

SOLIDARITY

IOWA POSTAL

Vol. 19, No. 9

For All Members of DMI Area Local APWU, IPWU, BMC, and Waterloo APWU

November, 2015

Beware The Wobblies!

"We're all leaders," said an unknown Industrial Worker of the World in Everett, Washington, in 1917. The sheriff had asked, "Who the hell's your leader anyhow?"

It was this spirit that inspired Joe Hill and others in the I.W.W. It is summarized in Joe Hill's famous sentence: "Don't mourn: organize." In order to understand what led Joe Hill to Utah, you must first understand the One Big Union that he dedicated himself to. The IWW, or Wobs, or Wobblies, began in Chicago in January, 1905. The January Conference drafted the Industrial Union Manifesto, which was an analysis of industrial and social relations that spelled out labor's grievances, criticized existing craft unions for creating a skilled labor aristocracy, and suggested "... one big industrial union ... founded on the class struggle." The Manifesto was sent around the country. All workers who agreed were invited to attend a convention in Chicago, beginning on June 27, 1905, to found a new, revolutionary, organization.

The I.W.W. preached that, because employers had united into great combinations of capital to maintain their supremacy, it was necessary to organize all workers into industrial unions in order to wage effective war on the integrated power of modern industry.

The convention drew nearly 200 delegates from thirty-four organizations representing workers. Together, they drafted the following: "The working class and the employing class have nothing in common. There can be no peace so long as hunger and want are found among millions of working people, and the few, who make up the employing class, have all the good things of life." -Preamble to I.W.W. constitution.

For the next decade, the I.W.W.

became the expression of class war in the U.S., participating in over 150 strikes. The strikes were vehicles of agitation, and strengthened working class solidarity. According to Joyce Kornbluh, "The I.W.W. avoided violence and destruction. However, bold free speech fights and inflammatory propaganda brought the impact of the organization to the doorstep of many communities across the country, and its revolutionary theories and militant strikes resulted in legal and illegal attempts to suppress the organization."

The IWW banner flew a design

The Industrial Worker called for all "Wobs" in the West to migrate to Tucker to help the cause, admonishing them to "Wear your wooden shoes to Tucker."

with three important tenets of the Union—"Education" "Organization" "Emancipation". All of those goals were best achieved by dissemination of information. Two Wobbly magazines, *Solidarity* and the *Industrial Worker*, were started in 1909. By 1912, they were being published in 12 languages, including Japanese. Each included songs and articles written by activists on the ground. I.W.W. songs were sung on picket lines, in hobo jungles, at mass meetings, during free speech demonstrations-anywhere members came together.

The music and articles weren't the only means used. Wobblies held outdoor public meetings to explain the practices of hiring agencies, which were notorious for their practices and were also known as sharks. Members called for their control by legislation, and urged workers to refuse to buy jobs from fee-charging sharks. According to Gibbs Smith, "Another practice of the employment shark was exposed in 'Coffee An', in which a worker pays for a job, works a week, then is fired. When he tries to collect his pay, the clerk deducts " . .

road, school and poll tax and hospital fee," and declares that the worker owes the company fifty cents for his week's work."

The struggle against sharks became known as the Spokane Free Speech Fight of 1909. "During the Free Speech Fight, I.W.W. soapboxers were jailed en masse for violating a non-street-speaking street-speaking ordinance passed by the city at the urging of the employment agencies.' The struggle ended with the revocation of the licenses of nineteen notorious sharks and the eventual passage of legislation regulating employment

agencies in the area. The I.W.W. was also granted the right to organize through street meetings in Spokane." (Gibbs).

These "victories" did little to endear Wobblies to members of the community at large. During a free speech campaign in San Diego in 1912, the *Tribune* wrote, "Hanging is none too good for them. They would be much better dead for they are absolutely useless in the human economy. They are the waste material of creation and should be drained off into the sewer of oblivion, there to rot in cold obstruction like any other excrement." These harsh words were perhaps some of the kindest written in the papers of the time.

I.W.W. members were arrested on various laws, and spent time in jail on trumped up charges. Vigilante groups, frequently in collusion with police and local officials, would seize I.W.W. prisoners on their release, load them into cars, drive to the edge of town, beat and club them, and warn them not to return. Victims were tarred and feathered, stripped naked and left abandoned or even pistol whipped and shot. Max Eastman wrote, "The church, the press, the state, the host of the people in this country hate the I.W.W., and they rejoice in every occasion when they can spit upon it. They hate it with a hatred beyond all proportion to its menace against privilege, or against property, or against law and order."!

Despite persecution, the movement gathered momentum and members. In January 1912, a ten week long strike of 25,000 workers

began in Lawrence, MA. Involving 51 different nationalities, it was also called the Bread and Roses strike and garnered national attention. The strike gave the Lawrence workers their first opportunity to redress grievances, and was considered a social revolution. The strikers ultimately received an offer of pay increases from 5 to 22 percent, time-and-a-quarter for overtime, and no discrimination against strikers, which led to the end of the strike on March 24, 1912.

Later that year, in May 1912, the Western Federation of Miners called a strike at a Murray, Utah, smelter. The strike kept over eight hundred men sidelined for six weeks. Although the strike was broken, membership in the

W.F.M. in the Salt Lake area rose from 250 in July 1912 to 2,500 in October. In September of 1912, the WFM led a strike at Bingham Canyon. The Union asked for 50 cents a day for workers, and recognition of the Union. When the strike ended in November, a pay increase of five cents a day was gained, but efforts had failed to get the WFM recognized.

In 1913, the I.W.W. organized a strike in Tucker against the Utah Construction Company. The workers had several demands: a twenty-five cent per day increase in pay, a shorter working day of nine rather than twelve hours, improvement of bathing and laundry facilities, free bunks and bedding, and abolishment of monthly hospital fees since Utah Construction had no hospital at Tucker. Rather reasonable, as demands went.

The company's response? They sent 50 guards led by Axel Steele, a deputy from the Bingham mines, to break the strike. 160 "agitators", led by James Morgan, were arrested and taken to Provo by train. The Industrial Worker called for all "Wobs" in the West to migrate to Tucker to help the cause, admonishing them to "Wear your wooden shoes to Tucker." The Tucker strike ended in mid-summer of 1913. The I.W.W. was able to gain a twenty-five cent a day pay raise and some improvement in camp conditions, including beds and blankets for the workers. Bolstered by his apparent win, on August 12, James Morgan arrived in downtown Salt Lake to organize.

continued on page 3

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Iowa Postal Worker
P.O. Box 539
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Know The Facts

240

The Postal Service has been in operation for 240 years.

40%

40% of the world's mail volume is handled by the Postal Service.

81%

81% of people aged 18-29 rated the USPS as "excellent or good".

\$0

The USPS uses 0 (zero) taxpayer dollars to operate.

However, USPS has cut service by lowering service standards, delaying all mail, ending door delivery and closing more than 140 mail processing plants.



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The IOWA POSTAL WORKER is the official publication of the Iowa Postal Workers Union and is published monthly. All articles or contributions for articles or Letters-to-the-Editor must reach the IOWA POSTAL WORKER, Box 539, Des Moines, IA 50302 by the 20th of the month preceding month of publication. Articles or comments should be typed or legibly written.

Opinions expressed in articles are those of the author, not necessarily the opinion of the IPWU Officers, Editor, Publishers or Advertisers of this publication.

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United We Stand – Divided We Fall!



As usual . . . leading the field.
812-923-1111



As Always It Pays To Belong To APWU In So Many Ways

by Bruce Clark,
Iowa State President APWU

Brothers and Sisters, some of you are seeing varying amounts of money showing up in your checks for grievance adjustments. Some folks have been concerned their checks were wrong and were afraid to cash them and others have called saying my did Fred get money and I didn't.

A little background . . . All this flows from the National dispute over Postmasters performing bargaining unit work. We have been fighting this issue since I started in 1978 and before.

This issue was finally laid to rest in a National arbitration which created all the rules about the same time as Post Plan came out. As most of you know a Postmaster in a level 18 office

can only do a maximum of 15 hours a week of bargaining unit work and they are required to document that time every day on a web 1260. These reports were turned over to Washington and they began in December of 2014 and continue now.

It was agreed that for that period the union would see where the violations were and tell the Postal Service who should be paid. In Iowa we had also made an agreement that affected the period from Dec. 6, 2014 through Feb. 7, 2015. This had to do with my insistence that the District needed to redo the process of filling Post Plan opening so that our members had all the information they needed to make those choices back in December. You will recall I explained before that this system worked great and your union and District management spent 11 hours one day in December figuring out by seniority what everyone wanted and where they would end up under the agreement. That highly successful process was purchased with an agreement that to the extent I was slowing up the process of filling those jobs, postal management would not be liable for that time unless there was clearly someone available to work. I still consider that an excellent agreement that produced a very fair and prompt process of filling the countless jobs created under Post Plan.

Therefore, this summer Dan Skemp your state Clerk Craft Director and I with help from Barb Wilson and Mike Bates from the DMI Local and George Bates, President of the Bi State Local in the Quad Cities, spent countless hours determining who would get the hours that were in violation of the Postmaster limits. I had a three inch thick binder crammed with the violations and it was a tedious process in which we followed a very careful strict pattern of how to disperse the hours. If a Postmaster in office A went 20 hours over the limit, we looked first at the PTF's in that of-

This is for the same dispute but is one lump sum for every clerk in small offices in the United States. Obviously a settlement for all clerks in the country is not going to look at your particular concerns.

The explanation for these payouts is at our National Website. In this case every PTF clerk or NTFT clerk who was on the rolls in a level 15, 16 or 18 office from May 7 2011 through December 5 2014, is receiving a "share" for each week of that period. The result as this was nationwide split of a set pool of money is that each "share" is worth \$26.23.

made to the whole bargaining unit regardless of whether you are a member or not. Naturally, it is frustrating to see large payments going to clerks who have never contributed to our organization that made it possible. We will certainly be sending membership sign up forms to all non members who are receiving money.

If you have not received any money in this first round, it is most likely that you aren't entitled but feel free to call to check of course. I can only assure you that this process involved a number of people checking it and was done absolutely without regard to who you are or whether or not you were a member.

Do you know a non member who shared in this great settlement?

How about asking them go become a member. You know the phrase "he ain't heavy . . . he's my brother" that is so true but some of these non brothers and non sisters are getting a little heavy so invite them to join the family.

I hope this unexpected influx of cash for our members comes at a time that will help make your lives and holidays happy in this coming season. Stay strong and stay APWU to fight for our rights and for a public postal Service. We rely on you to make it all happen. And Remember as our great President Emeritus Moe Biller always said "The struggle continues" and as your State President always says "don't let the bastards get you down".

In Working Class Solidarity.

"You know the phrase "he ain't heavy . . . he's my brother" that is so true but some of these non brothers and non sisters are getting a little heavy so invite them to join the family."

office to bring them to 40 hours, then we looked at all PTF's within 50 miles, by distance order, and brought them up to 40 hours. Then if we still had hours left we looked at Regulars within the office of the violations and looked at bringing PTF's over 40 up to as much as the max of 56. In some instances we had to use all those categories to hand out all the hours.

So the result is that if you were not, at the time, within 50 miles of a violation you would get nothing. If you were a regular you were far less likely to get anything and if you already worked over 40 hours that week you would not have been paid for that week.

When there is money in the air everyone suddenly becomes alert and we understand that. I can only tell you that we were incredibly methodical as everyone who was involved can tell you.

If someone thinks they were overlooked, chances are overwhelming you were not and we cannot look up the details for every clerk in the district. However, if you think you should have received something from this and did not you are welcome to call me.

National Pay Out

The next thing coming is the payout for the national settlement that runs from 2011 until Dec. 6 of 2014.

These payments have not been made yet but should be coming soon. In this case also the national union has reserved some of the money back to deal with errors that may arise as the figures for the settlement were supplied by the Postal Service.

These payouts then will also vary with how many weeks you fell into this category of PTF's or NTFT clerks in a level 15, 16 or 18 office.

When these payments are made, if you feel you were passed over or had some error in your amount then you do need to contact us so that those potential errors can be sent in for review.

Why The Heck Would You Not Belong To APWU ???

Both of these payments must be

Beware The Wobblies!

continued from page 1

He was giving a speech when he was attacked by Axel Steele and his cohorts, who had allegedly drawn lots to see who got to throw the first punch. A riot ensued, with cops and fire hoses eventually breaking it up. Morgan and six their Wobblies were arrested and charged after the incident, while Police Chief Grant issued a statement saying he would allow no more I.W.W. street meetings in Salt Lake City. An editorial in

the Salt Lake Tribune excused Axel Steele's actions as only "natural" in view of I.W.W. provocation. Meanwhile, Solidarity described Steele as a ". . . notorious gunman and the principal hireling of the largest Utah corporations in their unrelenting attempt to humiliate and crush the workmen in Utah."

This was the tense scene when our honored I.W.W. troubadour, Joe Hill, came to town in 1913.

— The Six-Bit

Congressman Young Agrees To Co-Sponsor H.R. 54

by Bryon Preminger, IPWU Legislative Director

A coalition led by DMI President Mike Bates, DMI Legislative Director Cindy Housh, IPWU MVS Craft Director Lonnie Matticks, and myself met with 3rd District House of Representative David Young on October 16th at his office in Des Moines.

He was very gracious as we sat down with him and discussed Postal Issues. We thanked him for his support of H.R. 12 which he co-sponsored which ensures the continuation of six day mail delivery.

Our main focus was how the Postal Service was an essential service to the American People and is the fabric of America. The issues we focused on were Veterans, Rural America, and the Elderly.

We reminded the congressman that the Postal Service is still and has always been the number one employer of Veterans. We discussed ways to ensure that veterans are made aware of Postal jobs when they return home from active duty. A veteran deserves the opportunity to be afforded the chance to obtain good employment after serving their country.

Congressman Young is from Van Meter, Iowa a rural town of about 1,000 residents and he told us he collected stamps as a boy. 65% of Americans live in underserved rural communities that business will not serve because it isn't profitable. We discussed how the Postal Service needs to expand services to these Americans like issuing hunting

and fishing licenses, postal banking, and other services that they currently have to travel many miles to attain. We discussed the impact postal privatization would have on rural America.

that all American's can rally around no matter what there political affiliation.

I highly recommend that each of you reach out to your representatives. You can do this very easily through capwiz.com an APWU political website that lets you track issues and send emails or letters to your representatives.

Now the issues and the work to be done.

Senate

S. 2142 Work-place Democracy Act – No cosponsors from Iowa.

This bill will amend the National Labor Relations Act to make it more efficient for employees to form, join, or assist Labor Organizations.

House

H. R. 784 To re-

instate overnight delivery standards for market-dominant products. Dave Loeb sack is the only cosponsor from Iowa.

H.R. 54 That the US Postal Service should take all appropriate measures to restore service standards in effect as of July 1, 2012. Cosponsors: Loeb sack and Young.

H.R. 28 That the US Postal Service should take all appropriate measures to ensure the continuation of door delivery for all business and residential customers. Cosponsor: Loeb sack

H.R. 12 Urges the US Postal Service to take all appropriate measures to ensure the continuation of its six-day mail delivery service. Cosponsors: Loeb sack and Young.



Pictured left to right: Lonnie Matticks, Michael Bates, Congressman David Young, Cindy Housh, and Bryon Preminger.

We discussed delivery standards and how that would affect the elderly as most of them receive their medication through mail delivery. H.R. 54 would restore service standards to July 1, 2012 levels and explained how not only are the elderly receiving their medicines late but American's bills are not making it to their destinations in a timely matter. He asked his aide for a copy of the bill and the cosponsors and told us that as soon as he returns to Washington he will have his legislative aide put him on as a cosponsor.

If I had to sum up my first meeting with Congressman Young he reminded me more of my meetings with Tom Lathrum. Somebody willing to have an intelligent discussion on issues that shouldn't be a political football but something

Fort Dodge Employees



Pictured left to right: Jerry Clabaugh, Bev Conaway, JoAnn Hanson, and Deb Konvalinka. Missing Kim Heman and Jan Gappa.



Jesi Bass



Pictured left to right first row: Pat Harvey. Rod Naylor. Tom Doyle. Ron Norine. Pictured left to right second row: Doug Gregerson, Molly Baker, Tim Anderson, Mike Harvey, Randy Johnson, Carter Smith, Kathy Bunda, and Kelly Albrecht.

Don't forget! Thursday is Wear Your Union Gear Day!



Update By Bates

by MJ Bates, President

I would like to take this time to thank the membership for sending me to the National President's Confer-

ence and the All Craft Conference in Las Vegas. I love the National President's Conference because we always discuss issues that are happening in other parts of the country that may be coming our way and we strategize how to contractually attack the issues. All the National officers were there and they give guidance from the national level on what they want us to do in the field. There was a lot of discussion on endorsing a candidate for President. After much discussion and after hearing from the National President on Sunday, the body voted on a motion to endorse Bernie Sanders for President. That motion passed!

We already have a couple of locals that have endorsed Bernie and at this time the DMI APWU will be voting to endorse Bernie at the November 7th union meeting. The DMI APWU Executive Board unanimously voted to endorse Bernie Sanders. At the All Craft Conference, Bernie Sanders gave a speech to all the delegates that electrified the crowd. The delegates were impressed on just how much Bernie knows about the postal service and on how important it is to save and grow the postal service. I encourage all of our members to go the national website, **APWU.ORG** and watch the speech.

5) Lead Clerk/TACS
6) Clerk Craft Jobs MOU, Whether Detailing a Supervisor Constitutes an Absence or Vacancy.

7) DM-901 Revision changing career language to "eligible and qualified"

8) NMO Outsourcing
Hopefully we will be victorious and get favorable decisions on these cases.

The following employees who were on the rolls as PTFs or who occupied NTFT assignments in Level 15, 16, and 18 offices during the time frame of May 7, 2011 to December 5, 2014 will receive payment on a share basis. I am publishing the names only that were identified by the National as employees who will receive payments, hopefully before Christmas. If you feel your name should be on this list please contact the DMI APWU hall at 515 265-7371 and we will look into it for you.

The National has 8 very important Arbitrations coming up that will impact jobs and bids.

- 1) Article 37.3.a.1
- 2) SONIKS, Elimination of all scheme, dexterity training
- 3) Sales Retention (solution) Team
- 4) Two Hours or Less in a day Custodian Cleaning

Hawkeye Performance Cluster Operations Program Support Des Moines, Iowa



"Just because it's STUPID doesn't mean we won't do it!"

LOCAL 44

Bid Changes Again: The Union had a discussion on bids today with the plant manager. We told her that the clerks had suffered enough already and we wanted the least amount of impact on reposting clerk bids. Management told us that there will not be ANY reposting of bids. Management will be sending letters to employees impacted by the hour changes in their sections. The new hour changes will take effect November 14, 2015. The changes are as follows;

- BT 2250 TOUR ONE EMPLOYEES
- T-1 TRUCK TERMINAL, FSM and AUTOMATION SECTIONS move to 2250.
- T-1 SPBS will move to 2150.

T-1 Incoming will be moved one hour closer to 2250, for example, if your start time is 12:00 a.m., you will be moved to 11:00 p.m.

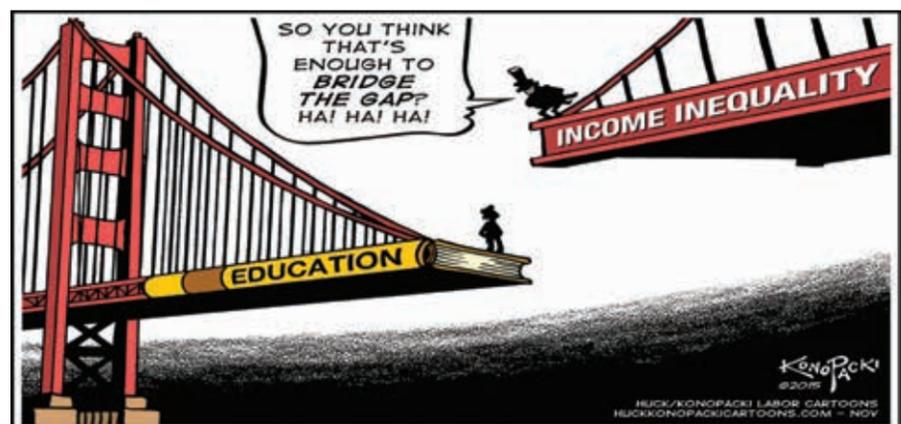
T-1 OUTGOING Not sure exactly what they will do with the staggered start times, but I told them the bids follow the mail flow. I am hoping they will not move any of these bids, but if they do it will only be by one hour.

- BT 0700 TOUR 2 EMPLOYEES
- BT 1550 TOUR 3 EMPLOYEES

ARE GOING TO BE MOVED LIKE THE TOUR ONE SECTIONS WITH NO REPOSTING OF BIDS.

I am happy to announce at this time, no one will lose their bids over the changes being made. I am always hesitant on putting information out because the possibility of change, but this was what was discussed with management and as always subject to change. Any further information that I get I will pass along to the membership.

1	Pamela Moore	DES MOINES	IA
2	Sarah Blakley	GRIMES	IA
3	Renee Archer	MADRID	IA
4	Melody Freeman	CARLISLE	IA
5	Barbara Friederich	MONROE	IA
6	Jennifer Race	DES MOINES	LA
7	Denise Peterson	COLFAX	IA
8	Loretta Eue	STORY CITY	IA
9	Gregory Snow	PERRY	IA
10	Gail Bauman	POLK CITY	IA
11	Rhonda Dalton	MADRID	IA
12	Kimberly Richards	DES MOINES	IA
13	Natasha Kamerick	NEWTON	IA
14	Danny Williamson	RUNNELLS	IA
15	Roger Mccullough	MADRID	IA
16	Tracy Gray	WAUKEE	IA
17	Patricia Muhlstein	GRIMES	IA
18	Kimberly Nelson	KELLOGG	IA
19	Rhonda Ross	MITCHELLVILLE	IA
20	Robert Phelps	AMES	IA
21	Scott Yarrington	PERRY	IA
22	Jack Nichols	STA TE CENTER	IA
23	Tammie Fedder	NORWALK	IA
24	Randy Snow	GRANGER	IA
25	Cory Courcier	NORWALK	IA





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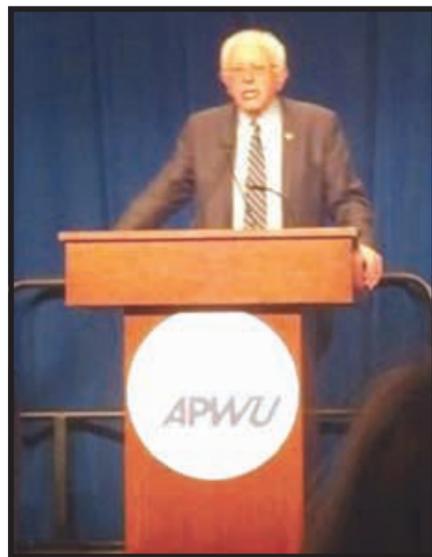
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Cindy's Outlook

by Cindy Housh, Editor

First of all, thank you for sending the President, Vice-President, the four craft directors and Editor to the All Craft Conference in Las Vegas, NV. We attended classes, gathered information to bring back to the membership and got to see Hillary Clinton and Bernie Sanders. Some of us attended a rally at the Trump International Hotel to support the members of the Culinary Union Local #226 who were protesting Donald Trump's hotel and its harmful labor policies. The surprise guest was Hillary Clinton who arrived and gave a short speech.

There were about 2000 members of the APWU who attended this conference from October 12-14, 2015. On Wednesday, October 14th, Mr. Bernie Sanders addressed the entire assembly of postal workers and retirees. His speech was great and he does know a lot of how the post office operates. I believe the National APWU is thinking about endorsing him to be our next President of United States. He really is for the workers of America.



He is not taking any PAC money to run his campaign. This election should be about the middle class, the worker, good jobs with benefits, good healthcare and a secure retirement. Not only do we need a new President for the middle class, we need to vote in new Senators and new Representatives who will get things done. Some of these people have been in office way to long and are not representing the people who elected them in the first place.

Ellen Gripp, Vice-President of the Retiree Chapter attended the Retiree Conference in Las Vegas representing the Des Moines Retiree Chapter and Janice Gillespie also attended the Retiree Conference at her own expense. It was great to have these two exceptional members represent our retiree membership. I was able to sit in on one session dealing with OPM and Social Security. They suggested to set up your social security as soon as you can, as long as you are over 18 years old, to avoid fraud. Simply go on socialsecurity.gov to set up your account. I did this and it gives you an account of what your earnings are and how much they estimate you will collect when you retire. The representative from OPM suggested you call 1-844-777-2743 to see if you were



affected by the OPM data breach. If you are retired you should go on opm.gov at least once a year, it really gives you a lot of information about your annuity and deductions.

There will no cost of living raise in 2016 for all CSRS & FERS annuitants and social security recipients per the information provided by www.myfederalretirement.com. The Social Security trustees did project there might be a 3.1% raise in 2017.

On October 16th, I got to go the office of Rep. David Young with Mike Bates, Lonnie Matticks, and Bryon Preminger. We asked him to sign on to HR 54 returning the delivery standards back to the same as they were in 2012. I have to say the visit was quite enjoyable and he did agree to sign onto HR 54 when he returns to Washington, DC. We hope to someday get him to tour the Des Moines Processing plant. We did stress to him that we hope Congress sees the post office as a national treasure and may it have many years of universal service to the public.

Some retirees received a letter to be a Holiday Clerk Assistant during the upcoming 2015 holiday season. According to the National APWU it was for retired clerks that retired in 2013, 2014 and 2015, but I was informed by a retiree that retired in 2012 that they received a letter too. There were special conditions on this employment which was: the pay rate was \$15.63 per hour, and the appointment duration is limited to three consecutive pay periods (6 weeks). I had only three days to make a decision on whether to apply or not. It really only took me about a minute to think about it. (Hell No!!!) My questions to myself was why would I want to stand and throw parcels all day, work (who knows) how hours a week, or what hours or days off would a per-

son have? What if you got injured lifting those heavy packages during the holiday season? It might be for some former employees, but it was not for me. I just don't understand how they got around the law that requires the salary of a reemployed annuitant be reduced, or offset, by the amount of the annuity to prevent dual compensation. What about the early out payment given to the retirees in 2013 to leave early? What if you have to pay that back? I am sure they thought about these questions, but what did OPM say about it? We will see how things go this season, good luck to all the former employees who are going to go for it.

I also received in the mail an opportunity to become a Test Mail Reporter. I would be reporting to IBM who was contracted by the USPS to do a Mail Measurement Study. I would receive 3 to 6 pieces of test mail per week and report the delivery of this mail by telephone or on their website. If I participated I would receive postage stamps every other month. This study was being conducted to help understand and improve processing and mail delivery. I wanted to call them to tell them it was simple, quit removing machines that process the mail, hire more people, put more window clerks at the windows to help the customers, and bring back the delivery standards. I did apply on their website and was asked a series of questions. One of the questions was "is anyone in your household employed by USPS or were you a former employee of USPS in the past three years?" Well, as soon as I answered yes to this, I was no longer considered a candidate for this study.

I had two opportunities to become employed and neither one was going to work for me. I guess I am enjoying my retirement way too much.

In Solidarity.



Las Vegas All Craft Conference

by Mike Gillespie,
Clerk Craft Director

It happened in Vegas and didn't stay in Vegas 12-14 October I attended the All Craft Conferences in Las Vegas. Once again this conference had many good classes that were shorter than they could have been due to the subject but the information passed was very good.

On Monday 12 October I attended a PSE issues workshop. Most of us know the rules with PSE's but a couple of things covered was making sure that the PSE's are working where they are supposed to be working. We have to make sure that window PSE's are hired for the window and are trained and watch for PSE's that are working the window that are not supposed to be working the window.

Another thing covered is that a PSE can work more than 40 hours during the week. Management does not have to use overtime if the PSE works more than 40 hours-A

PSE can't work more than 8 hours in a day without using the overtime list. We try to monitor this but if you know a PSE working more than 8 hours in a day except if it is a holiday when they have to use them more than 8 hours in a day to get regular employees off and not force let the Union know. PSE's can work a higher level job if no career employee wants to do the job. So yes, they could be a Lead Clerk. PSE's can loan to other offices after PTF's are used if available.

Monday afternoon, I attended a Preparing a Grievance for Step 3 and/or Arbitration. Once again lots of info in a short class. This class really could have been twice as long and usually is but to give us an overview and due to time constraints it was shortened.

One of the main things was for us to include all the necessary documentation to prove our case. If a witness statement is needed in

a supervisor doing our work then the statement must be complete. It can't just say I saw the supervisor doing clerk work. What work were they doing? For how long? From what time to what time? Who saw them doing the work? Signature!!

Our local Union sent out a great form that the Clerks can fill out with all the necessary info. Make sure you get it back to the Union timely and make sure you tell management you want to file a grievance for them doing our work. This can be free money.

On Tuesday I attended an excessing for clerks class in the AM. Luckily we aren't having any excessing out of the plant but the class did cover some on excessing from a section. On Tuesday afternoon it was a Large Office workshop. Once again lots of info. We covered bid reversions which is happening a lot at our plant. Management seem to want to get rid of jobs that we need. Sometimes they

get rid of a job then backfill the job with a PSE or employees from another section. WRONG. We have to show that the work still existed in that area. We have to show that the job was still needed since they had and still have people working there. We also covered that management is required to staff the DBCS machines with 2 employees except in limited circumstances. If you are told to run a machine by yourself ask for a Steward to clarify if it meets the exceptions.

The Union needs a good statement-what program you ran, from what time to what time. How many jams were there? Did you shut off the machine to pull full stackers? The more info the better.

Wednesday was a general session where we covered many things going on-there were so many things I can't begin to cover them in this article. All in all this was a great conference even if the info was crammed into our brains.

Just Say Thank You!

by Janice Gillespie

I would like to personally thank all of our union officers, stewards, and volunteers for their hard work, endless hours, and true dedication that enables all of us the needed benefits that we enjoy and will continue to treasure in the future.

Our officers are relentless. They each stepped up to run for the positions they hold. Yes, they receive a salary for whichever role they chose, but it's a small pittance for all they do. These union brothers and sisters do the work their job entails and participate in the union meetings where they represent us and their titles. They also do so much more.

It is on our executive board that you will find those who maintain our float, make the arrangements, order the shirts, buy the candy, make the signs, and so on and so forth so we can have a strong presence at the Labor Day parade. I mention this first because in today's economy we need to get the American people involved in our mission to improve service and keep the postal service viable.

Santa and Mrs. Claus gave a present to every youth in attendance at the children's Christmas party. The tree and hall were decorated, food and drinks were served and crafts and a magician entertained everyone. This was due mostly to our officers.

These same organizers load and unload the trucks of food, drinks, and supplies needed for our summer picnic, are responsible for the cooking and grilling, setting up the tables, selling COPA tickets and handling the raffles, and arranging the kid's activities. Soliciting donations is no easy task and all of this takes a great deal of labor. This and more so we can have fun with our loved ones and co-workers at the labor park.

Rallies also take work consisting in part of coordinating walkers, gathering signs and handouts and marching in all kinds of weather. These are necessary if we want to educate the general public about the real issues we are facing.

Time is precious. Our union stewards are right

beside our officials in work and the unlimited hours they invest. Talk about a thankless job. We all want management to give us what is "right" and therefor we forget that our reps can only fight for what is "contractual" These designated co-workers investigate allegations, solicit information, make recommendations, research the contract, question witnesses, coach us on what to include in our state-

ments and meet with management and the grievant by phone, e-mail, or in person, which frequently entails traveling to nearby towns. They often have to fight their own supervisors to get the time to fight for us. Our union reps rely on us, the complainant, to provide them with timely and specific information so that they can write up good grievances. Sometimes we win all that we ask for, sometimes we get a part of what we want, and at times the settlement

is different than we thought it would be. Some cases are lost. No matter the outcome, your steward has put in their time and effort. Our local is fortunate to have the invaluable volunteers that it has. These are the members who step up whenever and wherever they are needed. They come to meetings, write letters, stuff envelopes, make signs, set up, tear down, clean up, assist, and march.

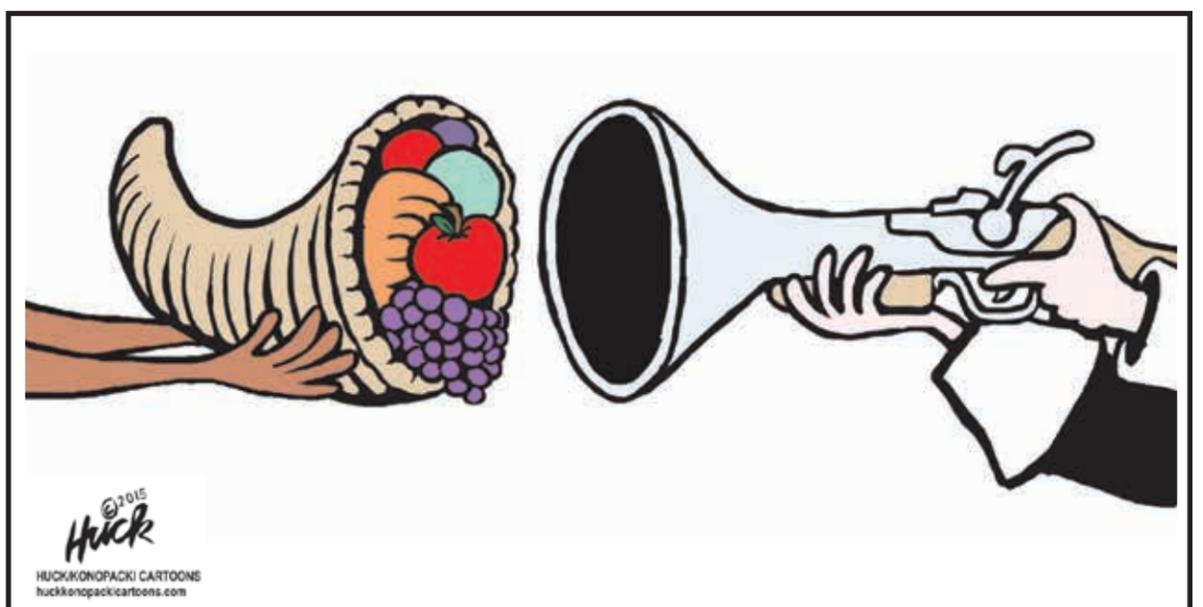
The dedication that shines through our officers, stewards, and volunteers at the meetings, events, conferences, and conventions is palpable. These brothers and sisters are committed to the union and all of it's members. They show their loyalty by standing up, speaking up, and fighting for us. They

take time away from their own families and friends to attend to union business. They do this for us.

Unfortunately, these same people who give their all hear more complaints then compliments. I challenge all of you. When you see an officer, say, "thank you". When you see a steward say, "thank you". When you see a volunteer say, "thank you". Tell them all, " thanks for all they do."

In solidarity.

Time is precious. Our union stewards are right beside our officials in work and the unlimited hours they invest. Talk about a thankless job. We all want management to give us what is "right" and therefor we forget that our reps can only fight for what is "contractual"



Best Retirement Dates For CSRS And FERS Employees In 2015 And 2016

Most employees should know what retirement system they are in but some years ago CSRS employees had a chance to transfer into FERS and believe it or not, some of them did. They are referred to as "Trans" FERS employees—these are CSRS employees who voluntarily transferred to FERS and with at least five years of CSRS service. They are covered by FERS rules for retirement eligibility. They receive a FERS annuity based on their years of service FERS and they will also receive a CSRS annuity during their retirement.

CSRS employees who retire on the first, second or third day of the month will have their retirement become effective on the next day and their first retirement check will be dated the first day of the next month. If a CSRS or CSRS Offset employee retires on the fourth through the last day of a month then

the employee's retirement becomes effective the first day of the next month with the first annuity check dated the first day of the month thereafter. All retiring employees are paid in a lump sum for any unused annual leave hours on the day of their retirement. The lump sum payment is usually deposited within 10 to 30 days of the employee's retirement date in their designated bank account. This should be noted because a retiring employee does not receive their first full CSRS or FERS annuity check until two months after they retire. An annuitant receives an "interim" annuity check while the OPM adjudicates their retirement case.

The issue of accruing the full amount of annual leave hours for the last pay period should also be considered. For those who work a Monday to Friday 80 hour bi-weekly payroll schedule, the best day

of the week to retire is the second Saturday of a pay period. There are exceptions to this rule. Checking with your retirement counselor would be advised if you are unsure what is best for your circumstance.

Effective January 1, 2014, all employees receive credit for all of their unused sick leave hours in the computation of their CSRS and FERS annuities. Note that unused sick leave hours can only be used for annuity computation purposes, not retirement eligibility purposes.

2015-CSRS/CSRS Offset—Best days to retire; Oct. 31, Nov. 28, Dec. 3: 2016- Jan. 2, Apr. 2, Apr. 30, May 28, Sept. 3, Oct. 1, Oct. 29, Dec. 31, Jan. 3, 2017

2015 FERS, "Trans" FERS — Best days to retire— Oct. 31, Nov. 28, Dec. 31: 2016- Apr. 30, May 28, Oct. 29, Dec. 3! — *My Federal Retirement*

APWU: Don't Post Health Records Online

The APWU is discouraging union members from participating in a voluntary program established by the Postal Service that creates an online database of their health records, APWU President Mark Dimondstein has announced.

"Last year's cyber attack on the

Postal Service demonstrates the danger in posting sensitive personal information in an online database maintained by management," Dimondstein said. A 2014 breach of USPS records compromised the names, dates of birth, Social Security numbers, and addresses of work-

ers and some retirees; information regarding OWCP records that were shared with the Department of Labor also exposed medical records, bank account and routing in

This year, the Office of Personnel Management (OPM), the federal agency that manages the records of

federal and postal retirees and current and former members of the military, also reported two major data breaches.

Management launched the voluntary online database of employees' health records, now known as USPS Health Connect Portal, in early October.

"Based on our experience with the 2014 cyber attack, we urge union members to exercise caution," Dimondstein said. "The APWU is fully committed to defending the privacy rights of our members and we encourage union members to be vigilant on their own behalf as well."

APWU Goes To Court Over Service Standards

The APWU filed a brief in D.C. Circuit Court on Sept. 14 against the Postal Regulatory Commission (PRC), arguing that USPS service standards must be "legally enforceable." In 2013, the union filed a complaint with the commission asserting that the Postal Service was systematically violating service standards as a result of plant closures. To avoid addressing the complaint, the PRC concluded that service regulations are unenforceable. Contrary to all past pronouncements, the commission declared that service standards couldn't be "violated" in any legally meaningful sense. "This is an unauthorized revision of the law," said APWU President Mark Dimondstein, noting that the Postal Accountability and Enhancement Act (PAEA) addresses USPS service standards. "Until the commission's rule of unenforceability is corrected, its 'directions' to improve service are nothing more than requests for cooperation from the Postal Service — no matter how much service deteriorates," he said.

— www.apwu.org



DMI APWU Local 44
Children's Christmas Party
DECEMBER 5
12:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.
 1200 E. Euclid Avenue • Des Moines, IA

Santa will be here, have your picture taken with him. There will be a performance for all ages by Silly Sally, the clown, at 1:00 pm. Enjoy lunch with your family while you work on art and craft items.

Please bring canned goods & non-perishable items to be donated to the Des Moines Food Pantry.

Call the Union Hall by November 30th and let us know your name and the number of children you will be bringing, 265-7371.

Self + One Option Added To Health Plans

by Bryon Preminger, DMI Health & Benefits Representative

The Office of Personnel Management (OPM) introduced a new option for Health Insurance Self + One. This will benefit many Postal Workers as many of your children have grown up and there is no longer a need to carry Family insurance.

This change however was treated cautiously by most insurance companies as the premiums for Family

and Self + One didn't result in major savings. One plan actually made self + one more expensive than their family plan. Blue Cross Blue Shield Standard only had a \$5.40 cent difference between the two options.

APWU High Option was one of the very few plans that took a different approach. They substantially increased Family enrollment though still about \$22 cheaper than blues but they came out with a Self +

One that \$59 cheaper than the family coverage. Once again APWU is

opportunity to enroll for APWU Consumer Driven. The Postal Ser-

	APWU High Option Family	Consumer Driven Family
Pay Period Premium.....	\$188.46.....	\$24.93
Deductible.....	\$550.00.....	\$1,200.00

giving their members a true value by switching to self + one.

vice will only contribute to this one plan and they will pay 75% of the premium.

Health Fair at the Plant November 18th

On November 18th representatives from various health plans will be available for you to talk to. If you are at a station be aware that the security system will probably be in place by that time so you will have to let them know at the gate that you are there for the health fair.

Health Plan Open Season is Monday November 9th to Monday December 14th

If you are a PSE that missed your opportunity to enroll after your initial appointment this is your

Why it Pays to be in Consumer Driven

If you are an APWU member that has been career for over a year you qualify for special negotiated rates for the APWU Consumer Driven Health plan. Let's see what that means to you.

The difference in premiums per year is \$4,251.78. If you minus off the difference in deductible you still save a whopping \$3,601.78 a year.

Whatever your choice is I hope 2016 is a healthy and happy year for you.

	Self Only	Self Plus One	Self and Family
Enrollment Code	474	476	475
2016 Premiums Consumer Option			
	Self Only	Self Plus One	Self and Family
APWU Career biweekly	\$10.39	\$22.85	\$24.93
APWU Career less than 1 year in FEHB biweekly	\$43.11	\$94.84	\$103.46
APWU Non-career (PSE) biweekly	\$51.94	\$114.27	\$124.65
Postal Category 1 biweekly	\$43.11	\$94.84	\$103.46
Postal Category 2 biweekly	\$51.94	\$114.27	\$124.65
2016 Premiums High Option			
	Self Only	Self Plus One	Self and Family
APWU Career biweekly	\$68.14	\$129.46	\$188.46
Postal Category 1 biweekly	\$68.14	\$129.46	\$188.46
Postal Category 2 biweekly	\$80.00	\$155.07	\$215.60
Non-postal biweekly	\$80.00	\$155.07	\$215.60
Non-postal monthly	\$173.34	\$335.98	\$467.13
	Self Only	Self Plus One	Self and Family
Enrollment Code	471	473	472

Come join the fun...
**APWU Christmas
Open House**

*Retiree Members & Their Spouse
or Significant Other Only*

*If you are not a member, sign up today by calling
265-7371 or sign up the day of the Open House.*

**TUESDAY, December 15th,
2:00 P.M. – 4:00 P.M.
at Union Hall, 1200 E. Euclid**

PRIZES!
Hors d'oeuvres, Cookies & Conversation
No Meeting, Just Fun!!!

*We will be taking donations
for the Food Pantry.*

**PLEASE MAKE YOUR
RESERVATION BY
December 10th, 2015
CALL 265-7371**

Save the Dates

	New Hires Can Enroll	Open Season	How to Enroll	Program Website
FEHB	Within 60 days from new hire date	Annual – November 10 to December 9, 2014 5 p.m. Central Time	PostalEASE https://liteblue.usps.gov 1-877-477-3273, option 1	www.opm.gov/healthcare-insurance/healthcare
FEDVIP	Within 60 days from new hire date	Annual – November 10 to December 8, 2014 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time	Go to www.BENEFEDS.com or call 1-877-888-3337 TTY 1-877-889-5680	www.opm.gov/healthcare-insurance/dental-vision
FSA	During 26th or 27th pay period after career appointment	Annual – November 10 to December 21, 2014 5 p.m. Central Time	PostalEASE	www.https://liteblue.usps.gov

APWU Voluntary Benefits Plan Legal Insurance open enrollment till November 30, 2015.



Tick Tock You're On The Clock

by Mike Gillespie,
Clerk Craft Director

This is a reminder to everyone that you only have 14 calendar days to file a grievance from when you discover a problem or should have reasonably known there was a problem that could be a grievance. You witness a supervisor doing Clerk work-the grievance must be initiated with management within 14 days. You see a carrier at a station doing Clerk work-

the grievance must be initiated with management within 14 days. There are a few instances that we may be able to go back more than 14 days but they are limited. You can initiate the grievance with management yourself-tell them you want to file a grievance about what ever the subject is you can put it in writing that you want to file a



grievance about whatever the issue is and give management a copy also ask for a Union Steward and tell management the reason you want a Steward.

Don't just mail or send a note to your Steward-they may not get it in time or they may be gone. If you ask for a Steward

and don't get one-make sure you document the time and date you asked and keep asking. If we can show that you asked but didn't get one timely we can go back more than the 14 days from when the grievance was initiated by the Steward. This has been true at stations and small offices where someone asks for a Steward and doesn't get one for a few or several days.

In Solidarity.

DMI Local Auxiliary Raises Money For Feeding America Backpack Program

The Des Moines Iowa Area Local 44 Auxiliary has stepped up their efforts again to help others in greater need. In support of the National APWU Auxiliary Human Relations Project, Feeding America Backpack Program, Des Moines raised a total of \$1,677. The money was raised by raffling off prizes that were drawn at the Auxiliary's October 3, 2015 meeting. Prizes were won by:

Lee Gray, Longaberger Crock and Salsa package; Robin Arnold, a bottle of Rosie Red Wine; Jack Fatino, \$100 cash prize; Lois James, winner of the Third Prize, an "Event in a Basket" valued at \$150; Bernita Jones, winner of the Second Prize, \$200 cash; and LaSandra Kearney, winner of the Grand Prize of \$300 cash.

Thank you to all of the Auxiliary Members who sold raffle tickets. Thank you to all that purchased raffle tickets for this wor-

thy cause. A special thanks to the following who donated prizes or prize money: Marsha Herman, Sally Whitman, Karen Tallman, Cindy Weems, Christine Sarcone, Robin Arnold and Debra Dickerson. Further, thank you to the DMI APWU Retiree Association for donating \$200 and to Terry and Sharon Glenn for their donation of \$50.

The best part about this fundraiser: ALL monies will go to the Food Bank of Iowa to be used locally.

According to the National Auxiliary's webpage: More than 21 million children qualify for free or reduced-price meals through the National School Lunch Program and the National School Breakfast Program. For many of these children, school meals may be the only meals they eat. What happens when they go home over the weekend?

For more than 15 years, the Feeding America Backpack Program has been helping children get the nutritious and easy-to-prepare food they need to get enough to

eat on the weekends. Today, bags of food are assembled at more than 160 local food banks and then distributed to more than 450,000 children at the end of the week.



DMI Local Auxiliary members raised almost \$1,700 for the National Auxiliary biennial human relations project, Feeding America Backpack Program. Pictured from left to right: Robin Arnold, Debra Dickerson, Mike Bates, Cindy Weems, Mark Sarcone, Christine Sarcone, Karen Tallman, Vancee Ringleb, Bernita Jones, Cindy Housh, Morrie Ringleb and Lonnie Matticks.



Feeding America Backpack Program

Raffle-Fundraiser Hosted by the DMI Area APWU AUXILIARY

Congratulations to the winners!!!

Date of Raffle Drawing: October 3, 2015

GRAND PRIZE: \$300 Cash LaSandra Kearney
2ND PRIZE: \$200 Cash Bernita Jones
3RD PRIZE: "Event in a Basket" (\$150 value) Lois James
4TH PRIZE: \$100 Cash Jack Fatino
5TH PRIZE: Bottle of "Rosie the Riveter Red Wine" Robin Arnold
6TH PRIZE: Longaberger Crock & Salsa Lee Gray

Total funds raised = \$1677 dollars!!! All proceeds benefit —The Food Bank of Iowa.

Thank you! Thank you! Thank you!

Thank you to everyone that donated a Prize for the raffle and to everyone that purchased a raffle ticket. Thank you for your generosity and support.

The "Feeding America Backpack Program" sends children home with healthy food and snacks for the weekends and vacations when school meals are not available. At the National level of Feeding America, every dollar raised equals 11 pounds of food, 9 meals or \$19 worth of groceries (wholesale value). The National APWU Auxiliary has adopted the "Feeding America Backpack Program" as its Human Relations project for the term of 2014-2016.

Thank you again,
Christine Sarcone, President, DMI Area APWU Auxiliary

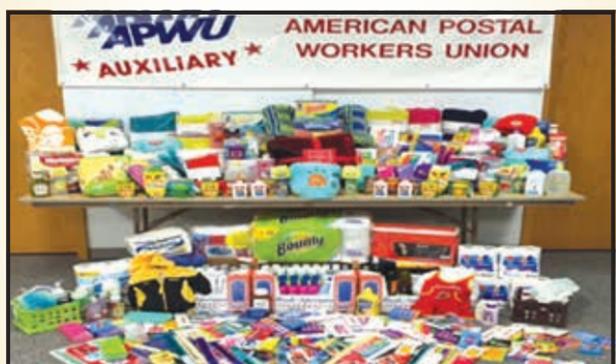


CHRISTMAS in July



HAWTHORN HILL

Thank You! Thank You!
Thank You For Your GENEROSITY!!!



(Not pictured-six -30 gallon garbage bags filled with women and children's clothing).

The DMI APWU Auxiliary thanks you for your donations to our annual charity drive, "Christmas in July". Donations were collected for Hawthorn Hill/New Directions, a women and children's shelter in Des Moines, Iowa.

Thank you to the Auxiliary members for all your help with this project. Thank you Mark Sarcone for helping deliver the donations and a special thank you to Kathy Kieffer and Linda Creighton for their generous monetary donations.

Over \$600 dollars were donated, along with bags and bags of clothing, baby food, baby items, toiletries, paper items and lots of school supplies.

When the donations were delivered, the gratitude was overwhelming. It was like delivering presents on Christmas Day.

On behalf of the DMI APWU Auxiliary,
Christine Sarcone, President



Des Moines BMC APWU

Local 7027 Meeting Minutes

October 20th, – 21st, 2015

Call to Order: 1:30 p.m. – No Quorum; Call to Order 4:00 p.m. Tuesday October 20th, & 8:00 a.m. Wednesday October 21st, 2015; Rob Moyer presiding.

Roll Call: Members signed in.

President's Report: Local President Rob Moyer discussed the National APWU extension of some MOUs with temporary agreements; the 50 mile excessing limit radius was agreed to be continued; this affects some options for some maintenance employee's situations. In the event of downgrades, Veterans will have options whether to accept an assignment at their current pay level, or to remain within the 50 mile radius with a saved grade lower level assignment. Some of the disagreements in the negotiations are employee pay rates and the current contract. USPS wants to address a projected increase in peak period parcel volume with additional clerk temporary employees. The USPS continues to confront a lack of Maintenance and MVS PSE applicants willing to work for the PSE pay rates. Pending National Contract Arbitration appears to be heading towards hearings in January 2016. USPS wants to reenact casual employee category for the APWU bargaining unit work during the next contract period. The USPS financial bargaining position is

to change COLA from being rolled over as base pay to a no carry-over lump sum status. That proposal is not favored by APWU because it does not maintain the pay level from year to year. Report accepted.

MVS Craft: Local President Rob Moyer A new MVS bidding system is being considered which would accelerate employee preferred assignment process. Some fears are noted that the MVS process would not encompass all MVS craft positions and MVS employees might miss out on some bid opportunities. The proposed MVS bidding process would not be exactly like Maintenance where employees put all possible options desired on a list pending any bid opportunities.

Clerk Craft Report: Local President Rob Moyer reported 3 PSE conversions to career included Steve Allen, Jenifer Bickham, & C. J. Tucker; up to 19 more Clerk PSEs will convert by November following the results of the e-reassign residual bid announcement; accepted.

Maintenance Director's Report: Rob Moyer discussed the Step 4 Art. 38.4.A.3 maintenance dispute, and arbitrator Das award, Roumell's award on requirements to provide staffing reports, and a national e-WHEP arbitrators award which stated the USPS had violated the contract and is-

sued a cease and desist provision that e-WHEP maintenance staffing intentions cannot be implemented as they are in violation of Art. 19. Rob Moyer had been instrumental in that Arbitration traveling to Washington NDC and testifying. Maintenance Manager Rees expressed the USPS intentions to continue the current plans to staff inappropriately (in spite of the arbitration award.) APWU believes the GOLD staffing belongs to be observed and may file if management fails to properly respond to the arbitration award. The award and management staffing plans relate to retiree vacant position, possible position downgrades, and proper level for other positions. 1 BEM employee who reportedly applied on PER was not given the position requested.

T-Shirt Winners: Tuanya Watkins & Linda Harding.

Cup Winners: 2 Meeting attendees – Rob Anderson & Chris Strait; 1 to a member at work: September Drawing – Shannon McGuire; October - Corey Jensen.

Cups are available for purchase for \$5.00 from Local 7027.

Door Prize: \$300.00 September - Carl Evans – not present; October – Pam Heinz – not present.

Recess: Tuesday & 16:45 p.m.

Adjournment: Wednesday 08:50 am.

The Loss Of The USPS Postmark Cancellation

Mark V. Case- 10-18-2015

As the USPS moves along with plant closures and mail consolidation; doing more with less, how is it working for you and this country! Mail that used to be next day-how many days is it taking now? How is the volume of mail being moved with less people and facilities? Are short cuts being taken with regular mail processing and service?

The cancellation of mail applies a date of processing to that piece of mail. This date verifies when the mail was placed into the system. Businesses's use the date to verify customer payment dates, and the public uses the date to see when mail was sent to them. Look at your mail and see if you see cancellation dates on it?

Big businesses were paid off long ago with discount rates from the USPS for just putting a Rate Box certification on the mail instead of a stamp. This mail never gets cancelled out with a date, and the customer never knows when it was mailed to them. Check your daily mail and see all the mail with no actual stamp postage. The customer never knows when it was

mailed or what price the sender mailed it to them. Could the reason be that it would cause a public outrage to see how little businesses paid to mail vs. what the average person pays?

Now we move on to a subject that has not been looked at too much. Election ballot mail, you know; people that vote by mail because they cannot get to the voting booth's. Usually this is the elderly, the sick, military personnel, etc... These people vote by mail before the end of the election. The postmark cancellation verifies their mailing date so that their ballot will count. Question- if the USPS cuts back and does not cancel the stamps on this mail — will the vote

count if the mail is delivered after election? Was it late because of the person or the service?

A postmark cancellation of mail verifies a lot of different critical things in this country — can we af-

ford to loose it? Check your mail, see if your mail is getting cancellation marks, and how long is it taking to get to you. How much has the post office changed, and how is it effecting you and your family?





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Meetings on Third Tuesday of every month at 5806 Meredith Drive 276-5272

BMC Local 7027 Meeting Schedule

Tuesday

**November 17th, 2015
1:30 PM & 4:00 PM**

Wednesday

**November 18th, 2015
8:00 AM**

Tuesday

**December 15, 2015
1:30 PM & 4:00 PM**

Wednesday

**December 16, 2015
8:00 AM**

Tuesday

**January 19, 2016
1:30 PM & 4:00 PM**

Wednesday

**January 20, 2016
8:00 AM**

Give your unopened Postal Pulse Survey to your Steward for eligibility for a \$25.00 drawing to be held each quarter by Local 7027.

50-Mile Limit — Minimizing Excessing Memo Extended

Two Related MOUs and Maintenance –Specific Step 4 Settlement Facilitate Extension

The APWU and the USPS have agreed upon two Memoranda of Understanding: “Minimizing Excessing” and “Peak Season Exception Periods,” in addition to a Maintenance-specific Step 4 Settlement, that are all interconnected and result in the extension of the 50-mile memo on Sept. 28, 2015, APWU President Mark Dimondstein announced.

“One of the biggest concerns of our members is the 50-mile limit on excessing which expires with the term of the 2010-2015 National Agreement. I am happy to announce today that the provisions of the Minimizing Excessing MOU will be reactivated and will continue until at least May 20, 2018 with one exception which is covered in the Step 4 Settlement (explained below),” reported President Dimondstein. “Excessing beyond 50 miles is so destructive to our members and devastating to their families, remov-

ing this concern for at least the next three years is a positive outcome for all APWU members of all Crafts.”

The granting of an exception period in Function 4 (retail) of the PSE Cap for three pay periods season beginning in 2015 as agreed to in the Peak Season Exception Period MOU will also establish appropriate procedures for the temporary reemployment of annuitants as “Holiday Clerk Assistants” to provide supplemental support for the peak volume seasons applicable to Function 1 and Function 4.

The Step 4 Settlement addresses the situation where there are no residual vacancies available for Maintenance Preference Eligible Veterans who exercise their MSPB rights to remain in their job category and management cannot excess them to a lower level vacancy.

Maintenance Director Raymer commented, “Working with President Dimondstein resulted in the entire APWU obtaining an important protection for our members; one we thought had been lost.

Given our experiences prior to 2010, the opportunity could not be passed by to include the entire Maintenance Craft under the continuing 50 mile excessing radius by the negotiating the retention of the Minimizing Excessing MOU.

Our settlement provides a complete choice for our Veteran Preference Eligibles, including retaining the rights they have earned in service to our country. Additionally, they also have the protections negotiated in our Collective Bargaining Agreement. Whichever is the best arrangement for them individually is theirs to choose.”

Dimondstein added, “I worked very closely with Director Raymer on these issues and appreciate his cooperation.

“The USPS expects a huge surge in parcels this holiday season. Simply put, we then negotiated to achieve a very important goal of contract negotiations – restoration of the Minimizing Excess Memo,” he concluded.

— apwu.org

TPing The TPP

Awfully fun to watch the different branches of government quiver like Aspen trees in a force 5 tornado arguing the pros and cons of the **Trans Pacific Partnership** trade pact. The TPP is either an environmental travesty designed to set the union movement back 100 years or the spine of the Pacific Rim’s economic pushback against China. Depends on who you talk to. One or the other: nothing in between. It’s two cliffs and a gorge.

Problem is, despite all the blatant blaring blather, no one knows exactly what’s in the 3D-chapter, 12-nation agreement, which has spent 10 years in gestation. The public being allowed to see the contents . . . no times. Zero. Zip. Nada. We’re talking Ultra-Hyper-Super Secret. More classified than Taylor Swift’s cell phone number. As transparent as diving for oil. In Arctic winter. At night.

You know the drill. “Comprehensive market access will eliminate tariffs and promote global job creation.” Blah. Blah. Blah. “Workers will experience increased affluence while consumers bask in the riches of less expensive imports.” The usual pie-in-the-sky promises from people whose connection to the real world mirrors that of a sultan’s sequestered eunuch’s knowledge of fantasy football.

Though 500 corporate lawyers

have worked on the negotiations, not even members of Congress have gotten a copy. No sense riling up the kiddies prematurely. But, in the spirit of the deal itself, utilizing a series of clandestine bribes and extortion, not excluding threats, we here at Durstco are able to exclusively re-

word for “currency manipulation” that can be utilized by member nations to placate local troublemakers.

New Zealand will give it a rest with that whole damn lamb thing. The latest version of the TTP requires **Vietnam** to pay workers the minimum equivalent of 20 US cents per hour without benefits. 10 cents with.

The USA will compile a list of their most radical environmentalists who will be restricted from annoying other member nations with boring chants and slogans and emotional appeals based on . . . “workers’ rights.”

In an attempt to combat overfishing, **Japan** agrees to eliminate all drift nets that exceed a mile in length.

Singapore will be forced to legalize chewing gum and all hell will break loose.

Mexico will be in charge of the resolution tribunals that adjudicate intellectual property disputes. Based on the theory that an absent witness is an ineffective witness.

Chile will be encouraged to change its name to something that inspires fewer jokes.

Australia shall henceforth be required to stop living in the 70s and forever refrain from using the word barbie to describe grills. And Sheila is a woman’s name, not a pronoun.



EAP Supports Military Employees

Here are a few reasons why veterans are an asset in the workplace:

Battle-tested, real-world experience. Veterans that may have been deployed and who have done everything from coordinating ground and air support during combat to hiring local contractors and restoring schools and hospitals bring skills to the workplace that are invaluable. Consider “decoding” their military skills into how they translate to valuable skills on the workroom floor.

Trainability. There are numerous types of military training that vary from service to service. The unifying factor is that training is a central component for all branches of the military beginning from the first day of enlistment. Personnel are trained in weapons, leadership development, administrative management, and much more making

veterans excellent candidates for both formal and informal leadership roles.

Adaptability. Military personnel continually adapt to changing environments and new responsibilities and thrive in a variety of settings.

Strong leadership. Military leadership can often translate to great civilian leadership. In many business environments including the USPS, it is difficult to instill a set of values that makes leaders servants to their employees. But it has been found that these values are commonly held by people who have worked in the military and other hazardous public service careers. Thus making them excellent candidates for leadership roles.

High dependability. Military veterans don’t show up late for work and can be relied on to perform their duties properly and put

forth their best effort to achieve the highest standards of performance. What does that mean to the rest of your workforce? They’ll be inspired and invigorated by their veteran co-workers.

Performance under pressure. Military veterans deliver under pressure in the corporate world just as they did when their lives depended on it. Some employees fold under pressure or turn down positions and responsibilities that may be pressure-filled. Veterans survive and thrive.

Military veterans have a wide range of skills they bring to the table that their civilian equivalent may not possess. Being adaptable, working well in groups, handling and performing under pressure, strong leadership skills, and being goal-oriented are all traits that veterans have. They also work with more precision, having been

trained to be very accurate in their military responsibilities. This translates into a postal employee that comes to work everyday ready to be successful in the work they perform, ready to help USPS continue its service to the American people.

Coaching offered by the EAP may be a perfect opportunity for military veterans to translate these assets into attaining the goals they have in their civilian life.

Contact your local EAP Consultant or call 800-327-4968 (800-EAP-4YOU)/TTY: 877-492-7341 to learn more.



800-327-4968

(800-EAP-4-YOU) TTY: 877-492-7341
www.EAP4YOU.com

No COLA Likely In 2016, Many Social Security Recipients To See A Net Reduction

In a recent *My Federal Retirement* article, it was announced that CSRS annuitants, Social Security disability and retirement benefits recipients, and FERS annuitants older than 62 will not see a cost-of-living adjustment in January 2016. Some high income annuitants may actually see a net reduction in their CSRS annuities or Social Security retirement benefits in 2016. This is attributed to the fact that their Medicare Part B premiums (which are usually deducted from their monthly CSRS annuities if they are not receiving Social Security monthly benefits or from their monthly Social Security payments if they are receiving Social Security retirement benefits) will likely increase in 2016.

COLA's have been based on the consumer price index for urban wage earners (CPI-W). The CPI-W during the first two quarters of 2015 actually declined from the first two quarters of 2014. So unless inflation surges in September, 2015, it is unlikely that the average CPI-W for the third quarter of 2015 will surpass the average CPI-W for 2014, resulting in it being unlikely there will be a COLA in CSRS and FERS monthly annuity benefits. 2010 and 2011 were also no COLA years.

— *My Federal Retirement*

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Getting 'You' Back Into The Union

Understanding the core reason for joining and supporting the union is crucial if we are to be successful in our mission. Even amongst union officers and stewards, sometimes it is easy to forget the central purpose of our union, and of all unions. Some of our members have never really understood this at all.

It is not just about money. If it was just about money, then all management would need to do is bribe its employees-but all the pizzas, hot dogs, free tools and other such tidbits that have been offered by management have not eliminated the need for a union.

The AFL-CIO offers some excellent training courses on unionism. The Seattle local sent a group of officers to this training about 15 years ago. The first question that was asked in that training was, "Why should we join and support a union?" Some of the people there could not answer the question. Like Charlie Brown in that wonderful Christmas classic, the instructor cried out to the class, "What's it all about?"

Dignity and respect

The reason for joining and supporting a union is to be treated with dignity and respect by the employer. An employer that respects its workers will pay them a fair day's wages for a fair day's work. An employer that respects its workers will not renege on promises. An employer that respects its workers will treat them with dignity, and will not discipline them without just cause.

Sadly, many employers are, as Adam Smith noted, just plain greedy-so greedy that they frequently avoid treating their employees with dignity and respect.

When workers come together to form a union, the purpose of that union is to collectively bargain on behalf of the employees, and to enter into contract agreements which guarantee that employees will be treated with dignity and respect. Unions enforce these agreements.

Your role in the Union

Many employees, these days, do not really understand their role in the union, other than to pay dues. Paying dues makes one a member; however, it does not fulfill one's role in the union.

It is difficult for many to understand the sacrifice that former unionists have made to achieve what workers enjoy today. Nowadays, very few employees make such sacrifices, and even fewer take any personal ownership for their responsibility as an employee and a union member.

This has given rise to a peculiar relationship between the Postal Service and many of its employees-the employer may respect the union and its officers, but at the

same time the employer does not respect its employees. This is the reason that we must get "you" back into the union.

Getting you involved Workers need to understand their role in the union, their relationship to their stewards, and their duty in the grievance process. Many postal employees do not, and this has given rise to some really unfair criticism of union representatives-by workers who have never taken any personal ownership for their own

ed States then YOU MUST file an income tax return; you MAY get a refund if you overpaid the government. If you drive lip to an intersection where there is a yield or stop sign, then you MUST yield the right-of-way; you MAY get a ticket if you fail to do so.

Everyone understands the difference between must and may except, it seems, when it comes to filing grievances. Many employees have been really spoiled when it comes to union representation.

Get involved with your union by attending your union meetings!



responsibility as an employee or a union member.

The APWU contract clearly outlines employee responsibilities for grievances in Article 15 Section 2 which reads as follows:

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 may reasonably have been expected to have learned of its cause.

Notice this specific language-the employee MUST discuss the grievance WITH their supervisor. Must is a very strong word. Must does not mean maybe or perhaps. Must is something that MUST be done. The same section of the contract goes on to say that:

The Employee, if he or she so desires, may be accompanied and represented by the employee's steward or a Union representative. The Union also may initiate a grievance at Step 1 within 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.

Notice that the word used in these two sentences is MAY. The employee MAY request a steward, and the union also MAY file a grievance. There is a big difference between may and must.

If you are employed in the Unit-

This is due to the outstanding commitment and great success of some of our union stewards; however, when the stewards are doing all the grievance work at step one just because they MAY, this has given rise to the peculiar relationship between the Postal Service and many of its employees-management respects the Union representatives, but not the employees.

The Union representatives are doing all the work at step one grievance meetings instead of the employees taking responsibility for what the contract clearly says THEY MUST do. This is why many supervisors will do things when there is no steward around that they would never do in front of the union's representatives.

Earning respect

Respect is something that, ultimately, must be earned by every human being. Respect is earned when an individual takes responsibility for themselves; when this happens, then others see it and respect that individual.

Union representatives that have laid it on the line for their fellow employees in grievance meetings for years deserve their respect-they have earned it.

However, some employees do not properly respect the very union representatives that have selflessly been representing them for years by filing grievances-not because

the contract says they MUST, but just because they MAY. At the same time, these same employees have never done what the contract says THEY MUST do. They do not confront their supervisors at all, and neither do they request that their supervisor provide a union representative to accompany them to file a step one grievance. Instead, they simply go looking for a union steward out on the workroom floor.

It is very disrespectful for employees to treat stewards as if they were waiters or waitresses on roller skates at a drive-in restaurant. Nowhere in the contract does it say anything about complaining to a union representative at the time clock and insisting they file a grievance, or interrupting a union representative who is trying to eat lunch, and insisting they immediately listen to your problem with enthusiastic interest. Nowhere does the contract say anything about finding a steward out on the workroom floor, interrupting them and engaging them- something which management could discipline both the steward and the employee for if it interfered with their work. Nowhere does the contract say anything about calling the steward at home, or when not at work, and taking up their personal time to engage in official business.

Employees working for the Postal Service have been so well represented in the past that they have totally forgotten that just because a steward MAY file a grievance for them does not mean that they MUST.

It is because employees have become so uninvolved that supervisors do not respect them, personally.

If employees really want the respect of their supervisors, then THEY MUST earn it. Ultimately, respect is earned by taking ownership of personal responsibility as an employee and a union member.

Taking responsibility

When an employee feels aggrieved, then that employee should go to their supervisor and request to meet with a steward, and also be accompanied by a union representative to discuss the grievance. If every employee did this, then union stewards would not have to be constantly requesting union time from management to do step one meetings-the employees would be requesting the meeting and then management would be answering to every employee-not just to the union stewards and officers.

This would cause supervisors to take a much more serious look at the employees' grievances, because then there would be two people in the room for the discussion, and also two workers that management must cover to accommodate the meeting as well.

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Difficult People At The Post Office?

I attended the **John Akey Seminar** in Duluth, Minnesota, on September 11 and 12 and took a class entitled "Dealing with Difficult People" that was taught by Joe Boyle, EAP Consultant for the Northland District. We learned to recognize various personality types amongst our co-workers and suggestions on how to cope with that person. Examples are:

1. Sherman tanks: use aggression, hostility and threats to bully and intimidate others. You should be assertive when dealing with this person, but be careful to avoid a head-on fight.

2. Exploders: blow up when feeling threatened or pressured. It is best to just let them blow until they run out of steam and then tell them that when they calm down you can have a discussion.

3. Snipers: make cutting remarks without being obvious and attack with innuendo and jokes. Let them know that you are aware of their

tactics and describe to them how their behavior affects you.

4. Complainers: persistently whiny and complain about real problems, but in such a way that it actually makes you defensive. Do not agree or apologize when they convey hopeless/helpless attitudes. Help them focus on their strengths and resources to solve their own problems.

5. Wet Blankets: continually negative and do not trust others because they believe others have ulterior motives. Do not agree with them. Be positive and give examples to disprove their logic.

6. Bulldozers: self-proclaimed experts who "roll over" others who need to prove their superiority and are offended if you try to correct them. Avoid challenging their authority but be assertive in your interactions with them.

7. Clams: unresponsive people with poor eye contact who shut down when under stress. Use open-

ended questions to force them to respond and do not fill silence with idle chatter. Force them to communicate.

8. Superagreeables: very friendly and out-going folks who feel the need to be liked by everyone and avoid conflict by being charming. They often make unrealistic commitments that they cannot fill. Find tactful ways to confront their unrealistic commitments and help them set achievable limits.

9. Indecisives: avoid making any major decisions because they are hoping the problems will just go away on their own. They do not want to hurt anybody else's feelings. Offer to brainstorm with these individuals to assist them in making a rational decision.

We all know people who fit into these categories, and some people who fit into multiple categories! Difficult behavior is the result of habitual patterns that have worked well for that person in the past but

because they are learned behaviors they can be changed through the influence of others. We also discussed disruptive behaviors, which include gossiping, irresponsibility and passive aggressiveness. Studies have shown that difficult and disruptive behavior creates 50% of all work stress, loss of productivity and declining motivation.

Coworkers with overbearing personalities have a unique talent of pushing just the right buttons to deliberately upset others, which can be very problematic in the workplace. Failure to cope with these problem behaviors can lead to physical and/or mental problems at work, and if you don't leave this unresolved stress at work it can have a negative effect on your home life. Learn to recognize difficult behavior patterns in your co-workers and utilize coping skills to make your work life more rewarding.

—Badger Bulletin

Getting 'You' Back Into The Union

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They may not like this, but they do respect the National Labor Relations Act, and will do so because federal law requires it — they have no choice.

If "you" get involved as an employee and take responsibility for what the contract says that "you" MUST do, instead of just expecting union representatives to do what they MAY, then not only will supervisors begin to respect you as an employee — your union representatives will have a whole new respect and appreciation for you as well. This is where we really need to go as a union if all employees are going to be treated with dignity and respect in the workplace.

Unity is the key to the success of the Union. Unity means a lot more than just paying union dues. The next time you hear someone complaining that some union steward didn't do what the contract says they MAY, ask that employee if THEY have done what the contract says that they MUST do.

Someday, the Union MAY achieve the goal of having every employee treated with dignity and respect in the workplace, but if this is ever going to happen then all employees MUST step to the plate and earn the respect of both their supervisors and union representatives. This will happen the day that "you" become an active part of the union. The day that all employees do what MUST be done, will be the day that the union MAY achieve this goal.

—Louisville Fed



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Enrollment Type

The FEHB Program introduces the Self Plus One Enrollment Type.



Introduction

The Bipartisan Budget Act of 2013 establishes a Self Plus One enrollment type in the Federal Employees Health Benefits (FEHB) Program. Coverage under a Self Plus One enrollment will be available beginning in January 2016. The first opportunity to enroll in Self Plus One will be during the annual Federal Benefits Open Season beginning in November 2015.

Frequently Asked Questions

Will a Self Plus One enrollment cost less than two Self Only enrollments or a Self and Family enrollment?

Rates for plans are not yet available. It will be very important during this year's Open Season to look at the rates for the plan you are in and for other plans as well. It may be possible to save money by enrolling in a Self Plus One enrollment, but you should review your health benefit needs and the available FEHB plans to determine which plan is best suited to meet your needs.

What is Self Plus One?

Self Plus One is a new enrollment type in the Federal Employees Health Benefits (FEHB) Program that allows you to cover yourself and one eligible family member you designate to be covered. Starting in 2016, all FEHB plans (your health insurance plans) will offer a Self Only, a Self Plus One, and a Self and Family enrollment type. Employees and annuitants will be able to select a Self Plus One enrollment beginning in the 2015 Open Season.

Who can be covered under a Self Plus One enrollment?

A Self Plus One enrollment covers the enrollee and one designated eligible family member. The definition of eligible family members has not changed. Your eligible family member can include either a spouse OR a child up to age 26. A child age 26 or over who is incapable of self-support because of a mental or physical disability that existed before age 26 is also an eligible family member.

When will OPM release the rates for the Self Plus One enrollment type for each plan?

Rates are announced in early October before Open Season begins. When posted, 2016 rates will be available at www.opm.gov/openseason.

How is Self Plus One different from Self Only or Self and Family?

A Self Only enrollment covers only the enrollee. A Self and Family enrollment covers the enrollee and all eligible family members. The new Self Plus One enrollment type covers the enrollee and one eligible family member you designate to be covered.

When will a Self Plus One enrollment be effective for annuitants?

If you choose a Self Plus One enrollment during the 2015 Open Season, your enrollment change will be effective on the 1st of January. For annuitants, Open Season enrollments are always effective on the 1st day of the year following the end of the Open Season. If you choose a Self Plus One enrollment outside of Open Season, your enrollment change will be effective on the first day of the first pay period following the one in which you make a change. For example, if you request an allowable change in the middle of February, your change will be effective on March 1st.

How will I know if a Self Plus One enrollment is right for me?

You should determine your eligible family members and decide which enrollment type is best for you. A Self Plus One enrollment type will cover you and one eligible family member. During Open Season 2015, you will want to pay close attention to the benefits and rates in both the plan you currently have and other FEHB plans available to you. OPM will release materials in advance of Open Season to help you make this important decision. Visit www.opm.gov/openseason to access these materials.

If I choose Self Plus One now, will I be able to make changes to my plan later?

Yes. You can always make changes to your plan during Open Season. In addition, you can make changes if you experience a Qualifying Life Event. For example, if you are currently married and chose a Self Plus One enrollment, in the event you divorce, you can make a change to Self Only. Alternatively, you can change to Self and Family if you have an eligible child. Other QLEs allow you to make changes as well. You can see a list of all your QLE opportunities on the SF 2809.

Will domestic partners/non-married partners be eligible for coverage under a Self Plus One enrollment?

No. Only legally married spouses are considered eligible family members under any FEHB enrollment, including Self Plus One. This has not changed with the addition of the new Self Plus One enrollment type.

When is the first opportunity to change my enrollment to Self Plus One?

You will be able to select a Self Plus One enrollment beginning in the 2015 Open Season. After Open Season, you will have an opportunity to change your enrollment upon experiencing a Qualifying Life Event (QLE).

I am an annuitant. What if I miss the Open Season and I want to change to a Self Plus One enrollment?

Annuitants are allowed to decrease enrollment at any time. This means that if you have a Self and Family enrollment and you decide you would like to change to a Self Plus One enrollment, you may do so throughout the year. No changes to Self Plus One can be made prior to the 2015 Open Season. Changes are effective January 1, 2016. If you have a Self Only enrollment, however, you must experience a Qualifying Life Event in order to change to Self Plus One. These are events such as marriage, divorce, or a family member's loss of coverage under another health insurance program. For a full list of allowed QLEs, please view the SF 2809. Reminder: No changes to Self Plus One can be made prior to the 2015 Open Season. Open Season changes for annuitants are effective January 1, 2016.

I am an employee. When will a Self Plus One enrollment be effective?

If you choose a Self Plus One enrollment during the 2015 Open Season, your enrollment change will be effective on the first day of the first full pay period in January 2016. If you choose a Self Plus One enrollment outside of Open Season, your enrollment change will be effective on the first day of the first pay period following the one in which you make a change. The earliest available effective date for a Self Plus One enrollment is January 1, 2016.

I am an employee. What if I miss the Open Season and I want to change to a Self Plus One enrollment?

As an active employee, you must experience a Qualifying Life Event (QLE) in order to change your enrollment outside of Open Season. These are events such as marriage, divorce, the birth or adoption of a child, or a family member's loss of coverage under another health insurance program. For a full list of allowed QLEs, please view the SF2809. Reminder: No changes to Self Plus One can be made prior to the 2015 Open Season.



www.apwuhp.com
(800) 222-2798

For additional information visit
www.opm.gov/selfplusone