

VOLUME 70 NO. 5

SAN ANTONIO ALAMO AREA LOCAL



JULY & AUGUST 2024

PRESIDENT

ALEX ALEMAN

Energize, Mobilize & Organize



I want to thank the members for allowing the officers and delegates to attend the APWU National Convention July 15–18, 2024 in Detroit, Michigan.

The officers and delegates did a great job of representing our local at the national convention. The national convention was attended

by over 2,050 delegates, 280 locals, 43 states, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands.

The theme of the national convention was to **Energize, Mobilize and Organize!**

The San Antonio Alamo Area Local delegates attending the convention were: Alex Aleman, Local President, David Hernandez, Vice-President, Kevin Spencer, Clerk Craft Director “A” (Plant), Ruben Hernandez, Clerk Craft Director “B” (Stations and Associate Offices), Thomas Van Meter Maintenance Craft Director, Faron Hierholzer, MVS Director, Yolanda De Leon, Clerk Delegate, Daphne Belton, Clerk Delegate, Celeste Ornelas, Clerk Delegate, Araceli Reyes, Clerk Delegate, Albert “Red” Cardenas, Maintenance Delegate and Ron Manor, MVS Delegate. I want to thank the delegates for their participation in the contract and craft resolutions.

During the APWU Constitution Committee, the delegates voted to add two full-time national officer positions, Assistant Clerk Craft Director and Southern Region Maintenance Craft National Business Agent (NBA).

The San Antonio Alamo Area Local gained two national officers to represent our local. The two full-time positions are much needed at this time. The positions will be filled by appointment until the next election taking place in 2025.

At the National Convention the San Antonio Alamo Area Local was recognized as one of the Best Organized Locals in the American Postal Workers Union. The San Antonio Alamo Area Local is 90% organized, representing 1000-1999 Employees. Our Local is Leading the Way for Organizing.

During his State of the Union address at the national convention our National APWU President Mark Dimondstein said about contract negotiations, the APWU main goal is to maintain the career “no-layoff” protections, the 50-mile limit on excessing, full COLA’s and annual wage increases, and bridging the gap between wage tiers and an all-career workforce.

The collective bargaining agreement expires September 20, 2024. Our National Officers commenced negotiations on June 25, 2024.

Negotiations are the most important event a union will do for its members. APWU President Mark Dimondstein is our lead negotiator. He will lead the fight for good pay increases. Negotiations are not easy; the union has to fight for everything we get in our contract. Locally we need to show support to our APWU negotiating team. I have designated every Wednesday to wear our union gear, like t-shirts and ballcaps. We need to show our support for a new contract!

In June the local hosted the Texas Postal Workers Union Education Conference June 27-29, 2024. The Educational Conference provided a great opportunity to educate our own stewards. The Educational Conference was well attended by postal workers throughout the state of Texas. There were 150 attendees. We had some attendees from Oklahoma. Our National APWU President Mark Dimondstein made an appearance at our Educational Conference and addressed the attendees. I want to thank our National APWU President Mark Dimondstein for taking time from his busy schedule to attend our Educational Conference. I want to thank our members who made the Texas Educational Conference a great success!

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ALAMO AREA LOCAL DISPATCH

Carlos BarriosEditor
Alex Aleman Associate Editor

This is the Official Publication of the
San Antonio Alamo Area Local,

American Postal Workers Union, AFL-CIO
AFFILIATIONS

American Postal Workers Union, AFL-CIO

Texas Postal Workers Union, AFL-CIO

San Antonio AFL-CIO Council

Public Employees Council, AFL-CIO

APWU Postal Press Association

Texas Postal Press Association

Post Office Women for Equal Rights

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Opinions expressed in this publication are those of the individual writer and not necessarily those of the Editor or the Executive Board.

Articles submitted for publication must not contain negative or derogatory comments about members or the union in articles or letters to the editor.

Deadline for articles to appear in the upcoming issue of the Dispatch will be advertised in the Dispatch.

All articles should be presented in MS Word format and email using Arial and Font 10 to:

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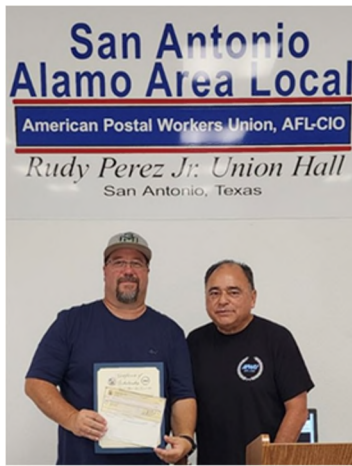
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Home

APWU (apwu195.org)



2024 Jonell McKay Memorial Scholarship Recipients:



Caitlyn M. Shepard, daughter of union member David Shepard from the Maintenance Craft and he is an Area Maintenance Technician. Caitlyn M. Shepard is 18 years old, her goal is to excel in veterinary medicine. She plans on attending Texas A&M University to pursue her bachelor's degree and continue her education with an additional four years of Veterinary School.

Fernando Juarez son of union member Jose Juarez, Del Rio, Texas Post Office. Jose Juarez is in the maintenance craft and is a Laborer Custodial. Fernando Juarez is 18 years old and plans a career in law enforcement. He was recently accepted into Angelo State University with hopes of getting his Criminal Justice degree.

Taje Burney is the daughter of Aaron K. Dabney who works at the Schertz Post Office as a Sales Service/Distribution Associate Clerk. Taje goal is to get a Bachelor of Science in Nursing at Pennsylvania State University. She then plans to pursue a career as a Registered Nurse in Atlanta, Georgia. She plans to gain a Nurse Practitioner License eventually. Taje wrote I've always been appreciative of change and relatively open to setbacks and mishaps that may interrupt or even change my progress.

VICE PRESIDENT

DAVID Z. HERNANDEZ

Time to Empower Our Membership



Hello Brothers and Sisters
Well, summer is almost ending and soon kids will be going back to school. So, be ready for those school zones and the yellow school buses again. Please be careful when you see them. I'm hoping everyone had a memorable summer and everything went well for everyone.

We just finished two major union events this summer, first the Texas Postal Workers Union (TPWU) Educational Conference, and followed up with the American Postal Workers Union (APWU) National Convention.

Hopefully, all the stewards, directors and delegates will use the knowledge to better serve our membership and guide them. As I have said before, changes are coming, therefore, we must keep the fight going. Just as our theme this year

says we need to "*Energizes, Mobilize and Organize*" and all must do their part in keeping our Union strong. At the same time, getting our younger generation involved, is crucial for the survival of the APWU. We witnessed first hand at the National Convention how many experienced knowledgeable stewards are retiring yet they are taking everything they have learned and pouring into our younger generation.

So, if you know anyone that would like to step up to be a steward just let us know. The future is yours so let's help preserve it. **The Electronic Grievance System (EGS)** is working well, and finally getting all of our stewards up to speed. The system allows for our administration and directors to review and follow-up with the grievance process, making necessary changes if needed to make certain the members are well represented. We still don't have 100% of all APWU locals on board for EGS, but eventually with technology it's just a matter of time. We have all seen how everything is changing, so let's not be left behind. The ugly twin sisters, **harassment and bullying** are still rearing its ugly heads at the San Antonio Installation. This disease is not just a local issue rather it is also being experienced at many offices throughout the nation. At the national convention we unanimously passed a resolution to have our negotiation team include this into our contract to hold the Monsters of the Post Office accountable.

In September of 2023, APWU conducted a workplace survey and more than 10,000 members highlighted an unadulterated portrait of a hostile work environment. San Antonio Mgmt. placed **NO ACCOUNTABILITY** for 3 supervisors identified by an Initial Management Inquiry Process (IMIP) investigation. Patsy Garcia, Fonda Belardo and Rick Torres were identified in the survey as the ones causing the most hostile issues for employees. And Plant Manager Kim Calderon places these negatives influences into MDO or Acting roles to foster their bullying tactics of harassment.

(from apwu.org)

Warnings about a hostile climate at the Postal Service are not new. The Kappel Report, which contributed to the 1970 Postal Reorganization Act, observed that an authoritarian style of supervision had become the rule in the Post Office. In the years since, warnings from the General Accountability Office, university studies, and posted unions have gone unheeded. Toxic Workplace environments affect large majorities of Postal Workers. The survey spelled out that the Toxic Work Environment, Bias or Unfair Treatment and Favoritism were the top percentages. A resounding 77.8% stated in the survey that they personally experienced or witnessed a toxic work environment in the last two years?

"...changes are coming, therefore, we must keep the fight going, Just as our theme this year says we need to "Energizes, Mobilize and Organize" and we all must do our part in keeping our Union strong"

Poorly Trained Managers/Hurting Morale in Understaffed workplaces. Seventy-Seven percent stated that their workplace is not properly staffed. Another factor weighed that **43.1%**

strongly disagree that management in their facility has been properly trained to carry out their duties. *Is Management in your facility fair and effective supervisors of the workplace?* 44.6% of those who answered the survey strongly disagree that management is fair and effective. San Antonio, micro managing is at an all-time high with the MDO's making the daily decisions for supervisors assigned to the sections of their responsibility. Acting Tour MDOs informing employees that if they call out then they will not be paid for the leave they requested. Maybe it's time for another Pickett at the Main Post Office. So much for the "ZERO Tolerance" policy.

DBCS

Clerks are still working alone at times, but refuse to file grievances, don't fall into that pit that you would rather work alone. If you are working alone, request to see your steward because you need to protect yourself and your job. The norm is two clerks staffing the DBCS. Don't allow for those who are running automation into the ground to tell you otherwise.

RI-399

APWU, Management and Mail Handlers met to discuss the jurisdiction of jobs. Next Union meeting will on Saturday, August 24, so please come in enjoy a lunch with us, and allow your voice to be heard, in a respectful manner. You can spend time with other union family members.

First time UNION members are always welcomed. Remember the door prize is \$350 dollars and up for grab if your name is selected. See you there.

2 Thessalonians 3:16, Now may the Lord of peace himself give you peace at all times in every way.

In Solidarity,
David Hernandez

SECRETARY TREASURER

JEFF GREENLEE

The Local As A Business



First of all, I hope you and your families are safe and healthy. It seems that Covid and its variants are still hanging around to make our lives miserable so please remain vigilant and protect yourselves and your loved ones.

Every couple of years I feel it is important to say again how the Local, whose first and primary responsibility is to represent the members, is also

ran much like a business with all the fiscal responsibilities associated with the business side of your Union.

The Business of the Local

The business of Labor unions is to protect the rights of workers in specific industries. A union works like a democracy in that it holds elections for its members that seek to appoint officers who are charged with the duty of making decisions for union members. The SAAAL is structured as a locally based group of employees who obtain a charter from the National APWU. Dues are paid by the employees to the APWU, and in return, the Union acts as an advocate on the employee's behalf.

The Local AS a Business

It is important to understand that although the "Business" of the local is representation, and all that entails, the Local must also be run as a business to remain financially viable and enable the officers to represent the members to their fullest ability. As a Labor Union the Local is also monitored by the Department of Labor and as such, reports must be filed, taxes must be paid and all the reporting and recording keeping requirements required by the Federal Government must be maintained.

Let me state that every Check, Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT), ePay, deposit, bill, invoice, charge to the Local's Debit Card, has a paper trail with a voucher or authorization attached and is charged to the appropriate expense account. The expense accounts are used for bookkeeping purposes and reports to the Department of Labor and IRS. NO expenditure is made without such authorization.

The authorization comes from the President, Vice President, or the members. Every expenditure is detailed and reported to the membership at the General Membership Meeting for discussion. 90% of the

expenditures on the financial report are on each report every month, just as you have many of the same monthly bills at home, so does the Union. These bills include such items as officer salaries, labor organization dues, deposits to funds, payroll and other taxes, phone bills, electric bill, water bills, office equipment leases, building security, etc., and the amounts may vary slightly but only by small amounts, and some of those do not change at all.

Every check the Local writes, every deposit, every electronic transfer to cover these expenses is reported at the General Membership Meeting where each expenditure is open to discussion. Approval of the Financial Report is authorization for the expenditures and has been for as long as I can remember.

"It was not in the too distant past (2018) when uncontrolled spending took us to the brink of bankruptcy. There was even a motion made at one of our General Membership Meetings to sell the Union Hall. We must NEVER allow our finances to take us down that path again."

The financial records of the Union are inspected each month by our accountant, and once each quarter by your elected Trustees, three from the Clerk Craft and one each from Maintenance and MVS. Your Trustees certify each transaction looking for proper paper trail, authorizations, and check management.

The Trustees work closely with me to identify any discrepancies and how to better resolve issues that may arise. I am proud to report that since I became the Secretary-Treasurer the Trustees have not found any major discrepancies in my bookkeeping process. Needless to say, to properly maintain the financial records of the Union takes time and that is where the local pays the Secretary/Treasurer to maintain the financial records of the local and serve the members.

The financial records of the Union are open for inspection by any member because it is important that transparency and accountability be the foundation of any organization, especially your Union.

I am proud to report that the financial health of the Local is good and promising. To maintain that financial health, it takes discipline and common sense which will allow this Local to continue to be financially strong. A financially sound Union enables your leaders to be strong advocates for your contractual rights.

We as members and officers have a responsibility to maintain fiscal responsibility, avoid frivolous or unnecessary expenditures, avoid the temptation to spend money just because currently we are in good financial health.

Continue on next page

It was not in the too distant past (2018) when uncontrolled spending took us to the brink of bankruptcy. There was even a motion made at one of our General Membership Meetings to sell the Union Hall. We must NEVER allow our finances to take us down that path again.

We must exercise constraint in the allocation of Union funds and ensure that such allocations are proper, essential, and in the best interest of ALL members.

At this time, we are in good financial shape, but we must remain vigilant and control spending if we are to remain solvent. Please remember that ALL members have a responsibility to ensure that our hard-earned dues monies are used wisely and to the benefit of all members.

Trustee Meeting

I am proud to report that at the July Trustee/Audit Committee review of the financial records for April, May and June, found no outstanding financial irregularities or issues. I want to thank the committee and its new Chairperson, Daphne Belton, for their service to the Local and for their continued vigilance ensuring the financial accountability of the Local, its officers and members.

One last note....I wrote in my last article about the importance of Union Meetings and how decorum and

process must prevail if we are to be productive at the meetings.

The July General Membership was a good meeting in that there was no petty bickering, or personal issues brought before the membership, officers were asked questions, but it did not turn into a back-and-forth exchange, and the business of the Local was first and foremost on the minds of the attendees.

I am not saying that you must agree with everything that happens at the meetings but there is a process to follow and all members, and officers, are accountable to understand the process.

While some of the Officer reports were a bit long, it is important to remember that we did not have a Union meeting in June, so there were two months of information, and much happened in those two months.

So, what I am basically trying to say, is that if you have been hesitant to attend the Union Meetings because you have had a bad experience or you have heard of the pettiness and arguing and that the meetings just dissolve into chaos, hopefully the July meeting was an example that those type of meetings are in the past and we as a Local MUST look forward. I hope to see you at the August 24 General Membership Meeting (yes the date has been changed), and participate in the direction of your Local.

The Postal Service Health Benefits Program FOR ACTIVE USPS EMPLOYEES

We are committed to providing the membership with updates as the Postal Service Health Benefits (PSHB) Program is implemented.

The Postal Service Reform Act of 2022 (PSRA), signed into law in April 2022, mandated the creation of the PSHB Program. The PSHB is a new, separate program within the Federal Employees Health Benefits (FEHB) Program, and will be administered by the Office of Personnel Management (OPM).

IMPORTANT ITEMS TO NOTE:

- OPM will launch a new enrollment platform for health insurance. Information on how to make elections using the new system will be available prior to the 2024 Open Season.
- During the 2024 Open Season, USPS employees and annuitants will be automatically enrolled in a PSHB plan that is the same (or is close to) the 2024 FEHB Program

in which they are enrolled. If no similar PSHB plans are available, you will be placed in the lowest-cost nationwide PSHB plan that is not a high deductible plan and does not charge a membership fee.

- You will still have the option to enroll in a different PSHB plan of your choosing during open season.
- Enrollment in a PSHB plan will not disrupt enrollment in the following federal insurance/benefits programs:
 - Federal Employees Dental and Vision Insurance Program (FEDVIP);
 - Federal Flexible Spending Account Program (FSAFEDS);
 - Federal Employees' Group Life Insurance (FEGLI), or

Federal Long Term Care Insurance Program (FLTCIP);

- The APWU Health Plan has been conditionally approved to participate in PSHB. More information will be available this Open Season. For a list of the conditionally approved PSHB carriers, please visit: apwu.org/pshb-carriers.

If you have any questions, call: 833-712-PSHB (7742), or email retirementbenefits@usps.gov.

KEY DATES

- PSHB plan options and premium information will be available in **October 2024**
- The 2024 Open Season runs from **Nov. 11, 2024 - Dec. 9, 2024**
- Coverage under the PSHB Program will be effective **Jan. 1, 2025**

EDITOR

CARLOS BARRIOS

The Union is NOT for Cowards



Greetings to members of the American Postal Workers Union (APWU) AFL-CIO. Being a Union member means that you are Strong and you may bend but won't break due to issues. One that lacks courage and is weak will run when the battle gets tough. Imagine our military losing one battle and putting up the white flag and surrendering.

It takes a brave individual that sustains the inequalities presented by management and their snappy dogs who go around speaking negative words against the union that will make you stronger. The mere ignorance of some supervisors that don't understand that a successful Collective Bargaining Agreement for APWU translates into supervisors getting a raise due to having to be paid a certain percentage above the bargaining unit employees.

Union have provided wages increases, excellent health benefits, lower rates for health care deductibles, paid leave, a strong pension plan, eleven paid holidays for career employees and 9 for PSEs, sick leave, Sunday premium pay, desirable workdays, and many more for both the strong members and weak non-members. Trust in the process and APWU Leadership will get us a contract that excels.

National Convention

APWU Clerk Director Lamont Brooks along with Assistant Directors Lynn Pallas-Barber and Sam Lisenbe provided information on daily dealings with management and the future upcoming negotiations for a new contract. Lamont addressed the many contractual violations that management continue to do. The main reason is because they don't have the proper training or insight and how to operate within a set of boundaries found in the contract. Imagine for a moment these postal supervisors working for a Fortune 500 company and not following their set of boundaries. They would be out on the street. But the USPS fosters this type of individuals.

No Accountability

Former Fire Chief of San Antonio, Charles Hood, who held that position since 2007 was forced to vacate his position due to an investigation that found him making "**vulgar and demeaning comments**" that disrespected women, according to an investigation by the city of San Antonio. If Charles Hood would have been employed at the San Antonio P&DC, he would still have a job, because no true investigation would have been conducted.

Lamont stated that the Clerk Craft is under ATTACK. Since starting my postal career in 1987, I witnessed the Letter Sorting Machines (LSMs) replaced with newly

equipment only to see that our craft has continue to grow to over 300,000 members over the 5 years after the removal of the LSMs, and still management tries to take our work away and many cases violate safety issues. One won't have to look far only to see automation supervising have no care for your safety by allowing clerks to work by themselves.

Lack of Trust

I wasn't around when our country leaders were making treaties with Native American tribes only to renege on promises with their forked tongues. Yet one can draw some parallels on how USPS management learned these divisive principles, and today they violate a signed collective bargaining agreement. Lamont stated that every APWU member has a responsibility and NOT just APWU officers so file for working alone and a Safety grievance. Lamont stated that the clerk division will NOT negotiate out of fear and will not scare the members. He mentioned that there is a risk, yet one can't gain without taking some risk.

"The sturdy ship APWU built over generations of struggle, will continue to chart the course to safe harbor and a bright future for postal workers and the postal public."

RI-399

The Regional Instructions RI-399 was discussed and we need to ramp up training to fully support the clerk crafts jurisdiction and machine staffing. It's important that we understand our jurisdiction involving our work while Postmaster General (PMG) DeJoy tries to accelerated his 10-year plan opening new facilities and destroy the USPS and take our work.

President Dimonstein

APWU National President Mark Dimondstein said, that the APWU and the labor movement must be a force for good in a troubled world. As a social justice union, we must counter bigotry and race hatred with unity, for division is the game of Wall Street and the bosses. We must counter the attacks on civil and democratic rights with a defense of those rights including voting rights and Vote by Mail. We must stand with those who peacefully protest, for our labor movement was founded on the right to protest. We must stand with all workers who are organizing, standing up, rallying, and striking for a better life. We must reject "want to be" dictators as part of defending our union and worker rights. Looking back on the last few years, the APWU continues to meet the challenges of our times. As former president Moe Biller always said, "**The Struggle Continues....**" and so it does. Through it all, here we stand "union strong!" Even when the seas get stormy, even when winds of change bring new challenges, even in the concerning political movement we face today, we link arms and build unity with labor and community allies.

The sturdy ship APWU built over generations of struggle, will continue to chart the course to safe harbor and a bright future for postal workers and the postal public.

Let's all stay the course and not break when issues don't go your way due to the contract. Be brave and stay the course.

MVS CRAFT DIRECTOR

FARON HIERHOLZER

Qualified & Certified Employees



In the Motor Vehicle Service craft (MVS), a Commercial Driver's License (CDL) and a Medical Certificate are required by the Department of Transportation (DOT) to perform your duties. A national policy was established in 1996 and is still in effect today. The national policy in 1996 allowed Postal Employees' who were required to maintain their CDL to be tested at any medical

facility that performed DOT testing. The Postal Service would accept the Medical Certificates. This national policy was amended in 1998 by memoranda from the manager of labor relations in Washington. The national policy in 1998 stated all CDL Employees are required to have a medical certificate (card) from either a *Postal Service Medical Unit, or a Postal Service Contract Medical Facility.*

This now meant Commercial drivers were no longer authorized to have their DOT physicals conducted at medical facilities other than a Postal Service Medical Unit, or a Postal Service Contract Medical Facility. This is required for all MVS craft employees who perform safe sensitive duties. A grievance was filed in Phoenix, Arizona, and it was sustained in the union's favor.

Arbitrator Jeffrey Jacobs arbitration award stated: *"The grievance is SUSTAINED. The Service is ordered to cease and desist the practice of allowing MVS PSEs, both newly hired and any who have been hired but who have been allowed to drive for the Service without having a Medical Certificate from a non-postal approved medical facility, irrespective of whether such employees may have a valid card upon hire. Arbitrator Jacobs furthered ordered the Service to pay all hours worked by noncertified employees at the overtime rate".* As you may know we currently do not have any PSE's here in Logistics, however the union was informed the new hires are being allowed to operate a commercial vehicle without a medical certificate from a Postal Service Medical Unit, or a Postal Service Contracted Medical Facility. It is important that you follow your PS Form-4533. This form is your route and/or stops. When your scanner and PS Form-4533 are not the same make sure you follow your PS Form-4533 and report it to your immediate supervisor. This could potentially bypass someone on the overtime desired list who volunteered to work.

Again, these runs are supposed to be performed by qualified and certified employees who have obtained and maintained their CDL and medical certificate from a

Postal Service Medical Unit, or a Postal contracted medical facility. This just may be your work. The union has submitted a grievance. The grievance is pending in the grievance/arbitration process.

National Convention

I was provided an opportunity to participate in the Resolution Committee for MVS. The Resolution Committee disputes resolutions from every local. Approximately 15-20 resolutions were submitted to the committee. One of the resolutions submitted was to obtain level increases for the

Driver Safety Instructors, Motor Vehicle Operators, and the Tractor Trailer Operators. There was also a submitted resolution that the committee concurred on making the Vehicle Maintenance Lead Automotive Technicians, and the Automotive Technicians increase their levels by two

levels. Again, these are resolutions submitted by Locals for our National Officers to use while negotiating a contract for bargaining unit employees.

Our Craft Director Mike Foster handed out so much information. This information was for contracting/outsourcing, arbitration awards, and discipline grievance training. I also had a chance to speak with the Craft Directors from Houston and Dallas. They spoke with me about how Logistics is run and how changes management is and/or will be implementing. Their operations are basically the same as ours here. Brothers and Sisters, it is going to be another uphill battle for us these next couple of years. We must continue to do our jobs each day, make scanning a primary function, make sure we are following our PS Form-4533's, and most of all make sure we are staying safe while doing so.

VMF

As National negotiates our next Collective Bargaining Agreement, the Vehicle Maintenance Employees (Lead Automotive, Automotive Technicians) will have some very strong points. Some very key points will be the hourly rates for Automotive Technician outside the Postal Service. The Postal Service will be scheduled to receive fully electric vehicles, and because of this we can argue the hourly rates for Automotive Technicians who are qualified and certified to work on electric vehicles. At this point the Postal Service has indicated the Lead Automotive Technician Level 10 will be sent for training to be qualified and certified to power down, and power up these electric vehicles so the Technicians can work on them safely. Another strong point is the Lead Automotive Technicians are still required to obtain and maintain their CDL.

Thank you for taking time to read the MVS news, and I look forward to discuss this issue with you in detail.

"...runs are supposed to be performed by qualified and certified employees who have obtained and maintained their CDL and medical certificate from a Postal Service Medical Unit, or a Postal contracted medical facility."

CLERK CRAFT DIRECTOR "A"

KEVIN SPENCER

Cracker Jack Management



Greetings Sisters and Brothers, Just getting back from the APWU National Convention held in Detroit, Michigan, whereas you can imagine many crucial topics were covered.

I was not only honored to participate and vote on national/local concerns but also to share in this experience with fellow officers and delegates.

The volume level was high! Texas was well represented in *the house!* There were certainly some fiery and lively exchanges on the convention floor that showed the commitment of the APWU in hammering out some very passionate issues.

One of the things that struck me was the fever from our neighboring states on many resolutions that also impact us so closely on a local level. Indeed, **"no one is an island!"**

"There are some rather absurd situations where those who had jobs abolished on Tour 2 are now being pulled from their new bid job back to DBCS to plug holes now left on the machines"

Further, I was grateful to speak with several health care representatives about the many changes ahead with our insurance coming in Open Season 2024. Rest assured that more information is to follow very soon.

Back on the home front, the strains and difficulties in automation appear to be ongoing. Regular upheaval and disappointment seem to be the overall morale daily. And, unsurprisingly, it appears to be impacting all tours and sections in one way or another. The main complaint? **Staffing.**

There are some rather absurd situations where those who had jobs abolished on Tour 2 are now being pulled from their new bid job back to DBCS to plug holes now left on the machines.

There are simply not enough hands to move the letters. In addition, Full Time Regulars (FTR) and Postal Support Employees (PSE) alike are being pulled from the RBUS, the ANNEX, SPBS, and AUTO FLATS at regular intervals to fill the gaps. This is now starting to implore enhanced questions of the efficiency of the new start times. Simply, most would agree, for now, **this isn't working!!** Even bringing in help from other sections/tours, there are still many DBCS clerks working alone.

What is surprising here is that after speaking with former Clerk Craft Director Carlos Barrios, he stated that when management decided on reducing the complement they understood that abolishing positions would reduce the hand of flexibility they once had by using FTRs or PSEs in automation.

What is most disturbing is how these issues are being addressed with Labor at Step 2 grievances, and are NOT being remedied. This is a simple matter that can be addressed and corrected.

This issue and other simple matters would have been corrected if Plant Manager Kim Calderon would have sent her micro-managed supervisors and MDOs to the Mandatory Joint Contract Interpretation Manual (JCIM) training. The JCIM is signed as a two party agreement between Thomas Blum, Vice President of Labor Relations USPS, and Mark Dimondstein, President of the APWU, AFL-CIO.

Mismanaged automation is a constant safety concern that will no doubt lead to potential injuries. Meanwhile, Tour 1 has STILL NOT returned to their machine assignments. This remains currently denied by management. Although this arbitration award for T1 machine assignments goes

back to 2008, and the problem has now returned once again.

For the moment, be sure that we're actively filing grievances and will continue to seek resolution on a number of these matters and violations moving forward.

As we are on the brink of a new contract it is vital that we stay **Unified** and show **Solidarity** on all fronts! Numerous topics are on the table concerning pay increases, an all-career workforce, 4-day work week, and many, many other concerns that will shape the years ahead. This along with uncertainties that continue to affect **ALL** crafts.

Other concerns on the table include **RI-399**. These inventories define the parameters of clerk work alongside the mail handlers. We will meet with the mail handler's union later this month to discuss specifics and make certain job descriptions are preserved and maintained in each operation.

Please stay hydrated on the job during these scorching summer days. And continue to look out for one another by reporting faulty equipment and any unsafe conditions that continue to arise. Also, do keep your eyes peeled on our local and national websites for the latest on the contract negotiations. I encourage everyone to stay closely informed on the latest updates and developments.

My gratitude to ACCD Giovanna St. John for her ongoing dedication. And endless thanks to Chief Steward Carlos Barrios, Phillip Doxie and Annette Martinez, and Stewards Mary Skala, and Nick Sohndi. There are not enough hours in the day for all the extra work they have endured recently.

MAINTENANCE CRAFT DIRECTOR

TOM VAN METER

National Convention News



Brothers and Sisters, the 27th Biennial Convention bore some good fruit for the maintenance craft. In our maintenance craft caucus, we were able to pass resolutions that will have tremendous positive effects on the craft and personnel.

First, we passed several resolutions relating to bringing your children and dependent family members to National Center for Employee Development (NCED) for training as we understand there are some of us with complicated family situations. I felt so strongly about removing barriers to training success that I introduced the amendment to this resolution that expanded its scope to include dependent adults and wards of guardianship (i.e. foster children).

The next major resolution of great importance was changing retreat right language to add a flag for maintenance craft members who had to vacate the craft; this flag would allow them to bid on maintenance openings or re-assign without having to start over at zero having been a maintenance craft member already. This establishes a pathway back to the craft for those in this situation.

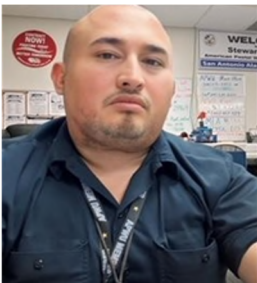
On the main convention floor our maintenance National Business Agents (NBAs) and National Leadership rallied to pass a resolution that created a third Southern Region NBA position. These are all great things and will serve us all well if they are included in the next contract. I anxiously await the outcome of our negotiations.

Lastly, let me say. Sadly, we did not hear all resolutions and appeals on the convention floor; the four-day format is insufficient for true representation. The representative democratic body was made ineffective by egregious amounts of time lost to pundits and political speakers that have little to no impact on this contract negotiation. This may be acceptable and even helpful in non-contract years but, I feel it hindered more than helped. I am currently investigating some entanglements and will be posting my findings in future articles.

LEGISLATIVE DIRECTOR

ROSS CAMACHO

Lack of Intelligence in Customer Service

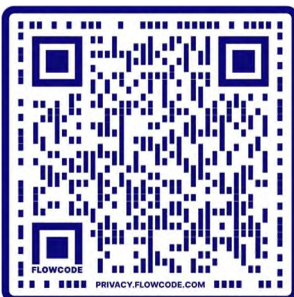


Chronic short staffing has been plaguing our facilities for years. Short staffing fosters a hostile & unsafe work environment. Stressed out, overworked employees don't work safely & lash out at their coworkers. Being short staffed also negatively affects our customers who see long wait times and must deal stressed out, and from their perspective, "rude" window clerk. Not to mention the smaller stations we see often having to close the counter temporarily because they have no staff whatsoever.

This is not some mom & pop bodega. Having to close because their one window clerk had to take a lunch is ridiculous.

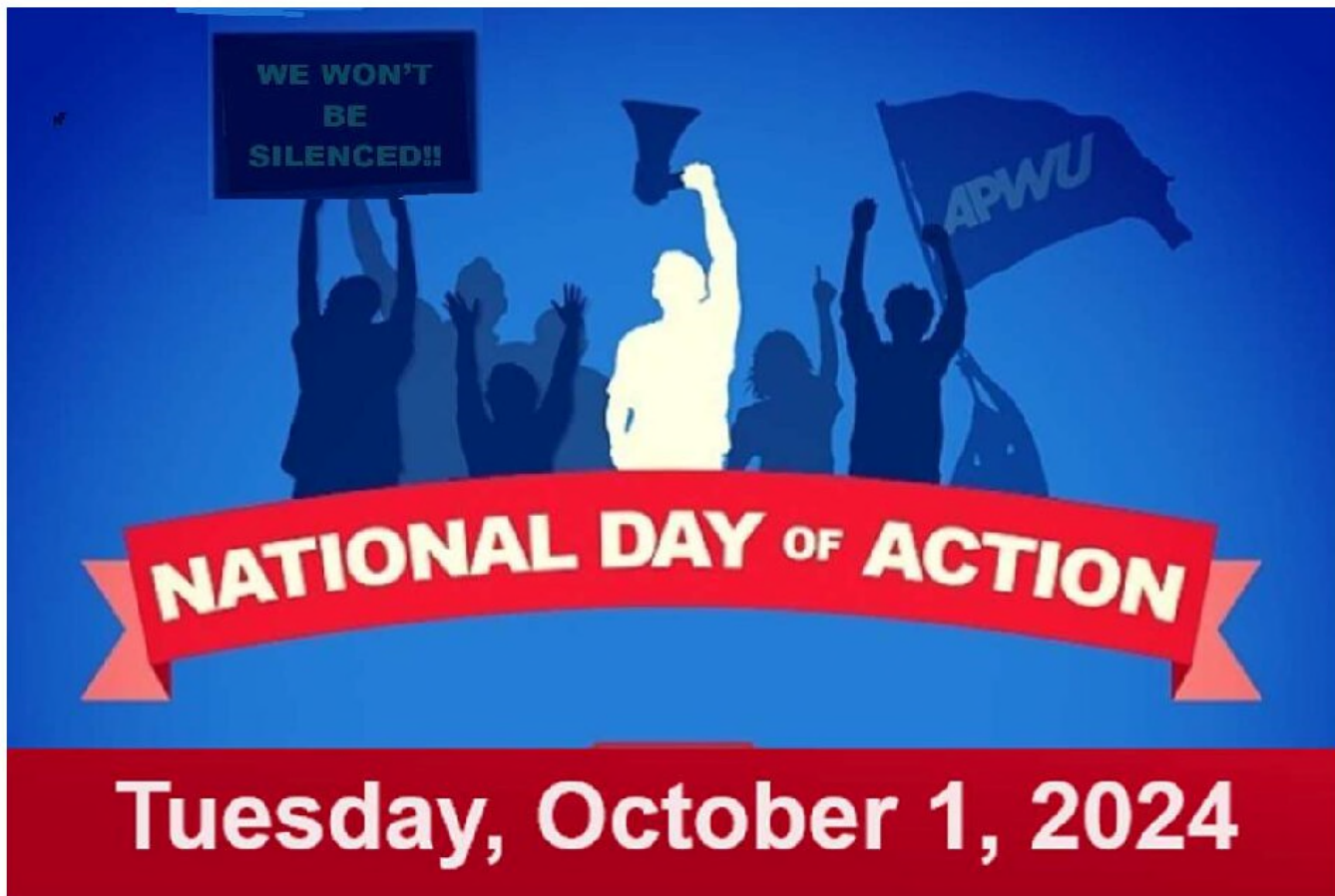
To help combat this issue, APWU launched the "Better Staffing, Better Service" campaign.

National is assisting locals with communications assistance, campaign materials, media help, & advice on appropriate grievances. We have seen progress in increasing Function 1 staffing on the processing side, but management still refuses to increase complement in retail.



APWU said long lines at the post office and missed or delayed mail are due to working conditions from USPS. The union states it's demanding solutions to staffing shortages, along with an end to toxic work environments and poor training of new employees.

APWU can get this done but we need your help. Remember, you are the union. Follow the QR Code to see how you can help. Solidarity as We Continue The Fight to Protect Our Jobs and Secure Our Livelihoods.



WE WON'T BE SILENCED!!

NATIONAL DAY OF ACTION

Tuesday, October 1, 2024

WE WON'T BE SILENCED!!

WE'RE FIGHTING FOR:

PUBLIC RIGHT TO COMMENT

BETTER STAFFING

BETTER SERVICE

GOOD CONTRACT NOW!



MORE DETAILS COMING SOON

APWU President Mark Dimondstein



American Postal Workers Union, AFL-CIO

1300 L Street, NW, Washington, DC 20005

Mark Dimondstein,
President
202-842-4250 (Office)
202-842-4297 (Fax)

August 7, 2024

Dear Union Family,

At our recent convention, delegates passed a motion calling on the APWU to organize a National Day of Action to "defend the right to 'prompt' and 'reliable' service and the universal service mandate that ensure equal service to everyone" and to continue our efforts to ensure the Postal Board of Governors seeks input from the mailing public.

The APWU "We Won't Be Silenced" National Day of Action will take place on October 1. We are asking that APWU local and state organizations plan a demonstration at postal facilities or other public places in their community.

As we did in our Stop Staples fight, the U.S. Mail Not For Sale campaign, and our many efforts to defeat postal privatization and service cuts, this is an opportunity to continue to unite with the public and make the connection between the good union jobs we deserve, and the good postal services the people of the country deserve.

As you all know, our current contract expires on September 20. If we haven't yet reached a tentative agreement with the Postal Service, this is also a key opportunity to rally in support of the outstanding new contract our members have earned with their dedication and hard work.

More details and campaign materials will be available at apwu.org in the coming weeks. The Regional Coordinators have been asked to coordinate the time and location of events across their respective region. Other inquiries can be directed to my Executive Assistant, Stephen DeMatteo, at sdematteo@apwu.org, who is coordinating with Secretary-Treasurer Powell, Director Cash of Industrial Relations, and others who are engaged in this effort.

Postal workers have always stood up for each other and for the communities we're so proud to serve. Let's show management and the privatizers that we won't be silenced because we're Union Proud, Say it Loud!

Sincerely,

Mark Dimondstein
President

National Executive Board

Mark Dimondstein
President

Debby Szeredy
Executive Vice President

Elizabeth "Liz" Powell
Secretary-Treasurer

Charlie Cash
Director, Industrial Relations

Lamont Brooks
Director, Clerk Division

Idowu Balogun
Director, Maintenance Division

Michael O. Foster
Director, MVS Division

Arrian Brown
Director, Support Services Division

Amy Puhalski
Coordinator, Central Region

AJ Jones
Coordinator, Eastern Region

Tiffany Foster
Coordinator, Northeast Region

Yared Wonde
Coordinator, Southern Region

Omar M. Gonzalez
Coordinator, Western Region

Hello, I (Bryan Magill) would like to thank the union members who voted during our election that was held March 2024, and especially to those who believed I could have performed the duties of the Secretary Treasurer. I apologize for the delay in expressing my thanks; the delay is entirely my own.

I have no idea how to entice you, the members of our local to attend our monthly General Membership Meeting (GMM). My main reason for attending is the \$33.82 per pay period.

By attending the GMM I can hold our elected officials accountable for how my union dues are spent. It is also the only place to publicly receive information and instructions from our Union leaders, air issues. And hopefully resolve those issues. If you do not give voice to issues nothing will ever change. Our GMM begins at 11:30am and can run up until 1300 so most of this will apply mostly to working at that time.

So how does one get time off to attend a GMM? If you are scheduled to work on the day of the meeting, then one can request an article 10 letter from their perspective craft director at least 10 days prior to the meeting.

A copy of the article 10 letter will be sent to the Labor Manager. The letter will explain to management the name of the employee attending and provide them with a choice of taking annual leave, leave without pay (LWOP) or submitting a change of schedule. Article 10 letters can also be used to attend training, state or national conventions. Please understand that the union will not be reimbursing any member to attend the meeting.

In the Contract, under Article 10 of the Local Memorandum of Understanding (LMOU) is where the name derives from and where one can read up to get themselves educated.

My current tour is from 0600 to 1430, which I normally request annual leave or LWOP for 3.5 hours. After working for 4.5 hours, I clock out to attend the meeting and provide my immediate supervisor with a PS Form 3971. When I was in the clerk craft I would report to work on the day of the meeting and work 2 hours, then attend the meeting and afterwards report back to work for an additional 2 hours. Another time I had a job bid with a begin tour of 1600 which did not require any lost time.

Once again, when requesting an article 10 letter from your perspective craft director, emails for the directors can be found on www.apwu195.org. Don't wait until the last minute to obtain a letter to attend the meeting.

If you must miss any work to attend the meeting you must account for any time away from work whether you use annual leave, leave without pay, or obtain a change of schedule. Annual leave and LWOP must be accompanied by a PS Form 3971. If you need to request a Change of Schedule, then obtain a form from a union steward or officer and get an approval from your supervisor. There is no guarantee that management will approve your time off work to attend the meeting. I have never had any issues with getting time off to attend meetings.

Finally, if you get approval to attend the meeting then please attend, and do not jeopardize yourself or others from getting approval to attend the meeting.

Thanks for your time,, Bryan Magill

The 1970 Postal Strike that Woke up America and Founded the American Postal Workers Union!!!



Alex Aleman ...

Continued from page 1

The toxic and hostile work environment still exist at the San Antonio Plant. You still have management officials like MDO Patsy Garcia and Supervisor Fonda Belardo roaming the work room floor and creating problems. Abusive managers/supervisors are not being held accountable by upper management. According to our Industrial Relations Director Charlie Cash, "The APWU will attempt during these negotiations to negotiate real accountability for postal supervisors and managers who are toxic, hostile, and harassing".

Locally, our members need to report abusive supervisors and managers. We must not allow managements intimidation tactics to prevail. APWU members outnumber Managers and Supervisors, in numbers there is strength. We must support each other. Managers and Supervisors abuse their authority, the abusive managers and supervisors are not there to do the right thing. They do not care about others, only themselves!

The local union has filed a class action grievance on management's decision to disallow DBCS clerks on Tour 1 to work on the DBCS machine of their choice. The local has a binding past practice supported by an Arbitration Award. The union is seeking all DBCS Clerks with a job bid on the DBCS Tour 1 to be compensated an additional 50% for all work hours. The compensation is ongoing until the grievance is resolved. The local is also seeking monetary compensation for not honoring the Arbitration Award.

Monetary compensation for the Lead Clerks has been made on the \$352,000.00 Settlement Agreement. Forty-three current Lead Clerks, former Lead Clerks and retired Lead Clerks were compensated.

Short staffing continues to be a problem, we find management utilizing city and rural carriers to perform clerk work. We find management utilizing Supervisors to perform clerk work at the stations to justify their existence. At most of the stations and associate offices supervisors perform TACS duties. I have instructed the stewards to file a grievance at every station and office where supervisors are performing TACS duties. I have assigned Vice-President David Hernandez to file class action grievances to create full-time duty assignments under Article 37.3.A.1., states, "Every effort will be made to create desirable duty assignments from all available work hours for career employees to bid. The union utilizing the Maximization/desirable duty assignment (MDAT) tool was developed as a result of the 2010-2015 Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA).

Locally we are seeking members to become stewards. We need another generation of postal workers to step up and continue the fight through the grievance process. A union steward is another union member who the union trained to investigate and file grievances. Stewards are always needed. I want to thank the stewards we presently have. I want to remind the stewards as representatives our primary function is to represent our members. If you are interested in becoming a union stewards call the union office at 210-271-0853.

ELM 545.7 Continuation of Pay (COP) by the Postal Service

To be eligible for COP, an employee must:

- Have a traumatic injury.
- File Form CA-1 within 30 days of the date of the injury and elect COP
- Begin losing time from work within 45 days of the injury.

545.2 Employee Responsibility

To ensure continuing eligibility for COP, an employee must:

- A. Complete and submit Form CA-1 to the employing agency as soon as possible, but not later than 30 days from the date of traumatic injury occurs.
- B. Ensure that medical evidence supporting disability resulting from the claimed traumatic injury is provided to the employer upon receipt from the attending physician, but no later than 10 calendar days after filing the claim for COP. The report from the physician must include a statement as to when the employee can return to the date-of-injury job.
- C. Ensure that relevant medical evidence is submitted to OWCP and cooperate with OWCP in developing the claim.
- D. Ensure that the treating physician specifies work limitations and provides them to the employer.
- E. Proved the treating physician with a description of any specific alternative positions offered by the Postal Service to the employee and ensure that the treating physician responds promptly to the control office or control point with an opinion as to whether and how soon the employee can perform that or any other specific duties.

NOTE: The Employer may controvert entitlement to COP, but must continue the employees regular pay pending final determination by OWCP. OWCP has the exclusive authority to determine questions or entitlement and all other issues relating to COP. The final authority to STOP your COP is OWCP, not your supervisor, manager or someone at the District Office. When you are requesting COP always complete PS Form 3971 for COP and write your claim number on the remarks section of the 3971.

If you are not getting compensated for COP, call the union office at 210-271-0853.

APWU National Convention



Detroit, Michigan



General Membership Meeting

August 24, 2024
11:30 A.M.

Union Hall
13102 Lookout Run
Executive Board Meeting
10:30 A.M.

*****AGENDA*****

Financial Report
Officers Reports
Executive Board
Expenditure for National
Presidents Conference
Wear Union T-shirt

Non-Profit Org
US POSTAGE
PAID
Permit #301
San Antonio, TX

American Postal Workers Union AFL-CIO
13102 Lookout Run
San Antonio, TX 78233

The Alamo Area Local Dispatch is
Published 6 times per year. There is
No subscription price.

SAVE THE DATE

OCTOBER 1 **APWU**
DAY OF ACTION

WE WON'T BE SILENCED



The Deadline for
articles to appear
in the
SEPT. / OCT.
Dispatch is

Sept 27

Your cooperation is
appreciated.

