

# THE DETROIT POSTAL WORKER



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DETROIT DISTRICT AREA LOCAL AMERICAN POSTAL WORKERS UNION

January-February, 2014

2011 POSTAL PRESS ASSOCIATION AWARD WINNER

## The President's Report . . .

# 2014 State Of The Union Address



**From The President**

**Christopher "Chris" Ulmer  
President**

### Welcome Back!!!

Happy New Year brothers and sisters. I thank you, once again for allowing me the opportunity to serve you, as President. I am grateful for this opportunity and I really enjoy serving each and every member.

I would like to start this article by welcoming back all the employees who were improperly excessed and those who have decided to exercise their retreat rights back to the Detroit installation. It is a wonderful feeling knowing we have kept our promise to each and every employee, that "we will fight for them until the end" and the officers that you all elected in November 2009 and again in November 2012 (an historical election) have done just that. I welcome you back, BUT I must inform you that the fight is not over, the fight and struggle continues. I'm glad you're back and I encourage you, that you do not sit on the sidelines but to actually get involved with the events of the local and become involved to help prevent this and other violations from happening again.

The union is still going through clock rings and employee work hours to determine the amount of money each individual that is entitled to compensation will get. The Union should have this information soon and we should be finalizing it with the Postal Service within the coming weeks. We hope this all will be completed no later than the end of January and we are targeting for each employee to receive the compensation no later than end of March.

### State Of The Union Address Finances

In the last 6 years the DDAL have lost approximately 1300 members due to retirements and excessing. Therefore the DDAL has to re-devise the way we use the resources we have and the way our workforce is presently structured. This means we will be changing our Constitution this

year and with those changes we will be making some of the full-time officers part-time, reducing or eliminating some of the annual events that the Union put on, and reducing the secretarial staff the Union presently employs. Changes are necessary for the survival of our Union financially. The changes we will roll out for you to vote on are long over due and are needed if the DDAL is to continue to operate in the same high efficient manner in which we have for years.

The propose changes should bring the DDAL approximately \$140,000 in savings a year. This money is direly needed to allow the DDAL to train and send Stewards and Officers for new updated training annually. These proposed changes

means we control the grievance process from the Step 1 through the Arbitration. New language in the collective bargaining agreement allows the DDAL to move up one case FASTER so we may not have to wait 2, 3, 4, 5, years for our issues to be resolved any longer. The DDAL is actively seeking the cooperation of the United States Postal Service to resolve issues and situations quicker. Resolving issues quicker (at the lowest level) gives everyone a greater sense of satisfaction and helps them trust our grievance and arbitration process more.

The Union is looking for smart members to get involved with the union, to become Union stewards for it is you who will be carrying the union's torch down the road later. We plan to conduct more steward training so our stewards can explain the contract to the members better. The better informed the stewards are the better understanding you will have. The better understanding you have the stronger the union is.

Union officers will be visiting all facilities we represent more. This will allow us to better facilitate and get a grasp of issues & grievances in the areas where the membership may feel they don't receive enough attention from all the Union Officers they elect. This will apply to all of the Mail Processing Facilities, Station & Branches in the outlying areas, and in the Detroit City Stations.

### Building

The Union Hall is in need of some essential building repairs and updating. As we grow as a leading labor organization throughout in our communities and in this region we need a facility that will be able to accommodate many different events in the same fashion we represent our members. We know we will need to buy a new air conditioning unit this year because one of the unit we presently have is broke.

### Participation

The DDAL is actively seeking and asking all members to regularly participate by attending the monthly Union meetings, being present at union related functions, and to consistently speak up and bring issues to the Union's attention, you must participate if we are to succeed. You must inform us of the issue, if we are to address and correct the issue.

I WANT TO SEND A SPECIAL THANKS AND SHOUT OUT TO ALL THE MEMBERS WHO CALL THE UNION JUST TO SAY THANKS FOR THE WORK WE ARE DOING AND THAT THEY  
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would allow the union to build up our savings and allow us to continue providing the special services to the membership that members have come to expect and enjoy, such as keeping the annual events as well the \$300 retirement rebate (with changes). The proposed changes would also allow us to pay each retirees that we still owe this \$300 to.

The money is needed to update the DDAL's grievance processing equipment. The DDAL must get in line with the changes that APWU headquarters are proposing such as the NEW E Grievance Appeal processing system. The money was also needed to eliminate our debt to the attorneys. The money will put the DDAL in position to challenge the Postal Service on important issues concerning the working conditions and wages of employees.

### Grievances And Arbitrations

The grievance and arbitration process is going well. As you may know the DDAL has complete control of our MOD-15 grievance process. That



**Detroit District Area Local Union Officials**

Christopher Ulmer ..... Page 1  
President

Patrick Chornoby ..... Page 3  
Executive Vice-President

Jane Duggan ..... Page 4  
Secretary/Treasurer

James Stevenson ..... Page 4  
Clerk Craft Director

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Maintenance Craft Director

Keith Combs ..... Page 5  
Director of Human Relations

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Marcus D. Smith ..... Page 5  
Director of Organization

Anthony "Tony" V. Latimer  
Assist. Maint. Craft Director

Raymond Allen Morgan  
Assistant MVS Craft Director

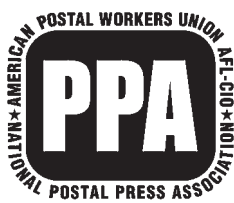
Stacey Carr  
Recording Secretary

Al Fouche  
Retirees' President

Danny Sawicki ..... Page 2  
Associate Editor

**TRUSTEES**

<b>Clerk Craft:</b> Dana A. Beard & Carl Williams	<b>MVS Craft:</b> Gary Hinton
<b>Maintenance Craft:</b> Michael Griffin	<b>Mail Handler:</b> Kimberly Durden
<b>SGT.-AT-ARMS</b>	
Steven Welborn	Dorothy Malone



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**Detroit Postal Worker**

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Editor: Christopher Ulmer  
Associate Editor: Danny Sawicki

Opinions expressed in this paper are those of the writer and not necessarily those of the Editors or the Detroit District Area Local.



**Associate Editor's Report**

Danny Sawicki  
Associate Editor

As the old sitcom song goes "welcome back, welcome back, welcome back."

At press time, for those that exercised their retreat rights, we are back at our old jobs for about a month or so. Some declined their retreat rights, stayed as carriers or stayed out of state as clerks. For each individual this was a personal decision.

The president and officers worked long and hard to get our retreat rights granted.

Ultimately, in the end, it was decided in the courts by an arbitrator and he decided that the Post Office did us wrong and now they must pay.

Remember the shock and confusion when we got the letters stating we would be sent out of state or forced to convert to other crafts? Our lives and families were turned upside down.

Many, or I should most of us did not want the change. Now that the retreat rights are granted some of us did not want to go back and some stayed as carriers or stayed out of state in their current positions. Again, we must remember when we got the letters and asked our union "how? . . . Why? . . . can it be stopped?" It was a long, tedious process that the Post Office dragged thru the courts but the President and The Detroit District Area Local did their jobs and we finally won!

There is good and bad in every job and changing back again is hard.

As a carrier, was I three houses from a shoot out with gunmen using my mail-truck as a barrier? . . . Yes!

Was I verbally assaulted, chased by pits and rotts, swans and ducks, dodging pythons and baby alligators in front yard pools? . . . Yes!

Did I fall on my kishka in the mud, snow and ice numerous times? . . . Yes!

Did I go thru a knee surgery from all the walking? . . . Yes!

Did I have to deliver mail in the middle of groups of drug dealers on porches? . . . Yes!

However, did I make life long friends on the route and at the station? . . . Yes!

Did I have children take my hand and lead me to the mailbox? . . . Yes!

Again, good and bad in every job.

As a clerk, working the machines at the GWY there is good and bad.

# Welcome Back, Welcome Back, Welcome Back

After almost seven years of being away, I've seen the same pattern of management, not working together as a team and making unwise decisions in getting the mail out on time.

I am not going to focus on the negative.

Most of us made it back safely, some did not and got hurt on the job. At the Detroit Postal Worker and the DDAL, we pray for full recoveries for our brothers and sisters who got hurt on the job and are still out. We will be there with open arms when you are ready to come back.

Going from mornings to midnights is another major adjustment and it will take some time for our bodies to adjust accordingly to the change of schedule. In these first weeks, make sure you get enough sleep to give your body a chance to adjust.

However, we persevered and survived and it's nice to be back . . . I don't want to say home, but it's nice to be back with my ole postal family and friends that I haven't seen for many years.

I'm looking forward to giving and receiving more hugs and kisses in the upcoming weeks. Welcome back my friends!

**Disagreements With Management**

Since I've been back, I've noticed quite a few floor room disagreements between employees and management. Some quite heated.

We want to be clear and concise on this matter.

If you feel management is doing you wrong, do not argue . . . request a steward be contacted immediately!

That is that they are there for, to fight for you. If you argue directly with management you will ultimately lose, and it may be your job.

Over the years, at the station and the plant, I have seen employees taken out of the building due to these heated exchanges between fellow employees and management. Some haven't been back.

Please be calm, get a steward and stay gainfully employed.

Since I have been back, due to paperwork issues, I have been down to the union three and four times and have had favorable results.

You have excellent, knowledgeable stewards on midnights including your organization officer, Marcus Smith, your Human Relations Director Keith Combs, and steward Kathy Carter.

Every time I have gone to the office, there has been someone in the office ready, willing and able to help.

Remember, the Post Office is looking to get rid of anyone they can. Be smart, try to follow the rules and if there is a problem, USE YOUR STEWARDS!!! Don't take matters in your own hands and get yourself fired.

## 2014 State Of The Union Address

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APPRECIATE THE WORK THAT IS BEEN DONE. The DDAL Officers appreciate the calls and/or text messages we receive from the members telling us that we are appreciated, it is these type of contacts that help keep us going, to doing the work we do.

The DDAL is proud to announce that Shore Mortgage company has joined forces with the DDAL to bring the DDAL membership the help it

need to get our members new homes or just refinancing your present mortgage to get a cheaper interest rate. You should be receiving more information and their flyer in the mail soon.

The DDAL has done a lot of great things. The plan for the DDAL in 2014 is to do even greater things for our membership and to prepare the DDAL membership for the future, the DDAL will lead the future as well.

## Not Too Late . . . the Y

It's not too late to make a new year's resolution. If you're after good health, the Y has a standing offer. If you join as an APWU member at the Boll YMCA (downtown Detroit) you get a 20% discount and NO JOINER FEE. In addition, if you join the Boll Y at 1401 Broadway, Detroit MI 48226, you can use any Y in the Metropolitan area.

FOR MORE INFO, CALL (313) 309-9622 or check out [www.ymcadetroit.org/boll](http://www.ymcadetroit.org/boll).





## Vice President's Report

Patrick Chornoby  
Executive  
Vice President

Greetings Union Sisters & Brothers:

Under our Unions Local Constitution and By-Laws, among many other duties, the Vice President is responsible for servicing the outlying Post Offices represented by our Local. As a result, I witness plenty of customer service issues that I would not ordinarily see in our larger Facilities, like the GWY Plant or NDC (National Distribution Center). One issue that clearly stands out is the relationship between mail processing and customer service, like the letter carriers and our window clerks. I continue to witness firsthand our customers waiting in long postal lines waiting for Service, and I applaud our Sales and Service Associates for having to deal with our customers all day, especially when the Postal Service fails in their obligation to create a professional working environment. Our window clerks do the best they can, yet it is disturbing to see how little concern management has in providing all the necessary staffing to assist in service our customers.

We all understand (with the exception of Management) that if our customers are not happy with their service, they will seek service from another source or Company. I fail to see any concern from Management on this issue, and I don't expect to see any either. I have recently witnessed in our Southfield Post Office customers leaving the lobby, silently whispering . . . "I ain't waiting in this long a\*\* line . . ." and I truly don't blame them either. When customers enter a Post Office to buy stamps, and see twenty customers in line, and only two Sales and Service Associates, they should get frustrated. What management refuses to address is that customer 'frustration' is directly aimed at our Window Clerks, and not at the ones directly responsible for the Office staffing, and that is Management. To make things worse, management seems to care less about providing good service to our customers, and that my friends, leads our customers to seek service elsewhere.

At a recent 482 District Meeting, I complained about the understaffing in the Window Operation. District Management was quick to argue that when they investigate complaints of understaffing on the Window, they always found the Office to be properly staffed. The results of their study found that 99% of the time it was the Sales and Service Associates who were improperly leaving their assign-

# Managements NEW Strategy . . . The Hell With Customer Service

ments. The result caused understaffing on the window, creating delayed customer service – long wait in line times.

**My observation is that management has understaffed almost every operation in the building, and assigns Sales and Service Associates (window clerks) to perform other tasks in the Office to get the mail processed in a timely manner.**

In another Office, I found understaffing in the Distribution Operation. Understaffed to the point that the Mail Processors could not get the mail sorted before the Carriers left for their routes. Management then instructed the Carriers to report back to the Post Office around lunch time to pick-up the mail that was not ready for them that morning. Is this efficiency or good customer service?

There is no question in my mind that management will be the root of the demise of the Postal Service as we know it.

### It's Easy To Help Protect Your Future . . .

It doesn't take but a few minutes to let your Congressman or Senator know about the Postal Service and how you feel about your job and the job that management does. Most of us have kids or grandkids who wouldn't mind going to the computer to contact our Representatives for us. We constantly hear from management that the Postal Service is "broke". But, setting all their "hype" aside, the Postal Service reported a \$600 million profit for fiscal year 2013. The problem is that they also had a net loss of \$5 Billion due to Congress enacting a law in 2006 which requires the Postal Service to PRE-FUND future retiree health benefits. At a cost of billions of dollars each year. In fact the postal service has paid in advance retiree benefits of employees it hasn't even hired yet (in fact, for employees that haven't even been born yet!), and they continue paying. This unreasonable burden placed on the Post Office is preventing the company in hiring workers and promoting Postal Support Employees to career. It also places undue pressure on the current workforce to process mail at a much faster pace to properly service our customers. We need to let our Representatives know that the Postal Service needs to be relieved of the burden of pre-funding of the retiree benefits.

### MTECH – PAE

As SERCO has been purchased

by a new Company – PAE, I have been receiving a large volume of calls regarding the "productivity" standards in the Plant, in addition to a negotiated incentive pay for going above and beyond the productivity standards which are negotiated for by the local committee. Since your prior representative Bill Manly re-

**"There is no question in my mind that management will be the root of the demise of the Postal Service as we know it."**

tired last year, PAE Bargaining Unit Employees need to get acquainted to your NEW representative of the Support Services Division, and he is Stephen R. Brooks. He can be contacted through our National Website at **APWU.ORG**, click on "contact us," and you are on your way! I must advise everyone to first seek assistance from your Local Stewards and Officers prior to appealing to Mr. Brooks. This will save a lot of time in resolving major complaints and issues.

### Our Competitor Takes A Hit

On December 26, 2013 it was all over the radio, television and most all news feeds that customers were very dissatisfied from the service they received from

UPS (United Parcel Service) this holiday season. Their complaint was that they did not receive their package deliveries as they were promised from internet sales before Christmas. Thousands of parcels were not delivered for Christmas while some customers waited in 3 and 4 hour long lines at UPS stores on Christmas eve trying to obtain their holiday packages, most without success. Just another reason for us (and the Postal Service) to promote our parcel delivery service as being the best in the country.

I have ordered gifts on the internet many times, and I always request the company to deliver the parcel through the U.S. Post Office. Surprisingly, more often than not, they accommodate my request. On one occasion I had an overnight delivery shipped from Oregon. I personally requested the company to send the package overnight via the U.S.P.S. Although they did not offer the service through their shipping department, the representative, agreed to honor my request. The original overnight delivery cost from UPS was over \$50.00. The U.S.P.S. overnight cost was only \$24.00. A great savings AND I received my package the next day before noon.

## What Is P.O.W.E.R.?

by Carol Anderson

What is POWER? POWER is the movement "Post Office Women for Equal Rights" P.O.W.E.R was founded at St. Louis, Missouri on April 28th, 1979.

The APWU National Convention was amended to include POWER at the American Postal Workers Union national convention in Detroit in August 1980.

APWU P.O.W.E.R (Post office Women for Equal Rights) is the women's committee within the APWU.

It unites women with their special concerns, yet works with the framework of the national APWU organization.

I would like to introduce you to your APWU-DDAL Local POWER Committee.

COORDINATOR  
Carol Anderson

ASSISTANT COORDINATOR  
Iva Williams

TREASURER  
Lopinia L.R. Roe

ORGANIZER  
Shuronda Ulmer



ACTING SECRETARY  
Jane Duggan

Our goal is to exchange ideas, issues, problems and solutions and to initiate and support educational programs. We invite all to join us in future educational forums concerning women, men, children and/or current issues concerning our families, friends and communities.

If you would like to participate in POWER issues please call Regina and Diane at the union office and they can forward the message to me. Thank you so much! 313-532-9305.



Clerk Craft  
Director

James Stevenson  
Clerk Craft Director

Postal Management has taken the position for the most part that "we are going to do what we want, catch us if you can." Well, Postal Management you have been caught. Over the past 3 to 4 years management in Detroit engaged in all out war against the clerk craft. Our union Brothers and Sisters were subjected to improper excessing, denial of retreat rights, denial of severance pay, Letter Carriers performing our work, supervisors performing our work, improper reversions, and part-time regulars working outside of their bid schedules.

Over the last five months the Detroit District Area Local has won some major victories which I hope will encourage everyone to keep fighting and there is light at the end of the tunnel. The first major victory was a class action on improper excessing in which the postal service exceeded senior employees out of the craft and installation prior to junior employees. Management argued in vain that some of them were injured and Pittsburg and other places did not want injured employees. We all know that seniority is the sole criteria for purposes of excessing. The arbitrator ordered the return of all the improperly excessed employees and a determination is to be made on financial damages.

The second major victory involved the issue of severance pay for employees who properly decline a directed reassignment outside of a 50 mile radius. The Postal Service felt they had the

## ***THE UNION STRIKES BACK:***

# **Huge Arbitration Victories In Detroit**

right to simply separate an employee who could not move to another city or who could not carry mail. Management in Detroit said we will simply put these people in the streets and terminate them as if they were never Postal employees. The ELM specifically grants employees who are involuntarily separated an entitlement to severance pay. For an employee with

from the timeless battle of carriers and supervisors performing clerk work. While management is constantly utilizing CSV which is short for "completely shady variables" and function "fake" reviews to reduce the number of clerk assignments they freely utilize others to do our work. A class action was filed for the entire Detroit installation in which the ar-

assignment. The same violation which gave rise to the \$500,000 award is still present if NTFT employees are working beyond their bid hours. The major difference is that the NTFT employees are now entitled to "out of schedule" pay where as the former PTRs were not. The restriction does not exist for assignments of 8 hours a day and 40 hours minimum a week.

You would think that after losing 100's of thousands of dollars in arbitration loses the postal service would change their behavior and follow the contract. It is quite the opposite. They simply try to devise a better mouse trap and keep the check writing pen ready. The major problem is that no management official is held accountable for these financial loses which did not have to occur if the contract were adhered to. Everyone in management is consumed with giving the appearance that they are a miracle worker on paper and their operation can run without hardly any clerks at all. In the end it is the postal employee and the public who lose as the self serving actions and the callous disregard of the contract by management places the very existence of the Postal Service in jeopardy. Do not blame the arbitrators for correctly applying the contract, do not blame the employees for speaking up, and do not blame the unions for representing the workers. Management there is but one to blame and they are looking at you in the rear view mirror.

In Solidarity.

***"Everyone in management is consumed with giving the appearance that they are a miracle worker on paper and their operation can run without hardly any clerks at all."***

25 years this could amount to as much as \$60,000.

The third major victory came in the form of denial of retreat rights. Management had devised a diabolical scheme in which they would intercept the pre-award notices and delete the names of excessed clerks who were properly awarded bid jobs to return to Detroit. The covert operation "Operation-Never let anyone return home" was foiled when the postal service provided one of the pre-awards they failed to react in time. The arbitrator ordered the return of the clerks who were improperly denied retreat rights and a determination on financial damages. It is very important that stewards clearly understand that clerks have a right to return to the "first available vacancy" not just to residual vacancies.

The fourth major victory rose

arbitrator awarded a cease and desist and payment at the overtime rate for all work performed by carriers and supervisors for the past two years. It has become such a common occurrence that the carriers have now met the 30 hours a week of performing clerk work, they technically are entitled to a clerk uniform allowance.

The fifth major victory came in the form of a \$500,000 arbitration award on utilizing part-time regular clerks outside their bid hours. After excessing the full-time employees management continued to improperly expand the hours of the PTRs. Although the category of PTR was eliminated in the current contract the work hour limitations on employees holding NTFT assignments of less than 8 hours in a day and 40 hours in a week are bound to work the hours of their form 50 and official bid



Secretary-Treasurer's  
Report

Jane Duggan  
Secretary-Treasurer

Happy New Year! January roars in like a lion for your Secretary-Treasurer. In addition to the usual duties, we have to convene a budget committee and prepare a proposed budget for 2014. I would like to thank the members of this year's budget committee: James Stevenson, Jason Rushing, DeVol LeJeune and Anthony "Tony" Latimer.

Our committee worked very hard

## ***Job #1: The Budget***

on January 7th and the Executive Board voted to adopt the Proposed Aggregate Budget on January 9th. At the membership meeting on January 12th, the members present approved the Proposed Aggregate Budget. The hardest part of the task this year was making a plan to continue activities including representation and entertainment with a loss of revenue amounting to approximately \$100,000 a year.

You may be asking what an "aggregate" budget is. This type of budget plan is recommended by our national Secretary-Treasurer's office. It lets us set up funding for line items but move funds around as needed during the coming year without calling a special meeting

for each and every change. So, for instance, if we have an unexpected heating and cooling situation arise, we may spend more than the proposed line item for building maintenance and less on supplies, etc. It is a flexible way to work within the constraints of the available funds.

We now have approximately 1700 members. This results in a great loss of income from the time when the local had over 4000 members. However, it seems as our ranks are thinning, the attacks on us are growing. Excessing is perhaps the most profound example.

Also, as we have fought back vigorously, the Postal Service has attacked some of our part time officers leading the fight by not pay-

ing them. Every one of us knows how stressful it is to go without a paycheck. As usual, in these situations, this sadistic attack has only increased the commitment of the officers under attack.

Sometimes, losing is a good thing. That was the case for Arnold McCormick of the DNDC who won P.O.W.E.R.s "Biggest Loser" weight loss completion. Congratulations to Brother McCormick for dropping 8% of his body weight!

I look forward to seeing you at this year's activities. Our new national union officers are leading us in a new direction. I believe under their lead, we will have more pickets, rallies, etc. I certainly hope to see you at those activities.



## Maintenance Craft Report

Jason Rushing  
Maintenance Craft Director

Hello there brothers and sisters. The all craft Conference in Las Vegas Nevada went well. The delegates had some good training along with in depth discussions of Maintenance work. You say, how can it not go well, your in Vegas! Well the \$4 cup of coffee gets old after a while, but that is just me!

One of the biggest changes, besides all the officers at the National level, is the new language received from one of our latest arbitration awards concerning contracting out our work. The Service has to let the union know they decided to contract out work. The notice can be after they made the decision, but must be before the contractors arrive on site or start work. You may think, no big deal, but it is a big deal. For years the Postal Service would just contract out work and had a "catch us if you can" attitude. This does not apply to custodial work which is still covered under language making all custodial work ours except in limited

circumstances. The language boxes the service in and will make them pay if they don't follow the contract when trying to contract out our work.

So, you think a contractor, the postmaster, supervisor or carrier doing maintenance work? Well, instinct is usually correct, you probably do. In very limited circumstances someone other than an APWU represented employees can do maintenance or custodial work. We may not always want to do the work, but tough, its our work and we are going to do it somehow. I will not tell management the union does not want the work, period. If I have to go do it myself, the work is ours and I want it! I will not sit by and let management tell me we have to excess maintenance employees but have work right here! Help me help you!

Maintenance Craft Officers are urging the Postal Service to make a decision on the big AOI award. Area Office Infrastructure. This award address's Postal EAS -IT employees doing maintenance craft work. It mostly involves work ET, BEM and MPE

should have performed. We won the arbitration, Postal Management will not comply and agree to an award. The Union had to push for another hearing to get the remedy awarded. It could amount to some real big money in total!

Another giant far reaching award we just received in late October, is the DIEBOLD case. It involves the continual contracting of work by anyone other than a maintenance employee to install, repair, locks in cluster boxes, parcels lockers etc, in the field. Some stations, anyone would do the work except maintenance employees. Now, the work is definitely ours, maintenance craft. It will be a far reaching award stating that any maintenance employee can do the work in the absence of a letter box mechanic. Some places building custodians do the work others BEM or MM mechanics do the work. Any maintenance employee can do it before any other craft, contractor or person. The remedy has not come down yet but stay tuned, it should be BIG!

We still have to push forward and grab all the work we can for

the maintenance craft. If there are contractors doing work, someone needs to investigate it, make sure the Postal Service follows the contract. We need to make if uncomfortable for them to blatantly violate our contract! We need to stay on them every minute of every day to protect our future!

So how do we file a grievance if maintenance work is not being done by APWU Maintenance Employee's?

File a step 1 in your local office with the management official in charge at step 1. The National Union now recommends that Article 32 is cited in contracting out work grievances. Also when you cite the ASM in a contracting out grievance, make sure you only cite ASM 8. That is the ASM with the correct language, not the ASM management tries to cite with language they modified for their advantage. We won a national award on the ASM language when it was changed years ago. The award is still valid. ASM 8-only.

Happy New Year to everyone.

As always, thank you for letting me serve you!



## Director of Human Relations

Keith Combs  
Director of Human Relations

Hello My Sisters and Brothers, It is become extremely apparent that many employees in the Detroit District are not familiar with the appropriate procedure to follow when they become injured while at work, so I have decided to shine some light on the subject. First and foremost report to your Supervisor every injury as soon as possible. It should also be understood that injury may also mean any illness or disease that is caused and/or aggravated by the employment as well as damage to medical braces, artificial limbs and other prosthetic devices.

It is important to make sure that once you have notified the supervisor you should than seek medical treatment. The form CA-16 must accompany you when seeking medical treatment when you have been injured at work. An employee injured at work can choose to seek medical treatment from his/her personal Physician, this is something that cannot be denied.

The employee who is injured

must file a written notice, in traumatic injury cases, complete a CA-1. Employees may obtain the form from their supervisor. The form must be completed and turned in as soon as possible. An employee who want to file an Occupational Disease claim must fill out a CA-2.

Every employee who files a claim should obtain a receipt of notice of injury which is attached to the form CA-1 and form CA-2. The supervisor should complete the receipt and return it to you for your personal records. If for some reason it is not returned to you, ask your supervisor for it.

If you are unable to return to work due to a Traumatic Injury, you may claim continuation of pay (COP) not to exceed 45 calendar days or you may choose to use your leave.

A claim for COP must be submitted no later than 30 days following the injury (the form CA-1 is designed to serve as a claim for the continuation of pay). If you are disable and claiming COP, submit to your employing agency within 10 work day's medical evidence that you sustained a disabling traumatic injury. If your disability ex-

ceed 45 days you should submit a claim for compensation form CA-7 or use leave.

A claim for compensation should be submitted as soon as possible after it has become apparent that

your disability will exceed 45 calendar days.

Until next time my Sisters and Brothers remember that for words to sink-in, they must be whispered-not yelled.

# The Proper Procedure To Follow When Injured At Work



## Director of Organization

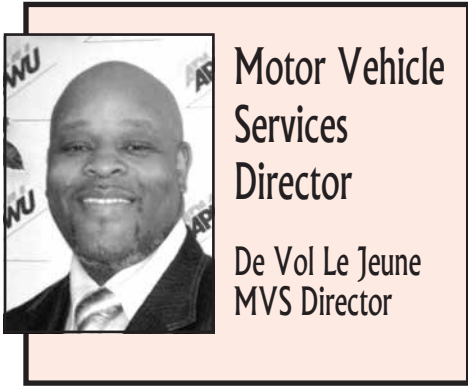
Marcus D. Smith  
Dir. of Organization

Greeting, Brothers and Sister, I would like to Thank-you, for allowing me to serve as Director of Organization for this illustrious local. I would like to welcome back our Brothers and Sisters whom retreated by to our craft, and encourage them to stay connected to our Local. We are looking forward to hearing from you. I myself was excessed to the carrier craft in 2009, and returned to the craft in Janu-

## Thank You

ary 2010. Whatever your concerns may be please feel free to contact the union with your questions we would more than happy to address them. I must stress the importance of staying connected. Please come to the Membership Meetings and take advantage of the benefits that you are entitled too. The APWU has Dental and Vision Plan to assist you and you're Family. I would like for you to consider our Health, Plan sponsored and administered by American Postal Worker Union AFI-CIO, United Health Plan and CIGNA has partner with us. Brothers and Sisters we are making great stride in the right direction "Lets get on the bus and get in our seats and lets go from good to great."

In Solidarity.



Motor Vehicle  
Services  
Director

De Vol Le Jeune  
MVS Director

Good day fellow brothers and sisters of the APWU/ DDAL. I am happy to inform you of my satisfaction with the diligent work efforts of your Local Union representatives as we continue to work hard on behalf of the craft to ensure that each individual's rights are respected in accordance to the 2010-2015 Collective Bargaining Agreement. We are actively focused on restoring and maintaining continuity of operations, unity, and solidarity among our teams at all times. Your Local Union representatives take pride in how we conduct business and handle your concerns and grievances. Likewise, we continue to practice and maintain confidentiality of all matters as brought to our attention;. Lastly, we pride ourselves in providing first class service to you which we desire will result in your continued first class execution of your job responsibilities.

Let's take a look at a few of our APWU/DDAL successes since the last newsletter:

• **Annual Awareness Day Meeting**

Annual Awareness Day was held on Sunday, October 20-2013. For those of you that missed it, you missed a treat! We only hope that you will be able to make the next one. Awareness Day is designed to be a great experience in fellowship and a forum for you to receive good and

## Extra, Extra . . . Read All About The MVS

valuable information that will definitely push our CRAFT to becoming a best-in-class environment.

I am elated to report that it was a success because of the overwhelming participation and support from you, the members of the APWU/DDAL along with our local and national Representatives. We were honored to have an opportunity to provide you with necessary information and receive feedback from you on how we could do things better.

Your Local Union representatives continue to work hand and hand with our National APWU team to obtain information that will continue to transcend and prepare us to achieve our goals in the MVS/ VMF Craft. In attendance from the National APWU Team was: Mr. Michael Foster, National MVS Craft Director; Mr. Javier Pineres, National Assistant MVS Craft Director and Mr. Merlie Bell, National Business Agent. Special thanks to each and every one of our National Team representatives that attended.

• **September Bids**

The September 2013 Bid process is currently underway. Your Local representatives are working diligently with the National Officers, management and supervision to make sure that no one's rights are violated in the implementation of these bids. As conflicts come up, we are focused on doing our best to keep management and supervision on one accord as per the 2010-2015 National Collective Bargaining Agreement and the specific guidelines relative to every employee having a bided assignment as contained therein.

• **APWU/DDAL National All Craft Conference 2013**

The National All Crafts Conference was convened November 02-08, 2013 in Las Vegas, NV. The main topic of discussion during this conference was on how the APWU/USPS can re-obtain as much highway contract work (HCR's) as a means to securing our positions, roles and responsibilities within the USPS operations. The discussion included specific details on upcoming new work and HCR's renewal work for possible consideration for MVS/VMF positions as well as instructions on the moving forward process to MVS/ VMF Craft's which will ultimately prove to strengthen our Craft. Your National leaders and Local Representatives are working diligently in regards to strengthening our Craft and securing a future for all involved.

During the conference, all members in attendance were informed of future plans for garnering the highway contract routes for in-house employees (our craft). In addition to the highway contract, we received pertinent information on how beneficial it would be for us to collaborate with one another and develop a game plan to tighten the gaps, document times and schedules as well as identify companies that are performing work as USPS contractors — which is clearly work that we could have in-house. Ultimately, our goal is to secure our future with the United States Post Office by obtaining as much work as possible. The conference topics and discussion was very refreshing and well received by all who were in attendance. With the hope of these efforts building a stronger MVS/VMF CRAFT, we look forward to attending this event again.

• **VMF/MVS Craft Audit**

We are undergoing a major audit that will have a major overall impact on the VMF/MVS Craft. If we haven't been united before, the time to do so is now! As the audit continues and

the holiday season have come and gone, it is important that we remain aware of our work and strive to always give our absolute best. At this juncture, your Local representatives are putting out a call for action — we need your full support and involvement in the upcoming and on-going events. Your continued support and dedication to our craft will prove to not only be a test, but a testimony that speaks to the unity and solidarity of our team.

All of the aforementioned successes have been critical to our future success with regard to sustaining and continuing on the positive path we are on that will guarantee greater outcomes and opportunities for the future of VMF/MVS Craft. As fellow brothers and sisters in unity and solidarity, we have a responsibility to each other as well as to our Craft to utilize every resource and unite them in an unprecedented manner to reinforce and support our craft when being put to the test. As a reminder, we must be willing to go the extra mile and beyond to demonstrate our ability to accomplish tasks and complete the work that has been set before us. This can-do attitude will ultimately confirm our willingness, capability and hunger to become over-achievers in the perfection of execution of our day-to-day operations.

**Collaboration is key! Your Union needs you!** You are the eyes and the ears that can ultimately make the difference in the amount of work that we retain, acquire or lose. This is a call for a "grand alliance", a duty and responsibility of all APWU/DDAL Members and Representatives, to help us help ourselves in the fight for the survival of MVS/VMF Craft in the APWU/DDAL.

I would like to personally thank and applaud each of you for your efforts and contributions toward building and maintaining a highly-productive, best-in-class working environment. Your hard work has not gone unnoticed.

## WELCOME 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!

Rhonda Austin	Joel Johnson
Kimberly Bradley	Ruvalda Kelley
Katrina Bryant	Treeta Lang
Marcus Caffey	Tawanna Mason
Alice Campbell	Cora Massey
Alice Clay	Tracey O'Neal
Sharon Clinton	Dorian Phipps
Brenda Ealey	Doris Pickett
Alan Evans	Florence Square
Lisa Fields	Deborah Williams
Cherie Jackson	Latonya Wilson

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.

## FMLA Turns 20

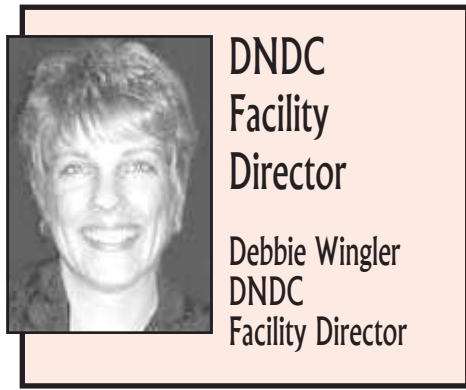
The 1993 Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) allows eligible workers to take up to 12 weeks of unpaid, job-protected leave each year for family caregiving, to address their own serious medical issue, or to address family needs arising from the deployment of a service member.

Family members caring for a wounded service member may take up to 26 of weeks leave. However, as a result of eligibili-

ty requirements, only about half the workforce can take federal FMLA leave.

The FMLA applies only to employers with 50 or more employees within a 75-mile radius. Workers must have at least one year of job tenure and must have worked at least 1250 hours within the past year to qualify.

For more information go to our website [www.apwudetroit.org](http://www.apwudetroit.org).



DNDC  
Facility  
Director

Debbie Wingler  
DNDC  
Facility Director

Over the last several months the NDC has struggled with acts of violence as well as bully type behavior and I thought it was important to share some information from the Workplace Bullying Institute. To seek more information please visit <http://www.workplacebullying.org/>

### Definition of Workplace Bullying

Workplace Bullying is repeated, health-harming mistreatment of one or more persons (the targets) by one or more perpetrators that takes one or more of the following forms:

- Verbal abuse.
- Offensive conduct/behaviors (including nonverbal) which are threatening, humiliating or intimidating
- Work interference — sabotage — which prevents work from getting done.

### Workplace Bullying . . .

Is driven by perpetrators' need to control the targeted individual(s). Is initiated by bullies who choose targets, timing, place and methods. Escalates to involve others who side with the bully, either voluntarily through coercion, and it. Undermines legitimate business interests when bullies' personal agendas take precedence over work itself. It is domestic violence at work where the abuser is on the payroll.

Read more about Bullying in comparison to Schoolyard Bullying, Workplace Violence and Incivility. Synonyms which reflect the seriousness of bullying: Psychological Violence, Psychological Harassment, Personal Harassment, 'Status-Blind' Harassment, Mobbing, Emotional Abuse at Work Euphemisms intended to trivialize bullying and its impact on bullied people: Incivility, Disrespect, Difficult People, Negative Conduct, Ill Treatment Not calling bullying "bullying" in order to avoid offending the sensibilities of those who made the bullying possible is a disservice to bullied individuals whose jobs, careers and health have been threatened as the result. Tom Engelhardt said it wisely when he said, "Words denied mean analyses not offered, things not grasped, surprise not registered, strangeness not taken in, all of which means that terrible mistakes are repeated, wounding ways of acting in the world never seriously reconsidered. The words' absence chains you to the present, to what's accepted and acceptable."

# Work Shouldn't Hurt

## Special note about Domestic Violence and Bullying

Being bullied at work most closely resembles the experience of being a battered spouse. The abuser inflicts pain when and where he chooses, keeping the target (victim) off balance knowing that violence can happen on his whim but dangling the hope that safety is possible during a period of peace of unknown duration. The target is kept close to the abuser by the nature of the relationship between them — husband to wife or boss to subordinate or co-worker to co-worker.

Read more about domestic violence and bullying.

### Who Gets Targeted

Why Me?

Unlike schoolyard bullying, you were not targeted because you were a "loner" without friends to stand up to the bullying gang. Nor are you a weakling. Most likely you were targeted (for reasons the instigator may or may not have known) because you posed a "threat" to him or her. The perception of threat is entirely in their minds but it is what they feel and believe.

WBI research findings from our year 2000 study and conversations with thousands of targets have confirmed that targets appear to be the veteran and most skilled person in the workgroup.

Targets are independent. They refuse to be subservient. Bullies seek to enslave targets. When targets take steps to preserve their dignity, their right to be treated with respect, bullies escalate their campaigns of hatred and intimidation to wrest control of the target's work from the target.

Targets are more technically skilled than their bullies. They are the "go-to" veteran workers to whom new employees turn for guidance. Insecure bosses and co-workers can't stand to share credit for the recognition of talent. Bully bosses steal credit from skilled targets.

Targets are better liked, they have more social skills, and quite likely possess more emotional intelligence. They have empathy (even for their bullies). Colleagues, customers and management (all except the bullies and their sponsors) appreciate the warmth that the targets bring to the workplace.

Targets are ethical and honest. Some targets are whistleblowers who expose fraudulent practices. Every whistleblower is bullied. Targets are not schemers or slimy con artists. They tend to be guileless. The most easily exploited targets

are those whose core personality reflects a prosocial orientation -- a desire to help, heal, teach, develop, nurture others.

Targets are non-confrontive. They do not respond to aggression with aggression. (They are thus morally superior.) But the price paid for apparent submissiveness is that the bully can act with impunity (as long as the employer also does nothing).



According to the 2007 WBI-Zogby Survey, 45% of targeted individuals suffer stress-related health problems. And additional findings regarding targets' health can be found in WBI research and the

PTSD- related research by others posted at this site.

Read our checklist of common signs of bullying.

### Why Bullies Bully Employers Create The Bullying-Prone Environment And Can Stop It

The rest of us get out of their way, cowering in fear. The bully's bosses have fallen for her or his ingratiation (butt kissing) tactics over the years and support the bully when exposed. And they will continue until we slap them down and say "enough is enough!"

### Factor 1 "The Way We Do Things Here" Work Culture Provides Cutthroat Competition Opportunities

Employees are pitted against each other in positions or tasks that allow only one winner to emerge from deliberate battles, creating many losers. Zero-sum is the winner wins at the expense of the losers; victory is carved out of the hides of the vanquished. Zero-sum is anti-team; it destroys teams. It's a routine way to design work in sales jobs, but unnatural and destructive elsewhere.

### Factor 2 Employers Hire Exploiters And The Exploitable

A small percentage of employees see the Opportunities and are willing to harm others, at least to try to harm. They are the manipulators. They are Machiavellian, not necessarily disturbed or psychopathic. Machs can and will change their behavior when Factor 3 (next) is re-engineered. Truly disturbed people who harm others have to be detected and terminated because their anti-social tendencies are irreversible given an employer's limited resources.

Ambition in eager job applicants

looks good to hiring employers. Unfortunately, the overly-ambitious snakes willing to hurt others hired without talking to the subordinates who were prevented from doing their work by the narcissistic, self-serving bully. The bully's boss is the only one asked to comment on the bully's qualifications.

### Factor 3 Employer Rewards Bullying

If positive consequences follow bullying, the bullies are emboldened. Promotions and rewards are positive. But it is also positive if they are not punished. Bullies who bully others with impunity become convinced they can get away with it forever. They will continue until stopped. Even reluctant bullies can be taught to be aggressive over time. We are all susceptible to changing our behavior in light of work environment conditions.

Stopping them requires nothing less than turning the workplace culture upside down. Bullies must feel pain themselves when they harm others. Punishment must replace promotions. And only executives and senior management can reverse the historical trend. To stop bullying requires employers to change the routine ways of "doing business" that have propped up bullies for years. Bullies are too expensive to keep but convincing executives, the bully's best friends and supporters, is difficult.

In conclusion, the ultimate solution fixes responsibility for both the cause and cure squarely on the shoulders of senior management and executives. They put people in harm's way and they can provide safety by undoing the culture which may have inadvertently allowed bullying to flourish.

Of course, if executives command bullying from the top, targeted employees can never be safe. As stated at the beginning of the article for more on Bullying in the workplace please visit <http://www.workplacebullying.org/>

Well "Enough is Enough" at the NDC regarding any of the fore mentioned conditions and at this time the union is requesting anyone to step forward regarding unpleasant working conditions. There are many ways to pursue the person or persons that are bullying you such as grievances, EEO, MSPB, Congressional Letters, 1767's relating to an unsafe work environment. Everyone has the basic right to come to work and be in a safe environment free from harassment, intimidation, bullying etc and "ALL" employees should be treated with dignity and respect.

From the Workplace Bullying Institute <http://www.workplacebullying.org/targets/solution/indiana/indiana.html>



Legislation  
Director

Regina 'Gina' Favors  
Legislation Director

Well the elections of 2013 are now a thing of the past. I speak not only of our local elections but our NATIONAL APWU elections as well. APWU members have spoken and we have new leadership at the helm. The citizens of Detroit (though very few cared enough to vote) and other communities have spoken. Whether your candidate of choice was victorious or not, it is more important that we now bridge the divide and pull together as union members, workers, citizens, and people who want Democracy and some sense of decency restored. New leadership most often means new direction and or a new/different approach. What we now can and must do is to hold their elected feet to the fire. We must be vigilant and stop being complacent. We must understand that as union members we are under attack, not only the APWU but ALL UNIONS. I know that we have members and co-workers who do not believe and support our union or any union for that matter. I firmly believe though, that is solely because of misinformation, miscommunication and sometimes a feeling of un-inclusiveness.

## Legislative News & Views

I think that we as members forget or often-times neglect to educate or even just simply talk about what we are doing and why we are doing it. I think we forget that the union isn't just about me, it's about us! We criticize our elected leaders, yet we fail to understand why certain actions are taken. We are jubilant when we get raises, holidays, weekends off, and any other event that makes us (the individual) happy but we destroy/condemn those same leaders if it adversely affects us (the individual). But while doing so, we never stop to consider that maybe the adverse action (or what we THINK is adverse) actually makes it better for everyone, not just a few. We don't get involved until it

of any and all unions, but it also holds true with all other elections as well. In my time as your Legislative Director, I have met so many leaders, officers, representatives of many organizations and legislators as well. I have met some of the most dynamic/powerful and caring people ever. Some of whom (at least in my view) are/were excellent, but some (again just my belief) were not. I also have seen a few who were just in it (seemingly) for political gain, for prestige, and/or other reasons. And likewise I have met so many more who are leaders that truly want to make things better for their members, fellow workers, working conditions and their community in general.



I think that everyone in the city and even the surrounding suburbs SHOULD have come out. We had a strong presence but not nearly as many as there should have been. I

mean this is even including those who are the ones affected. They were too afraid, intimidated, or just felt plainly defeated. Please ask yourselves these questions: are you satisfied with current situations, are you happy with your current Governor, has any of the "new" laws passed by these Legisla-

***"We must continue to fight for that which we believe to be right. We must fight to keep the Postal Service alive and thriving and we must fight to keep democracy alive and thriving."***

is something we don't like and then our involvement is to scream and condemn. We don't seek out those who could/would lead us in a positive direction, but when folks do run for office we select and vote based on friendship, popularity, or what I can do for YOU as opposed to what I can do for US. And worse yet most don't even bother to vote at all.

I am not talking solely about APWU on this issue, I am speaking

Over the summer, heading into elections and as I talked to folks, I knew that feelings were bleak and optimism was probably at an all-time low. Most folks were and are extremely apathetic. A lot of them felt hopeless and still many others (in Detroit) felt that with a new and different mayor change would be definite. For all those seeking a CHANGE, I stand here to tell you that YOU (WE) are the change that's needed. You are the ones who can make it better. And it all begins with your involvement. For instance, did you know that in 2010 the Dems had a 67-43 majority in the Senate. That year 383 bills were passed with 53% originating by Dems and 47% by Repubs. In 2011 the Republicans took control of both houses and that year 95% of ALL the bills (mostly all bad) that passed were originated by them (only 5% of Dem originating bills passed). In 2012, 91% of Republican originated bills (mostly all bad) were passed. Then from January to June of 2013, 97% of the bills passed were Republican originated and from where I sit none of them benefitted us the workers, us the middle class, the senior citizens or the pensioners.

So, now that local elections are done, we must focus on who we select and elect in 2014. Sisters and brothers there is so much work to be done. We cannot continue to sit idly by and WAIT for change. I understand that people feel that marching is no longer relevant, that protesting does nothing, but just sitting back and complaining doesn't either. How many of you came out and supported the city workers during the bankruptcy fight? And if not, why didn't you?

tors made your life better, have you gained or loss since 2010, do you pay more or less in taxes, has your economic situation improved or is it worse, do you really believe that unions, and the workers caused the economic collapse? Do you believe that those who spent their lives working in/for the City of Detroit should lose their pensions and health benefits (or any parts of it)? Then ask yourselves "is this what I voted for"? If so then I would guess that you are happy & satisfied. If like me, your answer is no, then I am asking that you not just sit back and accept what has happened as final. We must continue to fight for that which we believe to be right. We must fight to keep the Postal Service alive and thriving and we must fight to keep democracy alive and thriving.

Moving forward into 2014 I hope you are all prepared to give assistance to our newly elected officers in the struggle to save our service. Please keep abreast of the bills that are proposed to destroy/privatize us. Be prepared to take action and deliver a knockout blow to Darrell Issa and any others who seek to take our service away. Be prepared to seek out and help to elect folks that have our best interest at heart, here at home and those we send to Washington, D.C. We do this not by voting for those who have the most money for ads, and donors with deep pockets, or by those who talk the fastest, because none of that matters when their hearts are not right. I can say right now that we must restore the balance, restore integrity and take back our democracy. STAY TUNED! THE STRUGGLE IS STRONGER THAN EVER! In Peace and Solidarity.

## POWER's Biggest Loser Contest

by Christopher E. Ulmer,  
President

Power conducted its Biggest Loser Contest from October 4, 2013 for a period of sixty days that ended on December 6, 2013. The winner would receive a \$500 prize. The contest was conducted in all facilities that had people participating the contest had 16 paying participants. The winner of the Power Biggest Loser Contest was Arnold McCormick, an APWU-DDAL member, he lost a recorded 22 lbs in the 60 day period.

Arnold McCormick the DDAL Officers & members salutes and congratulates you for you big win while losing.

The DDAL wants to thank all the participants for supporting our Local's events and for participating in this Contest.







Detroit District Area Local  
John R. Merritt,  
Special Assistant

# So, You Think You Don't Need A Union, Do You?

As overall membership in labor unions continues to decline throughout the American workforce, people coming new into the workforce often don't understand what the relevance of unions is any more. They assume, or take it for granted, that any decent job is going to offer benefits, some type of sick pay when you're off sick, some type of vacation plan. They used to also assume that any decent job would also come with some type of retirement/pension plan, but in the modern employment world, people switch jobs so often that they aren't working with any one employer long enough to build up a pension. But the fact is, all the benefits described above were fought for and protected by unions. Do you really think that a boss or company owner came up with the idea of paying a worker for staying home sick, or paying a worker for taking time off, or paying a worker after he leaves the company for good? Why, the first time unions presented these ideas to company owners, those owners must have hissed and spat and raved that the end society was at hand. As these benefits continue to get chipped away by the modern employment environment, it is unions that continue to protect those gains that labor has been fighting for since the 19th Century. If for no other reasons than the ones described above, people should continue to join, support and form unions in new industries as they arise.

However, that isn't the point of this particular article. Lots of people also think that they don't need a union, or simply rationalize their decision to freeload on the dues-paying members, by asserting "I don't get in trouble, and I can handle my own problems".

Such an individual was the victim of one of the most outrageous examples of management abuse of authority and downright dishonesty that I've ever seen. I'm not just throwing the word "outrage" around carelessly here, this case really was an outrage, and even my brother said so when I told him the story, so there.

I've seen a lot, frankly, in over 25 years of being in the steward business. I've seen supervisors fire people just because they don't like the person, by fabricating absolutely false charges against the person. No kidding, absolutely false charges. Made up out of thin air. I've seen supervisors deliberately provoke people into confrontations, just so they could fire them. And their managers know about these supervisors. They know the supervisors were lying or provoking. Over the years, I was involved in a case where:

- A supervisor claimed to have witnessed an employee sabotaging equipment, and issued a removal. The steward investigating it did a careful examination of the area, and proved with a floor diagram that the supervisor could not possibly have witnessed any such thing, since, among other discrepancies in the supervisor's statement, there was a very large column in the line of sight from the supervisor's claimed viewpoint. She was clearly lying, it was no mistake. The manager took back the removal, but did nothing about this supervisor who made a false statement and attempted to fire a perfectly good postal employee using the false statement. That supervisor continued in management and is now at the DNDC. That, however, is not the outrage I'm writing about today.

- A supervisor at a Detroit city station claimed an employee ran into him with a piece of equipment, and again issued a removal to the employee. This one I happened to

investigate myself, and even met with the postal inspector who was called to interrogate the employee. Again, an investigation of the scene showed clearly that the supervisor could not have been hit in the manner, and in the location, he claimed. Even the postal inspector agreed. When this was brought to the attention of the station manager, the removal was taken back. In this case, it appeared that the supervisor may have had some mental problems, because among other factors that discredited him, he carried around with him a long, carefully-folded piece of adding-machine tape where he had logged dozens of details and incidents concerning the employee he was trying to fire. He had even followed the employee after work on some occasions, which he also included in his folded log. In this case at least, management relieved the supervisor from duty at the station and he went away, but for all I know he just showed up somewhere else. But this case is also not the outrage I'm writing about today.

So back to the case of the outrage. So far, this one tops my list. I wouldn't dare write this as fiction, because nobody would believe it. The victim in this case was clerk Michael Rothley, who expressly asked me to use his name (which I might otherwise not put into print) because he wants people to know how he was treated. There is also an object lesson here for everybody.

As everybody knows, the Detroit Priority Mail Center (or "P-1") operated for many years as the district's processing center for Priority Mail, until it ceased operations in August of 2012. What many probably don't know, largely because the Postal Service kept it as quiet as they could, is that a lot of drug shipments were going through the PMC in Priority Mail cartons. Various drug dealers found that Priority Mail was a good, reliable, method for shipping their "product". They could even

get delivery confirmation that their shipment had been received by the addressee. However, a local drug dealer using the user-friendly USPS internet tracking system, identified parcels from zip codes where he knew other dealers were shipping. This individual was named (honest) Calvin Coolidge Wiggins. As in Mike Rothley's case, I'm using Mr. Wiggins' real name, which is a matter of public record, and was all over the internet after his arrest.

Mr. Wiggins cased the PMC for a period of time, determined that getting in the building appeared pretty easy, and using one of the back doors - not the badge-access employee entrance - walked in one day, claiming to be a postal inspector. Since postal employees generally are, and are encouraged to be, terrified of postal inspectors, nobody questioned him. So for month after month, from sometime in the Fall of 2011 to the Spring of 2012, Calvin Coolidge Wiggins repeatedly entered the PMC, mostly on Saturdays (this became important) and using his "authority" as a "postal inspector" took out dozens and dozens of very large Priority Mail cartons (I know because I saw a video from just one single occasion, where he took enough cartons to fill two hampers) which he suspected of containing drug shipments from other dealers. He "seized" these and loaded them into his personal vehicle, took them away and presumably sold the other guys' intercepted drugs for his own profit. What a sweet deal.

It is important to observe here that, during all these months, nobody, but nobody in management, from the several supervisors to the plant manager, ever challenged Mr. Wiggins. In fact, they later claimed they didn't even know he was in their building.

Saturday after Saturday, month after month. I would ask any supervisor who may be reading this:

*continued on page 11*

## — All Aboard —

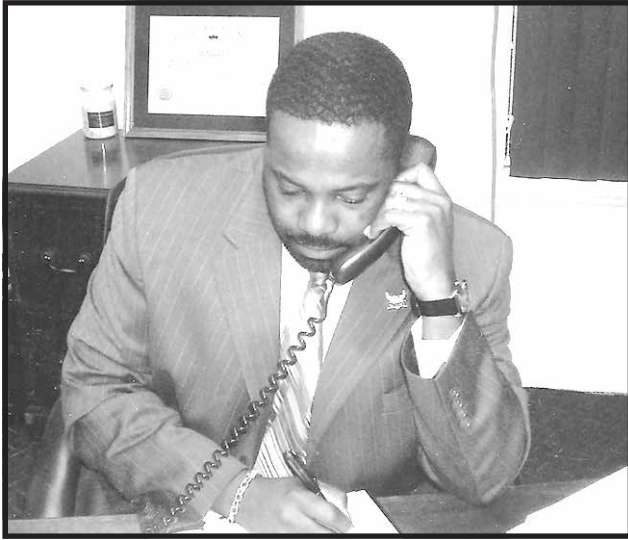
'The 2013 Adult Christmas Party was held on the "Detroit Princess Boat" in December. Good drinks, food and music and a good time was had by all.



# — Ask The President —

## Retreat Rights Granted!

by Danny Sawicki and Christopher Ulmer



Christopher "Chris" Ulmer, President

### Retreat Rights, Excessing, Bid And Arbitration Information

In this session of "Ask The President" we are going to focus on the specifics of the retreat rights that were recently granted to those of us that were un-voluntary excessed to other crafts and/or states. We are also going to touch on other pertinent issues at the Post Office.

**Q** - Mr. President, you and the officers worked long and hard to get our retreat rights granted. When will everybody's retreat rights be granted?

**A** - Danny, The actual date will depend on that particular employee. Some other employees may have a later date because they have to make arrangements to move back therefore they may take a longer time to return.

**Q** - Is it true that there are going to be two waves of employees retreated and do you have an idea when the second wave may be retreated?

**A** - It may take 2, 3, or 4 waves depending on when people chose to return. The USPS must afford all excessed employees still on Postal rolls their rights to retreat like the Arbitrator ruled.

**Q** - So it is going by seniority on who comes back first in that specific craft whether it be clerk, maintenance, motor vehicle craft etc.?

**A** - Yes, all employee movement (SENDING OR RETURNING) is done by seniority.

**Q** - A couple weeks ago at our station, management came up to us and asked if we wanted to stay as a carrier. They stated that we would keep our carrier seniority if we stayed and not lose that seniority. Now

*I thought if we declined our retreat rights in state, that we would lose all carrier seniority and be regulated as a Part Time Flex and start all over regarding seniority in that craft. Can you clear this up for us?*

**A** - First off, if employees excessed from one craft to another craft within their installation they (have no choice) must come back to the craft they were excessed from, unless it is an APWU represented craft. It is not surprising that USPS management is doing but what they are doing that has bearings on the employees rights to retreat or relevant contract language. The USPS telling employees they will maintain their seniority in another craft which we don't represent would be totally upon the carrier union to enforce, but frankly speaking it would violate the letter carriers craft employees.

**Q** - Chris, I know we've talked about this before, but since things are rolling we must visit this again. What about those that were excessed out of state and decline retreat rights, do they lose their seniority and please expound on their status?

**A** - Employees who were access out of the state, out of the craft, out of the installation all have a right to decline their retreat rights, and they have the same rights to accept them. They regain their craft seniority if they were excessed to another craft (they began a new period of seniority in that new craft) and they chose to return to the craft from which they were excessed. In the case where employees who were excessed stayed in their craft they took their seniority with them to the new installation.

**Q** - Now if the out of staters accept the retreat rights, will they get any moving expenses for their return?

**A** - No, The decision to retreat is a voluntary decision and therefore the employer does not have to pay for the voluntary act of an employees accepting their retreat rights.

**Q** - Once we are retreated are we protected in any way from being excessed again in the future?

**A** - No, Excessing can occur at anytime at any installation for any one of the accepted reasons the USPS can reduce the number of employees. If anyone tells you that you cant be excessed they are not telling you the truth.

**Q** - Concerning recent hires PSE's and others, can they be subjected to excessing and elaborate on the status of excessing in the Post Office?

**A** - I can only speak on PSE's because they are the new temporary permanent supplemental workforce exclusive to the APWU represented crafts. PSE's are not subject to excessing. The USPS's can lay

them off as the workload diminishes, in reverse seniority order, starting with the most junior PSE up to the senior PSE.

**Q** - Can the post office make us re-bid once we get back?

**A** - The USPS have the contractual right to realign bids which could require employees to bid on reposted bids.

**Q** - Let's get back to retreat rights. Chris, explain to the members the arbitration process. I understand this matter was settled in the courts. Is our retreat rights a specific mandated court order or can the Post Office somehow wiggle their way out of this mess they put themselves into and make us stay or delay and drag out the process?

**A** - The grievance process is one of many forums within the USPS that allows two or more parties to resolve their differences. The appearance before an Arbitrator is the last and final step of any grievance and therefore the arbitrator's ruling is final and binding, so the USPS can't just ignore his ruling for it resolves the issues of the grievance and is final and bending. No the USPS will not make you all wait any longer. This issue is not in the courts and will not be due to the Arbitrators ruling.

**Q** - Mr. President, I have been getting a lot of questions regarding Out of Schedule pay that the post office may owe us for their blunder. I know this issue is in the courts right now, and I know it may be hard to speculate at this point if we will be getting out of schedule pay and how much? However, can you give us an idea if we may get something for the pain and suffering that we endured and when it may be granted?

**A** - The Arbitrator awarded a full back pay remedy, fashioned in the same manner as out-of-schedule pay. The arbitrator also granted a make whole remedy and the DDAL believes a make whole remedy can be satisfied with the USPS paying each affected employee the equivalent of an extra 50% premium for all hours up to 2080 per year from the time the employees was removed from their GWY bid until the time they were returned to their former craft and GWY. We are currently still fighting the USPS on this issue, the USPS position is the employees should not get one penny so we fight on until the USPS has given the employees what was granted to them in the grievance process.

Chris, thank you for this poignant and valuable information. This is another different phase of life for our members and any correct information is greatly appreciated. There are so many rumours thru management and employees that fly around, so clarification by you and the officers is very important. It is important to contact yourself, the stewards, and or the officers to get correct updated information and I would like to personally thank you for bringing us back home.

**A** - Welcome back home to you Danny and all our dear members.

## FOLLOW US ON SOCIAL MEDIA

by Christopher Ulmer

In the attempt to get information to our membership faster and more accurately, the APWU-Detroit District Area Local has made it where every Member who wishes to stay updated and get information instantaneously regarding events, pickets, parties and/or changes in working conditions, we ask that you follow us on the following social medias:

- [twitter@apwuddal](https://twitter.com/apwuddal)
- [apwuddal on facebook](https://www.facebook.com/apwuddal)

• [www.apwudetroit.org](http://www.apwudetroit.org)

We invite you to follow us on twitter and to "like" us on facebook. Please share these links with other members and friends.

# The Get Engaged Program

by Christopher Ulmer and  
Danny Sawicki

In this phase of President Ulmer's "Get Engaged" program we are urging postal employee's, family, and friends to ask their U.S. Senators and representatives to support the Postal Service Protection Act. S. 316, H.R. 630 and H.R. 961.

The Postal Service Protection Act would . . .

- Fix the Postal Service's imme-

diated financial crisis by rescinding the mandate that requires the USPS to pre-fund the 5.5 billion dollars a year to health care benefits for future retirees. This is a burden that no other government agency or private company bears.

- Allow the Postal Service to recover overpayments the USPS has made to federal pension plans.

- Re-establish overnight delivery standards for first class mail, which would ensure the timely de-

livery of mail, help keep mail processing facilities open and protect our jobs.

- Protect 6-day delivery
- Allow the USPS to develop new products and services that would generate new sources of revenue.

- Protect Post Offices by giving the Postal Regulatory Commission binding authority to prevent post offices from being closed, based on the effect on the community and

the effect on the employees.

Call the capital switchboard at 202-224-3121 to reach your representatives and senators. Pick up the phone and do it! Our jobs depend on it.

*At press time a new resolution was entered in Congress, HR 1486 (The Staples Act). This resolution disallows the USPS from using non-postal employees at non-postal outlets. Please call your representatives to support HR 1486.*

## So, You Think You Don't Need A Union, Do You?

*continued from page 9*

When you have an inspector in your work unit, don't you want to know what he's doing there?

Enter Mike Rothley, one of those employees who can "handle their own problems".

Mike was often the guy working in the dispatch area where "Inspector" Wiggins came to "seize" the packages he was "investigating". After some time, Mike became suspicious of this "inspector" who kept coming in on Saturdays, taking out large numbers of parcels. The next time one of the real inspectors was in the PMC, during the week, Mike remarked to him about an "inspector" that always came in on Saturdays.

The real inspector immediately became suspicious, remarking to Mike that "we don't work on Saturdays". The real inspector, being tipped off, immediately went to review recent video tapes of the work floor, saw "inspector" Calvin Coolidge Wiggins on the work floor taking away parcels, and knew immediately the guy was a phony.

Inspectors arranged to stake out the work floor on following Saturdays. The next time "inspector" Wiggins showed up, Mike advised his supervisor, and for the first time a supervisor actually came up to Wiggins to challenge him, demanding to see his identification. Wiggins, who had to have plenty of nerve in the first place to have pulled off his scheme thus far, threatened to "write up" the supervisor for challenging him. The supervisor was not intimidated, demanded the identification again. Wiggins said it was "in the restroom" and left the floor. At this point Mike Rothley, having seen the quarry disappear, took it upon himself to walk out to the parking lot to watch for Wiggins, to get his license plate number if he drove off. Wiggins then came out of the restroom, the supervisor again demanded identification, this time Wiggins claimed it was "in his car". Knowing his cover was blown, Wiggins headed out to the parking lot, where the waiting real inspectors collared him.

Now, naturally, this whole business was an embarrassment to the Postal Service generally and the Inspection Service in particular. One assumes that somebody high up

wanted an example made of somebody else. And probably somebody high up thought the whole business was an "inside job".

So what happened? After a few months they decided to interrogate Mike Rothley.

That's right, the guy who suspected the imposter, the guy who tipped off the inspection service, the guy that pointed him out for the stakeout team. At this point Mike decided that, in fact, maybe he couldn't "handle his own problems", and asked for a steward, joining the union that very day. And a good thing, too, for Mike.

If not for Mike Rothley, Calvin Coolidge Wiggins might have been trolling the PMC for other people's drugs until the place shut down. Did he get a letter of commendation for assisting in the detecting and apprehension of a criminal imposter who repeatedly stole from the mail? Did he figure prominently in an article in the USPS Great Lakes Area Update, posing next to the Area Vice President above an article entitled; "Alert postal employee foils drug thief posing as phony inspector"? Far from it.

In July 2012, months after the apprehension of Calvin Coolidge Wiggins, the grateful Postal Service issued a Notice of Removal to Mike Rothley.

Every single person at the Priority Mail Center, including everyone in management, failed to challenge or stop Calvin Coolidge Wiggins during his lengthy operation. Mike Rothley was the only person responsible for bringing the imposter to the attention of the real inspectors. How could Mike, and Mike alone, be held responsible for the failings of everybody, most especially the people in charge.

Unbelievable, truly unbelievable. I couldn't believe that anybody could bring themselves to sign such a removal. Yet a supervisor did (she was one of the supervisors who never challenged the imposter, and claimed she didn't even know he was in the building), and a manager did (who was in charge of the whole building and should have known what was going on). I don't know how either of them could live with themselves, but they did. That's what I call personal integrity.

I should point out here, just as further frosting on this nasty cake, that the investigative report that the inspectors completed, did not put the blame on Mike Rothley. I read it many times. The investigative report concluded generally that proper security procedures had not been followed. Mike's name was mentioned, but so were a dozen other people, including two supervisors. There wasn't even a suggestion that anybody had been working in collusion with the imposter inspector Wiggins.

If Mike Rothley worked for a company with no union, he could have kicked and screamed, but in the end he would have stayed fired. He was an innocent victim of an atrocious effort to scapegoat him for the embarrassment of the Postal Service. I state this, because no other explanation fits the facts. The facts showed him to be the only alert employee among a group of postal employees, especially management, who evidently were too intimidated by Mr. Wiggins to challenge him or even check his credentials by calling higher authority. But as I say, without a union to intervene, Mike would have been a powerless victim.

Mike was off work for months. As we pursued the grievance on his behalf, we continued to investigate. Management clammed up tight. To this day I have been unable to find out what malicious, heartless individual(s) were behind the outrage of firing Mike Rothley. All the management people who signed the removal claimed they were told to do it by somebody else, who they would not name. And we sure did "go to the top", contacting the District Manager himself and presenting the whole situation. Here was a chance for the number one guy in the district to right an obvious wrong. He did nothing, in fact, did not even respond to my letters and e-mails.

I could not then, and still can't, believe a responsible organization would treat one of its employees in this manner. But it really happened. As I wrote above, I wouldn't dare write this as fiction - nobody would believe it.

We stewards don't usually have much good to say about inspectors, because in general our relationship with them is adversarial; they are

interrogating members that we are trying to defend. But in this case I will give credit where it is due, and it was a couple of postal inspectors who broke the logjam. The inspectors routinely visited the Priority Mail Center, and Mike Rothley was on conversation terms with a couple of them. When they learned, to their surprise, that Mike Rothley was fired, not only were they as outraged as I was, they were astonished, knowing the circumstances of the case. I met with both of them, and they had the personal integrity, I'm grateful so say, to put the truth of the case on paper concerning the manner in which the imposter Wiggins had actually been apprehended. They both wrote that Mike Rothley, and Mike Rothley alone, was responsible for bringing their attention to the matter of "inspector" Wiggins. They also wrote that the theft of mail might have gone on much longer but for Mike Rothley's information, and they also wrote that there was never any evidence that anybody "on the inside" was involved. I want to commend these two men, whose names I can't put here, for having the integrity to step up to help right a deliberate wrong, a wrong perpetrated by others who themselves were devoid of integrity.

I forwarded the statements of the two inspectors to the acting plant manager. I will also give him credit here. Within minutes of getting the statements, he called me and said he was bringing Mike Rothley back to work, and ultimately the plant manager signed a settlement rescinding the removal action and granting full back pay. And to give the plant manager further credit, he is the only person in management to apologize to Mike Rothley for the way Mike was treated, face to face. Mind you, I still can't discover who was really behind what I have correctly called an "outrage". And the always vindictive Postal Service still hasn't paid Mike his back pay, over fifteen months later.

So the struggle continues.

So for those of you who tell themselves that they "don't get in trouble", can "handle their own problems" and therefore "don't need a union"; I give you the case of Mike Rothley.

# Danny's Mailbag



by **Danny Sawicki**

## POSTAL NEWS FROM AROUND THE COUNTRY

• On December 11th, 2013, Canada's Postal Service said it would cease home delivery over the next five years and substantially increase postal rates. Canadian's will have to pick up mail and packages at so-called community mailboxes (cluster boxes).

Danny – It looks like Canadian's must get engaged and fight this privatization plan. Because that is what Canada and the USPS really want, the opportunity to privatize.

• On December 16th, 2013 seven people were arrested at the Springfield, Oregon mail facility. A crowd of forty people were protesting against the closing of mail facilities across Oregon, including Springfield. The seven were arrested for not leaving the mail dock and were cheered by the group when led away in handcuffs. In the past year, the Post office has closed almost half (150) mail facilities in the country, eliminating many, many jobs.

Danny – These people “got engaged” and paid the price by getting arrested. We all must do our

part by calling politicians and fighting the closing of these mail facilities. If we don't, our plant and/or station may be next. Get engaged!

• In December 2013, Tyson Barrette, a mail carrier from Lanover, Md was tragically murdered delivering mail in the dark. On Jan 20th, a rally was held at the Martin Luther King memorial site. The rally “against unsafe mail delivery in the dark” marched on to postal headquarters.

Danny – Our thoughts and prayers go to the family of Mr. Barrette. Remember we work dangerous jobs . . . first criteria STAY SAFE! if you don't feel safe, don't do it and contact your stewards!

• In December 2013, a mail carrier from Ypsilanti Township, Mich. was robbed of his packages at gunpoint at 7:20 p.m.

Danny – Why the heck is anyone out at in the dark at 7:30 in December?!? If that was a direct order a steward should have been notified immediately.

• **NEWS FLASH:** Staffing of Postal Outlets at Staples angers union.

Danny – As we reported almost two years ago “Bootleg Post Of-

fices” are popping up all over the country. These outlets are not staffed by postal employees. They are at gas stations, Walgreen's, Staples and all over. I wouldn't be surprised to see one at a Subway soon. “Sir, would you like a stamp with your sub?” The postmaster says that this has “nothing to do with privatization”. Yea right if you believe that then I have some “oceanfront property in Arizona” to sell you.

• Did you know that the only

water-delivery mail route in the nation is in Magnolia Springs, Alabama? The mail carrier Mark Lipscomb services 180 homes while dodging alligators, snakes and other critters. He uses a 15ft aluminum mailboat to deliver. Mailboxes face the rivers (Weeks Bay, the Magnolia and Fish Rivers) on the 32 mile route. Prestine water, land and wildlife everywhere.

Danny – Nice gig, especially if you like to fish!

## We Apologize To You

by **Christopher E. Ulmer, President**

The DDAL & the entertainment committee would like to take this opportunity to apologize to any and all members who were offended by the comments, antics, words or anything else used or expressed by the comedians at our 2013 Christmas party.

The DDAL deeply apologizes for any words use by the comedians

that offended our members and their guests. The entertainment committee was unaware of what material or scripts the comedians will use. The entertainment committee feels it necessary to take this opportunity to apologize to all of our members who expressed mentioned that they were offended. The DDAL and the entertainment committee will make sure that this never happens again.



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

Change Service Requested

## 2014 Membership Meetings

The meetings are held at your union hall:  
20530 Southfield Road, Detroit, MI 48235.

February 9 • March 9  
April 13

All meetings are at 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. If you have any concerns, come out and let your voice be heard! Support your union! For more information call your Union office at 313-532-9305.

You do not work for your union,  
you are a part of your union.

**UNION  
SOLIDARITY**  
starts with  
**WUW**

Be involved, OUR FUTURE DEPENDS on YOU!