

THE DETROIT APWU POSTAL WORKER

DETROIT DISTRICT AREA LOCAL AMERICAN POSTAL WORKERS UNION

February, 2017

2011 POSTAL PRESS ASSOCIATION AWARD WINNER

The Voice of the President . . .

2017 State Of The Union Address



**From The
President**

**Keith Combs, Sr.
President**

Hello Brothers and Sisters, it is hard to believe that over a year has passed, and we are here again discussing how to move our local forward. Well, a great deal has been accomplished, so let's get started.

FINANCES

Over a year ago, I spoke about retooling the way we conduct business financially in order to benefit our membership. I pictured us moving away from addressing our bills in the same way that past administrations had. I believe this was important because I wanted to see a difference, so I knew I must look at the way I approached our finances in a different manner.

A year ago, I set several goals, and one of the goals was to reduce our deficit. In January 2016, we inherited over \$120,000 in debt, today we have chopped the debt in half, all in one year. I also wanted to pay off the balance owed to our Attorneys. To date, the Attorneys have received over \$30,000 from us. We are staying on task to completely paying off the balance by April of 2017.

We have stopped the robbing Peter to pay Paul routine of the past. Now we are looking at ways to address the retiree's getting paid their retirement benefits \$300 per the constitution when they retiree. This will at least eliminate one half of the now \$60,000 deficit. This reducing the deficit was a promise from the TEAM COMBS members, and now we believe that the APWU-DDAL will be great again.

GOALS TO THE NEW CHANGES

The Constitution Committee has met

several times to accomplish the mission of reconstructing a Constitution that will make it clearer to read and this will address the unmentioned items in the Constitution that could allow an individual to conduct himself/herself in an unacceptable manner.

We will begin the well overdue payments to be made to the RETIREES upon retirement. We must show them how much we appreciate them.

DEFICIT OF THE UNION

Our union has worked extremely hard to reduce our deficit that is currently only \$60,000. For about 8 or 9 years, our local has passed from one administration to another a deficit of \$100,000 or more. My goal

is to make sure that the TEAM COMBS administration doesn't continue this when we pass on the baton. We have done well, however, the mission is not complete. In the past, our leaders have tried to dump trash into our minds by withholding from us how much debt we were in. However, I intend to be very clear with you, we must pay off our debt, thereby removing their trash.

I was recently told that someone said we have not done much regarding the deficit. Clearly, this statement is incorrect. I will simply say this about that statement. Plato was quoted this way, "wise men talk because they have something to say, fools talk because they have to say something."

BUILDING UPGRADES AND REPAIRS

Our building is no longer being neglected, to date we have a new furnace and air conditioner. The roof has been temporarily repaired, but we must look into a new roof. We have painted some of the building, and the City of Detroit ordered us to remove all water fountains due to the possibility of lead, this too was completed.

I think we should ask the prior administrations to show us the MONEY! In the next two years, we will look at a new front door, install new windows, repair the roof, redo

the lobby and continue on with the painting. When we took over last year, we moved into a building that was regarded a house, we are slowly converting it into a luxury home.

IN SOLIDARITY

My friends, we have accomplished a great deal together. It could not have been done without the donations of salaries from John Merritt, Matt Abdilla, Danny Sawicki and the countless donations from the membership as well as Pat Chornoby, Tamika Johnson-Smith and myself.

I would like to say how grateful I am to the seasoned Advocates we have on board at the DDAL. Recently, John Merritt, Tony

Friday and Keith Mosley have won major awards for our local. Our National Business Agent James Stevenson won for our local an award for

the excessing that many of our retreat employees received.

In 2016, we set several GOALS, all of which we achieved! The Attorneys were estimated to be paid off in early 2017 and that goal is in sight. We wanted to reduce the deficit. The mission is accomplished, with the deficit being half of what it was in January 2016. The MVS Director Rico Cameron and I wanted to make sure that the last 6 MVS drivers that were excessed be retreated in August 2016.

I wanted to reduce the cost of our local newspaper, *The Detroit Postal Worker*. We have spent about \$2000 less on each edition than the last administration, with not reducing the quality and content of our award winning newspaper.

I set out to have more training, we accomplished that as well, having more training and seminars including an OWCP training class put on by the state that I requested. Our local has not had this much training in years. My friends, I think we our on the correct path, so stay tuned for this years achievements.

Until next time brothers and sisters, remember that the world would be a better place if we would learn to talk more about what is right, than what about what is wrong.



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Assist. Clerk Craft Director

Keith Fletcher
Assist. Maint. Craft Director

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Clerk Craft: Dana A. Beard & Clarise Tard	MVS Craft: Charles Diggs
Maintenance Craft: Dale Zanardelli	Mail Handler: Kimberly Durden
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Lopinia L. R. Roe	Everett Hall



Detroit Postal Worker

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Associate Editor: Danny Sawicki

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Associate Editor's Report

Danny Sawicki
Associate Editor

People ask me all the time, "why should I be in the union?" They say, "I've never been in trouble, I've never been in the union office, why should I pay dues for nothing?"

In my 20 year career, before I became an officer/alternate steward, I never once stepped in the union office. Like most of us, I follow the rules and if a situation arises, I handle it myself. However, even if you are that person that follows all the rules, comes to work every day, there may be situations not under your control where you will need the union.

What are those situations you may ask? Well, what if you are falsely accused of something you did not do and you need representation? The Postal Inspectors and the OIG don't play. Even if you are innocent, if there is an ounce of suspicion, it is their job to bring you in to investigate. If you go into an interrogation without representation, get nervous, say things you shouldn't say, you could be in trouble for something you didn't do. It's sorry to say, but we all know the saying "innocent until proven guilty" is not always true. In certain situations with the law, it's guilty until proven innocent. That's why you need the union in these situations. Proper representation can save you many heartaches. In these cases, you use your Personal Union Insurance.

What if, for no reason, you are provoked, harassed, bullied by fellow employees or your supervisor. Remember, zero tolerance for stealing and violence. So do you just sit there and take the harassment or do you retaliate? If you retaliate, there is a good chance you will be put out and placed on emergency placement. Most of the time, in this situation, you are not getting paid until the situation is resolved. That can take a very long time. If you do nothing, the provocation and

Your Personal Union Insurance Brought To You By The DDAL

or harassment will continue or get worse. That is when you use your Personal Union Insurance. You get a steward to intervene, possibly file a grievance if the situation cannot get resolved. The union gets involved so you can be left alone and do your job.

Yes, you never use the union. But, what if you get hurt on the job? We all know we work dangerous jobs. It only takes one defective APC, or one dangerous strap on the floor, and in a split second we are seriously hurt. Now you need the union for OWCP advice, proper forms to fill out and many other factors to consider. On the job injuries is a complicated process and the union helps you thru the process. You think you can do that on your own if you are injured and possibly in the hospital? Again, you can rely on your Personal Union Insurance to help you thru this trying time.

Have you ever been improperly bypassed for a holiday and/or overtime? Do you just say "oh well, I hope they don't do it next time." NO! You get a steward, they investigate, and if it is indeed a violation they file a grievance. The grievance procedure takes time, but if there is a violation you will get a make-up opportunity or get compensated. Again, you being in the union gives you your own Personal Union Insurance.

Let's compare your union to your house or car insurance policy. Cari and I have lived in our house for over 25 years. We have faithfully paid our policies over the years. We all know how expensive insurance is. Over the years, we have paid tens of thousands of dollars with no claims. Well, in September, due to a silly mistake by me, we had a serious kitchen fire. *continued on page 5*



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!

- | | |
|----------------------|----------------------|
| MOURAD AHMED | LORRAINE NICHOLSON |
| NIA ALEXANDER | CLIFTON PADGETT |
| JEREMY ALLEN | SHAND PARHAM |
| INDIA AMOS | ERICA PETERSON |
| ASHLEY BALDWIN | TONI PRUITT |
| CYNTHIA BANKS | LEWIS RAMECHTRIA |
| ROBERTO BECKUM | LaSHAKUR RICE |
| BRIANNA BENNETT | SANAA RICHARDSON |
| CARLA CARR | JASON ROGERS |
| BRYON CHAMBLISS | ANGELO ROSADO |
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| SABRINA COLVIN | DARIUS SIMON |
| REGINALD CRENSHAW | BRITTANY SMITH |
| AIREONA DAVIS | DeANDRE STALLWORTH |
| AARON DAVIS | ALLEN STAMPLEY, JR. |
| BARBARA DAVIS | JALESA STEVENS |
| JAMES DORTON | JOHNTRANIECE TALBERT |
| CARRAH DURDEN | CLAUDIA WALKER |
| TAYLOR EDWARDS | KENDRA WELLS |
| DIONYELL FOY | YOLANDA WILLIAMS |
| JADE GAINES | CHEYENE WILSON |
| RANESHA GASSEWAY | KANARA WISE |
| MARLENE GASTON | JOY ZAWOL |
| DIANE GLENN | PAWEL WOLOSZYN |
| RITA HALES-HURT | VICKEY ALLEN |
| RHONDA HARRIS | KRISTEL RAMPERSAD |
| BRIAN HARRIS | NIKIA MACKEY |
| TIA JACKSON | RAE'SEAN EVANS |
| TARYNCE JACKSON | DARCELL GORDON |
| KENNESHA KELLAR | MOLLY HATCH |
| DAVID KING, SR. | ASHLEY KOLBUSZ |
| JESSICA KNOWLES | IYNA SILER |
| NATHANIEL LEE | GANINE O'NEAL |
| MIKHALE LUCAS | BELINDA SHOULDERS |
| MEGAN MCCOLLA | DENITRA WEST |
| ANNA McMICHAEL | BREEUNA PRIMM |
| COREY MOSS-BALLENGER | JAZZ GREENE |
| COREY MURRAY | |

Welcome



Director of Organization
Darrell Clark



Vice President's Report

Patrick Chornoby
Executive
Vice President

Greetings Union Brothers and Sisters:

I want to wish everyone a very Happy, Prosperous and Healthy New Year. I hope 2017 brings us all an overabundance of good fortune and a stress FREE workplace, even though it is in the Postal Service. There are a few topics I would like to touch on in my Article. I may be repeating myself, however this information is always worth discussing and I hope you share it with your co-workers.

PAE Our MTESC Center

In October of 2016, our PAE MTESC employees began to receive permanent lay-off notices from their employer. Our MTESC center housed in Wayne, MI employed several dozen American Postal Workers Union members. The building was a closed shop, one of our only closed shops across the country. The reason for the loss of union jobs there was because the company lost their contract with the Post Office. The MTESC employees were contracted by the Postal Service to repair, clean, empty, count, stack and ship postal equipment. This included BMC's, wires, tubs, trays, bags, sleeves, APC's and the like. These were all full time jobs and the loss of the postal contract left a lot of our members without a job, just before the holidays.

The company which took the USPS bid from PAE is called Hollingsworth. Hollingsworth is a local company headquartered in Dearborn, MI. They operate a plant in Temperance, MI, which is where the MTESC operations are currently taking place. What is unfortunate is that Hollingsworth has refused to hire ANY of the previous employees who had worked for PAE. Hollingsworth hired employees from the street to work in their plant and even went out of their way to refuse APWU members employment. Back when president Obama was elected, he signed into law an executive order that mandated all government contractors who won government contracts to hire the current workforce. This would save the government millions of dollars in training and hiring costs. It would also guarantee employment for the current workers. Hollingsworth refused to follow this order and has challenged it. The American Postal Workers Union has filed National Labor Relations Charges against Hollingsworth, and are currently waiting a decision. We

The Vice President Report

know it is very difficult for our members to be out of work for several months and they should know that we are doing everything possible to seek relief in the court with the NLRB charges. We will keep you updated on our progress.

ABA – ACCIDENT BENEFIT ASSOCIATION

I am sure you have all heard this before, but like I said above, this needs repeating. The Accident Benefit Association is an insurance company that is paid for by the Detroit District Area Local APWU for all active union members. Yes, you must be a union member to be a member of the ABA. Each and every member receives – at no additional cost – twenty-four hour a day, seven days a week insurance coverage.

The ABA covers FREE to union members a \$6,000.00 accident death benefit to your family in case of your accidental death. In addition, and most importantly to each member, is that the ABA covers you for any covered accidents you are involved in and will pay YOU \$12.00 per calendar day for covered accidents when you are disabled from any kind of work or if you

are retired, anything that would prevent you from normal life functions. Union members are covered for 365 days per year and also have a dismemberment benefit. If you are in an auto accident, and you are off from work for three weeks, the ABA will send a check directly to you for \$252.00. If you break your arm and you miss six weeks of work, the ABA will send you a check for \$504.00. If you slip and fall, and miss six months of work, the ABA will send you a check for \$2,190.00. These benefits are provided without any medical exam or questions. Never a phone call to your home, and no home visits from anyone.

It pays to belong to the UNION. This coverage is free to members, however, you have the option to increase your coverage, which is guaranteed, to a high option, which pays \$24.00 per day for an accident, and \$10,000.00 accidental death benefit. You can also upgrade to whole life insurance up to \$150,000.00 or term life up to \$150,000.00 with no medical examinations or questions. The ABA offers critical care coverage, basic life for your children and grandchildren and extended accident

benefits, with cash payments for medical care. See your Steward for more ABA benefit options.

Local Memorandums Of Understanding

The Detroit District Area Local has completed local negotiations with our represented offices of the GWY, the DNDC, the Garage, Ypsilanti, Ann Arbor, Lambertville, Taylor, St. Clair Shores, Eastpointe, Fraser, Centerline, Southfield, Lathrup Village, Monroe, Franklin, Erie, Newport, Luna Pier, Whitmore Lake, LaSalle, Inkster, Liberty Branch, Ann Arbor Green Road, Livonia, Livonia Greenmead and Temperance. One item in two of our individual Local Contracts have been sent up to impasse arbitration. Unfortunately, the Postal Service and the Union were unable to come to agreement on vacation disputes in our Southfield Post Office and at our main Detroit GWY Facility. When a decision is reached on these two items in the Local Contracts, the decision will be posted for all employees. For a copy of your Office's Local Memorandum of Understanding, contact your Steward or call the Union Office.



Secretary-Treasurer's Report

Tamika Johnson-Smith
Secretary-Treasurer

Greeting DDAL Members, Happy New Year to everyone! I hope your holiday season was safe and beautiful! Here we are at year two and I would like to thank the members for the opportunity to serve you as Secretary-Treasurer. One of our main goals was to reduce the inherited debt and we did our best to reduce it by half. As we look ahead at year two at the local finances, we still have a long way to go in eliminating our debt. I wanted to share one of our financial goals this year for the local. The first goal is implementing funds into individual accounts:

- General Fund
- Building Contingency Fund
- Outgoing Leave Fund
- Convention Fund
- Entertainment Fund
- Power Fund

We have a few of these accounts to date however; additional accounts will be added to complete this goal. This will provide the trustees and the secretary-treasurer a clearer picture of what funds are available outside of the general funds account.

Financial Goals For 2017

Building

Our building still needs (TLC) tender loving care repairs to be done. We are forging ahead with small projects such as painting and as needed repairs and replacements.

Dental/Vision

We are currently doing an audit to verify that you have the proper coverage and also the correct dependents on your plan with Golden Dental Plans and Midwestern Dental.

Dependent Requirements

- The dependent is no more than **25 years old (once the dependent turns 26 years old their coverage will end.)**

- A dependent of any age for whom the employee has **legal guardianship**. The member must provide a current copy of legal documentation (guardianship papers).

- Coverage for dependents not meeting the above requirements will be terminated effective **immediately**.

If you do not have any dependents please indicate that you have single coverage and the plan that you have.

Members

We currently have 1,773 and counting members and 174 non-members. I want to THANK the membership for packing on the

patience for this contract. National has afforded us some additional tools to use when management is in violation. The 2015-2018 Collective Bargaining Agreement is available now.

Don't Forget To Update Your Details

Please assist Your local in updating YOUR information. Recent events in YOUR lives may have change like the following information:

- Change of name
- New address
- Telephone (Landline or Cell)
- Dental & Vision information (Children turning 26)

P.O.W.E.R. would like to welcome everyone to **Women's History Month** at the local on Saturday, March 25, 2017 from 1pm-4pm.



Let your voice be heard, attend your union meetings!



Clerk Craft
Director

John Merritt
Clerk Craft
Director

This is my first article for *The Detroit Postal Worker* in the new calendar year, and I'd like to inform the membership regarding, as well as to invite the membership to join in, the direction in which I want the Clerk Craft to proceed this year.

We have a number of perennial problems which have never gone away in the thirty years I have been involved in the union business. These problems have never gone away primarily because we as a group get comfortable with a certain state of affairs, even though that state of affairs is detrimental to us as a collective bargaining unit. While I may be offending some members by identifying these problems, I must nevertheless do so.

OVERTIME: American labor unions fought since the beginning of the 20th Century for the 8-hour day and 40-hour work week. Eight hours a day and 40 hours a week is considered full-time employment in this country. But overtime work hours in the Postal Service are runaway out of control. Letter carriers are out delivering mail long after dark, including long after dark on Sundays. This is not merely a matter of working late, it is quite literally dangerous. Nobody expects a letter carrier to be up on their porch after dark on Sunday trying to deliver Amazon packages. Letter carriers have repeatedly reported to me their fear of delivering late, and their confrontations with startled or angry postal customers who don't expect people banging on their doors after dark. Also, carriers can't very well read addresses on mail as they walk along *in the dark*. But it isn't just letter carriers working too many hours. At Ypsilanti, for example, it is reported that at least one clerk worked 100 hours in a week. That is *two and half times a work week!* In mail processing operations at the Processing and Distribution Center, as well as at the Network Distribution Center, employees have *routinely worked 12 hours a day and 60 hours in a week AND MORE* all this year. This has gone on all year, even through the "slow" months of the summer, simply to process routine mail!

What does this indicate? Obviously: not enough employees. Now, employers are happy to pay overtime, even very large amounts of overtime, rather than hire employees. Overtime doesn't earn any sick leave. Overtime doesn't earn any annual leave. Overtime doesn't need

Strategy Going Forward In The Clerk Craft

a vacation. Overtime doesn't entail any retirement pension. Overtime can be cut back or eliminated entirely at management's whim.

But overtime is addictive. Those working excessive overtime get used to inflated paychecks and take on expenses that they otherwise could not afford if they had to live within their means. Remember, you are only guaranteed the hours of your bid; typically from 30 to 40 hours. Overtime could stop tomor-

row, forever, and there is nothing a union could do about it. Management is not required to call overtime if they don't think they need it.

Also, overtime adds no new members to our union. As the clerk craft continues to age out, we look to fill our ranks with new members, who will be coming from the Postal Support Employees. If management can continue to use double-digit overtime to get the work done, rather than by creating and posting new full-time positions, our membership will remain smaller and our organization will suffer in the long run. Overtime doesn't result in any new hiring and overtime doesn't pay any additional union dues.

It is therefore the proper strategy of the Clerk Craft to enforce the National Agreement and get runaway overtime under control; to thereby create a working environment where new employees will be hired and promoted to career positions, and where increase in dues revenue will strengthen our

union going into the future.

SUPERVISORS AND CARRIERS DOING OUR WORK: This is an historic problem for the Clerk Craft everywhere, but primarily at city stations and associate offices. This is a problem which the union cannot fix without active and persistent support from our rank-and-file members. I know how it happens. Your office is short of clerks. Your co-worker called in. You have too many parcels to scan before the carriers

have prepared forms for this purpose, which only need to be filled out by the witnessing member and sent to the steward or to the union office. Management rarely even denies what they are doing — which is why we routinely prevail in these types of grievances — and we get members paid for the violations.

It is therefore the proper strategy of the Clerk Craft to enforce the National Agreement and get runaway theft of our craft work under control;

to thereby create a working environment where new employees will be hired and promoted to career positions, and where increase in dues revenue will strengthen our union going into the future.

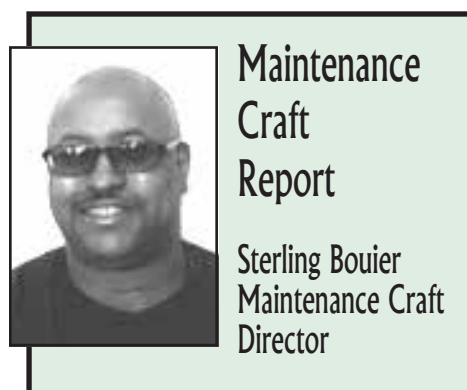
"The important changes in the 2010-2015 Agreement, however, were ignored by management, both nationally and locally in the Detroit District."

ACTING SUPERVISORS:

This is another historic problem for the Clerk Craft. Use of the acting supervisor, commonly called the "204B" is a tactic used by management over the years to pit one bargaining unit employee against another. It is a very unsatisfactory method for selecting and promoting supervisors, which lends itself unfortunately to cronyism and favoritism, and which breeds resentment on both the side of the acting-supervisor as well as the employees being supervised. The union has been accused, and myself personally, of "standing in the way of upward mobility" of those employees who wish to function as 204Bs.

When the 2010-2015 National Agreement was created, both the USPS and the APWU recognized that the continued use of 204Bs needed modification. Several very important changes were agreed upon by both management and the union and which were intended to limit the use of 204Bs, with the particular

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Maintenance
Craft
Report

Sterling Bouier
Maintenance Craft
Director

Hello Union Brothers and Sisters, My name is Sterling Bouier. I am the current elected Maintenance Craft Director for the APWU DDAL. I would like to begin by saying Happy New Year to everyone.

There was a solicitation for stewards at the beginning of the year. I would like to take this time to thank those that chose to sacrifice their

time and efforts to assist me in making our lives and work environment better for all our maintenance employees. We will work as a team to protect our rights contractually and to demand respect from management as we represent the American Postal Workers' Union! We plan to try our best to stay on top of issues as they occur and to ensure that things are done properly (contractually correct).

If you are a newly converted PSE to career employee, please ensure that a request has been submitted for you to receive your clothing al-

Thank You Stewards For Your Hard Work

lowance, which is currently \$89 for custodial employees. You will be issued a uniform allowance credit card and the credit will be applied annually on your anniversary date. If you do not spend it, the credit does not roll over. You forfeit it. The funds may be used at authorized Postal Uniform shops or at online authorized websites and catalogs via the mail. If anyone has any questions/issues/complaints pertaining to maintenance craft, please feel free to contact me at 313 965-1398 [maintenance office at GWY].

In Union Solidarity.

PSE Conversions



NDC
Facility
Director

Debbie Winger
NDC
Facility Director

As you are aware there have been several PSE conversions that have taken place on January, 21, 2017 and it appears that there are never enough conversions for the employee's that are waiting patiently. And understandably so. Management passed out a preference sheet in order to determine by seniority which PSE's would be placed into what position as part of the conversion process that took place on January 21, 2017. There

were 18 residual positions listed on this preference sheet but only 15 PSE's from the seniority roster were requested to preference into these positions . . . which would have left 3 positions remaining. The union has several grievances filed for the remaining 3 positions for the employees involved that were next on the seniority list to be converted but that were not requested to preference a position. We currently also have a request for information in to determine why 3 positions remain unfilled in spite of management knowing that they were residual positions and should have been offered to the next PSE's in seniority order.

While also looking at the preference sheet that employees were requested to bid from in that same

conversion process it has also been discovered that the residual positions that had been discussed in the grievance procedure are not the same as what the newly converted employees were given to preference from. In reviewing the documents discussed in step 2 meetings the union has determined that there are potentially an additional 14 positions that are unaccounted for and at this time we are trying to determine the status of those residual positions. Grievances are in place for these 14 positions which hopefully will lead to more conversions.

The union is aware that many PSE's are frustrated and please understand that we share your concerns as the Postal Service has made this process more difficult than it should be. Over the past sev-

eral months, we have had delayed conversions based on a wrong seniority roster and now there are discrepancies in the amount of residual positions. The union most recently has filed labor charges with the NLRB related to requests for information pertaining to these residual positions so that we can better have the appropriate grievances in place to maximize conversion for PSE's.

There are so many rumors circulating throughout the facility and at this time I ask that if you have any questions or concerns to please see myself or any other steward and we will be more than happy to show you all information related to PSE conversions. Although it should not be. It is actually more complicated than you think.

Strategy Going Forward In The Clerk Craft

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provision that much work formerly done by 204Bs would be taken over by the newly-created Lead Clerk positions. The important changes in the 2010-2015 Agreement, however, were ignored by management, both nationally and locally in the Detroit District. Because management clearly intended to disregard the changes in the contract, it became necessary for your Detroit District Area Local to actively pursue grievances to enforce the changed provisions.

In two landmark arbitration awards, in June and December, this local union has prevailed in grievances filed concerning use of 204Bs

in violation of the contract at the Detroit Network Distribution Center and the Detroit Processing and Distribution Center. Management has been ordered in each case to "Cease and Desist" utilizing acting-supervisor 204Bs in violation of the National Agreement, as well as to assign most of such work to Lead Clerks, as was the intention when the important changes to the 2010-2015 were made. Additionally, significant financial penalties were imposed on the Postal Service for the violations. The intention of the union in pursuing such grievances to arbitration, with a successful outcome, is not to "stand in the way of upward mobil-

ity" of anyone desiring to be a 204B. Nothing in our pursuing of grievances on this matter in any way impedes an employee's prospects to enter management. What our pursuit of these grievances does do — as was the intention when the contractual changes were made — is return work to the Clerk Craft in the form of newly-established Lead Clerk positions.

It is therefore the proper strategy of the Clerk Craft to enforce the Na-

tional Agreement and compel management to comply with the important and significant changes made to Article 37.3.A.8, bringing management into line with the much more restrictive provisions for use of 204B acting supervisors, as well as the new requirement to assign much of former 204B work to Lead Clerks.

As your Clerk Craft Director, I am committed to the strategies described above.

Your Personal Union Insurance Brought To You By The DDAL

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Thankfully, nobody was hurt and we got everyone and the pets out safely. However, extensive smoke damage was prevalent throughout the house. We were put in another residence for three months. Every stitch of cloths, every tool, knife, fork . . . I mean EVERYTHING was taken out of the house to have the smoke taken out. The whole inside of the house needed remodeling due to the smoke damage. Can you imagine if we didn't have insurance? We would have lost everything. The same goes with you being in the union. It is your Personal Union Insurance. Yes, it may be true you never use the union, but you never know, one day you may need the union to save your job, so you don't lose everything.

Now let's talk about other ways you can use the union. Your dues pay for the Accident Benefit Plan (ABA), which gives MEMBERS only free accident and injury insurance. These benefits, along with our cost

of living increases, our guaranteed salary, our no lay-off clause (6 years seniority), our night differential, our holiday pay, overtime, etc., are all negotiated by the union. These benefits are not guaranteed and the union must fight for them every contract.

Even though most funds for the Halloween party, the Christmas party and picnic is raised by fundraisers, the union puts on these fine functions to thank the membership.

We give you retirement information and advice. We give you FMLA information advice and forms. Your union represents you whenever you need it. The benefits listed in this article are just a few of the things the union does for you.

In the end, instead of asking yourself or others, "why should I be in the union," maybe you should ask yourself "why shouldn't I be in the union?" The Detroit District Area Local, your Personal Union Insurance.

Campaign for Postal Banking

The Campaign for Postal Banking is a coalition of consumer, worker, financial reform, economic justice, community, civic, and faith-based organizations calling for low-cost, consumer-driven financial services via the Postal Service. Products and services could range from check-cashing to bill payment to savings accounts to small loans. Postal banking would benefit consumers who do not have access to traditional banks. The expansion of services will also strengthen our public Postal Service. To learn more, visit www.campaignforpostalbanking.org.



Settlement Updates



NBA Central
Region

James Stevenson
National Business
Agent Central
Region

I received many calls on recent payouts that employees have been receiving. I would first like to state that whenever the Union files a grievance it is our intent to obtain as much relief as possible for as many aggrieved employees that we can. The DDAL has been very successful in obtaining relief for a great number of employees.

In 2013 over 900 clerk craft employees received approximately \$600 each which included clerks from the City Stations, GWY, and the former Priority Mail facility. Also in 2013 approximately 70 employees received right around 2.4 million dollars for the improper excessing and denial of retreat rights. In 2014 over 200 City Station clerks received \$450 for carriers and supervisors performing clerk work. This is just to name a few.

In December of 2016 two additional significant settlements were reached in which approximately 100 clerks received \$1000 and another 30 clerks received \$5,000. The \$1,000 checks were for crossing craft violations in which 9 stations which had the most violations were compensated. Many employees wanted to know why every station did not receive the \$1,000.

The short answer is that we did not have statements or proof from each facility. A lot of times employees witness violations but they do not want to say anything or provide

a statement which is their right but the downside of that is that when it is time to prove the case that silence is often detrimental in obtaining relief. Most of the testimony at the hearing I actually provided my personal eyewitness testimony by surprise visits at the stations at 5:00 a.m. and at closing time. We had another very brave clerk (I shall not name because she caught Hell back then) who testified and was very instrumental in us winning the arbitration. The APWU and the USPS entered a remedy settlement for employees at the 9 stations.

We even have had success at the Northville Post Office outside of Detroit in which each clerk received \$2000 during a separate arbitration proceeding (December 2015) for crossing craft violations. The USPS can easily avoid these type of payouts by simply ordering the supervisors and letter carriers to "KEEP YOUR HANDS OFF OUR CLERK WORK!"

Imagine the uproar if clerks started going out and delivering mail to earn extra overtime.

I would like to say to my brothers and sisters in Detroit that the most significant part of the arbitration award was the "cease and desist" order issued by the arbitrator. That means that even if supervisors or carriers are still performing clerk work today it is a violation of the arbitration award and the union can still file a grievance "Today." It is not so much a question of whether it is a violation but the real question is how willing are we as employees to

get involved and inform the union as to what is going on. I believe that the preservation of clerk jobs and adherence to the contract is most important.

If supervisors or carriers are passing out mail, throwing or scanning parcels, dropping tubs, staging DPS,



retrieving vacation holds, certified, or parcels over the window, throwing box mail, performing dispatch, passing out accountables in the morning or clearing the carriers in the evening, or any number of clerk craft duties — you do not have to personally challenge management but at a minimum write a statement and inform the union.

The \$5,000 checks was a result of a settlement regarding the 30 remaining employees who did not receive any compensation from the prior excessing case. The excessing in Detroit created an enormous amount of hardship on many employees and their families. Although

no amount of money can take away the pain and inconvenience that some of our brothers and sisters endured we were pleased to make their day a little bit better. It will not pay off the house but it makes for a very good week.

What is cooking in the hopper right now? We were successful this past December 2016 in a monumental grievance filed back in 2013 which involved the improper use of 204Bs at the City Stations and the GWY facility. The arbitrator awarded that clerk craft employees be compensated at the OVERTIME RATE for all hours worked

by the 204Bs from June of 2013 all the way to December of 2016. What is amazing is that I actually gave management a deal for all of 2012 if they would just stop violating but they kept right on violating despite a signed settlement. Brother John Merritt is currently negotiating the remedy payout on the arbitration award and will keep the membership apprised of any developments.

In closing I would like to state that I enjoyed all of my years fighting for the DDAL and I will always do whatever I can to protect the rights of our hardworking Brothers and Sisters. Although I am now a National Officer I will never lose my commitment to the employees of Detroit and the DDAL. In Solidarity.

DDAL Christmas Bazaar

The DDAL's first annual Holiday Bazaar was held at your union hall on December 3rd. There were tables of unique arts and crafts for sale, vendors specialty items

and even Santa came in to visit the children.

The event was a huge success and it is going to be an annual event at the DDAL.

Children's Halloween Party



On October 29th, the annual Children's Halloween Celebration was held at your union office on Southfield Road in Detroit. There was candy, games, food and fun and the children looked so darling in their costumes.



Santa Clark and children.



Legislation
Director

Regina 'Gina' Favours
Legislation Director

Hello brothers and sisters and Happy New Year! I hope that everyone truly enjoyed their holiday festivities! I would like to begin this article with a positive note. For Thanksgiving, the Metro Detroit AFL-CIO prepared and distributed 100 food baskets and for Christmas we prepared and delivered over 1100 baskets to families in need. These were union members who have been laid off or are under-employed (shortened hours) and families in the community and they were so thankful and appreciative as they drove through the line getting their baskets.

Okay that was the good news. So, during the lame duck session in Lansing there were a couple of bills (SB 279 & 280) that we did stave off (at least for a minute). I am not sure what the status is right now but I do know that our new Legislature came out swinging. Okay, now to the business at hand, it would be an understatement to say that I was (maybe still am) hurt and dismayed by the outcome of the election. All during and even after the election, there were many accusations and blame being tossed around. There were those who blamed Senator Sanders for entering the race. There are those who believed all the innuendos, rumors and lies about Hillary Clinton. Finally, there are those who blamed the failed Democratic Party itself and certainly there is probably some truth to all of that. Whoever you choose to lay the blame on, the fact remains that there are still very difficult questions on the circumstances of our election. I also wonder now if you are still happy with the decision you made. I would really like to know why some were so adamant in their belief that the "hacked" e-mails somehow made Hillary guilty of something. And now that there is more evidence of "hacking" those same folks that condemned Hillary now want to totally dismiss anything remotely related to "any hacking"! I would like to know why the "other" train continuously hinted about the "popular" vote they were so sure he would get while believing that Hillary would get the electoral votes and how they would not accept it IF IN FACT that would happen.

So now, fast forward to election night and now suddenly, there is no more talk about "a rigged system"! I believe we all know what their side would be saying and doing if the outcome had not gone their way. I mean, they all said so repeatedly. Now I just wish that folks would stop yelling "sour grapes", or "you lost so

get over it" every time someone has a question or comment about the election. We have a right to express our opinions, dismay, and doubt the same as you do.

Also along those same lines, I have not turned away any FRIENDS who had a different opinion than I did. I cannot say honestly that I UNDERSTOOD or accepted their opinion any more than they accepted mine but we are all entitled and that's what makes us the most diverse and widely accepted country that we are. This whole process (fallout) is about so much more than that. It's about our Democracy and the sanctity of our voting rights. It's about the protection of our constitution and equal rights for everyone. At least that's what it's about for me. I can also say, unequivocally that if it turns out that he does good for (and not hurt) our country I can say I was wrong (no harm/no foul) and I apologize. If it turns out that he destroys us more than helps, what will (or can) you say? If in fact millions of folks lose their health care and then cannot get other coverage, what can you say? If the hospital or doctor makes an error and you can no longer sue, or just say they stop your treatments, what then? Let's look back at just some of the things he said, for instance . . . he says he wants to "make America great again" and I ask in relative to what? Is he speaking of a specific time in history? He says one thing one minute and something else the next and then says "I didn't say that"! He has been allowed to say vicious, venomous things to and about folks and then we are just supposed to excuse and forgive what he said. But on the other hand, when something is said and/or done to him, prejudice, unfair treatment, and "bloody murder" is screamed. To be clear, this is not a beat up on him article but rather just pointing out some of the facts that I have noticed. Now we will just have to wait and see. I must say the start does not LOOK to promising, given the folks he has chosen as his cabinet. In each case, it appears that he has nominated the FOX to take charge of the henhouse (again, my opinion). Everyone that he has nominated is and has been either pro privatization, pro war, pro big business/corporations, against public education, against Medicaid/Medicare and so forth. So now we get to the question that I hear most from everyone: if he's so bad then why was he elected? I can only respond with the responses that folks gave as I was canvassing and phone banking which again comes back to hatred, bigotry, and just plain old apathy. Most of those I spoke with said "I don't want him, but I can't stand her"! Others said "she is the same and Pres. Obama and I didn't vote for him"! Well we can't really do anything about a person's feel-

ings of hate or racism, short of loving them in spite of; but when it comes to apathy that is something different. When folks say to me "it doesn't matter", or "my vote doesn't count anyway" it tears me up inside. I then ask if they vote in every election. Most do not. I ask if they call or write their legislators; most say no. To that I ask WHY??? So you just let people run for office, don't try to find out anything about them, don't know if they care about you, your situation, your community, your safety or basically your life and then you expect . . . what? I hear so many folks say that the Democrats "take us/our vote for granted"! I have never heard that from a Republican (but they get out and vote). I hear "they only come around when they want our vote"! And I dare say that is probably the only time you even see, hear or know their name. I must ask; have you ever talked to him/her and asked anything specific of them. Have you ever called or wrote to thank them for anything they have done? Do you call them on issues whether economic, employment, service or safety related? Do you ask or try to find out how they voted on an issue? Do you vote in the midterm elections? That is where it begins. It starts with those you elect to city councils, county commissioners, mayors, school boards and state representatives/senators.

Brothers and sisters, if we are going to ever regain real democracy, this is where we must start. We have let this go on far too long. There are a few things I am asking you to please pay attention to. The time is now to begin preparing to change our state legislature. Talk to your current Senators and Representatives. Go to their coffee hours or ask for a town hall meeting. Find out what they have done and what they will be doing this year.

In 2018 we will be voting for a new Governor, please do not wait until next year to begin seeking information. I wish we could have gotten rid of tricky Ricky in his first term but again too many folks voted "against" a good candidate because they "didn't KNOW" him and for a businessman. I said it then and I say it now, WE ARE PEOPLE, NOT "A BUSINESS"! And look where we are right now. Folks there are many laws being passed right now that are anti worker, anti-public education, anti-union, anti-regulation, and just plain anti-everyday citizen. Under



this legislature, we have had the largest city in the state go bankrupt, we've had a city poisoned causing long term damage to seniors and children. They have usurped your rights and violated the constitution on so many levels. They have decimated public education and are still going after the teachers. We voted no on Right to Work and they simply re-wrote it, attached appropriations to it and passed it anyway (going back later and removing the appropriation). As of right now they are planning to repeal the prevailing wage law. They are passing laws to fine folks for picketing. Now add all of this to what is happening nationally and I can honestly say that we must get involved and get active!

The Michigan Democratic Party Convention was held on February 11, 2017 at Cobo Hall. Brandon Dillon retained his seat as the party chairperson and Jonathan Kinlock and Rick Blocker retained their seats on the 13th and 14th Congressional Districts. There we will vote for who will be the Party Chairperson. We will also be voting on your chairpersons for your Congressional District. For those who are unhappy with what has been happening, you should be there to voice your opinion. You will also get to know who these folks are and it's a great opportunity to get information.

I know I must end this article for now but please watch out and pay attention cause our future depends on it! In Solidarity.



DDAL Christmas Party

On December 17th, your annual Christmas Party was held at the St. Maron Banquet Center in Detroit. The food and drink was fantastic and everyone was "cuttin up the rug".

With Deepest Sympathy

We regret to announce the passing of our fellow employees, one of our own. **Sara McGruder - SPBS operator at the GWY, Varnessa Patterson - Clerk at Oak Park, Regina Stevens - Clerk at Grand Shelby and Eugene Coleman, Retired SPBS Clerk and former APWU Vice President.**

Our condolences go out to these families on their loss of a loved one.



Director of Human Relations

Kathy Carter
Director of Human Relations

Hello, my name is Kathy Carter and I am honored to serve you as your Human Relations Director.

I began my career at the USPS in 1978 at the age of 18. In 1983, I went on military leave to serve four years in the United States Air Force. I returned to the GWY

Let Me Introduce Myself

facility in 1987 to continue my career. I have been an APWU steward for about six years and a member for 30 plus years.

I'm no different than you, life challenges have followed me throughout the years as it does to all of us. I have 38 years in the Postal Service and I can say I know a lot about the struggles of being a postal employee with everything that is going on. I will do my best to assist and serve you in every way possible.

I want to shout out to the Entertainment Committee that has done such a great job with the so-

cial events the last year. Let's continue to work together and build positive relations with each other.

Who and what is the Human Relations Director?

- The Human Relation's Director shall prepare and direct programs in the area of equal opportunity, civic, community service, and all related programs.

- Educates and assists in the social and interpersonal relations between human beings.

- Assists members in OWCP and EEO cases on an "as needed" basis.

- The officer identifies problems in the workplace, such as members off on long term absences, in financial difficulties, substance abuse problems and other issues of community interests.

Once again, I want to thank the membership for allowing me to serve you as the Human Relations Director.

2017 Membership Meeting

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

Sunday, April 9th

Meetings are held between
1 p.m. - 3 p.m.

Webmaster

Dale Zanardelli
Webmaster

Your Revamped And Improved Website

considered one of the best designers in the country. Dale is a maintenance mechanic at the GWY on tour 2.

If you have any comments or suggestions, go to the comment section of the website and leave a message. There is much more information on the website than we could fit in this paper. Check it out, we think you will like it. Go to www.apwudetroit.org

Your union website is considered to be one of the best in the country. Currently it is being revamped and updated with much more information. Your Website designer is Dale Zanardelli, also

Major Victory For The Union – USPS To Halt Postal Products And Services Being Sold At Staples

After a three year battle and the efforts of our members and fellow allies, Postal Management informed the APWU that the "Approved Shipper" program in Staples stores was being discontinued at the end of 2017. This program was a

program where the USPS staffed Staples stores with non-postal employees selling postal products and services.

For the full article and more information go to www.apwudetroit.org or the national website www.apwu.org



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

Change Service Requested

ADDRESS CORRECTION

Please help us to maintain our membership mailing list. The form printed below should be completed and sent the Local office whenever you make a change of address. This will allow us to continue our mailings to you without interruption.

Name _____ EID # _____

New Address _____

City _____ Zip _____

Post Office _____

Home Phone _____