



San Antonio Alamo Area Local #195

American Postal Workers Union, AFL-CIO



DISPATCH

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SAN ANTONIO ALAMO AREA LOCAL



SEPTEMBER / OCTOBER 2026

PRESIDENT

ALEX ALEMAN

Honoring Our Past, Fighting for Our Future



Honoring Our Past, Fighting for Our Future! was the theme of the American Postal Workers Union's 28th Biennial Convention, held Monday, August 17, 2026, through Thursday, August 20, 2026, at the Los Angeles Convention Center in Los Angeles, California.

I would like to thank our members for allowing our

elected delegates to attend the National Convention and represent the San Antonio Alamo Area Local and its members. What a great honor it was. Our local delegates did an outstanding job representing our membership. They were present and active each day of the convention, participating in discussions and voting on resolutions and constitutional amendments that were introduced.

Representing Our Local

Clerk Craft Director **Kevin Spencer** served on the Sergeant-at-Arms Committee. Kevin was responsible for maintaining order and verifying that everyone entering the convention floor was wearing their name tag and was a properly credentialed delegate.

Thank you, Kevin, for representing the San Antonio Alamo Area Local in such a distinguished manner.

Honoring Our Past

Past leaders were remembered and honored throughout the convention. As a union, we must never forget our past and the struggles and sacrifices that were made on our behalf.

It all started with the great Postal Strike of 1970, when federal postal workers walked off the job and took to the streets to gain collective bargaining rights and the ability

to negotiate for better wages, benefits, and working conditions.

Today, postal workers benefit from the struggles and sacrifices of those who came before us. I would like to thank our past leaders for having the vision and courage to fight for a better future for postal workers.

Fighting for Our Future!

As we convened at the National Convention, discussions centered on fighting for jobs, fighting for new work, protecting our work, and fighting to preserve universal service. This includes continuing to deliver mail six days a week and delivering to every address.

The APWU remains opposed to reducing services, closing stations, and treating the Postal Service as a business model rather than a service model.

Clerk Division Director **Lamont Brooks** emphasized the need to protect clerk work and aggressively pursue new work. He strongly reminded clerk delegates that **all work**

is clerk work!

No one in the APWU should be saying, "That is not my job," or "That is mail handler work." The San Antonio Alamo Area Local will not entertain grievances claiming that work in question is not clerk work or that it belongs to the mail handler craft.

Attendance and Discipline

Things are getting serious in the Postal Service, and employees are expected to maintain regular attendance. Since the Postal Service announced that it is running out of cash, discipline for attendance has increased, and employees are being placed in AWOL status more frequently.

Employees need to take attendance expectations seriously and understand the potential consequences of failing to maintain regular attendance.

"Honoring our past means remembering the struggles that brought us here. Fighting for our future means standing together to protect our jobs, our work, and the Postal Service"

ALAMO AREA LOCAL DISPATCH

Carlos BarriosEditor
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This is the Official Publication of the
 San Antonio Alamo Area Local,
 American Postal Workers Union, AFL-CIO
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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 displayed on the last page of the Dispatch.

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

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The American Postal Workers Union Supports Vote-By-Mail



There are many safeguards in place at each phase of the mail-in voting process. Voter registration verification, ballot tracking, and signature matching are just some of the ways that states keep Vote-by-Mail safe.

Studies show that voter fraud is extremely rare. The Brookings Institution reported that there have been fewer than 200 cases of mail-in-voting fraud between 2016 and 2022, amounting to 0.000043%, or about 1 in 2.5 million. **A person is more likely to get struck by lightning than to cast a fraudulent mail-in ballot.**

In terms of reliability, the USPS reports that since 2020, **postal workers delivered over 97% of ballots in federal elections to election officials within just three days.** That number jumps to over 99.8% of ballots delivered within one week. The table to the right, titled "USPS Mail Ballot Delivery 2020-2024," clearly illustrates that the American people can rely on postal workers to deliver their ballots on time.

Voting by mail has many benefits, including accessibility and higher turnout. **Casting a mail-in ballot gives millions of Americans who would have otherwise stayed home the opportunity to vote.** This applies to many registered voters, including those without access to transportation, those with disabilities, those living in rural areas, those without paid time off to vote, and more.

**USPS Mail Ballot Delivery 2020-2024**

Delivered	2020	2022	2024
Within 7 days	99.89%	99.93%	99.88%
Within 5 days	99.70%	99.82%	99.64%
Within 3 days	97.90%	98.96%	97.73%

Source: USPS Post-Election Reports

Contact the APWU Legislative and Political Department at (202) 842-4211 for more information



President Jonathan Smith
 Secretary-Treasurer Elizabeth "Liz" Powell
 Legislative and Political Director Judy Beard

Twenty-seven states already allow voting by mail through no-excuse absentee voting, and they have found that voting by mail works. Three states (Oregon, Washington, and Colorado) conduct their elections entirely by mail. After adopting all-mail balloting for the 2014 elections, Colorado bucked the national trend of declining voter participation and substantially increased voter turnout. States with all-mail balloting routinely rank among the states with the highest rate of voter participation. When surveyed, 81 percent of Oregonians said they preferred voting by mail to traditional polling-place elections.

In California, seven years after instituting "permanent, no-excuse absentee registration," which allows voters to choose to receive their ballots by mail, more than 50 percent of ballots cast in 2008 were submitted by mail. Other states have experienced a similar level of acceptance, along with increased participation.

Studies have shown that adding the option of voting by mail does not give an advantage to any political party. Republicans and Democrats both benefit from comparable increases in participation when voters are given their choice of voting by mail. Support for mail-in balloting cuts across virtually every major demographic group – including age, race, income level, education, employment status, and political affiliation.

One of the most important features of mail-in balloting is the low incidence of fraud compared to other methods. Voting by mail gives election officials the ability to validate every voter's signature and creates a verifiable paper trail. Increasing complaints about other balloting methods highlight the value of voting by mail. Voting by mail enhances democracy, giving American voters a choice that they need and deserve!

VICE PRESIDENT

DAVID Z. HERNANDEZ

Preserve the Legacy of the Union



Hello, Brothers and Sisters, I hope this message finds you in the best of health and high spirits as we transition from the sweltering Texas summer into the cooler embrace of fall. As always, I remind you to take care when driving through school zones and to check your back seats — let's keep our children safe as they embark on another school year.

I want to take a moment to express our heartfelt gratitude to all our members for supporting our attendance at the APWU 28th National Convention. It was an enriching experience, providing us with an invaluable opportunity to gather, share insights, and unite for a common purpose.

The highlight of the convention was undoubtedly the introduction of our newly elected APWU President, Johnathan Smith. His energy and passion resonated with every delegate in the room, igniting a fire that charged the atmosphere with hope and determination.

President Smith's address was a certainly a call to action. He spoke not just of the challenges we face, but of the strength we have when we come together as a union. His captivating words served as a reminder that our roles as union members extend far beyond merely holding a job; we are part of a legacy that demands our active participation and vigilance. President Smith urged us to engage in collective efforts—whether that be through organizing pickets or standing in solidarity with our colleagues. The stakes are high.

Our jobs and the future of the United States Postal Service (USPS) are on the line. Smith's message was clear: we cannot afford to be unresponsive bystanders while our legacy faces threats from all sides. It is our responsibility to step up, advocate for ourselves, and ensure that the next generation of postal workers inherits a forceful and encouraging environment, just as we did. Historically, our predecessors fought valiantly for the rights and protections we enjoy today. Today we stand on the shoulders of the union giants before us who laid the groundwork for our union's strength, and it is now our duty to honor that legacy.

Together, we are the defenders of a proud tradition that spans 251 years. We must do everything in our power to safeguard the future of the USPS and the rights of every worker within our ranks. As we move forward, let's remember that unity is our greatest weapon. Each of us has a role to play, whether it's in our local communities, at the workplace, or at the national level.

Your voice matters, and your actions can make a difference. There are many ways you can get involved: attend meetings, sign up new members, and speak out against injustices. Together, we can forge a path toward a brighter future.

USPS is investing in automation, digital tools, and new service models. The APWU is working to ensure these changes do not erode clerks' roles or working conditions. For example, recent arbitration awards have addressed issues like **TACS (Temporary Administrative Clerk Service) duties** and **dispatch coordinator responsibilities**. (Apwu.org)

"...our roles as union members extend far beyond merely holding a job; we are part of a legacy that demands our active participation and vigilance. President Smith urged us to engage in collective efforts—whether that be through organizing pickets or standing in solidarity with our colleagues"

Short-Term Stability

The 2024–2027 contract provides strong wage security and retention incentives, placing APWU clerks in a relatively stable short-term position.

Protecting and Expanding Clerk Roles

As USPS modernizes, the union's continued negotiations and advocacy will be essential to preserving existing clerk positions and expanding opportunities within the craft.

Preparing for the Future

Long-term job security will depend on adapting to emerging technologies and potential changes in service models. Clerks can prepare by staying informed through union communications, and participating in available training programs. Remaining engaged in efforts to promote fair treatment and job protection. Our current contract offers strong wage security and retention incentives, giving APWU clerks a stable foundation. The union continues to protect these gains through ongoing negotiations, while its leadership works to preserve clerk craft positions and expand our roles as USPS modernizes. Looking ahead, we must adapt to new technologies and possible changes in service models as the union continues advocating for fair treatment and job security.

APWU clerks can prepare for these changes by staying informed through union communications and participating in training opportunities. Let's turn the convention's energy into meaningful action by standing united to protect our rights and the future of USPS. Your commitment will help secure our shared success. Stay safe, stay involved, and let's get to work. I look forward to seeing you at our new September meeting.

Psalm 5:12, "For surely. O Lord, you bless the righteous, you surround them with your favor as with a shield".

SECRETARY TREASURER

JEFF GREENLEE

Time to Build Up The War Chest



Members, I hope everyone enjoyed a great summer, stayed cool, remained hydrated, and had the opportunity to enjoy some well-deserved vacation time.

The last few months have been especially busy for your Local, particularly regarding our finances. We experienced significant expenses for conventions, educational seminars, legal matters, and other important initiatives. While these investments temporarily reduced available funds, they were necessary to strengthen our Union and better serve our members. With many of these major expenses behind us, we can now focus on rebuilding our financial reserves as we prepare for the holiday season and continue protecting members' rights.

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Recent Expenditures

July and August were among our most expensive months this year, with our largest expenditures for the TPWU Educational Conference and the APWU National Convention. Our June cash assets reached an all-time high, and aside from these major items, monthly operating expenses remained normal and consistent.

If any member believes we should establish an additional fund for anticipated or unexpected expenses, I encourage you to bring the suggestion forward for consideration at a future General Membership Meeting.

Looking Ahead

Although we experienced a period of higher-than-normal spending, our Local remains financially sound. These expenditures were planned investments in our Union's future, and our financial position remains stable. As our 17-year-old Union building continues to age, maintenance costs—especially HVAC repairs—will inevitably arise. Planning ahead today helps ensure we are prepared for tomorrow.

Maintaining a healthy financial position requires discipline, sound judgment, and responsible stewardship of our members' dues. A financially strong Union gives your elected leaders the resources needed to defend your contractual rights and advocate for every member.

As your Secretary-Treasurer, I can provide financial reports, projections, and recommendations, but the direction of this Local ultimately belongs to you. Your dues give you the right to participate, attend meetings, ask

questions, and vote on decisions that shape our future. I encourage every member to exercise those rights.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding our finances, please do not hesitate to contact me. I am always happy to discuss our financial position and answer your questions.

Union Meetings

The Local's General Membership Meeting is the foundation of a democratic labor union. It is where members' voices are heard and the direction of the Local is determined. These meetings reflect a union governed by its members, and while participation is every member's choice, those who attend help shape the Local's future.

General Membership Meetings are among the Union's most valuable resources. They provide the forum where goals are set, priorities discussed, and guidance given to elected leadership. Strong attendance reflects a healthy, united union.

Union meetings provide opportunities to keep members informed, conduct the business of the Local, encourage member participation, build solidarity, and answer questions about contract enforcement, finances, and other union matters.

Meetings should never become a venue for personal attacks. Respectful debate is encouraged, but discussions should remain focused on issues rather than individuals. Members should feel comfortable asking questions and be willing to listen to the answers.

Our meetings follow a published agenda that promotes open discussion while ensuring business is handled efficiently and fairly. Participation should be positive, productive, and relevant.

Unfortunately, fewer than five percent of our members regularly attend General Membership Meetings. Because postal employees work around the clock, no meeting time can accommodate everyone. Even so, a small percentage of the membership often makes decisions affecting the entire Local.

Attendance also declines when meetings become unnecessarily long or focus on issues better handled elsewhere. To encourage participation, meetings must remain focused, orderly, efficient, and respectful of everyone's time.

I sincerely thank those members who regularly attend and participate. Your involvement strengthens our Local and ensures every member is represented. If you have not attended recently, please join us at our next General Membership Meeting, ask questions, share your ideas, and help shape the future of YOUR Local.



Protecting What You've Earned: Wills, Trusts, and Estate Planning

Understanding the basics of building a plan to protect your family, your federal benefits, and the assets you've earned.

After years of building a career with the Postal Service, you've accumulated much more than a few paychecks. Your home, savings, retirement accounts, Thrift Savings Plan (TSP), life insurance, and other federal benefits are all part of what you've built.

When learning about estate planning, you may hear terms like will, trust, and beneficiary designations. Each serves a different purpose. Understanding these basics can help you create a plan for the people and assets you've spent a lifetime working for.

Understanding the Role of a Will

A will is a legal document explaining how you want certain property and assets distributed after your death. It can also name an executor, establish guardians for minor children, and communicate wishes regarding your funeral and burial.

Wills must be signed and witnessed according to state law and can be revised as your circumstances change. After your death, the will may go through probate, a court-supervised process for administering an estate.

One important thing to remember: a will does not necessarily control every asset you own. Certain retirement accounts and life insurance policies may pass directly to the beneficiaries listed on those accounts. Keeping beneficiary designations current is an important part of estate planning.

Don't Overlook Your Federal Benefits

For postal employees, estate planning involves more than your home or personal belongings. Your plan should account for your TSP, Federal Employee Retirement System (FERS) or Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS) benefits, Federal Employee Group Life Insurance (FEGLI) or other private life insurance, bank and investment accounts, real estate, and other savings.

The U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) advises federal employees and retirees to periodically review beneficiary designations for retirement benefits and life insurance. FERS and CSRS participants can designate beneficiaries for certain lump-sum retirement benefits using the appropriate designation form.

For FEGLI, benefits are generally paid according to the most recent valid beneficiary designation on file, or according to the legal order of precedence if no valid designation exists. A will does not override a valid FEGLI beneficiary designation. Similarly, TSP and life insurance beneficiary designations may determine who receives those benefits after your death.

Review beneficiary designations after major life events such as marriage, divorce, the birth of a child, or the death of a beneficiary.

Protecting Your Assets With a Trust

A trust is a legal arrangement that allows assets to be managed by a trustee for designated beneficiaries. Depending on the type, it can provide instructions on how and when assets are managed or distributed.

A revocable living trust is created during a person's lifetime and can generally be changed or revoked. Properly funded trusts may help avoid probate for assets held in the trust. Other trusts are created after death according to instructions in a will or other estate-planning documents.

A trust is not automatically right for everyone. Establishing and maintaining one can add costs and complexity. The best approach depends on your family, finances, state law, and the assets you own.

Build a Unique Estate Plan

There is no one-size-fits-all estate plan. Some people with relatively simple estates may need only a will and updated beneficiary designations. Others may benefit from a trust or additional estate-planning documents.

For postal employees, estate planning should include more than deciding who receives personal belongings. Consider your federal benefits, retirement accounts, insurance policies, and other assets.

Start by making a list of what you own and reviewing your beneficiary designations. Keep important documents in a safe, accessible place and make sure a trusted family member or representative knows where to find them. Then consider speaking with a qualified estate-planning attorney about your circumstances and state laws.

APWU also provides a booklet called "**APWU Vital Papers.**" (https://apwu.org/sites/default/files/vitalpapers_death.pdf). You're encouraged to get a copy. This guide can help you organize many things that are often overlooked.

You've spent your career building a future for yourself and your family. Taking time to make a plan now can help protect what you've built and make things easier for the people you leave behind.

(This article is intended for general education purposes and is not legal or financial advice. Estate-planning laws vary by state. Representatives of MyFedBenefits are not legal professionals and cannot provide legal advice.)

Written by Stephen Murrah - Federal Employee Federal Benefits Specialist (210-843-6251) and Cara Gfroerer



EDITOR

CARLOS BARRIOS

Protect the Future of the USPS



Members have heard the message repeatedly: now is the time to organize, protect union jobs, and unite our efforts to safeguard the future of the United States Postal Service and the American Postal Workers Union.

Get involved and act rather than standing on the sidelines or following the advice of non-certified clerks who provide advice that is not helpful. APWU members

should follow the union's established procedures for seeking guidance from their crafts own certified stewards and avoid giving sensitive or official information to non-certified personnel. Those pseudo stewards who act on their own have earned absolutely **\$0.00** for the members they help assist. Whether its through NLRB charges or providing incorrect advice in filing their own grievances.

Key points from APWU steward training and policy is that all certified stewards are the official union representatives. They are trained to interpret the Collective Bargaining Agreement, handle grievances, and provide legal and procedural guidance. Members should request to see a certified steward through their immediate supervisor. The supervisor is responsible for coordinating the meeting so the steward can assist on the clock during work hours. Do not give statements or documents related to a grievance to non-certified staff. This protects the confidentiality of the member's rights and ensures that only authorized stewards handle union business. If a steward is unavailable, the union policy allows for a reasonable time to consult, and in some cases, the Postal Service may grant an extension for grievance processing. However, the member should still direct all union related matters to a certified steward.

Confidentiality matters

The Steward's Office is the place where union business is conducted, and members' conversations there should remain confidential. Former stewards or non-certified staff should not have access to this space.

We must actively contact our congressional, state, and local representatives to emphasize the importance of protecting USPS jobs. Job losses would reduce revenue and weaken the support we need from elected leaders to secure the Postal Service's future. Remaining on the sidelines of this political effort reflects a lack of concern for both us and others.

As Clerk Division Director Lamont Brooks emphasized, we must reject the idea that certain tasks are "not our work," because that mindset could threaten the future of the USPS and the Clerk Craft.. We should also resist calls to leave Clerk Craft for another craft based on claims that clerk jobs are disappearing. Because Clerk Craft represents 75% of the APWU, its decline would endanger the union.

Active legislative and political engagement are essential to protecting our members' livelihoods and serving the public that depends on the USPS. As federal employees, our wages, benefits, workplace safety standards, and operating requirements are governed directly by federal law and congressional action. We cannot afford to remain politically disengaged while advocates of privatization, budget cuts, and weakened workplace standards actively threaten our future.

National APWU leaders have consistently emphasized that advocating for sound postal policy, universal service, and worker safety is an organizational responsibility—not merely a partisan issue. We must continue pursuing legislation that protects the right to vote by mail and strengthens mailing standards.

"As Clerk Division Director Lamont Brooks emphasized, we must reject the idea that certain tasks are "not our work," because that mindset could threaten the future of the USPS and the Clerk Craft"

At the recent National Convention in Los Angeles, California, our national leaders said that we have spent too long fighting an unseen adversary. The threat is now clear, and we must oppose those seeking to dismantle

the USPS and the APWU. Protecting our future requires more than filing grievances; we must unite, raise awareness, and actively defend our union, our livelihoods, and the nation's postal service.

Grievance Outcomes at Stations and Branches

Stewards continue to file grievances and successfully challenge repeated violations by postal management. Recent Step 3 settlements totaling more than \$13,000 were secured at these locations:

- * NECA
- * Thousand Oaks
- * Laurel Heights
- * Kerrville
- * Uvalde
- * Nimitz
- * Leon Valley
- * Beacon Hill
- * New Braunfels
- * Encino Park

The grievances involved TACS violations, improper 204B assignments, PTFs working in a Level 21 facility, cross-craft assignments, managers performing bargaining-unit work, and Postal Support Employees working more than eight hours in a service day. TACS grievances were filed at Serna, NECA, Nimitz, Tejada, and New Braunfels. Improper 204B use was reported at Nimitz, Boerne, the District Office, Encino Park, and New Braunfels. Article 8 violations are occurring at Tejada, Encino Park, and New Braunfels. The clerk craft is strong and constantly filing grievances in both the Plant and the Stations despite rumors from Union Busters.

MVS CRAFT DIRECTOR

FARON HIERHOLZER

MVS Gains 7 Additional Runs



I would like to start off by thanking everyone for the opportunity to represent the Motor Vehicle Craft (MVS).

Thanks to Assistant Craft Director Ruben Solis for his dedication and hard work he continues to do for MVS. At the 28th Annual National Convention held in Los Angeles CA, MVS Director Mike Foster an-

nounced how organized our craft was, and from August 2013 through May 2026, MVS was the only craft that grew.

MVS grew by 5,892 jobs and much of the growth was by drivers while the Vehicle Maintenance Facility (VMF's) grew by 267 jobs. Foster also discussed some of the changes the Postal Service is looking to bring into the craft. One of the changes would be the addition of cameras in vehicles. One camera would be facing the driver while the other would be facing the road. The Postal Service is looking into adding language to Management's Instructions PO-720-2010-1, and many more could be implemented into our next agreement contract sooner. As soon as we get updated information from nationals I will communicate to the craft in Dispatch to properly keep the MVS and the VMS updated with current news.

PSA

The PSA is tentatively scheduled to open around September 26, 2026, although the date may change. The PSA opening has created seven (7) additional Motor Vehicle Craft spotter runs. The VMF is preparing our older tractors for road use and expects to complete the work by the opening date; it is currently on or ahead of schedule. Management conducted an in-house bid for these runs, effective August 22, 2026. Congratulations to everyone who participated. Successful bidders who have not been placed in their new assignments should ask to speak with a steward.

Article 39.3.E.2 states: The successful bidder must be placed in the new assignment within 21 days, except in December. A local agreement may establish a shorter period. Normally, the successful bidder shall work on the duty assignment as posted. The union believes management violated the CBA by failing to place successful bidders in the assignments they won. Affected union members may be entitled to a monetary award.

These new assignments have created residual vacancies, and the union believes qualified Part-Time Flexible employees should be converted to fill them.

Article 39.2.A.11 of the CBA states: When an opportunity to convert an employee to a residual full-time vacancy exists, the senior part-time flexible employee in the same occupational group and grade as the vacancy will be converted to the assignment, except as provided in Article 39.1.B.7.e. The identified PTF will be converted to full-time within 28 days, except in December.

Any affected PTF has the right to file a grievance and should be converted. These employees may also be entitled to a monetary award. If you believe you should be converted, request you to speak with your steward immediately.

"The PSA is tentatively scheduled to open around September 26, 2026, although the date may change. The PSA opening has created seven (7) additional Motor Vehicle Craft spotter runs"

At the National Convention there was a lot of discussion on our side of the house from jobs, pay, to job descriptions, and many more issues and topics. One class highlighted the training program our national union has worked hard to secure.

Over the past several years, the Postal Service has provided few training opportunities for VMF technicians. Let me tell you our voice was loud and proud. National went to work immediately. Over the last year or two the Postal Service has started training Technicians at the facility in Norman OK. One reason for the delay was the modifications and the new training facility in Norman, OK.

The facility has air conditioning, exhaust fans, new lifts, and epoxy floors. We also discussed issues with these battery electric vehicle and the Internal combustion engine (BEV and ICE) vehicles. We also went in detail on training opportunities. Some of the discussions that were on the floor were for management to create a job description/ opportunity for a Diesel Technician. The union is currently fighting for the Diesel Technician to be paid at the Level 10 rate. One of the biggest discussions brought up on the floor was pay for the Technicians. The pay rate could have an impact on filling Technician vacancies.

Once again, I will be writing about more upcoming changes coming to VMF's and what we can do to fight for more pay and more work in future articles. Sisters and Brothers let's be union strong, Union Strong all day long.

In Solidarity,
Faron Hierholzer



CLERK CRAFT DIRECTOR "A"

KEVIN SPENCER

Not Giving Up Without a Fight



Greetings Sisters and Brothers, I'm writing this following our National Convention in Los Angeles. I want to take this chance to thank each one of you for the opportunity to attend. During the convention I was also selected to serve on the Sergeant-at-Arms committee which was a great honor. A big shout out to the Committee Co-Chairs **Koquise Edwards** and **Courtney Serviss** for keeping us so well

organized with the daily events and activities. Meanwhile, on the convention floor, **San Antonio Alamo Area Local** was well represented! And numerous delegates from other states continued to comment on *The Dispatch* and apwu195.org as a valuable resource. I feel fortunate to be part of a local that not only connects our members but also connects delegates and new friends that were in attendance from coast-to-coast.
From the Convention Floor

It is with great apprehension to report that our National Clerk Craft Director **Lamont Brooks** mentioned that he will be stepping away after this term. The same is true for our great Assistant Director, A' **Sam Lisenbe**. We want to thank them **both** for their strong commitment to the Clerks! As Lamont continued to stress during the general session, **we're in the fight of our lives for the future of the Clerk Craft!** Mr. Brooks also made a strong call to address the attendance problems plaguing the workforce. He also commented on the nationwide changes with new technology and implementation of SIPS and specifically PILS machines impacting plants everywhere. This was further reinforced with comments by Assistant Director 'C', **Bob Romanoski**, with strategies to gain clerk work as well as the obstacles facing plants with their respective RI-399 inventories. Indeed, we are staring at MANY complex dilemmas with automation and technological change. Further, I was pleased to speak with numerous craft directors about the variety of challenges they are currently facing. It is no exaggeration to say that San Antonio **may** be in considerably better straits with the changes ahead than our sisters and brothers at other facilities. Our plant manager Kim Calderon has stated that there will be landing spots for those impacted by the functional obsolescence of SPBS at the plant. The affected clerks will maintain their same days off and same start times for the least inconvenience of those potentially unassigned due to abolishment's.

Prioritizing the Arbitration Docket (or avoiding the "Black Hole")

One of the most significant and singular resolutions for the clerk craft was passed on the floor during this 2026 National Convention session. It comprises resolution CL-02 – "Authorization of up to three (3) select cases annually by the National Clerk Craft Director to be scheduled and heard from their national arbitration docket versus the standard chronological FIFO scheduling."

In other words, this basically allows the National Clerk Craft director to move specific cases to the highest priority instead of FIFO (first in/first out). Technological changes and immediate impacts on Clerk Craft can now be prioritized on the arbitration docket. Cases based on their strategic importance and clerk craft job security will remain the prime concern. More commentary on this to follow!

Pardon our Dust

At the plant the long-discussed changes are well underway. Continue to look for the board next to the clock, near the mechanical door as you enter the workroom floor. This **FMRP** (Facility Modernization Restack Plan) oversized printout will provide the best timeline as the changes are actively happening. Further, the Union will continue to provide news as available, following our meetings with management. Yet, as I continue to stress, everything will be subject to change, and likely will as we move forward toward a fully formed **Regional Processing and Distribution Center**. As many of you will have noticed

on the last bid cluster, there were 3 new expeditor positions included for the PSA. The PSA will likely see at least 12 expeditor positions moving by the time you read this. More news on the PSA as staffing develops.

Order of Operations (3 + 1 x 5 = 8)

At the GMF we are currently in adherence to a rather strict order-of-operation while moving in with new machinery/equipment and relocating older equipment. Certain power requirements are needed, and legacy structures have to be cleared first before we can move on to installation of new machinery. This is mainly to give a **hierarchy of needs** as peak season nears. We still need the means to process mail while the changes are underway. This could be no easy task for anyone who has tried to bake bread without an oven. I realize there has been ALOT of strains recently with excess dust, power outages, and overtaxed air-conditioning not working efficiently at both the Plant and Priority Annex. We are in a major transition at the moment and many of these mechanical issues are inevitable, while trying to be kept to a minimum.

Unite and Fight

While we may feel isolated by our usual daily grind, the National Convention is always a reminder to see how we are all linked by very similar struggles nationwide. Even if the debates create disagreements, the livestream that we all participated in and led by our **APWU President Jonathan Smith** continues the clarion call, **Solidarity Forever** As always, my gratitude to Assistant Clerk Craft Director Giovanna St. John, Chief Stewards Annette Martinez, Nicholas Sondh and Jess Rooney, and Steward Tyrone Myers.

"Further, I was pleased to speak with numerous craft directors about the variety of challenges they are currently facing. It is no exaggeration to say that San Antonio may be in considerably better straits with the changes ahead than our sisters and brothers at other facilities"

CLERK CRAFT CHIEF STEWARD TOUR 3

JESS ROONEY

Construction On Going



Hello Union Sisters and Brothers,

Peak Season is just around the corner! Those of us clerks on the OTDL will probably be seeing a rising frequency in overtime as we get into October, make sure you sign your section's overtime list in the last few weeks of September, the last quarter of 2026 starts on October 1st! And keep in mind the more of us that are on the OTDL, the less likely it may be that we face overtime mandates. At least, we may count on that before December rolls around – but let's not get ahead of ourselves.

August transitioned into September with little fanfare at the Plant – oh no, what am I saying? The construction throughout the building has been ramping up all summer! We have had our CIOSS machines moved out of the Plant, and it is

expected that they will find their new home at the Annex with multiple other CIOSS machines soon. Then the Auto Flats area went down to two AFSM 100s for the time being. And throughout all of that chaos, we got to enjoy the occasional strong smell of welding machines as they removed the yellow and blue induction platforms from up above. There may even already be some activity at the PSA, with a tentative September 29th start date for some new expeditor positions that were awarded recently. Keep an eye on the bids, the one that closes on September 20th may have already passed by the time this Dispatch is issued, which will be effective on October 3rd – then our last 2026 bid cycle will be posted no later than October 16th. Best of luck that you may secure a section and tour that meets your needs for the Peak Season!

Not only has this summer had a plethora of record high temperatures in San Antonio, but we have also gotten to experience a great number of unprecedented challenges here at the Plant, from power outages to lack of air conditioning to mail processing machines breaking down to a shortage of transport equipment like APCs...as well as more and more discipline.

The “flavor of the month” for August was *short lunches*. I filed grievances to expunge discipline for one click short of 0.50 for one or two lunches. As usual, discipline has been punitive. This particular “offense” was not even in violation of the Employee and Labor Relations Manual, which is *the* publication for Postal Policy. Management cited 665.11 Loyalty, which states,

“Employees are expected to be loyal to the United States government and ***uphold the policies and regulations of the Postal Service.***” (Emphasis mine.)

In terms of disciplining employees for improper conduct for clocking in one click early from lunch despite management's orders to always have a 0.50 hour lunch, 432.461 of the Employee and Labor Relations Manual explains the Five-Minute Leeway Rule as thus:

“Although each employee at installations with time recording devices is required to clock in and clock out on time, congestion at time clocks *or other conditions can sometimes cause clock time to vary slightly from the established work schedule. Therefore, a deviation may be allowed from the scheduled time for each clock ring up to 0.08 hour (5 minutes).* However, the sum of the deviations for the scheduled tour must not exceed 0.08 hour (5 minutes).” (Emphasis mine.)

Just one of the many examples of how management can be overeager to issue

“The construction throughout the building has been ramping up all summer! We have had our CIOSS machines moved out of the Plant, and it is expected that they will find their new home at the Annex”

discipline!

Also in August, there was the APWU National Convention in Los Angeles, which I've really been looking forward to hearing more about. I hope that the rest of our Union meetings through the end of the year shed more light on the strides we've been able to take to strengthen the Clerk Craft and the APWU as a whole. It's been a privilege and an honor to be a clerk steward here at the Plant for almost two years; it has been a lot of learning, a lot of juggling, a lot of advocating – please never forget you can request to see a steward if you have any questions or any difficulties here at work. It is rarely ever up to me to secure a time to speak with other clerks, but if you ever get push back from management when you request a steward, please do not hesitate to let any of us know – the Office of the Inspector General even says so.

Many thanks to President Alex Aleman, Vice President David Hernandez, Treasurer Jeff Greenlee, Dispatch Editor Carlos Barrios, Clerk Craft Director Kevin Spencer, and Asst. Craft Director Giovanna St. John for all they do for the members as well as stewards such as myself. Shout out to my fellow clerk stewards Annette Martinez, Nick Sondhi, and Tyrone Myers for fighting the good fight at my side.

A Union is only as strong as its members. We each have a voice; lift one another up whenever you can.

In solidarity,
Jess Rooney

ARTICLES SUBMITTED DURING ELECTION PROCESS

The following explanation addresses the question of publishing articles in a local publication just prior to an election authored by members who are not regular contributors or have not previously submitted articles. Section 401(g) of the Labor Management Reporting and Disclosure Act (LMRDA) states: "No moneys received by any labor organization by way of dues, assessment, or similar levy, and no moneys of an employer shall be contributed or applied to promote the candidacy of any person in any election subject to the provisions of this title. Such moneys of a labor organization may be utilized for notices, factual statements of issues not involving candidates, and other expenses necessary for the holding of an election."

Under this provision, union newspapers that are funded by the union cannot be used to promote the candidacy of any person in a union election. The purpose of this regulation is to ensure fair and impartial elections for all candidates. It has been argued that the appearance of articles in a union publication during the election period from a candidate who has never or rarely before submitted articles in that union publication is a promotion of that individual's candidacy through the union publication in violation of the LMRDA.

According to the U.S. Department of Labor Office of Labor-Management Standards which is responsible for administering provisions of the LMRDA: ***"Generally, a six month period prior to an election can be considered as time when the newsletter may be construed as a campaign tool. Placement of articles, changes in format, blunt campaigning and letters from members or candidates to the editor could be considered as campaigning."***

Therefore, in an effort to avoid the appearance of impropriety and to thwart efforts to overturn elections, the Postal Press Association recommends that local editors do not permit members to publish articles in the union's publication six (6) months prior to an election, unless the

member is a regular contributor. This policy will protect the local from an allegation that the local unfairly allowed particular candidates to use the union-paid for newsletter in support of his or her candidacy.

The determination of a regular contributor must be made on a case-by-case basis taking into consideration the number of times that the union publication is published every year.

Anyone who is deemed a regular contributor should therefore be allowed to continue to contribute articles to the paper throughout the election period. Because some members may have already announced their candidacy while others have not, the safest course for the local to take is to adopt a policy prohibiting all non-regular contributors from submitting articles to the union publication during the election period.

There are no hard and fast rules with respect to when the election period begins. The six month rule is a general guideline that seeks to avoid the appearance of impropriety as the election nears. Certainly, once members announce their candidacy for office the election period should be deemed to have begun. (A candidate is announced when it is common knowledge that he or she is going to be running for office, either as an incumbent or challenger. Under election regulations, an individual does not have to be formally nominated to be considered a candidate for office.

An expressed intention to run is sufficient for the individual to be considered a candidate.) Finally, no one who writes for a union publication, whether a regular contributor or not, can advocate for the election or defeat of a particular candidate for union office, him or herself or others.

The exception is a local sponsored forum to allow all candidates to make a statement in the union publication in support of their candidacy.

Written by former APWU National Postal Press Association President Tony Carobine while serving as President from 1987-2023

San Antonio Alamo Area Local 2027 Election Timetable

Process	SAAAL Constitutional Requirement	Date
Appointment of Nominating Committee	Art. 5, Sec 1 - A Nominating Committee shall be appointed at the General Membership meeting in November to nominate at least one candidate for each office. Nominating Committee shall consist of at least one member of each craft.	11/21/26
Nominations of Officers and Delegates	Art. 5, Sec 1 - Nominations of officers and delegates to the State and National Conventions, shall be made at the General Membership meeting in January of the election year.	01/16/27
Acceptance of Nominations	Art. 5, Sec 1 - All candidates must give their approval to run for office within ten (10) days of the nomination.	01/26/27
Dispatch Deadline February "Election Issue"	Art.14, Sec. 3 - Lays out guidelines for Dispatch article...	02/01/27
Ballots Mailed	Art. 5, Sec 8 - mail ballots to each member in good standing at their last known address 14 days prior to the second Monday in March	02/22/27
Deadline to return ballots	Art. 5, Sec 8 - must be received at the postage due section by 9:00 AM of the Saturday following the second Monday in March.	03/13/27
Ballots Counted	Art. 5, Sec 8 - The ballots shall be counted by the Election Committee on the closing date of the voting period and shall continue until completed.	03/13/27
Effective Date (3 year term)	Art. 5, Section 2 - All elected officers and delegates of this local shall be elected by referendum vote for three (3) years effective the 2nd Saturday of April of the year they were elected to office	04/10/27

CLERK CRAFT CHIEF STEWARD TOUR 2

ANNETTE MARTINEZ

Duty of Fair Representation



Brothers and Sisters, I am Annette Martinez, Chief Steward for the Clerk Craft on Tour 2, and I will continue representing APWU members. Employees at both the plant and the annex have recognized me in filing grievances and securing favorable outcomes. To date, I have resolved 139 cases, with 42 awaiting arbitration under the new EGS process. I remain committed

to growing in this role, supporting our members, and protecting their interests. **UNION STRONG!!!**

APWU Grievance Procedure

Supervisor Meeting and Steward Involvement Under the APWU/USPS Collective Bargaining Agreement, first raise the issue with your supervisor. If it remains unresolved, request a union steward to file a grievance.

Contract and Procedure Basis

Article 15 of the APWU/USPS Collective Bargaining Agreement governs the grievance process. It defines a grievance as a "dispute, difference, disagreement or complaint between the parties related to wages, hours, and conditions of employment." The agreement establishes the following step-by-step process:

- * Step 1 – Supervisor Meeting: First, discuss the issue with your immediate supervisor. This is the initial formal step in the grievance process under the Collective Bargaining Agreement.
- * Step 2 – Steward Involvement: If the supervisor meeting does not resolve the issue, request assistance from a union steward.
- * Step 3 – National Representative: If the matter remains unresolved after Step 2, it advances to the national level, where a National Business Agent is assigned when the case is ready for arbitration.
- * Step 4 – Arbitration: If the grievance is still unresolved, it proceeds to binding arbitration before a neutral arbitrator.

Timeliness Requirement

To be considered timely, a grievance must first be discussed at Step 1 within **14 days** after you or the union learned—or reasonably should have learned.

Practical Steps

Request "union time" from your supervisor to meet with a steward before or during the supervisor meeting. This meeting should take place in the union office and not in an office that won't provide any privacy. Document the meeting by recording the date, time, participants, agreements, and next steps. If the issue remains unresolved, formally ask a steward to file the grievance on your behalf. Keep copies of all correspondence and meeting notes.

Additional Resources

APWU Grievance Procedure page — summarizes the four-step process and related forms. The Joint Contract Interpretation Manual (JCIM) is used to provide official interpretations of contract language to help identify the applicable article and procedure. So to review first meet with your supervisor. If the issue is not resolved, request a union steward to file the grievance. Article 15 of the APWU/USPS CBA requires this sequence.

"The Duty of Fair Representation arises under Federal Labor Law and the Supreme Court's interpretation of the National Labor Relations Act"

I will continue to representing members with fair representation, and continue to represent all bargaining-unit employees in good faith, without discrimination, and without arbitrary or perfunctory conduct, in accordance with the duty of fair representation.

Legal Basis/Scope

The Duty of Fair Representation arises under Federal Labor Law and the Supreme Court's interpretation of the National Labor Relations Act. As the exclusive collective bargaining representative, the APWU must represent every employee in its bargaining unit fairly and in good faith, regardless of union membership. This responsibility extends to employees in postal clerk, maintenance, motor vehicle, material support, operating, and facility services positions.

Rely on APWU-certified stewards, who are trained to represent members under the collective bargaining agreement, grievance procedures, and workplace-rights provisions. Using uncertified individuals may cause procedural errors, weaken a case, or jeopardize benefits, which is why APWU requires steward certification.

Remember that the union office protects confidentiality and provides accurate guidance, unlike individuals who may seek your information or give you incorrect procedures. If you ever have an issue concerning a past, present or future contractual violations don't hesitate to notify your immediate supervisor so that time at work can be provided to speak to the certified steward of your craft.

Alex Aleman
Continued from Page 1

San Antonio Processing and Distribution Center

At the San Antonio Processing and Distribution Center, the transformation into a Regional Processing Center continues. Management expects to install four **Parallel Induction Linear Sorters (PILS)**—two at the Selma PSA and two at the San Antonio P&DC.

The PILS has a high processing capacity of approximately **7,000 packages per hour** and is designed to process packages and bundles.

On September 15, 2025, the Postal Service awarded the work associated with the PILS to the Mail Handler Craft. The APWU has filed a jurisdictional National Dispute challenging this work assignment.

The PILS is expected to replace older **Automated Package Processing System (APBS)** equipment. This issue

remains important to protecting clerk work and the jurisdiction of our craft.

Local Elections Are Coming

Local elections are on the horizon. Nominations will be conducted at the **January 2027 General Membership Meeting**.

This will be an opportunity for members who wish to run for elected office to submit their names and become involved in the leadership of our local.

The APWU is a democratic organization, and our democracy is alive and well in San Antonio. I encourage our members to stay informed, participate in union activities, attend meetings, and make their voices heard.

Honoring our past means remembering the struggles that brought us here. Fighting for our future means standing together to protect our jobs, our work, and the Postal Service.

COLA Pay Raise

Based on the July 2026 Index, the fourth COLA will be 68 cents per hour



August 13, 2026 by [21cpw](#)

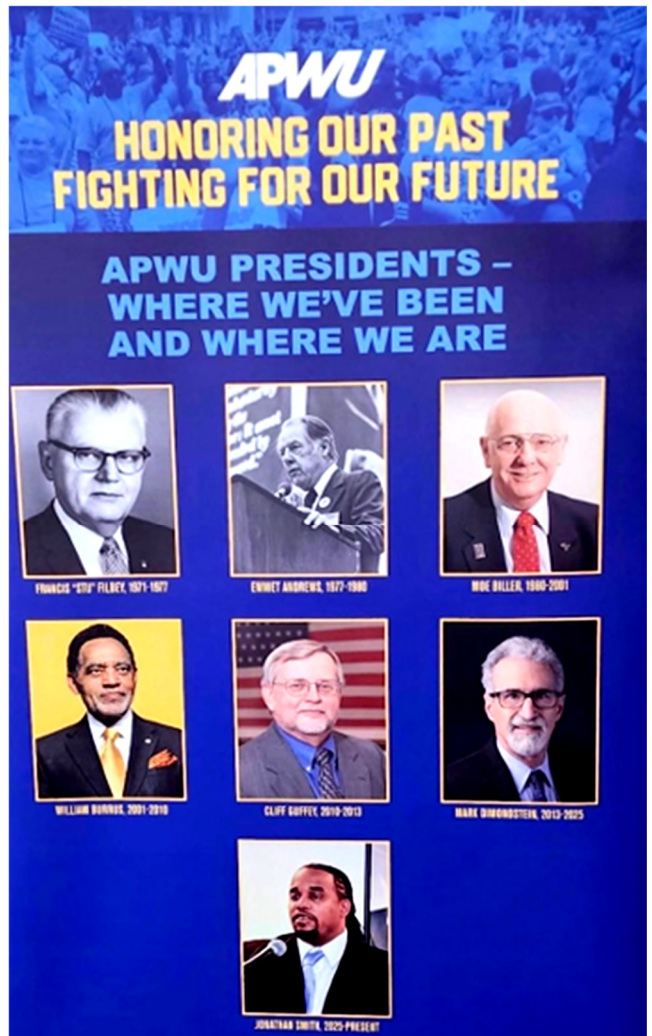
In July, the final month of the six-month adjustment period for the fourth COLA under the 2024 Agreement, the CPI-W Unadjusted Index (1967=100) rose slightly from last month to 974.343, but not enough to change the calculations. Nonetheless, it was an increase over the January 2026 index point upon which employees received the last COLA.

Based on the July 2026 Index, the fourth COLA adjustment will be:

Monthly Tracking	Amount
Per Annum	\$1,414.00
Per Pay Period	\$54.40
Cents Per Hour	\$0.68

The fourth COLA adjustment will **show up in paychecks on September 25, 2026**, which is **Pay Period 20–2026**, with the COLA becoming effective **September 5, 2026**.

28th Biennial National Convention Honoring Our Past, Fighting For Our Future



For Those Veterans Who Served, This Matters

As a veteran, I was appalled when I saw that Donald Trump himself posted an AI-generated image portraying himself as a highly decorated American general alongside Generals George Patton and Douglas MacArthur.

It wasn't patriotic. It wasn't funny.

It was an insult to every man and woman who has worn the uniform—and every working person who believes you earn what you receive.

I will not reproduce the image. I find it deeply offensive.

Military decorations are not props. They are earned through sacrifice, hardship, courage and, far too often, bloodshed.

You don't earn a military decoration by having AI put it on your chest.

During the Vietnam War, Donald Trump did not serve. After several student deferments, he received a medical deferment in 1968 for bone spurs in his heels. The deferment was legal. But while Trump remained home, more than two million Americans answered the nation's call. Many were your fathers, sisters or brothers. And many of them brought that war back home with them.

So were thousands who later became postal employees and union members.

Many never came home. Others returned with wounds—visible and invisible—that lasted a lifetime. Their families sacrificed too.

That is why Trump's attitude toward military service is disturbing.

In a 1997 interview with Howard Stern, Trump agreed that avoiding sexually transmitted diseases was his "personal Vietnam," saying, **"I feel like a great and very brave soldier."**

In 2015, Trump attacked Senator John McCain, a genuine Vietnam veteran who spent more than five years as a prisoner of war.

Trump said: **"He's not a war hero. He was a war hero because he was captured. I like people that weren't captured."**

A man who never served was dismissing a man who was shot down, tortured and held captive for years.

There have also been allegations that Trump referred to fallen American service members as **"losers"** and **"suckers"** during a 2018 visit to France.

On March 7, 2026, Trump wore a white **"USA" campaign baseball cap** during a solemn dignified transfer ceremony at Dover Air Force Base. Honoring Americans who died in service should be about the fallen and their families—not campaign politics.

So I ask: **Where is the respect for those who actually served?**

The AI image is especially offensive because it wasn't created by some anonymous internet troll.

It came from Trump's own social media account.

It portrayed him wearing the symbols and decorations of a military career he never had.

That should matter to every veteran and every union member. Because **we know the difference between earning something and taking credit for it.**

A worker doesn't take credit for another worker's labor. A steward doesn't claim someone else's grievance victory. A

union member doesn't accept an award for work they didn't perform.

Our movement is built on fairness, accountability, solidarity and earned respect. Working people didn't win better wages, safer workplaces, decent benefits and dignity by pretend-

ing. **We organized. We stood together. We fought. We sacrificed. We earned it.**

The same principle applies to military service.

They cannot be manufactured by AI or politics.

Whether you support Trump or oppose him is beside the point. **No president, candidate or political party should portray someone as a decorated military hero when that person never served in uniform.**

And where would be the outrage if Barack Obama had done the same thing?

Would we call it patriotic? Would we dismiss it as harmless? I doubt it.

So why should the standard be different for Donald Trump?

For those of us who answered our country's call—and for the families of those who never came home—this isn't just another AI image. **It is disrespect.**

Veterans' medals were earned the hard way. They represent sacrifice, courage and service that cannot be manufactured or rewritten by AI.

In the labor movement, we fight against people taking credit for work they didn't do.

We should stand just as firmly against pretending to have earned sacrifices we never made.

Our veterans deserve better.

Our fallen deserve better.

And working people deserve leaders who understand the difference between earning an honor and pretending to have earned it.

Honor isn't manufactured.

Honor isn't claimed.

Honor is earned.

Jeff Greenlee
Vietnam-Era Veteran



General Membership Meeting

**Sept 19, 2026
11:30 A.M.**

**Union Hall
13102 Lookout Run
Executive Board
Meeting
10:00 A.M.**

*****AGENDA*****

**August Financial Report
Officers Reports
Executive Board
Recommendations
Expenditure over \$500.00 for
APWU Health Plan Seminar
\$250.00 Door Prize**

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

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

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