

IOWA POSTAL SOLIDARITY

Vol. 26, No. 8

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

August, 2022

*Individually,
we are one drop.*

*Together we
are an ocean.*

— Ryunosuke Satoro

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— COLA And You —

**by Mark Dimondstein,
APWU National President**

Soaring inflation is hurting working people worldwide with rising prices on basic necessities including gasoline, food, transportation and housing. Inflation is largely being driven by an economy concentrated in the hands of a few powerful and greedy corporate monopolies that have the power to raise prices, with little fear of competition. In 2021 consumer prices rose 6.7 percent yet corporate profits rose 25 percent - a record high. In the first quarter of

2022, the five major oil companies tripled their profits to \$35 billion. Monopoly power and price gouging may be good for corporate profits and Wall Street, but they are disastrous for workers. Clearly, over the long run we have to replace corporate domination and power with more workers' power.

Rising inflation underscores just how important the continuation of our negotiated Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) is in our outstanding new union contract. COLA is our best protection against inflation.

We are some of the few U.S. workers who receive COLA increases. Even in the postal world, we are the only union that has maintained full COLA in our union contract. We should never take our union won gains for granted. Management puts COLA on the chopping block during every round of negotiations and we have to fight to preserve those hard-won provisions.

Let's examine the "COLA Difference:" (The APWU has negotiated a number of union contracts/collective bargaining agreements.

The figures below apply to the main agreement covering 200,000 postal workers.)

- As inflation started to dramatically rise in 2021, the union-negotiated COLA increases for that year amounted to \$1.14/hour or \$2,371 annually for fulltime career employees.
- The first COLA (March 2022) under the newly negotiated and ratified union contract was sixty-three cents/hour or \$1,310 annually.
- The second COLA, due this Au-
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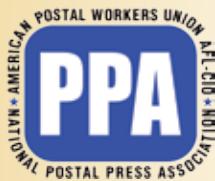


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Divided We Fall!*



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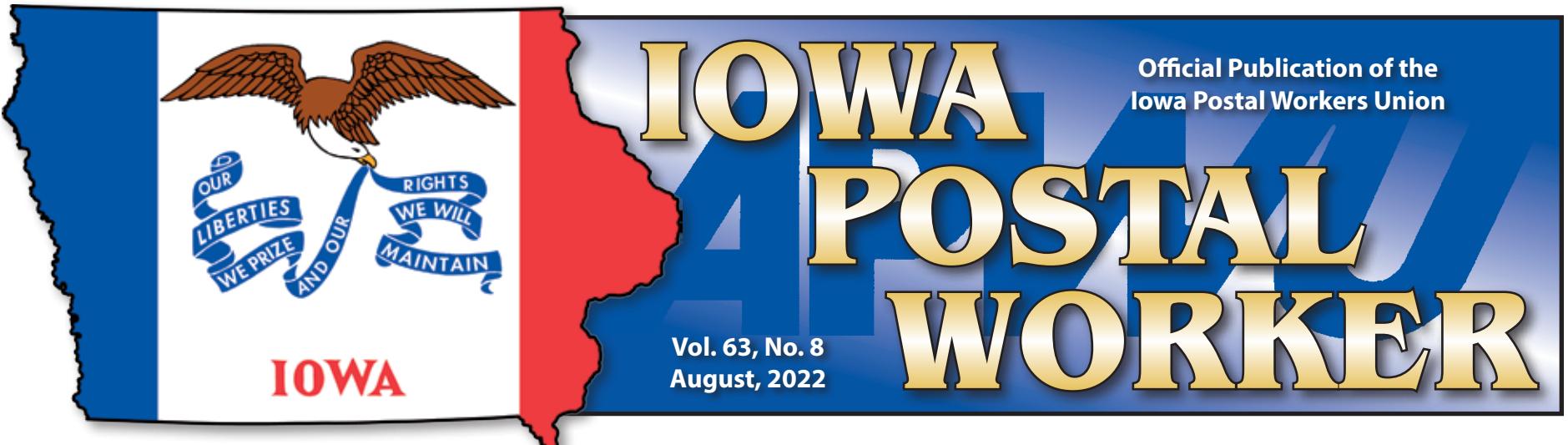
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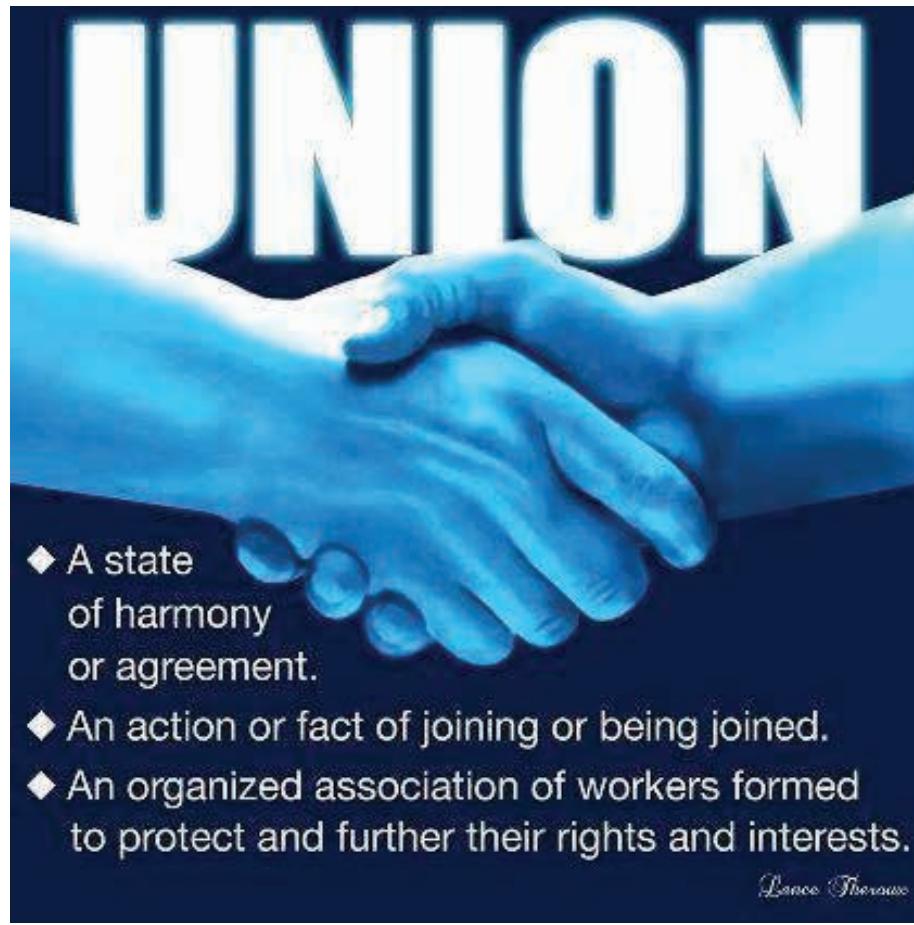
The Actual Meaning Of Union

by Antonio Rodriguez

Being a Postal Worker could be a stressful position when you have to deal with the great responsibility to handle and custody the mail. Sometimes we forget that this duty it is a valuable service and what it is called in USPS the "sanctity of mail" must be the main goal of our operations. At the same time we are under the constant vigilance of the Management in a sense of their duties are to implement more stress in our workplaces. Probably they think more important to act as bosses that collaborate with the real objective of the Postal operations. In what world do you think that overseeing the job of employees behind their backs is a good tactic to improve the productivity?

It looks like the Management doesn't care about more efficiency because the welfare of the postal workers results in a better job. The only way to stop the normalization of this way of harassment in the stations is the action of the Union.

It is a fact that the actions of the delegates in every Post Office and the local APWU has been a barrier



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gust, currently stands at a whopping eighty-seven cents/hour or \$1,809 annually. With two months left until the second COLA is set, (while the final allowance may fluctuate), we believe it could top \$1.00/hour.

- At this point in time, the first two COLAs in the new contract amount to \$3,120 annually.

- The 2021 and 2022 COLAs combined will exceed \$5,500 annually. COLA becomes part of our regular wages and thus carries over year-after-year.

- In addition to COLA, the annual wage increases due each November under the new union contract amount to an average of \$800/year for career employees. Those not yet

to harassment in the last year with historic agreements through several grievances. In the Union, as any

other kind of organization, the most important should be the common well of the members. Sometimes,

we are going to disagree with some decisions, we are going to see things that we don't like and we are going to presence mistakes because every human being is going to act wrong in any moment since nobody is perfect.

In the other hand, that does not mean that we are going to shut up and accept everything without any discrepancy. In a society with free of speech we must to respect this constitutional right in every organization. Critical voices does not mean that they try to destruct the Union, but to express the desires of changes to achieve new and better things.

In democracy we have the instrument to decide in the elections for the Board of Directors. This newsletter, based on the independence of press, is not going to influence in the decisions of the Union members. As editor I want just to invite every one to participate and feel free to express their concerns. The actual meaning of Union is being joint in a common objective and this is to fight for our rights as Postal Workers.

— *The Puerto Rico Postal Worker*

— COLA And You —

at the top step of the pay scale continue to receive step increases of approximately \$1,000 every thirty-six weeks, in addition to COLA.

- If prices decrease, with fuel for example, we still keep our COLA increases. Those gains are locked in and become part of our base salary going forward.

- While PSEs do not receive COLA, upon conversion they are slotted into the proper pay scale that includes all these COLA increases.

Over the years of contract negotiations, it has not been uncommon to lose COLA increases, either through an arbitration award or voluntarily absorbing an increase(s).

For example, the 1994 interest arbitration award eliminated

two COLA increases. In 2010, the APWU voluntarily gave up two COLAs. Once we skip COLA increases, they are gone forever. Just think what would have happened if we went to interest arbitration and lost the first two COLAs of the new CBA! Postal workers would have lost over \$3,000 a year or approximately \$100,000 over a typical postal career.

I am proud that as your lead negotiator in the last three contract negotiations of 2015, 2018 and 2021, we maintained all our COLA increases. And you should be union proud as well – every member is the strong foundation on which we build our union rights and build a better future for all postal workers and our families – including COLA!

GET INVOLVED WITH YOUR UNION!



Electric Trucks For USPS?

by Peter A. Drossler, MVS TTO

There is a gorgeous alpine road in the Austrian state of Salzburg called *Großglockner Hochalpenstrasse* that goes up to the tallest mountain in Austria. With a 10-12% average incline, numerous twists and turns, and beautiful mountain views, one can't help recall scenes from *The Sound of Music*. My brother and I rode our motorcycles up that mountain back in the 1980s – a memory I'll cherish forever.

On July 3 this year the Dutch manufacturing company DAF Trucks (a division of Paccar) drove an electric 48 foot, 26 ton semi truck up that very same alpine road to showcase the truck's capabilities and convince delivery companies that going electric is feasible even in mountainous areas. The truck in question boasted 280 horsepower, with 26 tons of load and 2,800 foot-pounds of torque. Impressively, the truck's battery power at the top of the mountain had not



dipped below 60%, and its journey back down brought it back up to an incredible 84% through regenerative braking.

This alpine example shows unequivocally that an electric fleet is not

only possible, but also efficient. But does the political will exist to make such a change in the U.S.? Are we encouraging our politicians with our votes?

As we find ourselves in the midst

of a climate change disaster, it is frightening to imagine the levels of greenhouse gases being spewed into the atmosphere on a daily basis by USPS trucks nationwide. Change must come. Yet, e-Trucks are not cheap – costing up to 3.5 times the cost of regular diesel trucks. As one of the largest organizations relying on trucking, and as an independent agency of the federal government, the USPS is in a key position to set a nationwide example by going electric and in turn, by bringing down the production costs of e-Trucks. This move toward renewables could be facilitated by the creation of union jobs in truck production here in the U.S., and could naturally lead to reduced reliance on coal-driven power plants throughout the U.S.

The above changes ought to be the first in a long line of renewable-minded initiatives – when renewables

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Workers Are Fighting Back

by Debby Szeredy, APWU National Executive Vice President

There is a union movement that is blazing across the country. It's important for all of us to do our part to give support to workers that are standing up and fighting like hell to get a union like we have. There are workers forming their unions at Starbucks and Amazon, gig workers, tech workers, professors, students, cafeteria workers, nurses, child care providers, artists, journalists, migrant workers, truck drivers, and more — all risking their jobs to have the security of a union. The Association of Flight Attendants is working hard to unionize at Delta, the only major airline without a flight attendant's union. This is a union that has pledged to us in our campaigns that they have our backs!!

In 1970, with incredible courage and solidarity, our foremothers and forefathers won their bargaining rights in the Great Postal Strike, and the APWU was born soon thereafter. Now it is our time to help build our union family. Let's face it, we have workers at Pitney Bowes and other mail houses that do not have the wages and benefits we do, yet work on the very same equipment as us for less...We need to start stepping up and reaching out to those workers that deserve good wages and benefits and lift them up by joining our union. UPS Teamsters are getting ready for their biggest contract fight, trying to reverse concessions made in previous years.

Think of ways that your local can help support this union movement not just outside our workplace but within our workplace too. We are only stronger when we stand together. We have some



of our locals that have been standing together on picket lines for those workers unionized and non-unionized. A

land that are demanding negotiations of a first contract. Amazon has taken the successful union election on Staten



perfect recent example is the Phoenix Metro Area Local Officers and Retirees standing with the new independent Amazon Labor Union from Staten Is-

land to court in another venue, Phoenix, AZ. Phoenix Metro reacted very quickly and in three days they pulled together a group of APWU mem-

bers to be there on June 19 and 20, to stand with Amazon Labor Union. We need to be prepared at short notice to help our Working Families. Have your APWU signs and t-shirts ready to lend a hand to those who have been less fortunate than ourselves.

Let's strengthen our workroom floor by developing more leaders in the membership, by continuing and strengthening the fight to keep our post offices and plants open, using our safety and health committees to protect our workplace and turn it around to be a place where you want to come to work. We complain of the hostile work environment, when we should be building strong committees of members to help plan ways to best stop it at the local level. Utilize committees in your local to strengthen and add to your list of activists. The time is now while the workers in this country are stepping up calling for unionization.

New Beginning, New Goals For Human Relations

by Daleo Freeman, APWU National Human Relations Director

I would like to begin by thanking President Dimondstein and the National Executive Board for appointing me to the position of Director of Human Relations. I extend a very special thank you as well to all the members of the APWU for supporting your union and the collective spirit that motivates all of us representing you.

There is much work to be done in this department. Before we get to the goals that we intend to accomplish, it's helpful to revisit the constitutional duties of the Human Relations Department. The APWU Constitution states the Director "shall prepare and direct programs in the area of Equal Opportunity, Civic, Community Service and all other related programs." The Director shall also make recommendations to the President for Representatives to handle OWCP and EEO cases on an as-needed basis.

It is my goal as Human Relations Director to build a National Network System across the country to meet members where they are. There is so much more to representing the membership and the Union than simply utilizing the grievance procedure. So, in accordance with the constitution our department will strive to continue to protect of our members' rights and benefits, keep members aware of the available resources to assist them in various needs, and continue to build on the great accomplishments of those directors who came before me.

I'll seek to continue the work of former Director Sydney Brooks, who helped lead the way, with others, in combating discrimination and ushering in an end to apartheid in South Africa; and former Director Sue Carney who fought for the rights of our Veterans and injured members.

We will put forth a strong effort into making sure that all the Veterans in our ranks will be recognized for their sacrifices and contribution. We must continue with these battles and the ones facing us today. It is imperative that we have a nationwide effort to make sure everyone has and uses the various union resources we have to offer. With respect to OWCP, with my input, President Dimondstein will appoint regional resource assistants for OWCP to carry out programs to train, support and assist locals in the fight to make sure injured em-

ployees are fully aware of their rights under the law.

The Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is underutilized and I hope to bring more awareness to the benefits that this program provides. This is a shared priority of the Union and the Postal Service, to provide EAP assistance widely and expeditiously.

Another major objective I want to address as the Human Relations Director is the Human Side of what we do. This entails involving members and

their families in other organizations, building alliances beyond the APWU to address issues that affect everyone. We must continue to forge a nationwide coalition that makes sure the public knows that the labor movement is integral to everything they do. Also, there is value in making sure that we all, as union members, are accessible and available to help all of our sisters and brothers no matter where they are and provide the necessary support from the union.

In conclusion, I look forward to applying my experience as a 28-year Postal Employee, 25-year Union Advocate, and my 4-plus terms as a Local and State union leader to this new position. This experience has led me to understand that everyone must be included in the process and your ideas about how to better expand our Human Relations Department are more than welcome. Let's continue to forge ahead in solidarity.

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This large, 36 X 36, wall-hanging, or table topper quilt will be given away at the SEPTEMBER 21st, 2022, Union Meeting. This specialty 2018, All Iowa Shop Hop fabric resembles postal cancellation marks. The quilt also has the Iowa flower, Iowa bird, and Iowa Capitol building in the design. To purchase tickets contact: Cindy Housh, (515) 669-9518 or Viola Seger, (515) 265-7371.



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 *QUILTED BY SHEILA ARNEY OF TAPNEY QUILTS
 *PATTERN DESIGNED BY RETIRED POSTAL EMPLOYEE
 *JACQUE JOHNSON OF ADEL QUILTING & DRY GOODS
 *2022

Time For A Grand Compromise

by Kirk Schroeder

We could take all that divides us, put it one hat, find the middle ground and go back to being the greatest country in the world.

We could take abortions and guns, two subjects we have been fighting over my entire life and come up with reasonable rules that allow them both to exist. We can make them both as easy or as hard to get. Put limitations on both. Mandatory classes. Required counseling. Waiting time. I am not suggesting any of these, just spit balling. Saying it could be done.

We could take voting and immigration throw that in the hat. Everyone gets a vote we know that, one side wants to make it harder to vote the other easier. So you must have photo Identification. But once you establish that, you can vote by mail. And instead of voting on a work day let's make it a Sunday or Holiday or better

yet open voting for a week, that way more people get to vote. Immigration let's come up with a certain number of people we can bring into our country every year that can begin to become citizens and meet the needs of us as a country.

If we can find middle ground on these two things also, then that's two less things for our leaders to use to divide us. Everyone should get to vote and it should be easy. And people have been coming to America forever, including all of our own ancestors. Why get upset every year at a caravan that to me looks like the ones that have been coming up for years. Again I am tired of it being used to divide us. We the people, maybe not our leaders, should be able to come up with a number of entries that would eventually end the politicizing of the subject while helping us find people for the openings we are all looking for.

Maybe fixing our supply issues.

There are many things we or they could put in the hat. We could quit arguing over forever or at least awhile. I'll mention one more. Oil or gas. I recognize our need for cleaner energy to save our world even though I'll probably be dead and gone when the real bill comes do on that. We need to continue striving for cheaper clean energy. But we also need to be able to survive until then.

So I suggest we crank out enough oil to drop the price to nothing. We crank out enough to put Russia and all the other countries out of the business. But obviously we the Government would have to take it over, because obviously these oil companies have different ideas. The speculators have different ideas. The people playing the market have different ideas. And these people do not care about us. We need to flood the market for

the good of the people. Not the good of profits for rich people. When a few companies can act in unison to set prices, then it's the government's job to step in. Break them up, create competition so the price is reasonable.

There are other industries where this is happening. The meat packing industry. The soda industry. It is everywhere. The government used to step in when companies got to big and that needs to happen again. Greed is taking over the world and we need to be protected.

So let's find middle ground on the stuff they keep making us argue over, so we can make them do the real important work of looking out for us, instead of the rich people and corporations lining their pockets.

Again I say, United we stand. Divided we fall. Join me and let's get this done.

— ShowMe News

Problems With The New Step-GG Implementation For PSEs

by Charlie Cash, APWU National Industrial Relations Director

Union Family,

It was brought to my attention late Friday afternoon that it appeared that the programming for the new step-GG for PSEs converted under the 24-month provision had a glitch. As a reminder-only PSEs who are converted under the 24-month provision are to start as a career employee in Step-GG and only in levels 5, 6, and 7.

It has been discovered that employees placed at the start of pay scales for levels 5-6-7 are slotting into step-GG no matter the reason for the placement there and regardless of craft.

I discussed this with the Postal Service and they admitted they were aware of the problem but "taking steps" to address it. (Apparently, notifying the Union of the glitch was not a step they felt they needed to take).

I have been told by the Postal Service that they were "instantaneously" placing employees into the appropriate step-FF if they were converted or placed into a career position. However, it has been shown that these "instantaneous" changes are not taking place and some employees who should not be in Step-GG were not moved.

I am angered by this error, angered by the fact they did not inform us of the problem, and angered that they are not moving people as they should.

However, as I address the failures at my level, I want to make sure that people are moved to the correct step as quickly as possible and have pay adjustments done for the time period they were in the incorrect steps.

I am requesting that all employees in levels 5, 6, or 7 who have been converted to career or moved from one level to another check to make sure that they are in the correct step. If an employee is in step-GG and

they were not converted to career under the 24-month provision, I need to have the employee's name and EIN provided to me ASAP.

As more information comes out, I will notify the field.

Unions Helped Keep Workers In Jobs And Paid During The Pandemic

In a new EPI technical paper, I review data on how union workers fared relative to their nonunion counterparts during the first two years of the COVID-19 pandemic. The nationally representative data allow me to draw several important conclusions about what unions have been able to do for the workers they represent as the country confronts COVID-19.

First, unions helped maintain pay for workers. Specifically, union workers — union members and nonmembers who were covered by a collective bargaining contract — were more likely than nonunion workers to receive pay during periods when their workplaces were not open for business. Even after controlling for a wide range of worker characteristics, such as industry, oc-

cupation, education, age, gender, race and ethnicity, marital status, state of residence, and others, union workers were 10 percentage-points more likely than nonunion workers to have been



paid by their employers for hours not worked due to pandemic-related closures or lost business during the pandemic period.

Second, unions saved jobs. My estimates suggest job losses were 2,000 jobs per month lower for union mem-

bers than nonunion members during the first six months of the pandemic when the economy was suffering most. Even as the economy started to recover over the subsequent 16 months, unions continued to preserve an average of 1,700 jobs per month. During the 22 months I analyzed in my paper, unions saved just over 40,000 jobs, relative to what happened to workers in nonunion establishments.

Third, the union boost to wage levels remained. The union weekly earnings premium — the 7% by which the weekly earnings of union workers exceeded the earnings of comparable nonunion workers — held steady over the course of the pandemic. The pandemic hit all workers hard, but it did not reduce the relative position of union workers.

Continuing Violations, What Are They?

by Linda Turney

The words "Continuing Violation" is misleading. Continuing Violations is a term that is often unsuitably applied because it is often misunderstood. Grievances filed after the date of occurrence may only receive remedy such as back pay **14 days** prior to the filing of the grievance. We cannot go back for 3, 5, 7 years for payment. We can only go back for **14 days**. Grievances for violations occurring after the initial grievance must be filed every two weeks showing the dates and times of the infractions. In other words, each instance of a violation must be documented and supported by a specific instance. If we say it is an ongoing violation, the local must supplement the file with subsequent dates and grievances every time there is a violation of the Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA).

Normally, violations of our contract require that a New Occurrence for each day specified by the Union be established and filed within 14 days of any violation. Under the continuing grievance principle, remedies such as (but not limited to): back pay for out of schedule, pay for supervisor doing clerk work, pay for carriers doing clerk work, denial of work, overtime must be filed as a new occurrence. The agreement provides for us to go back 14 days prior to the grievance being filed. The

Union cannot go back any farther than the 14 days for remedy when claiming a continuing violation.

For example, **back pay for out-of-schedule** shall run only from the date the grievance was actually filed. The following is the reasoning of Arbitrator Eisenmenger where she quotes:

"The basic principle is stated as follows in Elkouri and Elkouri, How Arbitration Works, Many arbitrators have held that "continuing" grievances in the act of the complained of violations of the agreement (as opposed to a single isolated and completed transaction) give rise to continuing grievances in the sense that the act complained of may be said to be repeated from day to day – each day there is a new "occurrence"; these arbitrators have permitted the filing of such grievances at any time, this not being deemed a violation of the specific time limits stated in the agreement (although any back pay ordinarily runs only from the date of filing). For example, where the agreement provided for filing "within fourteen days of the occurrence," and that a grievance was timely presented, such day lost would be considered timely filed."

In 1975, before I was even thinking about the USPS, Arbitrator Gamser AB-NAT-2541 in a National Award laid down the rules regarding continuing violations that are still followed today. APWU had argued that a unique situation which fully justified an exemption from the

general rule that a grievance must be filed within the specified time limitations (14 days) of the CBA. We argued employees should not be penalized because they were ignorant of the time limits. APWU argued that we could not be charged with such knowledge of grievance violations. APWU alleged the USPS continued to work these individuals outside of their schedules thus creating a statutory right to process a claim at any time. APWU espoused that requiring that the employees who have not filed properly gives the USPS unjust enrichment. APWU stated the employees should be held blameless because they were held ignorant of the procedures. APWU put forth that the Grievants are entitled to progress their claims even if they do not meet the time limits.

Sorry to say that Arbitrator Gamser in a National Award stated that

Article 15 language had no special exception to the time limits of the grievance procedure by the Employees or the Union. It is the Union's responsibility to acquaint the employees with the workings and objectives of the grievance procedure and the CBA. The Union's charge was denied. The Union's charge that the USPS misled employees to sleep on their rights was denied. The USPS's liability for such cases is retroactive for the **14 days** specified in the Agreement. This was decided only 4 years after our first contract was negotiated.

If you argue continuing violation, your work is not done. You must:

Continue to file grievances every time there is the same violation after the initial grievance.

Cross reference additional grievances to the initial grievance.

— Michigan Messenger

Electric Trucks For USPS?

continued from page 4

come to be considered an attractive prospect and the reliance upon them is put into practice, employees like you or I will experience the change firsthand: the implementation of electric charging stations for employees,

for example, could become more than just a far-off dream for the environmentally conscious among us. Let us face the changing climate future proactively in the interest of not only our industry and our jobs, but of our livelihood.

Come join the fun . . .

APWU Fall Retiree Meeting

Retiree Members & Their Spouse or Significant Other Only

You must make a lunch reservation for you and your guest prior to September 16th. If for any reason you need to cancel your reservation, please let us know as soon as possible since the retiree chapter has to pay for each person that is registered for lunch, whether or not, you attend. If you are not a member, sign up today by calling 265-7371 or sign up the day of the meeting.

TUESDAY, September 20th, 10:30 A.M.

@ Union Hall, 1200 E. Euclid

Lunch will be served by the DMI APWU Local 44 Auxiliary.

DOOR PRIZES

MAKE YOUR LUNCH RESERVATION BY SEPTEMBER 16TH

Cindy Housh, Retiree Chapter President

Email: cindermarie@msn.com

A Recession Would Be Worse Than Today's Inflation

The Federal Reserve has been under intense pressure in recent months to sharply raise interest rates in the name of taming inflation. The voices calling for these rate increases often explicitly say that they are worth doing even if they greatly increase the risk of recession. At their last open market committee meeting, the Fed heeded these voices and raised rates by 0.75% — the largest single increase in 28 years — and indicated commitment to continuing to raise rates until inflation normalized, even if this increased the risk of recession.

The Fed's actions to date do not guarantee a recession, but they have already made one more likely. Moreover, if they continue on a hawkish path much longer, a recession is quite probable. This would be a huge and avoidable policy mistake. Inflation is not being driven by large macroeconomic imbalances between aggregate demand and supply. Wage growth is already decelerating noticeably. In short, the point of rate hikes—bringing demand and supply into balance and restraining wage growth — has already been accomplished.

Besides failing to recognize these points, many voices in this debate have implicitly or explicitly argued that recession and inflation cause equivalent damage, or that inflation actually causes worse damage than recession. This view is clearly wrong — the economic damage wrought by recessions is far greater than that by single-digit inflation rates.

A common argument runs that inflation harms everybody in the



economy, but only those who lose their job are harmed by recession. This is the opposite of truth. A recession directly reduces economy-wide incomes while inflation does not.

A recession results from potential productive resources (labor, most importantly) being underutilized (a rise in unemployment, for example). In short, it represents pure waste in the sense that the economy produces less than it could have with full utilization of potential resources. Over the course of the Great Recession and the long recovery following it, this waste amounted to roughly \$20 trillion, or more than a year's worth of economic output.

Inflation, on the other hand, is pure redistribution in the short run, but does not directly reduce incomes in the aggregate. One person's cost is another person's income. As prices

rise, this leads directly to higher incomes for somebody in the economy. The inflation of 2021–2022 has admittedly been regressive, leading to lower real (inflation-adjusted) wages for (most) workers but substantially higher profits for corporations and for foreign exporters to the United States. But as much as we may not like the redistribution caused by recent inflation, there's no evidence that it has led to lower incomes overall (including non-U.S. global income). Additionally, if we wanted to hold income distribution harmless against the effects of recent inflation, there are a number of policy instruments like fiscal redistributions and labor standards that could do this.

Some might make the mistake of looking at the current pace of wage growth for workers (roughly 4.5% at an annualized rate) and the current rate of inflation (8.6% over the past year) and think that a recession could pull down inflation but leave nominal wage growth unscathed. If this was true, workers (at least those who remained employed) could in theory benefit from an aggressive campaign against inflation. But, this is wrong. Higher unemployment lowers wage growth much more reliably and by larger amounts than it lowers inflation. The evidence for this is simple—in regressions that identify the correlation between inflation-adjusted wages and unemployment (or other measures of labor market tightness), the evidence is overwhelming that tighter labor markets (lower unemployment) are associated with faster real wage growth. The boost that tighter labor markets give real wage growth is also highly progressive. Low-wage workers see greater gains as labor markets tighten and

Black workers see faster gains than white workers. In short, the benefits of high-pressure labor markets are large in the aggregate and distributionally progressive. Conversely, the costs of recession are large and regressive.

People hoping that any effort to contain inflation will just restrain price growth without slowing the pace of wage growth will hence be disappointed if this effort is wholly driven by a weaker labor market stemming from the Fed's interest rate hikes. Put simply, if the Fed does engineer a recession (or even a significant slowdown in the rate of economic growth), workers' inflation-adjusted wages will be lower than they would be without that recession.

This wage growth angle is, by far, the most important reason why just looking at the rise of unemployment in a recession is a radical understatement of how many workers are adversely affected by recessions. Other issues include higher rates of underemployment and fewer hours worked over the course of a year. In short, the costs of recession are not simply limited to those workers who lose a job—they're incredibly widespread across the workforce.

While it's generally understood that inflation may not directly reduce economy-wide income directly, some point to theories indicating that if inflation was sustained for a long time (several years) it could eventually prove detrimental to aggregate economic growth. But the main channels through which sustained high inflation leads to lower growth run through its potential interaction with the income tax code—whose features historically were not well-indexed to keep

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Live Healthy, Live Longer Without Dementia

Consumer News

Staving off Alzheimer's disease might just take a healthy diet, exercise and an active mind, a new study suggests.

Women and men who follow a healthy lifestyle live longer — and longer without Alzheimer's or other dementias, researchers say.

"Eating a healthy diet rich in vegetables, berries, whole grains, and low in fried or fast foods and red or processed meat, together with engaging in physical and cognitive activities, such as reading books, visiting museums and playing crosswords, might lower the risk of Alzheimer's as older people age," said lead researcher Dr. Klodian Dhana. He is an assistant professor of internal medicine at the Rush Institute of Healthy Aging in Chicago.

Although this study can't prove that a healthy lifestyle is the reason people live longer and without dementia, Dhana suspects biological reasons may underlie the connection between lifestyle and dementia and life expectancy.

Research has shown that a diet rich in nutrients and vitamins may reduce inflammation in the brain as well as oxidative stress (which can lead to cell and tissue breakdown). And physical activity has been linked to less high blood pressure and diabetes, which might lower the risk of vascular dementia, he said.

"Cognitive activities support the cognitive reserve hypothesis, that is, being associated with a slower cognitive decline," Dhana added.

For the study, which was published online April 13 in the BMJ, Dhana's team collected data on nearly 2,500 men and women aged 65 and older without dementia. They were part of the Chicago Health and Aging Project.

Participants completed diet and lifestyle questionnaires and a healthy lifestyle score was developed based on several factors.

Those factors included following a hybrid Mediterranean-DASH Diet, which is rich in whole grains, green leafy vegetables and berries and low in fast and fried food and red meats; engaging in mentally stimulating activities late in life; getting at least 150 minutes a week of physical activity; not smoking; and low to moderate alcohol use.

For participants who followed a healthy lifestyle, life expectancy at age 65 was 23.1 years for men and 24.2 for women. For those with a less healthy lifestyle, life expectancy was 17.4 years for men and 21.1 for women, the researchers found.

And healthy habits reaped big benefits when it came to brain health, the study found.

Women with unhealthy lifestyles



spent almost 4.1 (19%) of their remaining years with Alzheimer's, the findings showed. That compared to 2.6 years (11%) for those who followed four or five healthy habits. For men, a healthy lifestyle translated to 1.4 years (6%) with Alzheimer's, compared to 2.1 years (12%) for those with unhealthy habits.

These differences were even more pronounced at age 85, the researchers reported.

"We believe that these data might help health professionals to better understand and communicate the role that lifestyle factors may have

on Alzheimer's risk," Dhana said.

Finding ways to reduce the years people live with dementia while extending their lives is vital amid projections for the numbers to surge in coming decades.

Worldwide, the number of people living with Alzheimer's and other dementias is forecast to triple by 2050, from about 57 million in 2019 to 152 million in 2050.

One limitation of the study is that participants self-reported their health habits. That could result in bias, prompting responses that participants think researchers are looking for.

HwaJung Choi, a research assistant professor at the University of Michigan School of Public Health in Ann Arbor, wrote an editorial that accompanied the study findings.

"It's extremely important to reduce the rate and to reduce the total number of people with dementia, because dementia is a very expensive disease," she said.

Care and treatment of dementia patients is costly to society and is emotionally and financially draining to their families, Choi said.

"The good news is that a healthy lifestyle can not just increase life years, but actually increase life years without dementia," she added.

More Information

The Alzheimer's Association has more about Alzheimer's dementia.

SOURCES: Klodian Dhana, MD, PhD, assistant professor, internal medicine, Rush Institute of Healthy Aging, Chicago; HwaJung Choi, PhD, research assistant professor, University of Michigan School of Public Health, Ann Arbor; BMJ, April 13, 2022, online

A Recession Would Be Worse Than Today's Inflation

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economic incentives neutral in the face of inflation. But most features of the U.S. tax code are largely indexed for inflation today. Further, those features that are not perfectly indexed to avoid distortionary interactions with inflation could be fixed in ways that do not require draconian inflation control.

Of course, a sustained recession or period of weak growth would also have large effects on long-run growth. Extended periods where workers' wages are kept low by damaged labor markets are periods where firms' incentive to make productivity-enhancing investments are blunted — these firms can instead post high rates of profitability simply due to suppressed wages. These "scarring" effects of recessions on long-run potential growth are very large, and they almost surely dwarf any long-run effect from inflation over the coming years. Obviously,

if U.S. inflation rose to 50% for a number of years, the growth-stunting effects of that would exceed the effect of recession scars, but nobody seriously believes scenarios like that are plausible.

Some arguing for a more-rapid pace of Fed tightening have claimed that even if you think recession is worse than inflation, it is essentially impossible to ever pull inflation back to more-normal rates

without raising interest rates high enough to at least risk a recession. This thinking essentially argues that inflation is a one-way ratchet, only ever moving up until recession pulls it back down. This isn't true. The most obvious way this is not true is when much of overall inflation is driven by certain commodities like energy and food. These commodities' prices whipsaw up and down a lot and put substantial upward and then downward pressure on inflation without a recession necessarily intervening.

This claim of a one-way ratchet in non-recessionary times is also not true more generally. The key variable for determining whether or not a softer labor market is needed to rein in inflation in coming months is generally the pace of wage growth. If wage growth is consistently running more slowly than inflation, then wages are dampening inflation from both the cost side (labor costs are growing more slowly than other costs) and by generating lower real incomes for households, thus depressing demand. So long as wage growth decelerates, then inflation will be reeled back in without causing a recession once economic shocks relent. Currently, wage growth is decelerating. This means there is no genuine need for a recession to pull wage growth down to sustainable levels.

One could certainly argue that

the reason why wage growth is currently moderating is the recent hikes undertaken by the Fed, and their success in tamping down inflationary expectations. My own view is that's a pretty incomplete argument. But, even if one believed this, it seems clear that going forward, the imperative to continue pushing interest rates up is gone. The risk of recession is much larger now than it was a few months ago, and interest rate hikes — both in the recent past and in the anticipated near future — are a key reason why. The cost of a recession would be far higher than any benefit to piling on more contractionary policy to rein in already-fading inflation.

—epi.org

Together We Are The UNION

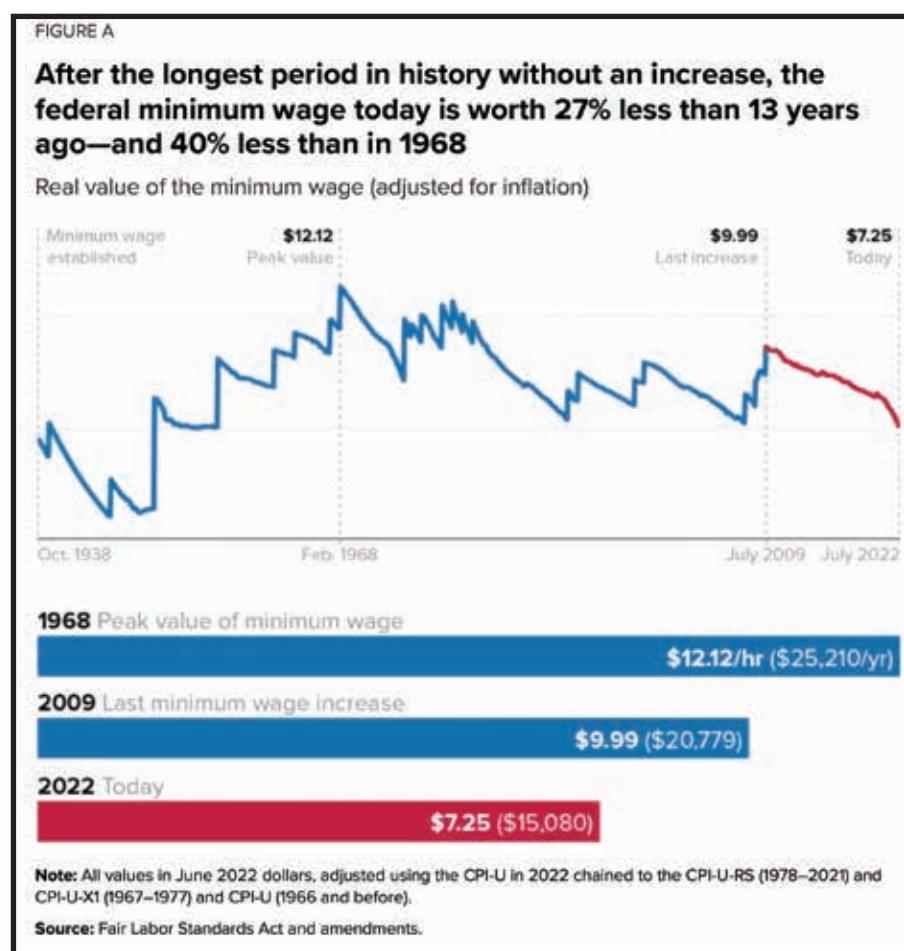
That Includes YOU!

The Value Of The Federal Minimum Wage Is At Its Lowest Point In 66 Years

The value of the federal minimum wage has reached its lowest point in 66 years, according to an EPI analysis of recently released Consumer Price Index (CPI) data. Accounting for price increases in June, the current federal minimum wage of \$7.25 per hour is now worth less than at any point since February 1956. At that time, the federal minimum wage was 75 cents per hour, or \$7.19 in June 2022 dollars.

Last July marked the longest period without a minimum wage increase since Congress established the federal minimum wage in 1938, and continued inaction on the federal minimum wage over the past year has only further eroded the minimum wage's value. As shown in Figure A, a worker paid the current \$7.25 federal minimum wage earns 27.4% less in inflation-adjusted terms than what their counterpart was paid in July 2009 when the minimum wage was last increased, and 40.2% less than a minimum wage worker in February 1968, the historical high point of the minimum wage's value.

The minimum wage increases of the late 1960s expanded the coverage of the minimum wage to include industries like agriculture, nursing homes, restaurants, and other service industries. The earlier exemption of these industries from the federal



minimum wage disproportionately excluded Black workers from this important labor protection. The application of the minimum wage to these industries raised workers' in-

comes and directly reduced Black-white earnings inequality. Congress's failure to raise the minimum on a regular basis in the interim, however, has eroded the value of the federal

minimum wage and worsened racial earnings gaps.

As Congressional inaction on the minimum wage continues, 30 states and nearly 50 cities and counties have enacted higher minimum wages. This includes 12 states and the District of Columbia that have adopted minimum wages of \$15 or higher. Most recently, Hawaii lawmakers elected to raise their state's minimum wage to \$18 by 2028, and policymakers in New York are considering a proposal to raise the minimum wage to upwards of \$20 an hour in New York City, with minimum wages a few dollars lower throughout the rest of the state.

A national \$15 minimum wage would raise the incomes of tens of millions of workers, including servers in restaurants, grocery store employees, and essential health care workers — as many as 2 million direct care workers who provide long-term services and supports would benefit from a \$15 minimum wage in 2025. Although the Biden-Harris administration recently raised the minimum wage to \$15 per hour for federal contractors, it is past time to raise the minimum wage for all workers.

- epi.org

How Can Democrats Save The Party ... From Their Own Leaders?

These are Democrats talking! Even before November's congressional elections are run, many conventional-thinking Democratic operatives are surrendering to a presumed Republican sweep. You don't need a political science degree to know that if you start out announcing that you'll lose, chances are you will – after all, who wants to vote for a party that shows no fighting spirit, no confidence in the appeal of its own ideas?

What's happening here is that the Party's top leaders have decided their candidates can't win in rural areas and smaller factory cities – so they've quit trying. Worse, they blame the voters, claiming that Trumpism, Fox News BS, and culture war nonsense have poisoned the minds of people "out there." Thus, Party leaders have retreated from the countryside to focus entirely on big urban areas. Democratic

Congressional leaders even killed their rural outreach programs, and the Party's chairman in 2018 meekly declared: "You can't door-knock in rural America."

Actually, sir, you can. And if you choose to abandon this whole working-class constituency – surprise! – it will abandon you. Worse, than failing to campaign along America's dirt roads and factory streets, national Democrats have actively been pushing corporate policies that have ravaged families living there – including trade scams that sucking out union jobs; shamefully bailing out Wall Street bankers who crashed our real economy



(while ignoring millions of devastated workaday people); and doing nothing about the corporate-caused farm depression still ripping across our land. Washington Democrats have largely betrayed this vital, FDRish constituency of millions

that they now blithely dismiss as irredeemable.

Did Party poohbahs think voters wouldn't notice or care how they're being treated? If we want them back on our side, then let's go to them... and get back on their side!

Motor Vehicle Services Update

by Michael O. Foster, APWU
National MVS Director

The Craft had a National Arbitration hearing on May 23-24 to determine if the USPS violated Section 2 of the 2010 Contract Motor Vehicle Craft Jobs Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) by failing to convert 600 HCR routes to PVS routes. The Postal Service claims the MOU requires 600 duty assignments to be converted to bargaining unit positions. The Union's position is that the MOU requires the Postal Service to convert a minimum of 600 HCR routes to PVS, which could be a larger number of duty assignments per route in the Motor Vehicle Craft.

Because of the many monetary concessions and work rule sacrifices made by the Union and its members in the 2010 contract, when the USPS was experiencing one of the most challenging times in their history, the question remains: can the USPS be trusted to live up to their negotiations and agreements?

There have been disputes filed by each craft that negotiated Craft Jobs MOU's during the 2010 Contract negotiations, with the USPS agreeing in exchange for financial relief, that work would be brought into the bargaining unit. The 2010 Contract and the deteriorating trust between the parties caused the next two successor agreements to be decided by an interest arbitrator instead of a negotiated agreement. Future updates will be provided on the status of this issue.

The MVS Division has recently held Headquarter Labor-Management meetings with Fleet Management. Some of the discussions have included VMF staffing, MVS Training Initiative MOU, and local management's authority to purchase the tools and equipment to make timely repairs in-house.

During the April meeting, the Postal Service informed the Union about their World Class VMF Program. The Union was invited to South Bend, Indiana VMF the week of May 23rd. The Union assigned a committee led by NBA Eastern Region Garrett Langley, William Drew, Boston VMF, Art King San Bernardino VMF, and Cedric Mingas Detroit VMF. The program consists of a commitment by postal management to properly staff the VMF's, increase training, supply necessary tools and equipment, and improve the work environment, at VMFs. The Union submitted a request for additional information about the World Class VMF.

Suspension of Bench Test

The Postal Service will suspend the Bench Test (hands on perfor-

mance test) for new hires, for the Automotive Technician position, and review other VMF jobs as they update these positions for the 21st century. The Union has long encouraged the USPS to update the bench test but the USPS declined to do so as long as the Long Life Vehicles, (LLV's) were part of the Postal fleet.

The Union received notice about a Pilot Program to log vehicle repair tags electronically in the Retail and Delivery Application Reports (RADAR).

The RADAR program is an effort to improve the efficiency for report-

ing repair tags. The program was initiated in the San Diego, California VMF.

The Postal Service notified the APWU that they will be exercising the contract option and purchasing 447 additional Peterbilt's Cargo Vans. Modifications were made from the cargo vans previously purchased. The APWU will participate in the First Article Testing (FAT) and inspection.

The Postal Service has informed the APWU of their plans to conduct a pilot regarding the use of sensors installed on Postal Service vehicles to improve visibility for

Postal customers and internal data accuracy and service measurement throughout the Postal Service network.

The sensor is a device which can determine if mail is in the vehicle or trailer. It can provide engine diagnostics, such as idle times, reduce fuel consumption, provide real-time locations and accurate ETAs. The sensors will be installed in various vehicles in the PVS fleet. The Pilot is scheduled to last until the end of 2022.

Have a safe summer, see you at the National Convention, "Keep on Trucking".

USPS **CIR** **GRIEF & LOSS**

Coping with Grief and Loss

There is no right way to grieve. Each person experiences and expresses grief in his/her own way.



Loss is a natural part of the process of living. Everyone experiences loss. Some losses are more painful than others. Loss brings with it another natural and very human response – grief. Like resting when we are tired or drinking when we are thirsty, grieving is a normal, necessary and natural part of staying healthy. Grief is nature's way of healing an emotional wound.

Normal grief experiences may include:

Physical sensations	Behaviors	Thoughts	Feelings
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stomach hollowness, hunger, nausea, poor appetite • Chest tightness, breathlessness, throat pain • Shakiness/headaches • Lack of energy, overall weakness • Overly sensitive to noise • Sense of depersonalization, "nothing seems real" 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sleep and appetite disturbance • Crying, sighing • Absent-minded behavior • Social withdrawal/restlessness • Increase in accidents/illness • Change in work performance • Yelling, irritability • Poor personal hygiene, sloppy appearance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disbelief: "This can't be true" • Confusion, forgetfulness • Preoccupation or obsessive thinking • Finality: "Things will never be the same" • Forging ahead: "I have to get over this" • Dread: fear of your own or other's death • Sense of presence or dreams of deceased 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sadness • Anger, frustration, irritation, hostility • Depression • Guilt • Victimized, helpless, out of control • Loneliness • Shock, numbness • Yearning • Fear • Relief • Peace, resolution

The tasks of grief:

- Accept the reality of the loss
- Feel the pain of grief
- Adjust to a new environment in which the loss is missing
- Reinvest emotional energy in new relationships

Take care of yourself

- Get adequate rest
- Maintain healthy eating habits and exercise
- Find time to talk with family and friends
- Take time for leisure activities and schedule down time
- Follow familiar routines
- Seek medical advice or counseling if you have symptoms that concern you

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Legislative Priorities And The Fight Ahead!

by Judy Beard, APWU National Legislative & Political Director

Returning USPS to its 2012 Service Standards remains a top priority of the APWU. In the 117th Congress, both the House and the Senate held hearings on USPS's declining service standards and invited APWU members to testify on the importance of returning USPS to its 2012 standards.

Your Legislative and Political Department continues to meet with lawmakers on the importance of preserving a fast, reliable, and accessible post office. We fought for, and won, language in the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2022 which was signed into law by President Biden on March 15, 2022. The language requires the Postal Regulatory Commission (PRC) to conduct a study that investigates and examines the benefits for USPS to return to its 2012 standards. This language has laid the groundwork for future fights to restore the speed of mail service that the American public deserves.

We will keep the APWU membership apprised of the results of this study, which must be completed within a year.

WEP/GPO Repeal

APWU continues our fight to repeal



the Windfall Elimination Provision and Government Pension Offset. This law has robbed many of our CSRS retirees of their rightful Social Security earnings. There are several bills under consideration that would repeal WEP

and GPO. President Dimondstein and I have met with lawmakers who have introduced some of the legislation and they have assured us that the fight to repeal is far from over and that support to take action is bipartisan. We

are committed to build more support by working with other affected unions and organizations whose members are affected.

Voting by Mail Our Work Continues!

At the recent National AFL-CIO convention which took place in Philadelphia June 12-15, I had the privilege of participating on a two-person panel, along with Lori Augino, Executive Director of the National Vote at Home Institute that focused on the importance of voting by mail. I highlighted the work done by postal workers during the 2020 election to process 65 million ballots (almost double the number in 2016) as well as the success of the national election task force established between the USPS and the postal unions. That work was so valuable to our country that we were able to achieve a continuation of the Task Force in our recent collective bargaining agreement. The work our members did during the 2020 election is a prime example of democracy in action. The role postal workers play in the electoral process has been recognized all across the labor movement and throughout our communities. We will continue to work with our partners

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PREGNATAL CARE

Women who suspect they may be pregnant should schedule a visit to their healthcare provider to begin prenatal care. Prenatal visits to a healthcare provider usually include a physical exam, weight checks, and providing a urine sample. Depending on the stage of the pregnancy, healthcare providers may also do blood tests and imaging tests, such as ultrasound exams. These visits also include discussions about the mother's health, the fetus's health, and any questions about the pregnancy.

Prenatal care can help prevent complications and inform women about important steps they can take to protect their infant and ensure a healthy pregnancy. With regular prenatal care women can:

- Reduce the risk of pregnancy complications. Following a healthy, safe diet; getting regular exercise as advised by a healthcare provider; and avoiding exposure to potentially harmful substances such as lead and radiation can help reduce the risk for problems during pregnancy and promote fetal health and development. Controlling existing conditions, such as high blood pressure and diabetes, is important to prevent serious complications and their effects.
- Reduce the fetus's and infant's risk for complications. Tobacco smoke and alcohol use during pregnancy have been shown to increase the risk for Sudden Infant Death Syndrome. Alcohol use also increases the risk for fetal alcohol spectrum disorders, which can cause a variety of problems such as abnormal facial features, having a small head, poor coordination, poor memory, intellectual disability, and problems with the heart, kidneys, or bones. According to one recent study supported by the NIH, these and other long-term problems can occur even with low levels of prenatal alcohol exposure.
- Help ensure the medications they take are safe. Women should not take certain medications, including some acne treatments and dietary and herbal supplements, during pregnancy because they can harm the fetus.



Source: <https://www.nichd.nih.gov/health/topics/pregnancy/conditioninfo/prenatal-care>

HOW CAN THE APWU HEALTH PLAN HELP?

You'll be happy to hear that both our plans - the High Option and the Consumer Driven Option - offer 100% coverage for in-network maternity care including prenatal care! So you can rest assured that you and your baby will be covered throughout your entire pregnancy.



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Local 7027 Meeting Minutes

Local 7027 Meeting Minutes July 19th – 20th, 2022

Call to Order: Tuesday July 19th, 2022, 1:30 pm - 4:00 pm; Wednesday July 20th, 2022: 08:00 President Rob Moyer presiding.

Roll Call: Members signed in.

Treasurer's Report: Regular Monthly Office expenses, Report Accepted.

Communications: National APWU is projecting COLA pay increase based on June cost of living estimates which cumulatively adds to the July Index of Urban Wage Earner Consumer Price Index. An excerpt from National APWU President Dimondstein stated: "The second COLA, due this August, currently stands at a whopping eighty-seven cents/hour or \$1,809 annually. With two

months left until the second COLA is set, (while the final allowance may fluctuate), we believe it could top \$1.00/hour." President Dimondstein further noted that: "upon conversion they (PSEs) are slotted into the proper pay scale that includes all these COLA increases."

Officers Reports: President Rob Moyer had finalized the Local Negotiations with the signing of the Local Memorandum of Understanding. Rob discussed durability of negotiated provisions. The Parcel Support Annex was addressed in the new LMOU. Tour windows were addressed in the new LMOU.

Maintenance: President Rob Moyer discussed maintenance craft has so far not resolved some improper

scheduling employees off work issues. Filling vacant assignments has been pursued. Custodial work is needed at PSA as dust still collects whether SIPS machine runs or not.

Clerk Craft Report: President Rob Moyer commented on the effort to have employees who have been improperly scheduled off reimbursed with administrative leave. Rob has been addressing the MVS function 3A supervisors approaching dock clerks for attendance issues which may prevent function 1 PSEs from being assigned to backup dock clerk work. Management is occasionally scheduling only 1 Mail Flow Controller on Tour 3 which Rob discussed with plant manager to get additional Mail Flow Control staffing assurances.

Door Prize and Cup/Shirt Drawings: May and June Drawings scheduled to be done at the July meeting.

May 2022 Door Prize: \$80.00

Name Drawn – Tim Harmon - Not Present.

May 2022 Plant Cup: Won by Joe Critchlow

June 2022 Door Prize: \$100.00

Name Drawn – Amir Shokry Dawod – Not Present

June 2022 Plant Cup: Won by Nzymemana Jackson

June T-Shirts: Won By Joe Nizzi and Cyndi Miller

June Meeting Cup: Won by Will Davis

July Drawings scheduled to be done at the August meeting.

Recess: 14:35 pm and 16:50 pm.

Adjournment: 09:00 am.

Legislative Priorities And The Fight Ahead!

continued from page 13
at the National Vote at Home Institute to advocate for national vote by mail.

2022 Midterm Elections

We are quickly approaching what may prove to be one of the most consequential elections for the labor movement. As voters go to the polls in November to cast their ballots, they will be making the decision of whether

or not to elect lawmakers who stand with the working people of the country. The APWU will work to not only ensure pro-labor candidates are elected but that ballot initiatives and referendums that would enhance the lives of working people are passed. We encourage all of our members to get involved with voter engagement and empower people to exercise their right to vote.



HARASSMENT DOESN'T HAVE TO BE ILLEGAL TO BE WRONG

Postal policy declares not every instance of inappropriate behavior may fit the legal definition of harassment. However, such behavior at work violates the Postal Service's standard of conduct.



STAND UP FOR YOUR RIGHTS

Make the Postal Service commit to their policy of providing a harassment-free work environment!

Text HARASSMENT to 91990, or scan the QR code below, for more information.



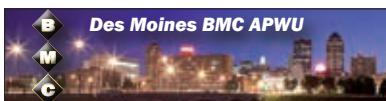
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- ✓ PURSUE IT
- ✓ DON'T TOLERATE IT

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APWU

apwu.org/fighting-workplace-harassment



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Chris Strait

Mike Cope

Richard Schneider

STEWARDS

Maintenance

Mark Clifford

Clerk

Dave Hefel

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

BMC Local 7027 Meeting Schedule

Tuesday
August 23, 2022
1:30 PM & 4:00 PM

Wednesday
August 24, 2022
8:00 AM

Tuesday
September 20, 2022
1:30 PM & 4:00 PM

Wednesday
September 21, 2022
8:00 AM

Tuesday
October 18, 2022
1:30 PM & 4:00 PM

Wednesday
October 19, 2022
8:00 AM

T-Shirt and Cup Drawing For Each Month
July 2022 Door Prize Amount: \$120.00
August 2022 Door Prize Amount: \$???

LOCATION
8435 University Boulevard, Suite 1
Clive, IA 50325

10 Roads Express Workers Vote APWU Union Yes!

Truck drivers for 10 Roads Express in Harrisburg, PA have voted to form a union with the American Postal Workers Union, AFL-CIO. The 100 professional drivers in Harrisburg join nearly 1,000 10 Roads Express drivers who are already part the APWU.

The drivers, whose company is now the largest USPS trucking contractor, worked hard for their win. They stood strong in solidarity against a concerted anti-union campaign based on lies, illegal threats, and retaliation. However, the 10 Roads Express organizing committee stood strong and did the difficult collective work necessary to win!

A New Day Has Dawned!

With the win, the Harrisburg-based drivers have a real voice and power to bargain with Management over ev-



erything to do with wages, hours, and working conditions.

Bill Hamilton, an 18-year veteran mail-haul driver said, "Together, we will fight to secure things such as fair work rules, seniority rights, bidding rights, job security, and more. Most importantly, we will not accept being

treated with anything less than the dignity and respect that we, as professional drivers, deserve"

APWU President Mark Diamondstein, said, "Congratulations to the workers on this important victory and welcome to the APWU Family! Their determined organizing made it happen. We all benefit when working people come together and strengthen their collective voice in a union. I salute all who supported the campaign, especially lead organizer Rich Shelley and Keystone Area Local President Kim Miller."

In the coming days, workers will meet to decide what their bargaining priorities will be and which drivers will be on the negotiating committee. They will also work expeditiously to set up their new APWU Local Union, write their union constitution, and elect their new union officers.

What Is COPA? APWU Committee On Political Action

by Doris Orr-Richardson

COPA, the APWU's non-partisan Committee on Political Action, was created to raise voluntary political campaign contributions to support congressional members who champion working families and the public Postal Service and help defeat those who do not. COPA allows us to amplify our voice.

COPA funds are used to amplify our voice on Capitol Hill, defend worker's rights, and support political candidates who share our values.

We rely on YOU, our active, retired and Auxiliary members, to build a strong APWU COPA Fund through voluntary contributions to COPA. Our effectiveness comes from unity, education and action.

What COPA Does With Your Contributions

Every contribution is recorded in our computer system and deposited directly in COPA's bank account. By law, COPA funds may not be co-mingled with other APWU funds. The Secretary-Treasurer's Department is responsible for administering the COPA account, and employees in APWU's accounting department make sure that individual and group contributors are acknowledged.

COPA Committee members meet regularly to survey the political landscape and to determine the best use of COPA funds. We consult

with headquarters staff and other APWU national, state and local officers about supporting incumbents and challengers. The COPA com-

mittee also consults the Retirees Department, retiree chapters and the APWU Auxiliary to get their input.

— Voice & Views

American Postal Workers Union, AFL-CIO
1300 L Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20005
202-842-4211 • www.apwu.org/copa

CONTRIBUTE TO COPA! Please Select ONE of the THREE Methods Below

1 - ELECTRONIC FUND TRANSFER (For Both Active & Retirees)

The COPA Fund will automatically deduct the amount you choose to contribute, with no fee to you.
I hereby authorize my bank to deduct from my checking account the sum of:
 \$2 \$4 \$6 Other: \$_____

Biweekly and forward that amount to the American Postal Workers Union, Committee on Political Action (COPA).
I make this authorization voluntarily and may revoke it at any time by notifying the APWU COPA Committee in writing.
(When returning this form, please include a voided check, a copy of a check, or provide your
bank Routing Number: _____ and Account Number: _____.)

2 - OPM ANNUITY (For Retirees Only)

The COPA Fund will automatically deduct the amount you choose to contribute from your monthly postal pension check.
I hereby authorize the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) to begin or increase deductions from my annuity in the sum of:
 \$2 \$4 \$6 Other: \$_____

per month and forward that amount to the American Postal Workers Union, Committee on Political Action (COPA).
I make this authorization voluntarily and may revoke it at any time by notifying the APWU COPA Committee in writing.
CSA #:
(Civil Service Annuity number issued by OPM)

3 - COPA BY CHECK (For Both Active & Retirees)

My check in the amount of \$_____ is enclosed.
(Make your check payable to APWU COPA and enclose it with this form.)

Yes! I Want to Join the Team.

Name: _____ Last: _____ First: _____ MI: _____
Employee ID # or Member ID #: _____ (Retiree Member ID is found on APWU Membership Card. Call 202-842-8805 for assistance.)
Signature: _____ Local/Chapter: _____
Should we need to contact you, please include your email address and phone number. Please write clearly.
Email: _____ Phone: _____

Please mail this completed form to: American Postal Workers Union 1300 L Street NW, Washington DC 20005

This COPA solicitation is paid for by the American Postal Workers Union, 1300 L Street NW, Washington, DC, 20005. It is not authorized by any candidate or candidate's committee. Contributions or gifts to COPA are not deductible as charitable contributions for federal income tax purposes. COPA will use the contributions it receives for political purposes, including inviting contributions to candidates for federal, state and local offices, and addressing political issues of public importance. Contributions to COPA are voluntary. The amount given or the refusal to give will not benefit or disbenefit the person being solicited. Federal law requires political action committees to report the name, mailing address, occupation, and employer for each individual whose contributions aggregate in excess of \$200 in a calendar year.

US Postal Service Continues Horrible Management

The U.S. Postal Service (USPS) admitted it had made a colossally bad decision about electric trucks used for deliveries and other services the organization performs. After months of insisting it should use gasoline-powered vehicles almost exclusively, it knuckled under to pressure to move in the direction of an electric fleet. The first decision was poor, and the decision to reverse it is another sign of how badly broken the organization's management is.

In a long, complex press release about postal service modernization,

SAFETY

There are quarterly meetings held with Postal Management and all Postal Unions where safety concerns are addressed; both at the P&DC and Customer Service. These meetings are very necessary and give us a platform to bring about issues that need immediate attention. APWU does not take these meetings lightly. Every issue/concern that is brought to us we take to these meetings to discuss with management. Most are immediately addressed and handled; some are ongoing. Please bring all safety concerns to your steward and/or officers to be addressed as soon as possible.

We are looking for members to join the APWU Safety Committee. This committee will consist of dedicated members looking to hold the USPS accountable for making every effort in assuring our safety is their #1 priority.

Reporting Safety Issues

We cannot stress the importance of reporting unsafe conditions. From tripping hazards, uncovered outlets to air conditioning or overflowing trash; everything dealing with safety and health has to be addressed. Use PS Form 1767 to report these concerns. Management has a responsibility at different levels to address and handle these concerns. They must first be given the opportunity to correct any issues. Once that opportunity has been given and nothing changes then there are more steps we can take. However, we cannot skip step 1 in the process. So please make sure you report any issue or concern to your immediate supervisor verbally and on the 1767. Keep a copy for your records and ask for a steward so that your report is documented.

— edited for space

management announced, "The Postal Service expects that at least 40 percent of the total quantity of NGDVs and COTS vehicles covered by the SEIS will be BEVs." In short, four in 10 vehicles will be electric. The number set earlier in the year was 10%.

It is hard to imagine a federal government agency would have a fleet of almost entirely gas-driven vehicles as the United States has pledged to do what it can to attack global warming. This is particularly true since electric vehicles

(EVs) are available. It remains stunning that the shift is not to a fleet with closer to 100% EVs. But USPS has continued to make decisions that are not in its best interests, either financially or in terms of servicing customers.

USPS has continued to lose money, while competitors like UPS and FedEx print cash. In the most recent quarter, it lost \$648 million, on revenue of \$19.8 billion. It also continues to run a bloated number of retail locations, which currently total 34,223. It has over 500,000

career employees and 130,000 "non-career" employees. The office and worker counts are too high for an organization that perpetually loses money.

USPS continues to deliver mail six days a week, a number unnecessary in the world of email and overnight delivery services. It also could shutter thousands of locations without substantially harming service.

The EV debacle is merely the tip of the iceberg of USPS management problems. — postalnews.com

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