



by
Paul
Browning

RETIREE PRESIDENT

RETIREES WIN!

Retirees Finally Have A Voice & Voting From The Floor!

2022 APWU

National Convention Report

Delegates to the August, 2022 APWU Biennial National Convention easily reached the two-thirds vote threshold necessary to amend the APWU National Constitution to allow each APWU Retiree Chapter one delegate to future APWU Conventions. After some backroom manipulations and parliamentary procedure twist and turns, members of the APWU Retirees Department gained an increase in their voice and vote determining the future of their Union. Retiree representa-

tion was a modest victory but nonetheless a show of respect and acknowledgement from over 1,500 Convention delegates of the contributions retirees have made in the past and still continue to make in their communities and political activities.

Convention delegates from the Michigan Postal Workers Union and the MPWU Retirees Chapter worked tirelessly from 7:30 a.m. caucuses to the evening APWU sponsored dinners lobbying for the amendment. It was a measure that had been in the works since the late Brother Al LaBrecque and myself originally authored a resolution calling for more retiree voice and vote

at the 2016 APWU National Convention. Such resolutions were defeated in 2016 and again in 2018 but with the continued clamoring from APWU retirees at countless Zoom meetings during the pandemic, APWU leadership finally bowed to the pressure and did not oppose retirees this time around.

Following the tradition of Brother LaBrecque, Michigan's own Mr. Union and one of the founders of the APWU Retirees Department, Flint Michigan Area Chapter President and Michigan State Retiree Chapter Trustee Deb Gorney spoke forcefully at a Convention microphone in favor of the resolu-

tion. Many other Michigan delegates were lined up to speak at Convention microphones in favor of the resolution but weren't necessary as a vote was called for after one delegate after another spoke overwhelming in favor of the resolution. There's a long list Union activist member to thank for the recognition of retirees, none more so than my own mentor Brother LaBrecque. But I have to name a few besides Sister Gorney-Jane Duggan, Joanna Atkinson, Teresa Williams, Yvonne Tatum, Mike Mize, Darren Joyce, Joe Gordon, Roscoe Woods, and all the members of the

continued on page 4



Michigan Retirees President Paul Browning on the convention floor fighting for Retirees Right to Vote!

tion on the Convention floor will go from the current one delegate from each of five regions to also include one delegate from each of the 74 Retiree Chapters. It



by
Michael
Mize

PRESIDENT

EXCITEMENT

memberships rights and/or position.

Let's talk about the learning experience. For the first time I was asked to sit on a National Convention Committee. I found it very interesting and enlightening to discuss the proposed resolutions with an elite group chosen by Headquarters. Firsthand in a small group to hear the reasons others did not like what we felt was a clear benefit or improvement. It was hard work and long days, but I really enjoyed the experience. The Committee assignment did pull me away from some other meetings that I would normally attend. I really appreciate the other relationships we have so I could get information about any other meeting that was necessary. I am honored to have had the opportunity to serve in this manner and hope that in future years other opportunities like this are available to me as your State President.

Now for the exciting news! I know our friend, mentor, advisor, advocate, etc., Al LaBrecque is dancing in heaven. Al had fought for retiree rights my entire Union career. Most of the rights the retirees have achieved had Al's

hand on them. After several battles over the last several Conventions the Retiree Chapters will each get one voting delegate on the Convention floor. Now I know that is not where Al wanted to be. I also know that it is in the right direction. I know that Al would be very proud of his State and his home Local of Flint for continuing the fight for rights for retirees. I pray that this will allow a few more Retirees in the room. A few more strong Union advocates that have a history to tell. A history that we must pay attention to, so not to make the same mistakes that have been made before. I am pleased to have been a part of seeing this language passed. It was special to pass this at this Convention after Al's passing. It is special to see Officer's that worked with Al so happy that they are almost brought to tears. Again, thank you to the MPWU membership for affording this honor to me.

My pledge to Michigan. I will continue to work with all Union members in Michigan for the betterment of the Union and the membership, regardless of the dues someone pays!

Honored to Serve.

Return to APWU/MPWU
c/o John Greathouse, Editor
P.O. Box 27303
Lansing, MI 48909-7303
Change of Service Guaranteed



Non-Profit
U.S. Postage
PAID
Jefferson City, MO
Permit No. 303

EDITORIAL ARTICLE



by
John
Greathouse

ELECTIONS

Safe, Secure, Vote Dumping, Fraud And More!

With all the election deniers and related hype, I contacted my local clerk to discuss just how the process is done for an election as well as how elections are made secure and here is what I found.

Prior to the elections, the clerks had a good deal of thing to complete.

The County Clerk will program the tabulator cards for the upcoming election and the local Clerks will test the programing in all of the tabulators in accordance with the State of Michigan Election Laws. A chart is created to show how to mark the ballots for all of the things that is to be tested for. This testing will include test for overvotes, blank ballots, ballots from the wrong precinct, crossvoting (in the Primary Elections), stray marks and more. Then ballots are tested for each candidate for each office to ensure that the tabulators match the test ballots. This can be 50+ ballots depending on the size of the election. These test ballots and test chars are retained for a retention period and check during post-election audits. At lease one tabulator is tested at what is called the Public Accuracy Test that is open to the public. These tests are done by the local Election Commission and have the local clerk and staff involved with the testing of all of the tabulators. This process is open to the public, check with our local clerk to find out when.

On election day, each tabulator has a program card inside the machine specific to each separate precinct that accepts ballots from the public. The doors to the compartment where this card is inserted has a numbered seal that is logged in the pool book by the local clerk after testing and these numbers are verified by the Election Inspectors before the polls open.

Should a tabulator break, the program card can be removed, placed into a new machine and resealed with a new number that is also recorded, and voting can continue. This information is again recorded in the poll book.

Ballots can currently, under Michigan law, only start to be counted at 7 am on Election Day.

How Getting A Ballot Is Done

To get a ballot, you need to register as a voter in the rolls of your precinct or jurisdiction. In addition, absentee ballots have a signature verification process on the envelope that are matched to the application.

Number of voters, the number of ballots and the number of ballots tabulated are balanced. There was a rare event where a voter did not put the ballot in the tabulator but took it home.

Absentee Ballots

Absentee ballots are run through a process like a voter at the precinct. Before the Absentee Counting Board gets the ballot on Election Day, here is what happens:

1. A voter must apply for a ballot by completing and signing an application (just like filling out the application at the precinct).

2. The Clerk's Office check's the application to see if the voter is registered in our jurisdiction by looking them up in the Qualified Voter File (QVF). We then double check their name, address, DOB, just like they do at the precinct. For absentee ballots we also verify the signature on the application against the signature in QVF.

3. The next ballot to assign (based on precinct, school district, etc.) is pulled for the voter and the number is entered in QVF. A label is printed and the ballot in a secrecy sleeve, voting instructions, return envelope, etc. is ready to mail or give to the voter. If the voter is picking up the ballot in-person, ID is required (or they can sign an affidavit attesting to who they are and that they don't have ID on them – just like at the precinct).

4. When the ballot comes back it is scanned to be marked received. We also verify the signature on the ballot

envelope with the signature in QVF.

5. QVF will not allow more than one ballot to be issued to a voter. A ballot can only be issued to a voter in QVF, and a list of voters is printed for Election Day (just like a precinct Poll Book). To issue another ballot to a person (if they made a mistake, didn't get their ballot, etc.) we must spoil the original ballot to be able to issue a new one. All ballots are accounted for. Issued ballots, returned ballots, spoiled ballots etc. Just like at the precincts our number of voters and number of returned ballots must match. We balance the returned ballots every day and then balance all returned ballots once week. The returned ballots are organized by precinct and ballot number and kept locked every day.

Then on Election Day the absentee ballots are delivered to the Absentee Counting Board. They process one precinct at a time. Their process is basically this:

1. Check the number of ballots to process with the voter list and count the ballots to make sure they match.

2. One team opens the envelopes.

3. Another team removes the ballot (still in the secrecy sleeve so they don't see the marked ballot) from the return envelope while checking the

continued on page 5

MICHIGAN POSTAL WORKERS UNION OFFICERS

President..... Michael Mize
W: (810) 257-1534; C: (810) 444-7578
U: (810) 239-0931; F: (810) 239-6879
e-Mail: president@mpwu.com

Executive Secretary..... Michael Long
C: (616) 302-1409
e-Mail: mdlblong@gmail.com

Secretary-Treasurer..... Darren Joyce
U: (810) 239-0931; C: (810) 444-5142
F: (810) 239-6879
e-Mail: fmal11@comcast.net

Dir. of Education & Research..... Amy Puhalski
W/U: (616) 776-1489
F: (616) 776-1536
C: (616) 822-3678
e-Mail: apuhalski@aol.com

Editor..... John Greathouse
U: (517) 337-8753; C: (517) 819-7403
F: (517) 332-4391
e-Mail: the.pacer@yahoo.com

Legislative Director..... Roscoe Woods
U: (248) 543-3262; C: (248) 709-8249
F: (248) 543-2750
e-Mail: apwusteward@hotmail.com

HR/Injury Compensation Director..... Keith Combs
U: (313) 532-9305; C: (313) 330-7030
F: (313) 532-5433
e-Mail: combskeith24@gmail.com

Clerk Craft Director..... Wendy Kempke
W: (517) 263-5809; C: (419) 377-4595
e-Mail: kempke.wk@gmail.com

Maintenance Craft Director..... Marti Jablonski
U: 248-543-3262; C: 586-615-7369
F: 248-543-2750

e-Mail: journey4@comcast.net

MVS Craft Director..... Rico Cameron
U: (313) 532-9305
F: (313) 532-5433
e-Mail: rcameron@apwudetroit.org

Veterans Director..... John Smeekens
U: (248) 543-3262; H: (586) 286-2304
e-Mail: mpwuvetdirector@ameritech.net

Area 1 Director (480/481)..... Geoff Walker
U: (248) 543-3262
C: (248) 758-5786
F: (248) 333-3509
e-Mail: apwurep@yahoo.com

Area 2 Director (482)..... Tony Friday
C: (313) 532-9305; U: (313) 532-9305
F: (313) 532-5433
e-Mail: tfriday@apwudetroit.org

Area 3 Director (483)..... Robin Ely
C: (734) 558-6933; H: (734) 753-0438
e-Mail: relyapwu480-481@charter.net

Area 4 Director (484/485)..... Sandra Rancour
W: (810) 742-1580; U: (810) 239-0931
e-Mail: fmalccd@comcast.net

Area 5 Director (486/487)..... Amy Ridgway
C: (989) 820-7142; W: (989) 724-6787
e-Mail: amyrldgway.apwu@gmail.com

Area 6 Director (488/489)..... Maceo Cosper
C: (517) 281-3779; U: (517) 337-8753
F: (517) 332-4391
e-Mail: maceo.cosper@gmail.com

Area 7 Director (490/491)..... Christine Repke
C: (269) 221-8740;
e-Mail: chrisrepke719@gmail.com

Area 8 Director (492)..... Wendy Kempke
W: (517) 263-3795; C: (419) 377-4595
e-Mail: kempke.wk@gmail.com

Area 9 Director (493/494)..... Dana McLean
W: (231) 652-6677; C: (231) 638-7290
e-Mail: danamcleanapwu@gmail.com

Area 10 Director (496)..... Vince Nichols
W: (231) 933-1020/4502; C: (231) 499-9333
F: (231) 922-1863
e-Mail: vince00tc@yahoo.com

Area 11 Director (497)..... Deborah Goodacre
W: (231) 933-1020; F: (231) 922-1863

Area 12 Director (498/499)..... Theresa Granquist
U: (906) 774-6303; C: (906) 396-6103
F: (906) 774-7353
e-Mail: tgranquist@att.net

P.O.W.E.R. Representative.. Tamika Johnson-Smith
U: (313) 532-9305; F: (313) 532-5433
e-Mail: tjohnson-smith@apwudetroit.org

State Retiree Chapter President..... Paul Browning
C: (231) 275-6016
e-Mail: oldhipster54@hotmail.com

Vice President..... Joanna Atkinson

Secretary-Treasurer..... Jane Duggan

Trustee #1..... Deb Gorney

Trustee #2..... Vacant

Trustee #3..... Teresa Williams

MPWU Auxiliary President..... Vacant

MPWU Historian..... Vacant

MPWU Advisor..... Vacant

The Michigan Postal Workers Union proudly represents the Members at Large within the Great State of Michigan. The following locals have also affiliated with the MPWU for training, education and information sharing between their members, stewards and officers of their own local and others throughout the state and nation:

Battle Creek	Jackson
Central MI	Ludington
Cheboygan	Muskegon
Detroit District	Roger City
Farmington	Sault Ste Marie
Flint	Southwest MI
480-481	Stevensville
486-487	Traverse City
498-499	Troy Local
Gaylord	Western MI
Great Lakes Area	
Mail Haulers	

The MICHIGAN MESSENGER is published six times yearly, and is the official publication of the Michigan Postal Workers Union, American Postal Workers Union, AFL-CIO, also affiliated with the APWU Postal Press Association.

The opinions expressed in this publication are those of the writer and not necessarily those of the Editor, the MPWU, the APWU or the Postal Press. Articles and correspondence to the Editor may be sent to MPWU – Michigan Messenger, John Greathouse – Editor, PO Box 27303, Lansing, MI 48909-7303. Articles must be signed to be printed (your name may be withheld upon request). Articles may be edited to fit the confines of this publication.

Affiliated with: American Postal Workers Union, AFL-CIO; APWU National Postal Press Association, Michigan State AFL-CIO & Michigan Labor Press



MAINTENANCE CRAFT DIRECTOR

HELLO, Its Marti's Maintenance Message!

by Marti Jablonski,
Maintenance Craft Director

I truly hope everyone's summer has been full of laughter, family time, and memories, while remaining healthy and safe!

Let me start with what an honor to be nominated to sit on our National Maintenance Committee. This allowed me the opportunity to see the behind the scenes of our contract negotiations. To see so many were very well thought out resolutions that were put before the committee, from all across US, and some came with quite a bit of discussion for future problem solving. Also, I had the pleasure in meeting fellow maintenance craft directors as well as Local Presidents from other states that were maintenance employees as well.

Our newest highlights of our new **Contract that settled without arbitration**,

Hear about the new steps have been awarded to our Letter Box mechanics and a few other field Maintenance.

craft. To these employees I stress, please make sure you take the necessary precautions and obtain all the training you need to keep yourself and those you work with safe.

Informed on how we have stopped the conversions of TL-3 to TL-5.

and last hoping our **retro pay** will soon be in our paychecks!

A few things I would like to address in this month's article would be, if your office does not have a steward representing you and you are in a USPS custodial cleaned office, please contact me as soon as possible so we can make sure your Line H was covered this past fiscal year. The sooner I know this information, the better I will be able to serve you and correct any wrongs that have already occurred. With that being said, any offices that are postal custodial cleaned and have not had the "TL-5 Team Cleaning training" that was necessary to train you on the Team cleaning system please let me know! As one of the

best things that came from our contract negotiations other than more money, was the freezing of the converting of TL-3 offices to TL-5! Which inadvertently means more cleaning time and frequencies for you to maintain a healthy and safe building for you and your fellow workers.

For those of you in Field Maintenance, I know it's hard to do all that they expect you to do with traveling hundreds of miles in a day to do a 10 min job here and there, remember, you are paid for every minute you are on the clock! Do not give your work away by allowing them to call in FSP calls and having outside contractors do our work. If you a custodian or clerk in an associate office and you are aware of your postmaster calling everything into FSP, to just get it done! Please take the time to send an email or text my way so we can capture our work. Work orders are extremely important to keeping our work and FSP reports can help earn more hours for more promotions to Field maintenance. I

have heard the words time and again, how to determine if the job gets done, **"time, tools, and talent"**.

Do you have the time?

Yes! You are on the clock!

Do you have the tools?

Article 38 of your contract, specifically states, management must provide all necessary tools!

Lastly, do you have the talent?

You wouldn't have been promoted to the position if you didn't have the basic talent for the job, and the rest is up to you to make sure you receive all the training you need to do the job safely and efficiently!

Please remember this and if you have any issues, never fear that you can't say something. Just send an email, text, or phone call and I or your local steward will contact you back.

Thank and always remember to stay strong in solidarity, and we will win!



by Eric
Chornoby
Union Email:
chornoby@
apwu480.com

I was honored to be one of the MPWU Delegates for the 2022 APWU National Convention held in National Harbor Maryland. Selected at the MPWU State Convention this year. For those who don't know me, I am Eric Chornoby. I grew up in an APWU family. My father Patrick Chornoby was a long-time Detroit District Area Local (DDAL) and MPWU elected Union Representative.

I never expected to work at the Post Office. When I first applied to the USPS, I was given a choice of what offices to work at once I was hired. I picked Madison Heights for the Royal Oak bid cluster. In part as I had only heard good things about the 480 - 481 Local under President Roscoe Woods. Rather be safe than sorry, right?

It was not until I needed my Union that I discovered I wanted to be a Union Steward roughly four years ago or so. Then COVID hit and my Chief Steward Richard Dale passed away. And the real work began.

Two years of Pandemic. Multiple new Federal Laws. Telework at the Customer Care Center. Every day was and is a fight - exactly what I signed up for in our new, uncharted landscape.

When I went to the State of Michigan Convention this year and was nominated to be a National delegate by 480 - 481 President Roscoe Woods, I was flattered. It made me feel I was doing good work by someone I admire and

respect. After speaking to the delegation and being elected to be the State of Michigan Delegate I was honored.

I didn't sleep much the night before departing to Maryland. This was one bus I couldn't miss. After a long drive, we arrived in Maryland. This was way bigger than memorizing the contract, studying new laws, and negotiating with (or yelling at) Management. This was an opportunity to help change our Contract.

Long hours, unfamiliar procedures, and over 2,000 other delegates who were, by and large, more experienced made me nervous. MPWU Secretary-Treasurer Darren Joyce gave me fantastic advice, to paraphrase, 'sit next to and listen to MPWU President Michael (Mike) Mize.' That was the best advice anyone could have given me.

MPWU President Mike Mize was on the Labor Management Committee. He had insight into committee recommendations and rationale no one else knew. He is a fantastic advocate for all MPWU members. Sitting across from me was MPWU Editor John Great-house and us Michigan Delegates had lively debates.

Behind me was my home local. 480 - 481 Executive V.P. Steve Wood who is a wizard at Roberts Rules of Order and Convention procedure I frequently leaned onto to figure things out. VP John Diem who I looked over to see how he voted on Maintenance issues. And when in doubt, I looked over at President Roscoe Woods to see how an issue should be voted upon. As a Steward, seeing on most votes all Michigan Delegates agreed invoked confidence.

I was in a perfect spot to learn, have

a lively debate, and make an informed decision to benefit all Postal Employees. Over dozens of resolutions were to be discussed and decided upon. Floor debate was inspiring, and to quote David Yao of the Greater Seattle Area Local (paraphrased), 'When it's everyone's job when things get busy, it's nobody's job.' I will be using that.

After daily sessions ended, I was not done working. I attended as many workshops as possible. Including POWER (Post Office Women for Equal Rights), and Young Members. I also had the pleasure of speaking with Congresswoman Brenda Lawrence.

Listening to the live debate between Michigan's own John Marcotte, former national Legislative and Political Director and previous APWU Health Plan Director and current President Mark Dimondstein. Some positions

surprised me and I was proud to be a member of the MPWU. I also was able to speak with two of our Clerk NBAs Devendra "D" Rathore and Linda Turney about our issues and Grievances.

I can't leave out Michigan's own NBA Curtis Walker who provided excellent feedback at the MPWU table. Michigan had many proud National Committee members such as Edward (Eddie) Hosendove, Jennifer Kowalczyk, Keith Combs, and Amy Puhalski. I pray I leave no one out. But Michigan's talent, from NBA to Committee Members, to National Officers was clear.

When the convention ended, I was exhausted. Learning so much is always difficult. The knowledge I gained is irreplaceable. My confidence in my ability to represent all APWU members has greatly increased. Management better watch out, as Michigan is strong.

Once Upon A Time In Maryland



AREA 5 DIRECTOR

by
Amy
Ridgway

Overtime Pay Calculations
For Part Time
Flexible Employees

regular in the same step and grade. This is because holiday pay is included in Part Time Flexibles hourly wage. The holiday pay amount is not used for configuring overtime. For example: A PTF at step C, grade 6, is \$29.45 per hour. The full-time regulars base pay at the same step and grade is \$28.20. Overtime would be 1.5 times \$28.20.

In Solidarity.

Greetings brothers and sisters, Summer is winding down and I hope everyone took some time off to enjoy it. I have had several questions concerning overtime pay calculations for part time flexible employees. Overtime is not calculated using the hourly wage. It is calculated using the basic pay of a full-time

AREA 3 DIRECTOR



by
Robin
Ely

Taking Care of Business

Hope everyone has enjoyed their summer. We are still dealing with Covid, but it seems that we are finally starting to meet face to face with people again. It has been a long time coming.

We are still facing many contractual problems in the smaller offices. Did your schedule get posted on the Wednesday before? Is the postmaster putting up a generic schedule just to say they put one up? Are they texting you after hours to tell you what time to report to work the following morning?

Article 1.6 issues – Bargaining Unit Work

Small office issues in Level 18 of-

fices - Did the postmaster do more than 15 hours of clerk work while cutting your hours? Is the postmaster claiming all the work they have performed each day? Sorting mail? Sorting PO Box mail? Working the window? Performing Dispatch?

Performing duties in Webbats (PO Box)? Getting collection mail out of the boxes out front? Scanning any accountable mail? Accountable cage duties? Do not hesitate to call your steward to discuss these issues.

Convention Notes –

This is an election year for the Executive Board at the APWU headquarters. Make sure you vote. The percentage of votes cast in the last election was embarrassing. Make sure you do your part and have a

voice in your union.

It is your responsibility to elect the best person for the job. Call your steward if you need help understanding who's running and what they bring to the table. They can help you to understand the best-qualified candidates.

Just came home from the convention. It was a long hard week discussing what we want in our contract for the benefit of our members.

We had a lot of outstanding speakers.

Sara Nelson, International President of Flight Attendants-CWA, was one of the speakers. If you ever get a chance to hear her speak, please attend. She is a strong union sister looking out for women's rights and equality in the workplace. Then right after her speech, Pres-

ident Mark Dimondstein needed a break from leading the convention. So, Mark turned the podium over to Industrial Relations Director Charlie Cash. Nothing against Mr. Cash, but the next in command would have been our Female Vice President, Debby Szeredy. This is not the first convention that Mr. Dimondstein refused to turn the meeting over to the Vice President. So yes, the delegates from Michigan loudly voiced their opinions from our seats. Local Executive Vice President Steve Wood went to the microphone to challenge President Dimondstein's decision, and Mark still refused to correct his mistake and turn the meeting over to Debby Szeredy. So, when you get your ballot, remember this article!

Solidarity to All.

RETIREEES WIN!

Retirees Finally Have A Voice & Voting From The Floor!

continued from page 1

Michigan Postal Workers Union. And I can't forget our own APWU Retirees Department Director Nancy Olumekor who has championed retirees from Day 1 of her initial Director appointment in 2016 and subsequent elections to the position. Also, current APWU Health Plan Director Sarah Rodriguez and former National APWU Officers Sue Carney as well as Michigan's own John Marcotte who has always had retirees' backs whether in his former positions as APWU Legislative Director or the APWU Health Plan Director. On behalf of Brother LaBrecque and all APWU retirees, I give my thanks and gratitude to all I mentioned here and any who I missed but were in Solidarity with retirees.

Demonstration

What if over 2,000 APWU members staged a demonstration and nobody saw it? Such was apparently



the case as Convention delegates rallied in front of high-rise hotels on the Potomac River in National Harbor, Maryland on Day 2 of the National Convention. Delegates carried signs, heard speeches, and chanted for voting rights for all Americans. Certainly, it was an inspiring moment for delegates and a pump up the enthusiasm for all attending but it was a preaching to the choir hour and a half (which admittedly never hurts). However, how much



Trustee Teresa Williams, V.P. Joanna Atkinson, Sec-Treas. Jane Duggan, President Paul Browning, Trustee Deb Gorney (missing Yvonne Tatum whose plane home left early)

more effective could it have been and how much more attention could it have drawn if it had been held in the actual nearby United States Capitol City? As former Michigan Postal Workers Union President John Marcotte noted-USPS Headquarters, the Capitol Mall, or even the National Postal Museum, would have made a bigger splash with the Media, the American public, and our Congressional representatives.

Time To Dump Postmaster General DeJoy

In a rebuke to APWU President Dimondstein's continued efforts to "work with" PMG DeJoy,

Convention delegates supported a resolution calling for the removal of DeJoy as PMG. And President Dimondstein is not alone in his lukewarm relationship with DeJoy. None of the Presidents of the other three Postal Unions have called for DeJoy's removal. Only the rank and file are up in arms about DeJoy's plans to eliminate tens of thousands of postal jobs, consolidate mail processing even more resulting in the displacement of more postal workers,

and his continued plans for slower service and higher postage prices. How long before Postal Union leaders unite to say ENOUGH IS ENOUGH!

More Debates

Two controversial resolutions were also put forth requiring more explicit APWU Constitution language concerning retired full dues paying members right to vote on Contract approval as well as greater transparency on National Executive Board actions whose results are only announced after decided in secret by the NEB. While these resolutions did not obtain the necessary two-thirds vote for passage, many dissidents gave convincing arguments for an open and less secretive style of leadership. There was also much rumbling of disagreement over President's Dimondstein's decision to leave vacant for two years the position of Human Relations Director who handles among other duties the important matter of Workers Compensation cases for members injured on the job. In response to Dimondstein's decision to finally appoint a Human Relations Director only months before APWU elections, delegates passed a resolution to make a decision within 90 days to

either fill vacant positions or do away with them.

On the whole, it was a typical APWU Convention. Contract proposals from members who actually are on the workroom floor were put forth and either rejected or passed for consideration in 2024's contract negotiations. There was controversy and debate and dissent. It was a democratic Union in action meeting together. It was the continuing evolution of the American Postal Workers Union. No doubt and thankfully it will be repeated at the 2024 National Convention with free expression of members on everything from Constitutional issues to contract matters to formal resolutions addressing and expressing the APWU's position on numerous social issues from climate change to voting rights.

APWU Elections

Ballots for the election of APWU National Officers will be mailed out in early September. Below are the offices and candidates' retirees can vote on:

President: Mark Dimondstein-John Marcotte, Legislative Director: Judy Beard-Tom Benson, Human Relations Director: Daleo Freeman-Doris Simmons, Retirees Department Director: Nancy Olumekor-Robert Jeffrey. There are also other contested offices that full dues paying still working members can vote on. This is the opportunity for APWU members to express their opinion and beliefs as to whether they agree or disagree with the actions and job performance of current National Officers and the direction the APWU is headed in. It was a hard fought right obtained over half a century ago. APWU members have not only the right but the responsibility to make their voice known in determining the future of their Union.

ELECTIONS

Safe, Secure, Vote Dumping, Fraud And More!

continued from page 2

ballot number stub against the ballot number on the address label.

4. Another team removes the ballot from the secrecy sleeve. They didn't see the outer envelope, so they don't know who the ballot belongs to so the secret ballot is preserved. They then remove the ballot stub.

5. Another team unfolds the ballots, with stubs now removed and puts them in stacks of 25.

6. They count all the opened, unfolded ballots, with stubs removed to make sure they have the same number again that they counted when they started. They verify that is the number of ballots they should have, and it matches the number of ballots returned on their list.

7. The ballots are now run through the high-speed tabulators/scanners in batches of 25, making sure the number tabulated again matches the number of ballots they already counted twice and is the number of ballots returned on their list.

Election Results

We have seen on TV where the results for a county show a total of vote and a percentage of votes reported, these are totals from various precincts or towns that were reported to the county, after the polls close. These totals are not done so until all votes for that precinct are completed.

So how do they get to this point, at the end of the day, after the precinct is closed, the results on each tabulator are printed, total tapes are then signed along with the poll book as well as the electronic poll book. The memory card is removed from the tabulator and sealed in a transfer bag that comes back to the local clerk. The local clerk will then take these memory cards and upload them to the County Clerk via a secure system.

Is this secure? Yes, and while there are vulnerabilities, therefore each precinct prints their results when the poll is closed to match it to what is on the memory card. There are also multiple result tapes that are printed, and the County Board of Canvassers check these tapes against the transmitted results. At no time are the tabulators connected to a modem or online. They do not have Wi-Fi as well. The same process is done for in person or absentee voting.

Back to reporting, total votes for a precinct are only reported after the poll is closed, when it is done, it is done, period. Some precincts are finished before other and that is why you will see partial results being reported on TV. These totals for each precinct will include the absentee ballots as well. If they are not counted, that precinct will not be reporting.

Vote Dumping

This is a load of . . . Well . . . you

know, the stuff your dog leave in the yard.

What some folks are referring to vote dumping is the results being reported by different precincts as they are finished. Not all precincts are done at the same time, so the results will not be reported at the same time.

Looking back at the 2020 election, one candidate might be shown having an early lead but the votes for that county have only had a small percentage reported and as more precincts

and vote again, that just not how it works.

What kinds of indicator alert clerks to voter fraud?

Signatures not matching an application or envelope for an absentee ballot. This might not be fraudulent, a younger voter who keeps changing their signature or an older person whose can't sign like they used to. Almost all cases can be resolved by the voter showing their ID and signing.



report, the results will change.

Large precincts or city will have to check the absentee ballot drop boxes at 8 pm to ensure that they have all of them when the polls close, this can and does add more time to the final tabulation of votes for that precinct.

This is not "finding" or "dumping" votes, but it is simply the processing of all of the ballots that were turned in time.

Fraud

There has been no evidence of widespread voter fraud. There is individual here and there who have been caught trying to vote twice or trying to vote for someone else. Some folks make it sound like you can just walk into any voting precinct or grab a stack of absentee ballots

There cannot be multiple ballots issued or ballots coming in that were never issued. Voters can and do receive multiple applications for a ballot and some folks again, think this is fraud . . . it's not. Political parties and other groups are allowed to send applications (unsolicited) to who they target. You will not get a ballot for each application you fill out, just one ballot per registered voter. It is part of the checks and balances process to verify that you are a qualified voter. My daughter, who moved out of state 4 years ago, still gets applications sent to my home. She votes in the state she lives in and yes, she does not receive an absentee ballot at my home.

To help the clerks with this process of verifying, the state and coun-

ty provide reports of deaths as well as checking obituary, tracking property transfers, home sales and more. Also, here in Michigan there is a Qualified Voter File which is tied to the Secretary of State license file. Whenever a voter updates their address for their license, the local clerks gets a notification of this change.

Michigan also joined Electronic Registration Information Center (ERIC). 33 states and the District of Columbia are part of a data sharing effort. When someone applies for a license or registers to vote in another state that is a member of ERIC, the previous Clerk will get a notice. This all helps to keep the voter rolls as up to date as possible.

The Township Where I Did This Interview

The clerk I interviewed has been a Clerk for 24 years and has had just one case of voter fraud. Someone who had been registered in the same residence for years obtained an absentee ballot and returned it. He then registered to vote in Florida and voted in-person. He was caught and prosecuted in FL.

It just happened to be in 2020, the year that seems to have had a good number of politicians talking of fraud as well as a lot of inaccurate information about fraud was brought to a new level. And it just happened to be that this individual who cheated (or tried to cheat) was a proclaimed Trump supporter.

Individuals here and there, might try and cheat, but they are usually caught. There is no way to have large-scale fraud that could throw an election. Is prison time really worth 1 more vote? And usually, they are caught before their vote is counted.

Conclusion

Elections are safe, secure, accurate and reflect what the voters have done. No amount of yelling or screaming from the bully pulpit will alter that fact.

So, get out and VOTE!

AREA 11 DIRECTOR



by
Debora
Goodacre

Management Is Responsible For Adequate Security

ment's responsibility to have adequate security?

I want to express how important it is NOT to wait until you receive a L.O.D (Letter of Demand) for issues you may be experiencing at the window. Please put any problems you have in writing. You should also call the Help Desk and get a ticket for proof of reporting. Please contact me if you have any questions or concerns. I also have "Report of Secu-

riety Problem or Poor Financial Practice" forms you can fill out as well.

On another note, the Retail Customer Experience (RCE) is the same as the Mystery Shoppers? It's just a different term. These cannot be used against you for discipline.

All HUB clerk PTFs must put in writing to work in other 18 & 20 offices. Also, put in writing NOT to work other offices and keep a copy. In Solidarity.

Hello brothers and sisters.

I want to thank those of you who have reached out to me thus far. I want to remind all of you that you may call, text or email me with any issue you have no matter how small it may be. I will do my due diligence to respond in a timely manner.

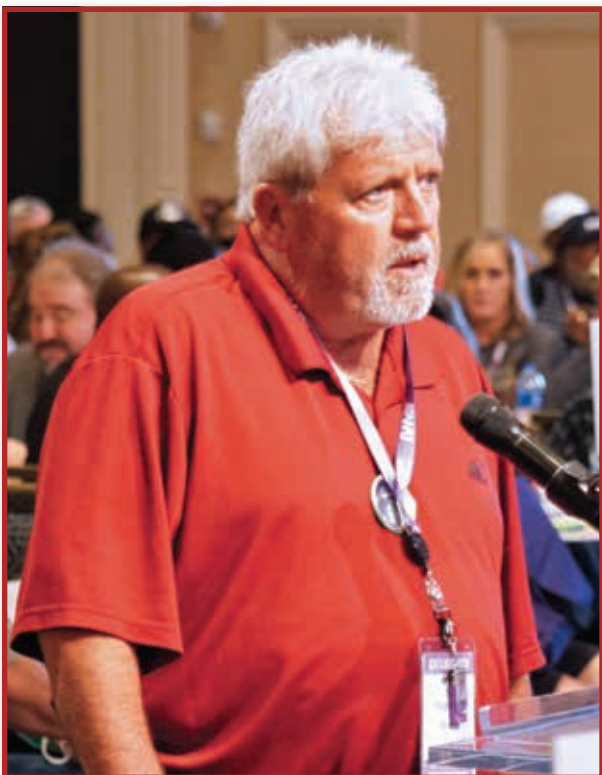
Did you know that it is manage-

Michigan Delegation At The 2022 APWU





National Convention – Fighting For You!



Meet The Candidates APWU Human Relations Director Election

Questions & Answers

Each candidates' answers alternate between questions and are in different color as shown below. Initials are bolded for each candidate at the end of each answer.

Daleo Freeman (I) – Candidate for APWU Human Relations Director

Doris Simmons - Candidate for APWU Human Relations Director

1. Please tell our members about yourself. Years of service with the USPS Union and Offices held.

Daleo Freeman - I am currently serving in the position of Director of Human Relations after being appointed by President Dimondstein with the Approval of the Executive Board.

I became a Postal Worker and APWU member in September of 1994. I decided to join the fight in 1998 and became a Steward. I was elected President of the William H. Burrus Cleveland Ohio Areal Local 72 in 2012 after serving as Vice-President. I was elected Director of Industrial Relations of the Ohio Postal Workers Union (OPWU) from 2013-2016 and OPWU Vice-President from 2016-2022. I am currently the Vice-President of the North Shore Federation Central Labor Council.

I served on the National Constitution Committee three (3) times and was the Chair once.

I served on the Rank-and-File Committee twice. I served on the Young Workers Panels at All-Craft Conferences as well.

Doris Simmons - My name is Doris Simmons, I am a Clerk Steward at the Atlanta NDC. I have 39 years of Postal Service (Civil Service). I held the position of organization director for 7 years. I have been helping members with their OWCP Claims/COVID. My father was in the United States Marine Corps and my sister is currently serving in the United States Army.

2. What would you like to offer/ accomplish with education to state and local officers?

Doris Simmons - I would like to set up educational programs for State and Local Officers. This will ensure that our representatives are more familiar with EEO and OWCP processes, to better serve their locals members. I want to go a step further to make myself available to the membership by checking in with the Locals as the new claims come in.

Daleo Freeman - I am prepared to take some risks to move forward to achieve the Department's goals. To be successful, the ideas, input, and informed views from state and local officers as well as the membership will be welcomed. Two-way communication will be paramount. One of the Department's goals is to build a national system of local and state Human Relations Representatives aimed at meeting and assisting members where they are.

Another goal is to utilize the resources

granted to us that stretch far beyond the grievance procedure and use them to our collective advantage. In accordance with the Constitution and the will of the membership, the department will work diligently to expand on the protections of our members' rights through collective action in the field and on the workroom floor. Knowledge is the key and communicating this knowledge opens the door.

3. EAP – District Advisory Committees – how would you address the number of craft vacancies and lack of support from the USPS to holding meetings and providing input to National in the EAP issues from the district levels?

Daleo Freeman - The responsibilities of the Human Relations Department are vast, so I dare not take responsibilities assigned to other departments according to the constitution, unless another officer makes that request. Craft vacancies are not under the jurisdiction of the Human Relations Department, and I have not been asked to assist with handling any issues dealing with vacancies.

As far as EAP, I intend to make sure that employees are aware of the services and take advantage of them as the need arises. I have already been discussing ways to improve and address the numerous EAP issues. There will be consistent talks and resolution meetings to assure that members receive our support. I will work to make sure that District Advisory Committees function as they are intended to.

Doris Simmons - I would address the absence of support regarding the EAP District Advisory Committee's meetings by proposing a consolidation of the District committees to get more people together at the same time to try to streamline the functionality of them and reduce red tape.

4. How would you improve the accuracy of the membership rosters for the locals? There seems to be a disconnect between the locals and HQ resulting in a discrepancy.

Doris Simmons - I would like to see a semiannual or quarterly, member and non-member lists. And work with the National Organization Director efficiency of communications with the Locals.

Daleo Freeman - I must reiterate that the responsibilities of the Human Relations Department are vast, so I dare not take responsibilities assigned to other departments according to the constitution, unless another officer makes that request. I have not been asked to assist with the handling of membership rosters and the need to do so has not been presented to me.

5. Tell the members something positive about your opponent.

Daleo Freeman - While I do not know my opponent well, I assume that she is a member to be able to run and I applaud her for that. Also, I in-

tend to continue to run a clean campaign based on my record and facts and hope that my opponent will do the same.

Doris Simmons - Mr. Freeman was a President of a Local in Cleveland which shows a commitment to the Union.

6. As HR is responsible for the accurate recording of membership for both active dues paying members and retirees who are full dues paying members for voting, how do you plan to update this process and ensure that the members receive their ballots and are not overlooked on contract and election voting?

Doris Simmons - I will work with the Organizational Director to see what I can do to help ensure that the active dues paying member and the retirees receive their ballots by tracking them through the mail.

Daleo Freeman - Again, I must reiterate that the responsibilities of the Human Relations Department are vast, so I dare not take responsibilities assigned to other departments according to the constitution, unless another officer makes that request. Some may mistakenly believe that HR (Human Resources) and Human Relations are the same thing. The two are different. Further, I have no proof that what is alleged is a problem and I have not been asked to assist.

7. Are you running as part of a group/team or not? Please explain your reason for running your campaign this way.

Daleo Freeman - I am a proud candidate with the APWU Solidarity Team because the current leadership has demonstrated that collective action by our members activists, officers, and allies is the key to protecting our rights and benefits.

The diverse makeup of the Solidarity Team and solid vision of the best path forward for our union's future, will keep the momentum going to best protect our interests.

Doris Simmons - I elected to run on my own and not as a team because I want to show my individual strengths. No matter who's in office I am a team player.

8. What is a long-term goal that you would like to set into motion that may take longer than just one term, yet would be welcomed by your successor?

Doris Simmons - My long-term goal is to set in motion a way that our members can continue to get knowledge and training needed to ensure that my successor can easily incorporate that will continue the betterment and livelihood of our membership.

Daleo Freeman - I intend to direct the activities of the department in accordance with the constitution and the will of the members, so I would hope that my successor would want to build on everything that I do. The goal is for

the betterment of all our futures. Everyone is responsible for keeping the labor movement alive, growing, and well. This election and holding office should not be about personalities, but who can and will do the work.

One long-term goal that may take more than one term is my goal of connecting all locals and states, including Members-at-Large, small, medium, and large locals, to deliver programs that assist members with their concerns.

9. OWCP is a hot button issue with the members and additional training is needed to allow the Local HR Directors to be more effective, how will you address this?

Daleo Freeman - After evaluating the Department and recognizing that many workers need assistance with OWCP education and the processing of their claims through the system, I have retained our Specialist as a consultant. Also, we have begun vetting and appointing OWCP Regional Resource Assistants to assist members in all five regions. The Regional Resource Assistants will conduct training programs and assist locals in their fight to make sure all injured employees are taken care of correctly and efficiently.

Doris Simmons - This has to be addressed through consistent communication with the Department of Labor, to ensure training is readily available and an open discussion between the members and local personnel to identify problems and conduct more training in person or zoom meetings.

10. Any additional statement that you would like to close your interview?

Doris Simmons - As the proud daughter of a United States Marine who proudly served his country, I look forward to serving the Members of this great Union if elected, I would like to bring onboard a retired veteran to make sure their voices are heard

Daleo Freeman - To summarize, I must note that it is important that everyone understand the role of the Human Relations Department as outlined in our National Constitution and By-laws. If members know what the job entails, then expectations will be reasonable, and members can correctly evaluate the goals that have been and will be accomplished.

All the duties of the department are important, and I will endeavor to balance them all, refraining from letting one aspect of the responsibilities overshadow the rest. I will concentrate on mobilizing from within and empowering members. The human aspect of union business will always be observed.

I appreciate the opportunity to respond and I hope that my answers will not be changed. I trust that you have asked all that you want to know. I have web articles and literature that all members can review. For further questions, go to the Solidarity Teams website

Meet The Candidates APWU Legislative & Political Director Election

Questions & Answers

Each candidates' answers alternate between questions and are in different color as shown below. Initials are bolded for each candidate at the end of each answer.

Judy Beard – Candidate for APWU Legislative and Political Director

Thomas Benson – Candidate for APWU Legislative and Political Director

1. What do you feel is the Most important legislation for postal workers going through the 2020-2022 Congress at this time and why is that?

Judy Beard – There is more than one significant bill going through Congress at this time that is important to postal workers. The Inflation Reduction Act, if signed into law, will invest in clean energy that to date includes billions in funding for an electric postal fleet as well as lowering families' energy costs. The bill also lowers the deficit and makes prescription drug savings for many seniors. Voting rights legislation would make it easier to register to vote, make voting more accessible via vote by mail and early voting. It outlines a criteria for redistricting that would draw fairer maps.

Thomas Benson - When I am elected APWU Legislative, and Political Director I will bring fierce determination to DC to safeguard and expand our legislated benefits. I am determined to restore our service standards to save our jobs and ensure every community has a post office. I dare to "imagine" us getting back to the time before 2012 when service standards demanded a letter mailed across the street by you, got there 98% of the time the next day. I plan on pitching a tent, if need be, in DC to make sure this message is delivered for "YOU" daily, weekly, monthly, and annually.

I know for a fact; with the right relationships and hard work I can achieve this. Together John Marcotte, former legislative and political director, and I scored a huge victory in 2015. We achieved 2012 service standards for our membership by working with influential legislators. This was achieved without committees. This was done by building strong relationships with members from both parties. The pending legislation was pulled days prior to its anticipated passage at the request of the union leadership. I believe in communicating this goal clearly and concisely through our rank and file. We must return to the "Service Model" that proved successful for more than 230 years.

Making 2012 service standards law will have a ripple effect across the country. It will produce faster delivery times, keep many processing plants from being consolidated and will save good paying postal union jobs.

2. What do you feel is the Most important legislation for our retirees (and to working members as it impacts them at retirement) going through the 2020-2022 Congress currently and why is that?

Thomas Benson - The repeal of the unfair provisions of WEP and GPO that rob teachers, police, firefighters, and postal employee retirees of their Social Security benefits should be a priority for the APWU. I have seen talking points from the current APWU legislative and political director on this matter, but I have not seen a call to action. The APWU retirees deserve better than just talking points. On July 15th, 2022, 291 Congress members signed on as cosponsors of HR 82. This will be the first time in history that a floor vote will be taken on any bill to repeal or modify WEP/GPO. The vote will hopefully be in September of this year. If I were the current APWU Legislative and Political Director, I would be using all the resources at my disposal to push a call for action. The passing of this bill will help so many APWU retirees who currently live on a limited budget and suffer stiff penalties against social security benefits. I believe it is up to us (current members) to be the stewards of the retirees, as they were to their predecessors. I believe we also welcome them in the fight with information and important dates to act when and where needed.

As APWU Legislative and Political Director, I will battle to win a living wage for workers; protect Social Security and Medicare; pursue cost-of-living adjustments that keep pace with inflation; defend affordable, premium healthcare, and laws that protect our ill, injured, and those caring for family. I am dedicated to procuring paid Family Medical Leave, safer working conditions, and retirement benefits that sustain us through our golden years – working diligently to equalize FERS cost-of-living adjustments to CSRS while working tirelessly to repeal the Government Pension Offset and Windfall Elimination Provision if HR 82 is not made law.

Judy Beard – A number of our current retirees are adversely affected by the Windfall Elimination Provision and Government Pension Offset. There are several pieces of legislation APWU has been fighting for that would repeal these unfair laws and grant those under CSRS, who paid into Social Security, what was promised to them.

For current and future retirees, we continue to fight for Cost of living increases to be calculated based on a formula known as the CPI-E. This consumer price index for the elderly would better reflect the spending habits and living costs of retirees and would provide more money to them if legislation is passed to include this.

The Federal Retirement Fairness Act would ensure that over 100,000 postal workers who started as PSEs or casuals and converted to full-time employees would be granted the ability to make catch-up retirement contributions that would enable them to retire sooner with full benefits.

3. Tell the members something positive about your opponent.

Judy Beard – When each of us steps up and voluntarily chooses to be a dues paying union member, we are making a commitment to helping APWU fight for better wages and benefits.

Thomas Benson - Judy Beard was interviewed by the Smithsonian Postal Museum. Her views and statement of her experience in the Postal Service will be there for future generations to hear and read. Judy Beard is a pioneer for all women and the African American community of women in the Post Office and beyond through her many years of service. She is a staunch supporter of our APWU.

4. What legislation do you feel is most important for our members to get passed in the soon to be elected 2022-2024 Congress, what is the strategy to do so and why is it most important?

Thomas Benson - I believe in stopping the PMG's 10-year plan. It's obvious that the PMG is not invested in our future. Under DeJoy, we are seeing a slow yet steady approach to privatization. I will build strong relationships and will work to push Congress to get involved to prevent the complete 10-year plan from happening. I'm simply appalled that our APWU leaders are silent about the 10-year plan. This plan will negatively affect a huge portion of our membership. In the early 2000's I was directly affected by Article 12 impacts, and I was a PTF for nearly 13 years. Consolidations of plants will bring Article 12 impacts back. I understand what adverse effect this 10-year plan will have on the membership. In the past we, the APWU members, fought the USPS when their ideas had adverse effects on its members. I plan on protecting your best interests, as I do when I travel on my dime and time currently to conventions, meetings, and rally's here and abroad, and have been for years to ensure your benefits and contractual rights are kept sacred. I will align myself only with people who have this same commitment to our welfare. What happens to you, happens to me.

Judy Beard – Voting rights legislation is urgently needed. Our democracy depends on every eligible voter being able to exercise their right to cast a ballot. We will join other unions and organizations leading this fight and organize our members nationwide to continue to advocate to their lawmakers at the local, state, and federal level for the advancement of voting rights. Our strategy includes educating our members that we have power in numbers. We will provide the tools and resources so they can effectively carry this message from their communities to the ballot box. Additionally, we will continue with our current practice of organizing national call-in days of action to put pressure on lawmakers.

5. Evaluate in detail the recently passed Postal Service Reform Act of 2022, specifically its impact on our members and retirees going forward.

Judy Beard – The Postal Service Reform Act of 2022 was a huge victory. Over 15 years in the making, this legislation provides financial relief by eliminating the pre-funding mandate, provides postal oversight, Medicare Integration, and codifies six-day delivery into law. The repeal of the pre-funding mandate will help to free up funds for improvements and innovation. For years, this absurd mandate pushed the USPS to slow service and shutter facilities. The codification of six-day delivery was a huge accomplishment. Up until this point, six-day delivery had to be introduced and passed in Congress each year. This legislation will also allow the USPS to work with State, Local, and Tribal governments to negotiate the sale of non-postal products and provide public services which will generate more revenue. The creation of a public dashboard, as mandated by this legislation, will allow the public to monitor any service failures and identify mail slow-downs. This will be an extremely useful tool in our fight for increased service standards. Finally, Medicare Integration which is fair to both active and retired postal workers. As of today, the eligibility for Medicare Part B remains at age 65. To quote one of the answers from the extensive Q and A we released on Postal Reform, "With Medicare Integration, Medicare becomes the primary provider, FEHBP becomes the secondary provider. FEHBP picks up what Medicare does not cover, and thus eliminates out of pocket expenses such as co-pays and deductibles. In addition, with Medicare as the primary provider, the FEHBP plans save money which in turn helps to mitigate future costs of the FEHBP plans. For these reasons approximately 80% of APWU postal retirees voluntarily join Medicare B, finding it beneficial to health and personal finances." This legislation does not require current retirees who did not enroll in Medicare Part B to now enroll. However, if they choose to enroll there will be a special enrollment period for those who wish to enroll and penalties will be waived. I encourage all of our members who have questions on this legislation to visit the APWU Legislative webpage for the full Q and A.

Thomas Benson - The Postal Reform Act of 2022 eliminated a 2006 mandate from Congress to pre-fund retiree health benefits. This has been a huge burden on the USPS. The elimination of this 2006 mandate was the best part of the bill for the members.

The Postal Service Reform Act failed to guarantee our service
continued on page 10

Meet The Candidates APWU Legislative & Political Director Election

continued from page 9

standards (which I feel is imperative) while the NALC and carriers achieved theirs. The Postal Service Reform Act gave away the rights of future postal retirees to make their own decision about Medicare B which comes at a significant additional expense; offers unattainable savings for most when weighed against the month-to-month costs and mandates their federal health benefits become secondary. Their shortsightedness will place us into a postal only health benefit program that weakens our bargaining strength for affordable premiums, deteriorates benefits, and diminishes access to preferred providers.

Medicare Part A (helps cover inpatient care in hospitals, skilled nursing facility care, hospice care, and home health care) is running out of money and could become insolvent by 2026. This is very worrisome as now we have no choice but to take Medicare at age 65. Prior to the Postal Reform Act of 2022, postal employees could opt out of Medicare if they chose to. This was a guaranteed benefit for federal employees. The current APWU legislative director and APWU President used our benefits as a bargaining chip to get legislation passed. The pre-funding mandate was a product of Congress in 2006. This was not the fault of the retirees or current employees, and yet . . . we are forced to give up a vital benefit to fix what Congress created.

I've been to several APWU conferences and heard top officers say that only 20% of postal retirees do not sign up for Medicare, but 80% do sign up. This was the APWU's justification for giving away a benefit. It only affects 20% of the retirees. I'm a firm believer of "AN INJURY TO ONE IS AN INJURY TO ALL". The APWU should ensure fair wages, benefits and safe working conditions for the members and retirees. The union shouldn't be giving away benefits. This has opened Pandora's box and I feel will be an issue in the future. I will make this promise to you, I will never use your benefits as a bargaining chip. I remember when it was unheard of for

National Officers to make deals without the trust of the membership that transparency brings. I will be coming to work as Legislative Director with a big spotlight.

6. As Legislative and Political Director, what group(s) would you become active in to assist the APWU in creating and passing legislation beneficial to postal workers. Please explain your activities in these groups in detail.

Thomas Benson - As APWU Legislative and Political Director I will be active with the National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association, NARFE. I believe we must stand up and fight for the retirees and protect their rights and benefits. The APWU would not exist if it wasn't for those who came before us and laid the groundwork for what we have today.

I will be active with many Veteran organizations such as DAV, the American Legion and Veterans of Foreign Wars. I will work with these organizations and lawmakers to enforce Veterans' preference legislation; improve medical services and benefits; expedite access, and fight to restore postal hiring registers to rebuild our rapidly dwindling Veteran workforce – down 30% since 2020 under the watch of our existing director and president. Veterans and members of the armed forces sacrificed to serve our country; they deserve knowledgeable leaders who are willing to fight for them.

Judy Beard – I am already involved in a number of groups who have been critical in our fights. We are stronger when we fight together and it is critical that we show up for our allies like they show up for us. During my time as Retiree Director I formed relationships with the Alliance for Retired Americans as a former member of their executive board, Social Security Works, and the Leadership Council of Aging Organizations. I continue to work with these groups to repeal the WEP and GPO. As a lifetime member of the NAACP, I will continue to ensure APWU remains a strong ally. The NAACP played a significant role in the

last election cycle with their lawsuits against the USPS. I also work with the six constituency groups of the AFL-CIO, the Coalition of Labor Union Women, the Labor Council for Latin American Development, Coalition of Black Trade Unionists, Pride at Work, A. Philip Randolph, and the Union Veterans Council. They have come to our aid in our campaigns to stop the privatization of the postal service and are also strongly committed to voting rights and I will work with them to push for legislation. For these groups and many others not listed, I attend meetings on a regular basis to speak on the actions of the APWU and to update them on our legislative priorities.

7. What is your long-term legislative priorities for the APWU going forward that may take more than one Congress for them to become law?

Judy Beard – During my tenure as Legislative Director I have always fought for improved service standards. We have succeeded in multiple Congresses with service standards language being included in the House-passed appropriations. Most recently, we were able to secure language directing the Postal Regulatory Commission to conduct a study. Unfortunately, even if language is passed in the Appropriations process, that language is only good for a short period of time. Until the passage of Postal Reform, six-day delivery had to be reintroduced and passed each year. Permanent Service Standards would need to be advocated for in separate legislation to avoid having to be reauthorized each year.

Thomas Benson - I have clear pictures in my head of me working with Congress on protecting the rural post office.

The USPS operates 13,000 rural postal locations, representing 39% of all postal retail locations. Nearly 51 million rural Americans, which is roughly 16.5 % of the U.S. population utilize rural post offices. Rural communities have the largest share of people above the age of 65 and are less mobile and tech savvy than younger generations. My plan is to work with Congress to prevent the closures and cut in hours at these locations. This action will help better serve the communities and will save postal Union jobs. This will be an ongoing fight as we know every year the USPS cuts hours and continues to try to close these small rural offices.

Every time, on my drive out, I am called to a Rural Post Office. I can't help but think of how important it is that we continue to serve the Rural American Communities and have for 246 years.

8. Any additional statement that you would like to close your interview. (MAX 500 Words/numbers)

Thomas Benson – I believe every-

thing rises and falls on leadership.

I believe how you do anything; is how you do everything.

I believe transparency equals trust.

I believe more service hours and plant operations will increase business.

I believe finding ways to speed up the mail, not slow standards down are the way to our future.

I believe in long term vision for legislation. 5, 10, even 20 years down the road should all make it on our map of today.

I believe that people working currently on the workroom floor have a distinct advantage in what is working and not working for our members. I continue to hear from the workroom floor the cries for help from our members not just with my ears, but with my eyes and heart.

I believe in uniting our members (including retirees) from Rural America, Suburban America, and Urban America to form a power voice demanding value driven policy.

I believe the APWU members, all of us – active and retired – have a responsibility to be politically active and work to elect politicians who will ensure that the USPS will be here for future generations. Fight for a strong educational system for our young people, fight for good-paying jobs for postal workers and a secure and dignified retirement for postal seniors.

I am humbly asking for your support and your vote in this year's APWU election. The time has come to make the Legislative Department, strong and respected again on Capitol Hill.

BECAUSE of YOU I am in the fight!

In Closing, I will put it as frankly as I can. WE either get busy living and growing The Great American Postal Workers Union, and the USPS, or we will be busy dying.

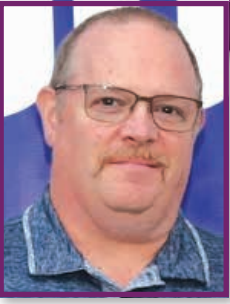
I choose growing through Changing of the Guard! It's time!

Judy Beard – It has been a great honor to serve as your Legislative and Political Director these past 6 years. Together we have fought for and won significant postal legislation and elected pro-worker candidates across the board. I made a commitment when I first accepted the position to work with any member of congress who was willing to fight for the public Postal Service and the dedicated members and retirees of the APWU. The result of this has been a bipartisan coalition in Congress who I continue to build relationships with. I'm asking to be re-elected as Legislative and Political Director and promise, if re-elected, to continue to foster the relationships I've built, continue to fight to ensure the hard earned benefits of APWU members are protected, and advocate for legislation that benefits your families and communities.

Read the Q&A for President at mpwu.com/elections/meetingthecandidates.html







by
John
Greathouse

EDITOR

In The Room Where It Happened!

A funny thing happened at the 2022 APWU National Convention . . . **History was made!**

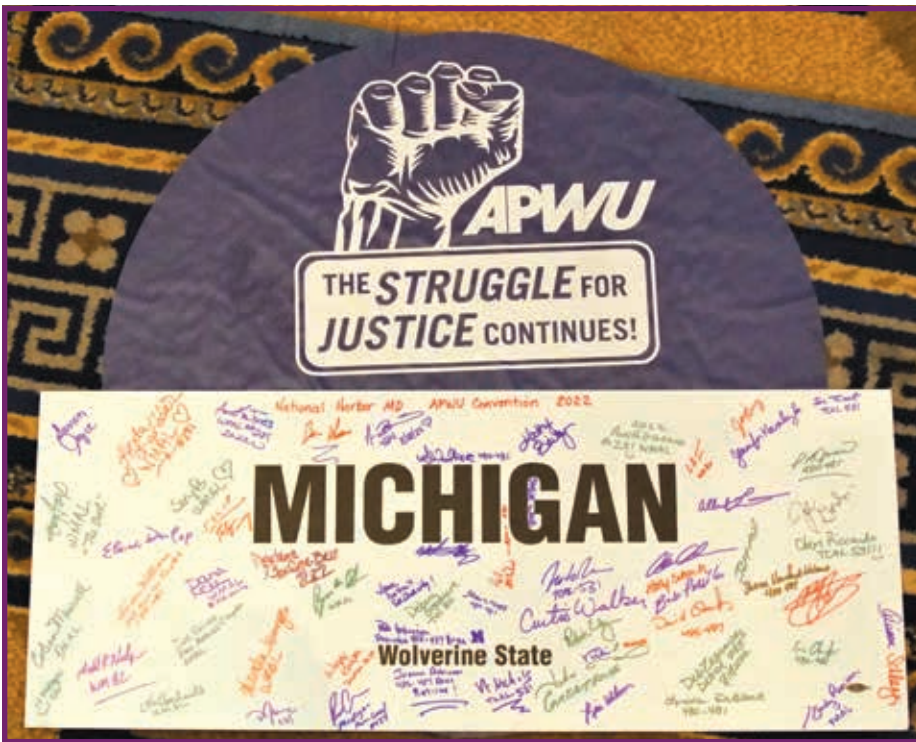
Retirees were finally, after years of fighting and bargaining, granted the right to vote on the floor of the convention!

The debate was intense for both sides and the vote was close. It came down to President Dimondstein needing to bring members from both sides of the issue onto the stage to observe the floor vote due to the vote being extremely close. When the vote was taken again, it

of each convention and has some very heated debate every year.

Members of the Michigan Delegation had a good mix of seasoned members with several conventions under their belt as well as many first-time convention members who gained a lot of experience as well as seeing democracy in action. I am sure that the new folks will remember this and be much more motivated to take the things they learned back to their locals and share the experience with others.

This year's convention was held just



was agreed by all parties that it passes!!!

The energy in the room was intense on both sides and when it passed, it was like a party! Brother Paul Browning, MPWU Retiree President, was instrumental in pushing this resolution over the top this year along with several of the Michigan Retiree delegates, our Michigan and Local Presidents were in this fight to make it happen.

This struggle began in 2016 and was the mission championed by the late Brother Al LaBrecque. It has been an issue on the floor

outside of Washington DC in National Harbor, MD on the Potomac River. The hotel and surrounding area were fantastic, and we were just a short drive from downtown Washington DC. I have included a few photos of the sites and monuments there.

We had some very good speakers as well, the most notable are the President of the American Flight Attendance Union, Sara Nelson and US Representative Brenda Lawrence from Michigan, who used to be both a clerk and carrier in the Detroit area.

Elections

This is a touchy area, so I will tread carefully . . . There were numerous candidates in attendance who were passing out tons of flyers, buttons, stickers, hand fans and more. The 6 major candidates for APWU President (Dimondstein/Marcotte), HR Director (Freeman/Simmons) and Legislative and Political Director (Beard/Benson), all came to meet with the Michigan delegation during our 2 caucus meetings.

While I would love to just say that you should vote for (X), but I can't, or I would get in a ton of trouble. So, to help you along in this decision process, I have held a Question & Answer interviews with all 6 of them. You can read these on the MPWU webpage by flowing the link; mpwu.com/elections/meetingthecandidates.html. After reading these, you should have a better understanding of each candidate and where they stand on the issues as well as some idea as to their personal character and qualifications. If you have any questions, talk with your local officers or president for more information about them.

VOTING!

Voting is key here folks . . . while some of the locals here in Michigan have a good turnout, others... well... not so good! We can do better! We must do better!

The last election had about 15% of the membership voting! Think about it, 220,000 members and only about 15% (about 33,000 members) decided who the winners were in the last APWU election! We can do better!

With such a low number of members who voted, if one extra person votes, that translate into about 7 votes in the percentages of votes from the last election. I cannot say it enough . . . **VOTE!**

So, when your ballot comes, it will include a book that has a letter from each candidate that will help you decide who to vote for. Do not just check the first name or the last name you see... Pick the person that you have read about and agree with their ideas of where to take the APWU to in the next few years! Please do not dump it on the pile of things to do and forget about it until after the election is over, do it that day so that your voice can be heard!

Be a part of history by voting for our next APWU National Officers that will guide us forward.

VOTING - Part 2!

Vote early and vote often... Well not exactly but in this case, **Yes you can!**

We have two elections this fall and you will have the chance to vote twice in the APWU elections in mid-September, then again on November 4th in your local, state and national elections as well.

This year is an important year in Michigan as this election is the first with the new districts that should have a shift in the balance of power in the Michigan House and Senate as well as the Governor's race.

Again, I am not going tell you how to vote for, but you need to get out and vote! You **cannot** complain about who got elected if you don't VOTE! In Solidarity.

"PROCLAMATION"

"PRAISE THE LORD AND PASS THE AMMUNITION"

"WHAT HAPPENED TO THE BILLY GRAHAM RELIGIOUS MOVEMNET AND ALL OF HIS FOLLOWERS GONE? HAVE WE GIVEN UP ON OUR FAITH AND OUR BELIEF IN THE LORD? THE VICTIMS IN UKRAINE NEED OUR PRAYERS AND OUR CONTINUED AID. THE NEWS MEDIA ONLY PUBLICIZE RACIAL EVENTS, SHOOTINGS, ABORTIONS, AND THE FORMER PRESIDENT'S ELECTION LOSS. HOW SAD, COULD NOT HAVE HAPPENED TO A NICER GUY."

WE NEED TO BE A LEADER NOT A DICTATOR. WE MUST BE VIGILANT AND MAKE THE RIGHT CHOICES BECAUSE THE EXTREMISTS ARE WAITING IN THE WINGS TO TAKE OVER AND THEY DON'T CARE WHO THEY TRAMPEL TO ACHIEVE THEIR GOALS. REMEMBER VIOLENCE AND LOSS OF LIVES CREATED BY THE INSURGENTS? THEY ARE THE PREPARING FOR ANOTHER TRY.

WE NOW HAVE THE TYRANT VLADIMIR PUTIN THE MINITSER OF PROPAGANDA. HE CITES FALSE INFORMATION AND HAVE TRIED TO INTIMIDATE SWEDEN AND FINLAND WITH HIS NUCLEAR ENERGY IF THEY WERE TO JOIN NATO.

"VLADIMIR PUTIN: MESSENGER OF DEATH, THE ROCKETS RED FLARE, BOMBS BURSTING IN AIR AND MORE VICTIMS AND DEATH EVERYWHERE AND THE TYRANT PUTIN NO WHERE. HIDING UNDER A ROCK."

"VLADIMIR PUTIN IS FOLLOWING ADOLPH HITLERS FOOTPRINTS, DEATH AND DEVASTATION WILL BE HIS LEGACY. HIS EGO IS LARGER THAN HIS MIND. WE MUST TOPPLE HIS REGIME. THE WAR COULD END QUICKLY, THE CHOICE, UKRAINE OR RUSSIA, WORLD WAR THREE(3) NOT A GREAT CHOICE SO THE MASSACRE CONTINUES, SO WHERE DOES ALL THIS END?

WE MUST CONTINUE TO SUPPORT PRESIDENT BIDEN AND HIS POLITICAL AGENDA. IS JOE MANCHIN A POLITICAL WATCH DOG OR IS HE BENEDICT ARNOLD IN DISGUISE?

WE NEED TO PROTECT OUR SOCIAL BENEFITS, SOCIAL SECURITY, MEDICARE, AND MEDICAIDE. SUPPORT THOSE WHO HAVE OUR BEST CONCERNS AT HEART.

"THE WISDOM OF FULTON SHEEN: A MAN OF VISION: THE MODERN TENDENCY IS TOWARD THE AFFIRMATION OF THE EGO, THE EXHALTATION OF SELFISHNESS, RIDING ROUGH OVER OTHERS IN ORDER TO SATISFY OUR OWN SELF-CENTEREDNESS. IT CERTAINLY HAS NOT PRODUCED MUCH HAPPINESS, FOR THE MORE THE EGO ASSERTS ITSELF, THE MORE MISERABLE IT BECOMES."

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,

LEO J. VARGAZ - RETIRED POSTAL CLERK P.W.U.

Michigan Messenger

Deadline for Newsletter Submissions

October 12, 2022