

# THE DETROIT POSTAL WORKER

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DETROIT DISTRICT AREA LOCAL AMERICAN POSTAL WORKERS UNION

September, 2011

## The President's Report . . .

# Wake-Up Postal Employees And Get Engaged



From The President

Christopher "Chris" Ulmer  
President

Hello Brothers and Sisters. Once again I bring you information to help you get engaged and to wake up to the events and happening that are going on around you.

The USPS has started the studies to close, consolidate, or leave open many postal facilities; these studies are at our doorsteps again. This is why the DDAL has started the WAKE UP campaign. The APWU-DDAL believes these studies to be politically motivated and we can no longer wait to respond or to engage our voices into the political arena to be heard. We must engage now and we need your voice to be part of this choir.

As you know, in July of this year the USPS announced plans to study closing 17 post offices in the Detroit District, of which 12 were within Detroit's city limits.

On August 1, 2011 I met with the District Manager and voiced the DDALs' concerns and opposition to the announced studies. The closing of these 12 post offices in Detroit would have stripped about 510,000 of Detroit's 700,000 to 800,000 residents of a postal facility and will cause some of our members to be moved, 510,000 by any measurement is a lot. I also spoke with the Detroit Postmaster about the studies and informed him of the DDALs' opposition to the studies, and the DDAL questioned the fairness of the studies, but the Detroit Postmaster assured me that the studies would be fair. It was welcome news that 6 of the 12 post offices slated for the study were removed because it was not feasible to close or consolidate them at this time, but it does not mean the USPS will not come back at a later date to finish what they did not accomplish this time. While the number of post offices was reduced the APWU-DDAL still questions the fairness of these studies and the proposed closings.

On September 29, 2011 the Detroit District management team held all the Community input meeting for the proposed closings. One of the issues the DDAL was concerned about most was the USPS obligation to notify the impacted residence of Detroit. The DDAL was concerned that the USPS was not going to notify the Detroit residents so we went to the Detroit City Council,

the Mayor of Detroit, the news media (radio and television), and everywhere we could find to get our voice heard about our concerns. We believe it was this attention and the help we got from Detroit City Council and the Mayor of Detroit office that got the USPS to reduce the number from 12 possible closings to 6, and we hope that number (6) will be reduced farther.

The USPS did not meet its requirement by law to notify all the residents in the affected areas. At every meeting held on September 29, 2011 the majority of the people from the community that showed up made it clear that they never received any notice. The residents of Ferndale were never notified or informed of the study to close their only Post Office at all. The Ferndale community input meeting was attended by about 25 - 30 people of which about half the people lived in Ferndale and the only reason they knew about the meeting was because they have P.O Boxes

at the Ferndale location, and they received notification in their P.O. Boxes only one - two days before the scheduled meeting date. The USPS acknowledged that the letters to the residents of Ferndale were never sent out.

On September 15, 2011 the USPS made another announcement about closing Processing and Distribution Centers (P&DC) across the nation, about 252 are being studied to close or consolidate. The 252 number is more than half of all the P&DC facilities in the entire United States. Please be assured that if this goes through all USPS employees will take a hit and it is for this reason, we ask you (no matter where you work) to WAKE UP and get involved and to stay involved. In order for the USPS to close the 252 facilities the USPS would have to reduce the service standards. What does that mean Chris? It means this; the overnight standard or next day

*continued on page 7*

## The Detroit Postal Worker Brings Home Prestigious Journalism Award To The Local Membership!

The Detroit Postal Worker's editor, President Christopher E. Ulmer, was awarded the "Hank Greenberg" award for best New Editor of a union publication in 2011 at the Postal Press Association Awards Ceremony August 13th in Orlando, Florida.

Entries for this exceptional award were received from union publications across the United States of America. Chairperson Jenny Gust of the 2011 APWU/PPA Awards Committee stated that, "this is the most prestigious award given out by the Postal Press Association".

According to the PPA, "the Hank Greenberg award is named in honor to past PPA president Hank Greenberg. This award signifies the type of spirit, determination and leadership that brother Greenberg displayed as president for over 17 years. Besides the physical makeup and content, this award recognizes a new editor that exemplifies dedi-

cation, sincerity and professionalism."

In addition, the Award states that "this award is presented in recognition of proven excellence in the field of postal union journalism."

When informed of the award, President Ulmer stated, "I am honored, but, this award is for the Membership of the Detroit District

*continued on page 5*



Chris Ulmer and Danny Sawicki with the award.





### Vice President's Report

Patrick Chornoby  
Executive  
Vice President

Greetings Sisters and Brothers,

Many years ago, when I began my postal career, things sure were a lot different. The word 'automation' was rarely heard of. Back then, in our minds, we were already working on automated equipment, the old MPLSM (Multi-position Letter Sorting Machines) were all the automation we ever knew, which at that time, the wave of the future. We were affectionately referred to as ZMT Clerks (Zip Mail Translator Clerks).

While those machines have come and gone, we see today that automation was constantly changing the way we perform the core functions of our jobs. Unlike today, our automation did not happen overnight. It took years and years to get new equipment to process the mail. We had more time to adjust, and more time to make arrangements for our futures in the Post Office. I credit most of this to management at the time, who seemed to have more interest in the welfare of the employees back then. Today, it is quite a different story.

Of course we worked very hard back then, went home many of nights sore. Yet we finished our jobs every day with a feeling of accomplishment. Like we had done something to move the company forward. Bringing a little happiness to that customer who was waiting for a birthday card, or delivering a flat to a doctor's office waiting for medical results, and even delivering a check to a retiree. All very important functions of our jobs.

Today however, this same feeling no longer exists. Employees do not have that same feeling of accomplishment at the end of their workday as we did years ago. I blame the loss of this "working together" concept on our new management team.

Years ago like today, our work was hard. Management was tough on all of us, but, back then they seemed to create a sense of unity among our ranks, our supervisors watched-out for us. If management from one operation or unit jumped on us, OUR supervisors would take care of it for us. If management from another floor or building wanted us to work in their operation, our supervisors made sure we weren't taken advantage of. And when we worked, it was acknowledged with gratitude. We worked as a TEAM, and most of supervision at the time believed in the team concept.

Today, there is a much different story. Not only have most of supervision lost the ability to recruit em-

# What Has Happened To Post Office Management

ployees to work as a team, within a team concept, they have lost the ability to build that camaraderie employees, including among each other. The fact today is that management will go out of their way to find ways to destroy our commitment to providing service to our customers.

Supervisors and managers who chastise employees for personal childlike reasons, like threatening an employee for taking time to help out a special needs customer, and threatening an employee with discipline because they forgot to wear their name badge while working on the Window. Managers have even gone as far as removing employees from the building because they were talking or drinking a cup of coffee.

This is what happens when your employer has unprofessional, non-qualified people in supervisory positions. We all know that the postal service has a long history of promoting the troublemakers or making promotions as personal favors to other managers and supervisors. This may happen in other corporations, but I'll bet you that in other corporations, the management staff is required to perform. In the postal service, management who are promoted is also allowed to continue to

fail and cause a hostile working environment for the true workers, the bargaining unit employees.

We wonder why the postal service has been losing revenue for a dozen or so years now, and continues to do so today. The answer is not the bargaining unit, it IS management. Managers in private sector corporations who cause businesses to fail or to lose revenue, end up getting replaced or are terminated. Within the postal service, the policy is just the opposite. At the post office, if you mess-up, you get promoted. If you mess-up again you get sent to another location to screw-up again!

The postal service has always been successful in the past because they had enough revenue coming in to cover all of their blunders and bad supervisors and managers. This is no longer the case today. Money isn't as abundant to them as it used to be years ago.

The ONLY way for the postal service to move forward into the future as a vibrant profitable company is to "clean house" starting from the top and working down to the line supervisor. Replacing trouble making supervisors, supervisors who fail to communicate properly with employees, managers who can not

manage properly and managers who continue to cost the service money in grievance and EEO settlements. I didn't say promote them, I said remove them. And while they are at it, they can remove all of the useless EAS positions that make the post office so top heavy and costly. It's funny how you can go into a regular business and find a photo on the wall stating this is your store manager (ONE person). At the post office, they need a collage of photos stating this is your Postmaster . . . this is your manager on the day shift . . . this is your manager on the afternoon shift . . . this is your shift operations manager . . . this is your supervisor over the window operation . . . this is your supervisor over delivery for zips 1 through 8 . . . this is the supervisor for zips 9 through 15 . . . this is the manager over Statistics . . . this is the manager over Support . . . etc. etc. etc.

I think you know what I mean about being such a wasteful company with so many EAS positions. Since the EMPLOYEES move the mail, any position not directly associated with processing mail, maintaining equipment or delivering the mail should be subject to elimination. I hope you agree.



### Secretary-Treasurer's Report

Jane Duggan  
Secretary-Treasurer

Last issue I told you we were sending members to a number of conferences and conventions. These included:

- BMC CONFERENCE – MAY 15-16, 2011, GREENSBORO, NC.
- MPWU EDUCATIONAL SEMINAR – JUNE 9-11, 2011 IN BAY CITY, MI
- POWER CONVENTION – JULY 13-17, 2011, SAN JUAN, PUERTO RICO

In October, we will send a delegation to the Multi-Craft Conference in Las Vegas. This will be the first large gathering for training since the new contract was ratified. When our delegates come back, we will have local training to convey to a larger circle all that they learned.

#### ANNUAL PICNIC

July 16th, we had our annual picnic. The entertainment committee must be commended for finding an outstanding location at Metro Beach. In spite of the ex-

## Labor And Community: We Are One

treme heat, we were comfortable since the committee had secured the only shelter on the water. We also had a tent set up with tables and chairs so everyone could relax in a shaded space.

About 230 people attended this year – members and their families. Lots of the kids took advantage of the pool to try and deal with the heat. GOLDEN DENTAL supplied the ice cream which went a long way toward everyone keeping cool. Special thanks to Golden Dental for this generous donation.

Special thanks to HAP as well. HAP provided hand sanitizers and first aid kits for all the attendees. HAP also provided four gift cards for drawings held throughout the afternoon. The committee also had skate boards and lawn chairs for the drawing. The winners were:

Sterling Bouier  
Marlene Dickerson  
Michelle Hamons  
Joane Nolane  
Louis Coleman  
Everett Hall  
Mattie Shelton  
Angelo Williams

Like all of you, I'm sure, I've been following the debate on raising the debt ceiling and cutting funding. Our local can't really raise our debt

ceiling so we are constantly looking at ways to cut spending and to save. By putting money aside in savings on a regular basis, we are trying to be prepared to fund all our liabilities better.

It was good to see all of you at the annual Labor Day Parade. We planned this event for months. This year's theme was LABOR & COMMUNITY: WE ARE ONE.

Last month I received a lengthy fax from one of our recent retirees. He sent me a copy of a letter he had addressed to Senators Levin and Stabenow. He shared concerns with them that many of us care deeply about too. His concerns included tax loopholes for the rich, limits on taxing high income individuals and respect for senior citizens.

We all raised our voices this Labor Day. We must continue to do this in an effort to be heard on the many issues before working people in our country. Active participation in government is a must for democracy to have any meaning.

We will all need to be active too in the ARE YOU IN campaign to sign up nonmembers and potential new members. There is a great deal on the line for each of us as we continue to battle the Postal Service in this very difficult period.



# The Sabotage Of The Detroit Post Office And The Assault On Service

The Detroit District has always prided itself on quality service and high performance scores. This was the case for quite some time until the wrecking crew from Grand Rapids management began to run the Detroit District. The top officials who have been guiding the decisions in Detroit for the past 5 years have all come from Grand Rapids. The decision to excess needed employees out of Detroit to far away states and then hire PSE's, the decision to excess the qualified employees out of CFS and then say their performance is down, the decision to short staff the city stations and create 72 part-time positions (which were never filled), the decision to open window services to the public in Detroit from only 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. (denying many working residents access), the decision to excess employees and remove work from the P1 (resulting in a plummet of national leading scores), the decision to remove the POS machines out of the city stations (resulting in long lines and dissatisfied customers), and the list could go on and on. Oh, but guess who is keeping their processing and distribution centers — you got it — Grand Rapids. Keep in mind we do not want to see any facilities closing but the local officials certainly know how to take care of home (as long as that home is not Detroit).

### The Proposed Closing "Study"

The Detroit P&D is located in a

city with a population over 700,000 (the largest in Michigan), close proximity to Metropolitan Airport (23 miles vs. 48 miles to Metroplex), has wholesale and retail trade sales in the millions, has 55% minority owned businesses, 40% women owned businesses, directly across the river from international partner Windsor Ontario, has the greatest egress of transportation routes with several major freeways, and has begun to attract a significant interest by companies large and small. DTE is moving 9,700 employees from the suburbs to Detroit, Blue Cross-Blue Shield will house approximately 6,100 employees downtown, and Quicken Loans expects to have 3,700 employees downtown just to name a few. Although the entire state is suffering significant financial challenges the business community has blatantly made it apparent that the growth spurt and revitalization in the region will originate with the city of Detroit. This point is evidenced by the business community relocating to the heart of Detroit. One would ask the question "Why is the postal service shutting down the processing center and the majority of stations in what is the business hub of the state and the epicenter of the state's population?" The Detroit News reports that retail vacancy rates for Detroit suburbs has increased almost 2 percentage points for the past 2 years while downtown Detroit's rate has stabilized. Information disclosed from the 2010 census indicates that the neighborhoods serviced by the proposed station closings are some of the most stable communities in

Detroit and have experienced the least amount of population lost. By the way, the postal service only plans to only close the window operation cutting off the means to generate income and revenue while still paying utilities, property taxes, maintenance, and all other operational cost for the buildings because the letter carriers will still work out of the facilities.

### Disparate Impact

We are going to try and explain Disparate Impact. It would be nice to believe in the premise that we live in a color blind society. But that is simply not reality. Disparate Impact is defined as an action or policy which may be facially neutral but have a negative impact on a protected category of people. It does not matter whether the discriminatory act was intentional or unintentional the effect of discrimination was still the same. Postal management consistently comes before the citizens of Detroit and the Detroit District employees stating how "IT IS NOT OUR INTENT TO DISCRIMINATE OF SHUT DETROIT DOWN." But over and over again every decision which has been and is made regarding postal operations Detroit has received the short end of the stick. Oh, I stand corrected. The entire southeastern district of Michigan is now called the Detroit District but the postal service does not actually want to have any facilities, employees, or service in Detroit. It is the Detroit District in name only. The decision to make the excessing in radius for Detroit employees 1,000,000 miles and the rest of the state 20 feet resulted in only Detroit employees being forced to leave the state. Despite the plain language of the Postal Reorganiza-

tion Act which requires prompt and efficient service to all communities, the postal service believes that federal law does not apply to the residents of the city of Detroit. The postal service every day is looking for ways to pirate jobs out of Detroit so those management officials who loathe setting foot within the city limits can return to the comforts of the Bellingham office in Troy. Detroit is relatively an unbanked community with many check cashing stores, payday lenders, money orders for sale, and stores selling stamps for twice the actual cost. Senior citizens and many residents depend on the stations and branches to conduct their business with confidence and safety. The negative impact being made by the anti-Detroit decisions of the postal service has and will continue to have an impact on the tax base, business community, and quality of postal service not just for the city of Detroit but the entire region.

### FYI: HELP FOR HOMEOWNERS

The Michigan Homeowner Assistance Nonprofit Housing Corporation acting through the Michigan State Housing Development Authority can provide assistance to homeowners in the form of:

1. Mortgage payment assistance for homeowners currently receiving unemployment compensation.
2. Rescue funds for homeowners who have fallen behind in their mortgage payments due to no fault of their own and who have overcome this obstacle.
3. Federal matching funds for principle reductions for homeowners who can no fault afford their mortgage payments as a result of reduced income.

Homeowners can apply at [step-forwardmichigan.org](http://step-forwardmichigan.org)

## If the UPSP Eliminates Saturday Mail Delivery . . .

# The Postal Service Would Fall Apart

**If Congress approves the USPS plan to end Saturday mail deliver:**

• **Your service would be at risk.**

Millions of Americans depend on Saturday delivery to receive prescriptions, checks, newspaper and magazine subscriptions, greeting cards, and notices from churches and community organizations.

• **High-priced couriers would step in** — but only in the most profitable locations. Customers would pay more — a lot more.

• **The USPS would be weakened** — perhaps fatally. The Postal Service's ability to serve every American at an inexpensive, uniform rate would be compro-

**Until this issue is resolved in the public's and in our favor, we will continue to print this piece: Remember, CLIP AND SAVE and COPY. Hand out to friends, family and neighbors. Our jobs could depend on it!**

mised. Privatization could soon follow.

**The loss of a national, public postal system would be bad news for our country and our financial system:**

The USPS is a powerful engine in the nation's economy that operates a vast network, enabling citizens, businesses and government to communicate quickly and inexpensively.

### SAVE SATURDAY SERVICE!

Ask Congress to stop the elimination of Saturday delivery. Write your U.S. Representative or call 202-224-3121.

For more information, call the American Postal Workers Union at 202-842-4210 or visit [www.apwu.org](http://www.apwu.org)



## The Welcome Mat

The APWU-DDAL would like to give a big round of applause to the following new members. As we all know, there is strength in numbers. We appreciate and acknowledge all who make the endeavor to become unionists. We invite you to come in and play an active role in helping this union flourish!

We would also like to acknowledge those that signed the new brothers and sisters. Remember, any member can sign a new member and it's \$20 in your pocket!

- Elizabeth Daniel.....Signee.....M. Smith
- Anthony Mobley .....Signee.....M. Smith
- James White.....Signee.....M. Smith
- Kenneth Hall.....Signee.....M. Smith
- Douglas Hackman .....Signee.....M. Ardilla
- Paul Kress.....Signee.....M. Smith
- Kelvin Greer.....Signee.....M. Smith
- Jacqueline Scott .....Signee.....K. Mosley
- Laura Swider .....Signee.....M. Smith

If your address has changed, please notify the union and the Post Office of your address change. If you do not, the Post Office will continue to send your paper to the old address.



**Maintenance Craft Report**

**Jason Rushing**  
Maintenance Craft Director

# Maintenance Happenings Unions Are Under Attack

Hello Brothers and Sisters, Detroit Delegates attended the MPWU Education Conference in Bay City Michigan. The conference was opened up by MPWU President John Marcotte. He welcomed everyone and wished them all a great convention. He had concerns with the leadership of our cities, states, congress and house being anti-union. Nothing new there. His real concern though was at the speed at which anti union legislation and bills are being passed and introduced.

With that being said he introduced Brent Gillett, AFL-CIO State/National Mobilizer and Political Director. Brent relayed to us the urgent message that everyone needs to get involved, while we still have unions left! There are bills to take away, or reduce, union's collective bargaining rights already in process

of becoming fact. Right now Brent states, there are 63 Republicans and 47 Democrats in the House of Representatives. Not good for unions. In the Senate there are 26 Republicans and 12 Democrats, again not good for unions. Bargaining rights and safety checks have been taken away from Police, Firefighters, Teachers, OSHA repeals, Childcare givers to name a few. The latest attack on everyone as whole is the repeal in pricing stickers requirements at stores. Stores no longer have to put a sticker on items for sale if its posted somewhere by the product or they have scanners throughout the store. SO, you better keep an eye on items prices before going to the check out. Brent was a great speaker full of energy and information. He cited the AFL-CIO's website [www.miaflcio.org](http://www.miaflcio.org) for information on pickets, gatherings, protesting and other events.

When Brett was done, Sue Carney, APWU Human Resources Director gave us great information on all the things her office does for Veterans every year. Throughout the year they do BBQ's at vet-

erans hospitals, clothing drives, backpack program for homeless Vets and more. She touched on the NRP program, stating that once we get the Service to court, we are doing well. MSPB is doing well against NRP program as well. Info has it that the NRP program itself is coming to a close, according to good sources of Sue's.

Most important to me was the Maintenance classes given by Troy Rorman, NBA and National Maintenance Craft Director Steve Raymer. Discussion started with the Memorandum of Understanding concerning Maintenance Craft Jobs. The new PSE category can only hold Custodial positions. Most of these will be in detached offices, away from major areas.

As contracts expire for Custodial services, PSE's will be hired for jobs. Veterans are still first in line for these jobs. Get the word out when you see a posting so Vets can put their applications in on-line at [www.usps.com](http://www.usps.com). Also discussed from this memo was an audit of EAS and Contractor jobs, to see if we can bring back more work back to the bargaining unit. This discussion will take place at headquarters. Other discussions and information was passed out concerning RMSS, job filling and posting, seniority and excessing limits. Director Raymer took questions people had to get it straight from the source. Thank you for allowing me to represent you at this conference. In Union Solidarity.

## The Detroit Postal Worker Brings Home Prestigious Journalism Award To The Local Membership!

*continued from page 1*

Area Local. If it wasn't for the loyal and supportive membership, this award would not have been possible. I want to thank the Associate Editor, Danny Sawicki, for his long hours and expertise he dedicates to

every issue, the officers, stewards, writers and staff of the DETROIT POSTAL WORKER, all who make this an award winning union publication. However, I want to reiterate, this is the DDAL Membership's award and I thank them!"



## The Postal Service Is Facing Bankruptcy . . . And Our Jobs Are In Danger

*continued from page 2*

quires the USPS to fund a 75-year liability in 10 years and costs the Postal Service more than \$5 billion annually.)

But H.R. 2309 would establish a "solvency authority" with the power to unilaterally cut wages, abolish benefits, and end protection against layoffs. **Sponsors of the bill claim postal employees are overpaid by 34%.**

The bill also would create a board that would order \$1 billion worth of post office closures in the first year and \$1 billion worth of post office closures in the second year. If H.R. 2309 is enacted, thousands of offices throughout the country would be closed.

### But There Is Hope

Rep. Stephen Lynch (D-MA) has introduced a bill that would allow the USPS to use the billions of dollars in pension overpayments to meet its financial obligations. H.R. 1351 would address the cause of the USPS financial crisis without cutting pay, reducing benefits, eliminating collective bargaining rights, or slashing service. However, the word on Capitol Hill is that Rep. Issa is blocking consideration of H.R. 1351.

### What Can We Do?

Postal employees and their families must take action now. Ask your legislator to oppose H.R. 2309 — or legislation like it — and to support H.R. 1351.

- **By phone:** Call the Capitol Hill switchboard at 202-224-3121 and ask to be connected to your representative's office.

- **By mail:** Send a note to your representative at:

The Honorable Sandy Levin US House of Representatives  
1236 Longworth House Office Building Washington, DC 20515-2212

Feel free to use the attached postcard, or better yet, write a letter in your own words.

- **Online:** Visit the APWU Web site at [www.capwiz.com/apwu/home/](http://www.capwiz.com/apwu/home/) to send your legislator an e-mail message.

- **In person:** Join members of your local and visit your representative. Let your legislator know how strongly you feel about saving the U.S. Postal Service and your job!

- **Join the APWU e-Team:** Stay informed about important legislative developments when you sign up for the APWU e-Team, at [www.apwu.org/dept/legis/index.htm](http://www.apwu.org/dept/legis/index.htm).

The Honorable Sandy Levin  
US House of Representatives  
1236 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515-2212

Dear Representative Levin:

I am writing to urge you to oppose H.R. 2309, the Postal Reform Act of 20 11, introduced in the House by Rep. Darrell Issa. Recently, much has been said about the dire financial situation facing the Postal Service. Rather than addressing the underlying problems, however, H.R. 2309 would devastate service and destroy postal jobs.

If enacted into law, H.R. 2309 would mandate closing enough post offices and sorting facilities to wring \$2 billion dollars in savings from the mail system over the next two years. Service to small towns and to rural postal customers would be devastated.

H.R. 2309 also would establish a "Solvency Authority" with the power to unilaterally cut wages and benefits. Unfortunately, H.R. 2309 would do nothing to correct the cause of the Postal Service's economic difficulties: It would do nothing about the billions of dollars in USPS overpayments to its pension accounts, and it would do nothing to correct the -congressional mandate that requires the USPS to pre-fund the healthcare benefits of future retirees. (No other government agency or private company bears this burden, which costs the Postal Service more than \$5 billion annually.)

If passed, H.R. 2309 would lead to the end of the Postal Service as we know it, and it would have a devastating impact on the American economy. I urge you to oppose H.R. 2309 — and any similar legislation.

I hope you will support legislation such as H.R. 1351, which would allow the USPS to use the billions of dollars in pension overpayments to meet its financial obligations. H.R. 1351 would address the cause of the USPS financial crisis without slashing service or hurting workers.

Sincerely,

Signature

Print Name



Director of  
Human  
Relations

Keith Combs  
Director of  
Human Relations

Hello my Brothers and Sisters,

In recent months, I and many of our members have noticed an attack by management on employees who are injured or have an Occupational Disease. In this month's article, I would like to clear up the difference between the two claims. First and foremost it should be understood that Postal Employee's who sustain a workplace injury have the right to seek prompt medical treatment from the physician of their choice. Examination by a USPS contract physician should not interfere with this treatment. In fact, injured workers have the right to decline treatment from the USPS provider.

Now let's get started, a medical condition that is caused or aggravated by the work environment within a single work shift is a Traumatic injury, and is claimed on the Office of Workers' Compensation Program (OWCP) Form CA-1. The CA-2 Form is used to give notice of an Occupational Disease; a medical condition which caused or aggravated by the work environment over a period longer than one work shift. Claims must be filed within three (3) years of the injury date, or within three years from when the employee became aware that the medical condition is attributable to work.

Employee's who report a Traumatic injury should receive a "First Script" card from the USPS. A CA-16 Form which guarantees payment for most medical treatments

# Clarification Of The OWCP And EAP Information

for up to 60 days must be issued by the USPS to individuals who report a Traumatic injury within seven (7) days of the occurrence. Employee's should be aware that before a claim can be approved, the following requirements must be met: The claim must be filed within the OWCP's specified time limits; the worker must be a civilian federal employee; a fact of injury must be established; the injury must have occurred in the performance of duty; and a relationship must exist between the injury and the workplace.

I would like to note that Employee's who fill out a CA-1 are entitled to continuation of pay (COP) or Wage-loss compensation (WLC) for absences resulting from disability or medical treatment. In order to be eligible for COP, Form CA-1 must be filed within 30 days of the Traumatic injury date, and the first day of work stoppage must have occurred within 45 days of the injury. Unless the injury occurs before the beginning of the work shift, time lost on the date of injury is charged to administrative leave. Employees are eligible for up to 45 calendar days of COP. COP is charged for non-scheduled days and holidays when medical evidence indicates that disability exists during these time periods.

It is my hope that no member sustains a workplace injury, however when and if injuries occur it is my belief that we have made clear your rights so that you will not be violated.

Brothers and Sisters, until next time remember that Life is not a race, but indeed it is a Journey.

## Your EAP Provides:

### Easy access to services

Getting help is easy, convenient, and confidential. Just call on the convenient toll-free telephone numbers to speak with a live person at anytime. Our intake specialist and professional counselors are available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, to discuss your concerns. Crisis counseling is always available to insure that you get the help you need when you need it.

### Immediate resources

Whether there is an immediate crisis in the workplace or the need for a resource address close to you, the EAP is ready to provide services to meet your needs. You can get names and resources in your community that provide child care and elder care services by calling 1-800-327-4968 or by accessing the website: [www.eap4you.com](http://www.eap4you.com)

### Personalized care

The Employee Assistance Program representative will help you.

### Clarify the Problem

The EAP counselor will help you clarify the issue for which you are seeking help. This insures that your concern is being addressed.

### Identify Options

Together, you and the counselor will explore alternatives for addressing the problem. EAP counselors provide an objective point of view and can offer suggestions that you may not have been considering.

### Develop a Plan

An individual plan is then developed. The plan may involve short-term counseling through the EAP or a referral to a helpful resource in the community. Family members may also be included in counseling as part of the action plan for problem resolution. In all cases, the decision of how to handle your concern and manage your life is up to you.

### Confidentiality protection

Your privacy is protected by strict federal and state confidentiality laws and regulations and by professional ethical standards for counselors. Information you share with the EAP may not be released to anyone without your prior written consent, except as required by law (e.g. when a person's emotional condition is a threat to him or herself or others, or there is suspected abuse of a minor child.)

At varying times in each of our lives, we must face personal problems. Some problems are more

easily resolved than others, but many can be best solved with professional assistance.

The EAP can help you resolve your personal concerns, so you can be your best at work and at home. Among other things, the EAP can help you with:

- Work Stress • Family/Parenting Issues • Relationship Problems
- Anxiety or Depression
- Anger Management • Alcohol Drug Addiction • Coping with Change • Grief or Bereavement
- Child/Elder-Care • Gambling
- Financial Problems

The Employee Assistance Program is provided by the USPS for its employees and their families, through a contractual agreement with Magellan Health Services.

## Frequently Asked Questions

### Q. Who can use the EAP?

A. Services are available to USPS employees and their family members (dependents).

### Q. When can I call the EAP?

A. You can call (313) 226-8430 anytime, 24 hours a day, seven days per week from wherever you are.

### Q. How much will the EAP cost?

A. There is no cost to employees who receive counseling and other services provided directly by the EAP or an affiliate. If additional outside professional services are needed, the costs are your responsibility if not covered by your Federal Employees Health Benefit Plan or private insurance. The EAP will work with you to identify the best available outside treatment services.

### Q. Is the program just for problems in the workplace?

A. No. You can use the EAP to help you deal with any number of concerns, big or small, whether or not they have a direct impact on your work environment.

### Q. Can I call even if my concern isn't a crisis?

A. Yes, the EAP is a life management tool, designed to help you sort through whatever is happening in your life. Call the EAP whenever you need a new perspective on things. Call when you need help identifying your options and making informed choices.

### Q. My minor child needs counseling, but the Detroit EAP office is located inside the GWY Plant and children are not allowed in the plant. What do I do?

A. Counseling for minor children can be accessed through the Wayne EAP office, or affiliate offices and resources in your local community which will be coordinated by the EAP counselor.

## With Deepest Sympathy

Our condolences to the family of Postal Employee Arthur Rines

We would like to express our condolences to the following employees on their loss of a loved one;

Dennis Bennett  
Denise Burger  
Aaron Carter  
Kathy Carter  
Diane Clay  
Vanessa Evans  
Lynette Flournoy  
Portia Fowlkes  
Samuel Fowlkes  
Shaun Fowlkes  
Rhonda Fudge  
Constance Garner

Shanika Garner  
Tonya Garner  
Antonio Harris  
Dawn Harris  
Detranell Harris  
George Harris  
Sharon Hayes  
Terence Jackson  
Eric Johnson  
Amanda Lawrence  
James Liggins  
Yvette Mason

Willie Mason  
Nicole May  
Cynthia Pinchem  
John Rand  
Dora Robinson  
Matthew Sledge  
Diane Thomas  
Doug Tumpkins  
Chemayne Vereen  
Tonya Wilson  
Robin Wimbush

Our sincere condolences to the families of retired and or separated employees:

Phyllis Mitchell      Louise Leadbetter      Jesse Harris

We apologize if there are any employees that we may have overlooked. For those we have missed, please call me so we can honor them in the next issue.



Priority Mail Facility Director

Iva Williams  
PMC Facility Director

# Priority Mail Center Update

The Priority Mail Center is into its fifth month after supposedly restructuring. Are we any better? The answer would be NO! We need more clerks, mailhandlers, custodians, mechanics, you name it, we need it. With

summer vacations here there is an overwhelming need for everything. Fellow clerks that volunteered to be detailed to the NDC somehow can't get out unless they are being sent against their will back to the P1 to help. The P1 is a facility now staffed with an older workforce that along with sickness and injuries, sometimes the workforce may not work as fast as we used to. Nonetheless, management is constantly berating employees to key faster, work longer, work harder, do this do that. Don't get me wrong, we all love our "good gov-

ernment jobs" and we believe in "a fair days work for a fair days pay" but let's be reasonable, our bodies aren't getting any younger, and it will take a little more time to complete the job. It is also disheartening to employees to see management constantly working beside them knowing that fellow co-workers were sent out with the claim that we had enough people. Who did our staffing package ??? I sure they would change their mind if they had to come work on the SPBS machine and work in those harder positions. Also, somehow management has for-

gotten that rotating employees will not only help them ergonomically, but will help keep this equal among all the SPBS clerks. Employees were sent out letters regarding VOE survey scores, the letter starts out as Dear Valued Employees. I would hate to see what kind of treatment unvalued employees would receive. As always the union's position is and always has been, employees should NOT fill out and return these surveys. All in all, I guess you can say we are weathering the storm. That's just what we do !!!

## The P.O.W.E.R. Point

by Sandra Carey,  
P.O.W.E.R Coordinator

Greetings Sisters & Brothers !!!  
**P.O.W.E.R CONVENTION NEWS**

In August Of 2009 P.O.W.E.R celebrated its 30 yr. Anniversary here in Detroit, Michigan. This year the 15th Biennial P.O.W.E.R convention was held from July 14th-16th in beautiful San Juan, Puerto Rico. I would like to thank President Ulmer for his assistance in making it possible for the Detroit District Area Local to be represented with 5 delegates. The theme of this year's convention was "Educating and Empowering Working Women".

The American Postal Workers Union, AFL-CIO faces some very serious challenges that threaten our

jobs and the future of The United States Postal become actively involved in the political process, and to organize the Unorganized workers on the job. We must stand, side by side with our union brothers and join in the fight to protect employment benefits, improve working conditions and ensure our overall job security. APWU P.O.W.E.R sisters must continue to unite and strengthen our forces, by increasing our numbers and finding new ways to combat the challenges at hand. Once again I encourage all the women within our local to step up and get involved with your P.O.W.E.R committee, it takes all of us sisters and brothers working collectively to keep APWU strong !!!

**UPCOMING EVENTS**  
October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month - Oct. 1, 2011 "Sista

Strut" hosted by Frankie Darcell of FM Radio Mix 92.3 to be held at the Detroit Riverwalk.

### Annual POWER Scholarships

As you may know last year a proposition was placed before the membership by President Ulmer to name the four (4) Scholarships that are usually given annually after four prominent women from within our local. These women were to be those that have made a significant contribution to the Labor compiled the results.

This year we received 4 applications with Essays however; only 3 were complete with all required documentation. The winners are:

Jessica Renee Stephens, mother Linda Stephens, Clerk Craft (Highland Park) —The Judy Beard Scholarship

Brittany Nicole Nichols, mother Lil-

lian Nichols, Maintenance Craft (GWY) — The Elisabeth "Betty" Littsey Scholarship

Xavier Marie Montroy father Roderick Montroy, Clerk Craft (DNDC) —The Jane E. Duggan Scholarship

The fourth scholarship is The Regina Favors Scholarship, named after our own Legislative Director. The above recipients will receive \$500.00 each to be applied to their respective Educational Institutions. We thank all four of the young adults that took the time to apply and we wish them much success in their Educational endeavors, (you may view the entire application in hard copy at the Union Office).



Jessica Stephens



Xavier Montroy is pictured with her father Roderick Montroy, Clerk Craft (DNDC).



Brittany Nichols

### TECHNOLOGY TEAM FROM BUILDING POWER WORKSHOP



Seated from left Sharyn Stone, Central Coordinator, Elizabeth Powell, National Secretary Treasurer, Princella Vogel, Southern Region Coordinator, Judy Beard, National Retirees Director and the to the right of her standing Linda Turney, Central Region NBA.



Central Region Delegates: seated - Lynn Pallas-Barber, Central Region NBA, standing to the left of Lynn is Karen See, CLUW (Coalition of Labor Union Women) National President, Sharyn Stone, Central Region Coordinator, standing to her right is Carolyn Watson Central Region POWER Coordinator, seated to her right POWER 1st alternate (Indianapolis) and 2nd alternate (Kansas City).

## Wake-Up Postal Employees And Get Engaged

continued from page 1

standard that we know now would become a thing of the pass. The USPS would no longer be required to deliver the letter you sent across the street or town the next day, it would be allowed to deliver it 3 to 5 days later, totally unacceptable!!!! The studies of closing these facilities is just a part of the politically motivated actions of the USPS and others that wish to privatize the largest segment (the USPS) of the more than 1 trillion dollars (annually) mailing industry.

THIS IS WHY YOU MUST WAKE UP, AND MUST BECOME ENGAGED IN THIS FIGHT, TO PREVENT

THE PRIVATIZING, CLOSING, and CONSOLIDATING OF ANY POSTAL FACILITY.

Here is how you can get involved, call the Union Hall 313-532-9305 and ask to be kept informed by leaving you email address and phone number or by visiting the [www.apwudetroit.org](http://www.apwudetroit.org) website.

### MVS Information

The DDAL MVS Awareness Day will be October 23, 2011, at 1 p.m., at the Union Hall. Please plan to attend.

The issue about the 19 drivers exceeded from MVS to the Letter Car-  
continued on page 9



Legislation  
Director

Regina 'Gina' Favors  
Legislation Director

Greetings once again sisters and brothers. I hope everyone enjoyed their summer.

Well as you can see things are not improving at all. We have much work to do. There are so many attacks leveled against the middle and lower class that it is beyond preposterous. The budget (not only for Michigan, but nationwide) is in the toilet and all they can say is "there HAS to be shared sacrifice". I personally want to know WHERE IS THE SHARING? ? ? Oh, wait I know . . . we (at the bottom) share the cost and they (at the top) reap the benefits. I don't know how they can truly believe that all of the CUTS they are making is going to balance the budget! I don't know about you but I don't care how much "budgeting and depriving" I do, if I do not add money in the coffer, the only thing I am left with IS "budgeted and deprived"! In every article I write I ask that we engage ourselves and fight for what we want, and for what we believe is just and right! I always ask (and I am STILL asking) that you please make it a priority to 'GET OUT AND VOTE'! Make some NOISE cause if you don't I guarantee that someone (or ones) will be making the choices for you! WE HAVE TO STAND UP

## Legislative News & Views Fight For What Is Right

FOLKS !!! Over the past couple of months I have been participating in the "RECALL Governor Snyder" petitions. I also have been collecting signatures on the EMERGENCY MANAGER PETITIONS. With these petitions, if successful, the emergency manager law would be "stayed" until 2012 when it would be placed on the ballot where folks could VOTE on it. As I've said before, when an emergency manager is appointed, that person(s) have TOTAL and COMPLETE control. They can eradicate contracts, sell properties, privatize, hire, fire or whatever they choose. They can also 'take' the money and run and we the citizens will be left with the final destruction. We as voters and residents have NO SAY! At that point, our voices have essentially been silenced. We are also left with paying the bill, the salary of this emergency manager if we were in dire straits to begin with how do we pay this bill? Emergency Managers are total dictators and presumably untouchable basically by law 'cause they have been given those super powers by the Governor and this terrible law!

On the postal front . . . we have been talking about the huge overpayment the postal service made to the CSRS and FERS retirees health benefits fund. HR 1351, the bill introduced by Representative Stephen Lynch would allow the USPS to use the billions of dollars in overpayments to meet its financial obligations. As of now, we are still

seeking co-sponsors for this. We have been visiting our Reps asking for their support. We are asking all of our Republican members to please visit or call your Representative in congress. The more constituents they hear from the better our chances of getting them to co-sponsor. We need them to sign on and have congress to correct this overpayment. It would also be great if you would write a thank you to our Michigan Representatives who have already signed on. While asking their support HR 1351, you should also ask them to vigorously oppose HR 2309, the resolution introduced by Rep. Darrell Issa. His bill is really about union busting and dismantling the postal service. It would create a Solvency Authority to oversee the USPS and this authority would be "empowered" to single handedly "reject, modify or terminate" 1 or more terms and conditions of an existing collective bargaining agreement (can you spell EMERGENCY MANAGER?). And this could be done after just simple 'meeting' and conference with the appropriate bargaining representative.

The other fight we are aggressively engaged in is the "study" (as the Postal Service calls it) to close post offices. We all know that when the service says something like this, they are already in the process or undertaking of doing just what is being 'studied'! Each and every one of us needs to be actively involved in this struggle. We will



be asking that you write letters, come and participate in town hall meetings, maybe set up a community meeting in your neighborhood or maybe even plan or help create some other event so that folks will know the importance of what is going on. We have to speak up and fight for our service or we will surely lose it! There will be training and workshops on how to talk to your legislators, possibly media training on how to get your message out, on tools you can use or other venues to help our cause. This may not all be totally put on by our local but also by our other AFL-CIO affiliates and members. So when you can please try and attend whatever training/event you can because WE ARE TRULY ALL IN THIS TOGETHER! What has happened in Wisconsin can and MUST happen here as well as in Ohio and other states that have fallen into the web of union busting, middle class destruction, and forfeiture of rights perpetrated by this so called "new" group of legislators. As we do this we must also continue strong dialogs with our family, friends, neighbors and businesses that we patronize and let them know just what is going on. We have to put the real truth out there and we should do this on all fronts. We did NOT cause this collapse. The teachers, firefighters, healthcare workers and other public sector workers did NOT cause this collapse. It was not the fault of all entitlement programs that caused it and by the way Social Security is NOT an entitlement program. Social Security did NOT cause this economic mess! We should not have to bear all of the cost to "fix" it. This devastation has been ongoing for at least the past 20-30 years and while we may not have 20-30 years to fix it, they should not be trying to fix it overnight or in one year! In the interest of space, I fear this article is getting much too long and I may be "preaching" to the choir but folks this WAR ON WORKERS AND UNIONS needs to be SHUT DOWN !!!

So until next issue . . . keep fighting, stay strong and hold on. In SOLIDARITY.

## — Steward Talk —

by Danny Sawicki,  
Associate Editor

Lori Lewis is a steward at the Grosse Pointe Station

**Q: Hi Lori, being a steward, how do you think some of the challenges differ from a big plant to a smaller station?**

*A: In a large processing facility your experiences vary and you encounter processing of mail in different stages and areas. Employees also learn the classes and categories of mail. Generally speaking most employees observe the process from start to finish. In a station there is a greater concentration on distributing priority and first class mail to the earners. Since the onset of the FSS machine we have less second and third class flats to distribute to the carriers.*

**Q: Do you think management tries to "single out" more employees in a smaller work place such as a station?**

*A: In a smaller station the focus of management can't help but notice fewer employees. Therefore management concentrates on employees breaks, lunches, and scheduled assignments.*

**Q: Of course, there is a big difference between window clerks and mail processing clerks, can you tell us some of the main management infractions that are levied upon window clerks.**

*A: Window clerks main responsibility is servicing the customers, due to station down sizing, the system has created less room for errors. As station window clerks we are given monthly evaluations by management that highlights transactions and evaluates customer service. Window clerks also have the added pressure of passing a mystery shopper that continuously and randomly tests the stations products, wait time, number of clerks available, proper attire and knowledge of ser-*

*vices and products in a specific order. Where as Contract Postal Units and other businesses authorized to sell stamps and offer Postal services are not censored and held accountable by mystery shoppers or management.*

**Q: We always ask the stewards, "What are the 3 things that you can advise the members to protect themselves against the wrath of the post office?"**

*A: Union Members should continue to support the APWU and become more actively involved. We should give a fair days work for a fair days pay. Craft employees should display unity and solidarity.*

*Thank you for your service Lori, And remember members, USE YOUR STEWARDS!*

*If you would like the opportunity to be a steward, send President Ulmer a letter with your name, facility, tour, craft, NS days and start time.*





Director of  
Organization

Marcus D.  
Smith  
Dir. of Organization

Greeting Brothers and Sister, I would like to Thank-you for allowing me to serve as your Director of Organization. National Organization Week started July 18 through 22, and some questions were asked, why have people organized into labor unions? Why will they continue to organize? Who

# The Benefits Of Being Organized

benefits from organized Labor? In past times workers realized that in numbers and unity there is strength. Working conditions were unsafe: their hours of labor were long and weary, and their pay was meager and unjust. As individuals, how could they overcome such burdens? The answer is that they could not, so workers organize into groups with similar jobs and interests to gain leverage in their dealing with their employer. These groups with similar jobs and interests in gain leverage in their dealing with their employer. These groups/unions accomplished much as they fought for

fairness and justice for workers. But the need for their continuation remains.

In our efforts to organize the unorganized, our President, Brother Christopher Ulmer, myself and one of our National Officers Judy Beard who serves as Director of Retirees Department for the APWU, and served as past Vice President of our Local, went to various Postal Facilities in our area to inform the members with current events and woes of our Postal Service. We will continue to encourage and educate our members on the Postal Form in Washington. What can we do as our jobs and future is being

threatened with a reckless regulatory bill in Congress H.R. 2309.

Postal workers are encouraged to immediately contact their elected representative in Congress to support H.R. 1351, and oppose H.R. 2309 when it is considered by the House of Representative. Organized labor cannot rest until all unorganized workers become aware of the goals and achievement so labor unions: of the benefits of membership, in organized labor; and of laborers unending pursuit of social, political and economic improvements of all human beings. ARE YOU IN? WE NEED YOU!



Assistant Clerk  
Craft Director

Tony Corbin  
Assistant Clerk  
Craft Director

Hello once again brothers and sisters of the American Postal Workers Union, Detroit District Area Local. My current newspaper article pertains to the subject of Overtime. Once read, I sincerely hope you will ascertain the subject matter as written.

Overtime is paid to all full-time employees for work performed after eight (8) hours on duty in any one service day or forty (40) hours work performed in any one service week. Overtime pay is to be paid at the rate of one and one half times the employee's basic hourly straight-time rate. Whenever two or more overtime or premium rates appear applicable to the same hour or hours worked by an employee, there will be no pyramiding or adding together of such overtime or premium rates, and only the higher of the employee's applicable rates shall apply. When an opportunity exists for overtime for qualified and available full-time employees doing similar work in the work location where the employees work, such qualified and available full-time employees on the appropriate Overtime Desired List (hereafter referred to as the OTDL), will be selected to perform such work by SENIORITY ON A ROTATING BASIS. Two (2) weeks prior to the start of each calendar quarter, full-time regular employees desiring to work overtime during that quarter shall place their names on an OTDL to be established by craft, section and tour. During the quarter when the need for overtime arises, employees with the necessary skills having listed their names on the OTDL will be selected by Seniority on a Rotating Basis. Employees ABSENT or ON

## Overtime Issues

LEAVE shall be passed over. If the OTDL does not provide sufficient qualified employees; then full-time employees not on the OTDL may be required to work overtime only if all available employees on the OTDL have worked up to twelve(12) hours in the service day or sixty (60) hours in the service week; however, the employer is not required to utilize employees on the OTDL not yet entitled to penalty overtime are available for the overtime assignment(s).

Penalty Overtime Rate(s) are applicable for the following circumstances:

- If a full-time regular employee is required to work overtime on more than four (4) of the employee's five (5) scheduled work-days in a service.

- If a full-time regular employee works more than ten (10) hours on a regular scheduled work-day.

- If a full-time regular employee works more than eight (8) hours on their perspective non-scheduled work-day or

- If a full-time regular employee works more than six (6) days during any given service week, than the employee is entitled to be compen-

sated at the penalty overtime rate for all hours worked on the seventh day during the appropriate service week.

In conclusion, when a full-time regular employee is called-in to work on any non-scheduled work-day, they are not contractually guaranteed to work on their regular Bid Assignment; however, they are guaranteed eight (8) hours work or pay in lieu of.

If any further questions require answering, please contact any A.P.W.U. Officer or Steward.

In Union Solidarity.

## Wake-Up Postal Employees And Get Engaged

*continued from page 7*

rier Craft is not an isolated incident. Most employees excessed for any reason were not retreated back or given an opportunity to retreat back to their respective craft. USPS management knew the employees excessed should have been retreated back and it was for those reasons they notified employees they were being returned to their crafts. We had things in place for all of you to return (retreat back). It was some source in the MVS Craft (so USPS management says, USPS management will not identify the source to me) telling USPS management that the drivers could not return without a residual vacancy being available. The DDAL did not and does not feel this way, the union made it perfectly clear that the presence of a residual vacancy does not matter if the USPS is hiring Casual Employees or PSE's to do the work that our 19 MVS drivers (brothers and sisters) should be doing. Casuals and PSE are driving routes and making runs our 19 excessed MVS drivers should be driving. Returning the 19 MVS Drivers from the Letter Carriers Craft became a mute issue when the USPS took the position (nationwide) that they would not retreat any excessed employees, this issue is being addressed in a step 4 grievance by the national. The DDAL has

filed a grievance on this issue locally already.

It was brought to the Unions attention at the last union meeting that the employees on tour 3 at the garage do not have union representation present during their tour. In the event you are unable to see an APWU-DDAL steward, or cannot reach one, please call the GWY steward's desk (313-964-1100 or 313-226-8685) and let them know your situation and help will be directed to you ASAP.

The MVS craft will be bidding this year barring a valid reason the DDAL should not be following it LMOU.

### Part-Time to Full-Time

The Conversion of Part-Time employees into Full-Time employees was done wrong in all aspects of the National Agreement. This issue is being addressed nationally and locally, and it can only be resolved locally after the national has resolved it. All affected employees should have filed a grievance by now. When it is resolved by the national the local remedies can be applied. If for any reason you have not file the grievance please contact your Craft Director and provide him a copy of your statement for a grievance.

The pay issues for the employees that were converted from Part-Time

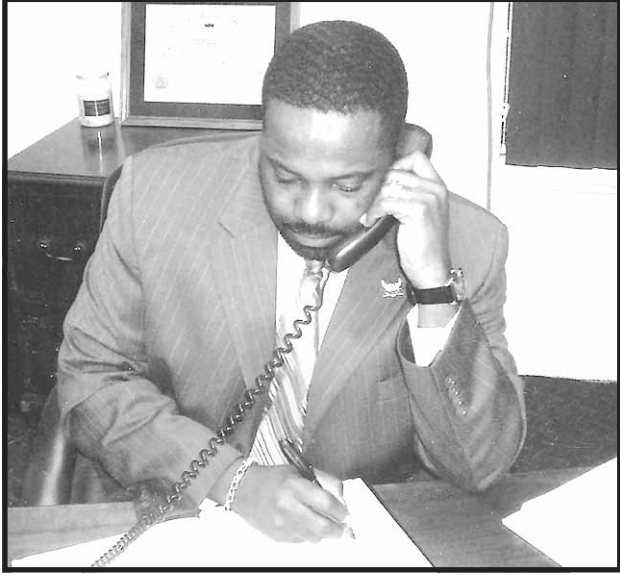
to Full-Time is being addressed locally; you should have filed a grievance by now. Once I found out about this issue we contacted the District manager's office and we were informed that this issue was a problem nationwide with the newly converted employees and their holiday pay. The Union was informed that if the employees wanted vouchers they could receive them, or if they wished to do pay adjustments that too could be done. This issue should be completely resolved in the coming weeks, but you should have notified USPS management so they can correct it. If you have done all these things and still have not found a resolve please give me a call (313-532-9305).

### Local Memorandums of Understandings (LMOU's)

The DDAL has completed all of the Local Memorandums of Understandings for every officer that we represent. The LMOU negotiations has been going on since August 1<sup>st</sup>, 2011 and ended for all offices September 30, 2011. The LMOU process was a very demanding, very draining process, but your local officers managed to complete this process while improving your local benefits. Thanks to all the officers & stewards for their time and hard work, job well done.

# Ask The President

## Retreat Rights And Non Traditional Full Time (NTFT) Questions And Answers



Christopher "Chris" Ulmer, President

In this segment of ask the President we are going to tackle two issues that the membership is concerned with right now.

**Q: Mr. President, what is the latest update on the retreat rights on employees that were involuntarily excessed into other crafts?**

*A: The latest update is that we initiated grievances concerning the Postal Service's refusal to allow employees to exercise their retreat rights and ultimately offer them their retreat rights. The good news is that the APWU Industrial Relations Director "Mike Moore" also has initiated a Step 4 grievance against the United States Postal Service for not allowing our members to retreat back. This situation is not only happening in Detroit, this is happening nationally. There are very few that have been granted their retreat rights. It depends on the situation.*

**Q: Mr. President we know the grievance procedure takes time, however can you give us a time frame when our retreat rights might be granted?**

*A: Danny, I cannot give the membership a time frame. At this point it would be total speculation. Danny, I know the heartache and pain of being displaced. If I was to give you some consolation, is that in the new district resolution process was negotiated in our new contract was to allow things in our grievance process to be heard quicker. So hopefully, the issues concerning retreat rights will be heard within the next six months. In the past, that process could take many years, so I think that the new fast track process that was implemented in the contract will be tested and now is the time to truly trust in the system and we believe it will work in our favor for a quicker resolution.*

**Q: Concerning retreat rights, can you explain the difference between employee's like myself that were involuntarily excessed into other crafts and those that were excessed out of state?**

*A: They are no different. Let me recant that. There are some differences. There are differences in choice. Employees that were excessed into another craft within the installation have to come back. The employees that were excessed outside the installation have the choice to come back or not. These are the differences. But in terms of how those retreat rights are triggered, enacted and followed upon are the same.*

**Q: So Chris, concerning our retreat rights, we just have to hang in there?**

*A: Danny, we have to hang in there, it is a tough situation — but we must be resilient in our faith and our strength to hang on.*

**Q: What about the situation with employees being improperly placed into non-traditional full time (NTFT) bid schedules. It seems to me that this is a blatant violation by the postal service?**

*A: Here is another issue that was grieved nationally. The USPS has directed headquarters to place people who were scheduled to become full time regulars into NTFT schedules which is a blatant violation and by all accounts of reading and understanding the Collective Bargaining Agreement no way in the world can the Postal Service place someone in these schedules. These same schedules are part of the situations that would have triggered the retreat rights for our members. That is probably why the Post office is playing these games. These bid positions would have had to go up for bid for everybody and if a person who was excessed into one of these NTFT schedules, they could have been able to bid on it. The Postal Service did not post these schedules for bids. That is the number one violation. They placed employees into them which is the second violation. The third violation is that the employees that were placed in them were only given 30 hours per week. They are full time employees and should get 40 hours per week. Those are the violations that have been occurring in the clerk craft and MVS craft. Right now those are the major violations in those crafts. These acts were done by the Postal Service to deny our members work hours that they are entitled to us by the contract. We have initiated grievances in both crafts concerning this issue. We are asking for regular pay, out of schedule pay and all benefits that the members are losing while working these 30 hour schedules. It would have been a*

*different story if the Postal Service put these bids up like they were supposed to do and the membership was able to bid on those positions voluntarily. They didn't do that, they didn't put these bids up !!! They just forced employees' into them. Some people might have wanted to bid on them, it might have been a better situation for that particular employee. It was unfair and unjustly done, and it was all done in the name of denying our employees the right of a 40 hour work week.*

**Q: Chris, do you think that the employees that were forced into these NTFT positions will be reverted back into a full time position in a timely manner?**

*A: The grievance has to be rectified nationally before it can be handled locally. Again, this is a national matter. Once it is addressed nationally and there is a remedy, it will filter back down to our local.*

*I truly hope it is soon. If I can speculate on a time table, I would say it should be arbitrated within 4 - 12 months and then even the Postal Service will try and hold things up. I think ultimately once this grievance goes in front of any arbitrator, we will prevail. The violations are so blatant I think the Postal Service will not even want for this matter to go in front of an arbitrator.*

**Q: I would think that this being such a blatant violation by the Postal Service that the labor department would be involved. What do you think about that Mr. President?**

*A: Truthfully Danny, at this point I have very little faith in the Labor Department. Right now we have about 25 labor charges pending against the Postal Service. In some of the charges, they have already found that the Postal Service is in violation, but the labor board is reluctant to force the Postal Service to do anything to rectify these situations. I trust more of the grievance process because we control that. I do think that soon these issues will be answered and resolved.*

**Q: Chris, we really needed to hear this information and the members appreciate your candor and honesty about these situations at hand.**

*A: I appreciate our membership. Their loyalty and resiliency. I appreciate what they do and how they respond. Danny, in conclusion I want to make this important point. I will appreciate them more when they hear our calling to get involved. To become active, we are going to have to walk the walk, talk the talk and everything else that is needed to get the voice of the people heard by our elected officials. We will be putting bulletins out to get actively involved. Now is the time, tomorrow might be too late.*

*Danny: Absolutely, spot on point. We must get legislatively involved at this point. You touched on it and, in this paper we have given the members the tools to make it easy for them to contact elected officials and let our voice be heard!*

*\*\*Thanks again Chris*

*\*\*Thank you Danny*

If you have any questions for "Ask the President" column, contact Danny Sawicki, mailing address: 20530 Southfield Road, Detroit, MI 48235; e-mail: [dsawicki@apwudetroit.org](mailto:dsawicki@apwudetroit.org), cell phone (586) 943-3950.

Attend Your

**UNION**

Meetings!



## Retirees' Department Notes

Al Fouche  
Retirees' President

Union members represent a broad cross section of America. They come from all walks of life in all parts of the country. They want what any American wants. Peace, Prosperity and security. Dignity of the individual. They want these for each and every American.

There are two ways they go about getting them. One is through collective bargaining. The other is through political and social action. Let's talk about them one at a time.

Collective bargaining is a rational, democratic and peaceful way to resolve conflict. In recent years, some 150,000 collective bargaining agreements have been made. Only two percent of them were af-

fectured by strikes. So in 98 percent of all cases, collective bargaining was successful. Not a bad record.

Back around the turn of the century, things were different. There were not very many unions then, and those that existed had a tough time of it. Employer resistance to collective bargaining was fierce and many times violent. There was no National Labor Relations Act then to give workers the right to organize and promote collective bargaining. But workers persisted and the fledgling unions survived. Collective bargaining became the accepted way of regulating employer-employee disputes. It took a lot of nerve for employees to stand up for their rights in those days. There were no job safety standards, paid vacations, sick leave or retirement plan. Hiring and firing, promotion and layoff policies were under the exclusive control of employers.

But they did it, and today we are enjoying the results. You cannot put a price tag on the human dig-

nity individual workers feel when they stand up for their rights, either.

It hasn't changed today. Every time the union-negotiated contract expires, the members have to assess the situation again. They look at their wages and compare them with current price levels; look at company profits; determine if pensions, health and medical care plans are adequate. These are the quantitative factors that go into wages and salaries at collective bargaining time.

There are qualitative factors, too. Things like work rules, work speeds, occupational safety and health, time off for vacations and holidays, and promotion policies.

Put them all together and you have a package of wages, benefits, and work rules that becomes the subject of contract negotiations. Employers — large or small — don't just hand out this package. The employees have to stick together, send their elected representatives into the negotiating room

with employers or their representatives, and through a process of fact finding, discussion, argument and debate, make an agreement on just what the package will contain. Then the membership has to ratify or reject it.

We call it collective bargaining, and it has played a vital part in lifting the living standards of the American worker to the highest level in the world.

Think about this time you hear a company official say, 'Here's what we give our employees'. Even if that company does not have a union or the employees he is talking about are not part of the union in the firm, do you really think they would give these wages and benefits if there were no unions? Maybe. But it isn't likely unless a pattern of union-won gains is in existence.

But even then, the employee has no voice in matters affecting the job. Where is the dignity in that system? Or security?

In Union Solidarity.

# DNDC Rumors And Facts

by Christopher Ulmer

A message to DNDC APWU members from the President. I must first tell you that the leadership of the local has not been out to your facility as much in the last 60 days due to LMOU negotiations that has been taking place since August 1, 2011 thru September 30, 2011. I know you all are well represented and that you all have been in good hands of your Facility Director (Debbie LaMay). It is the intent of this leadership to visit every office at least once a quarter and for the most part that has been accomplished.

The officers and stewards at the DNDC have done a wonderful job in representing the membership out there. The Union did not do a lot to the LMOU at the DNDC, but some changes to the LMOU were proposed to USPS management. The USPS did want to make changes to the LMOU but proposed none.

The DNDC has completed the process of retreating its excessed employees. In August (2011) all the remaining vacant jobs from the tour alignment of the facility went on e-reassign, where they were supposed to be posted on e-reassign for 21 days, so anyone outside the facility desiring to work at the DNDC could try and come there. The USPS had problems with the automated bidding and employees were not able to place bids on the posted jobs. The USPS since has decided to do manual bidding for these vacant jobs.

I still hear rumor as to what is going to happen with the DNDC and the Priority Mail Center and Romulus. I meet with the District Manager at least once a month and every month I ask if

there are any talks or plans to merge the P-1 with the DNDC and he tells me that he has not had any discussions of any kind to do this. I know this talk comes from supervisors and managers talking to employees but I think it is more the desire of the DNDC Plant manager than anybody else's right now, and that is what management is referring to when they talk about it.

Let me make this clear, the P-1 is part of the GWY and if the P-1 was to merge with the DNDC then it would be merging with the GWY in reality.

The APWU-DDAL has fought every plan to close any office. Thus far we are doing pretty well. The DDAL does not entertain rumor and gossip simply because we cannot challenge of question either one of them. The DDAL can and will question, oppose, challenge, and fight any merger, or closing that does not benefit the public in which we service, and the membership we service also.

The DNDC has been the best at signing up non-members out of all the facilities we have and I would just like to acknowledge that and ask that the members, stewards and officers continue to do a great job.

I was recently informed by some of APWU-DDAL members on detail to the DNDC from the GWY and the P-1 that they sometimes feel like the union at the DNDC is not fighting for them. I can proudly and confidently say that while this may be, the, or a perception it for sure is not reality. The Unions main job is to ensure that the Collective Bargaining Agreement is followed by all parties (the Union, USPS management, and the employees) and sometimes when violations occur the union must (MUST) address them.

Does this sometimes affect the members? Yes. But it would affect another member in an adverse way if it was not addressed, now would it be fair to let wrong continue? NO I would not. That is way it is always so important for the union to follow the CBA and not deviate from it, to make sure the union is not choosing and picking side. The union can never win when they pick and choose sides. The union always wins when they are following the CBA. This does not mean that everyone will be happy but it ensures that everyone

will be represented fairly.

I would like to congratulate the DNDC stewards and officers because they are so united and they actually participate in the events the union is a part of. This is very important, if the stewards are not there how can they keep the members on the workroom floor accurately informed. Keep up the good work. As always feel free to contact the president's office for any reason, any time, because that is the reason I am here, to help and assist you for any reason.

## Reporting For The 480 Offices

by Christopher Ulmer

The Southfield office recently went through re-bidding again. The OIC and the Postmaster has expressed a need to excess from the Southfield office, yes again. While the DDAL does not believe the need to excess in the Southfield office, it is the USPS that plays with and falsifies the number to justify what they want. It is the APWU-DDAL's (strong) belief the Postmaster is upset with the hard work that the union is doing. The DDAL will fight vigorously to make sure that this does not happen. In the same breath the USPS officials say they do not have enough people, so go figure.

The Southfield P.O had conversation with the 480 director about hiring some PSE employees. While it would a total violation of the CBA to hire employees without first offering retreat rights to the employees already excessed the DDAL ask that

you not panic, stress out, or get upset because we will be addressing it if this rumor becomes truth.

I recently visited the Southfield office and can proudly say we have managed to clear up and clean up the LMOU for this office. We added and changed things that we believed would give the membership more flexibility and greater benefits, while removing things that put barriers in the employee's way.

I was in the Southfield office also to speak with the employees that signed the petition about an APWU representative. I must express my profound gratitude for all parties involved because the utmost professionalism was displaced during the entire time I was interviewing people. I believe the members spoke opening and honestly to me. I actually learned more from the members interviewed than I can ever express. While the

*continued on page 12*

# Detroit APWU Annual Picnic Metro Beach – Metro Park, Saturday, July 16, 2011



## Detroit APWU Labor Day Parade



## 480 Happenings

*continued from page 11*  
conversations were direct and uncensored I think the constant theme or conversation was about the union and what the members wanted their union in Southfield to look like and be about. I can say the issue is being addressed and I expect resolution soon. Thank you members for bringing the issue(s) to my attention, for the building up of the union, rather than for the tearing down of it, thank you. Now get out there and sign up those non-members in your office. Now is the time that all those excuses for not

being a union member should be thrown out the window. The fight is now and you are in it.  
The union completed the LMOU updates and negotiations for the Roseville, Eastpointe, Centerline, Fraser, and St. Clair Shores offices. The USPS has begun to hire Postal Support Employees (PSE) in some of these offices. It is the APWU-DDAL position that no office should be hiring PSE's that have anyone still excessed. We have and will file grievances on this type of violations.

### FREE Legal Consultation

by Christopher Ulmer, President

Attention APWU Members:

Every month, Representatives from the Law office of Robert D. Starkman will be at the union office to provide FREE legal advice to our Members.

If any Member is experiencing any legal matters, or have questions, please call the union office at 313-532-9305 to schedule an appointment to meet with an Attorney. Also, call for dates and times.

This consultation with the Attorney is provided free to our Members. I encourage everyone to take advantage of this valuable service. In Union Solidarity.

**Next Membership Meetings**  
**SUNDAY, OCTOBER 2**  
**SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 6**  
**1:00 P.M. - 3:00 P.M.**



DETROIT DISTRICT AREA LOCAL  
APWU, AFL-CIO  
20530 Southfield Road  
Detroit, Michigan 48235

Change Service Requested