



by  
**Michael  
Mize**

## RETIREE PRESIDENT

# Votes Matter

It appears that far too many of our members think the above is not true. The APWU election that was just completed ended with less than 14% of the ballots sent out being returned and counted in the election. This is a trend that we must change. Why does your vote matter?

If just 5% more of our members voted and they all voted for a change, we would have new leadership in the National APWU. Not voting is allowing others to make your decision for you. We see on social media all the complaints about direction the Union takes and wanting change, but the votes make it clear. Not clear that people are happy with our direction. Clear that people think it does not matter.

To illustrate how close things can be look at the Central Region MVS NBA position. The difference in this election was 10 votes. Ten more MVS people deciding to check a box and drop a ballot in the mail could change the direction of the Union.

Further, your votes show how you feel about what is going on. If we had 50% of the members voting and the election is very close it tells the leaders there is work to do. It tells them that half the members are not happy with our direction. Leaders in these positions want the APWU to thrive and the membership to thrive with it. We know not everyone will be happy all the time, but we want to keep the majority happy while we improve the APWU.

So, your vote carries your voice for far more than just the results in who wins or not. Your vote matters in a democracy. Your vote is your voice.

What is the reason I would go on about this when the election is complete?

The reason is simple. We have our elections for this great country in the matter of days. Your votes here matter the same as they matter in the APWU. We need Legislators that support and care about the USPS. We need



**MPWU President Mike Mize with Governor Gretchen Whitmer and Secretary of State Jocelyn Benson.**

Legislators that care about the Middle Class and those less fortunate than us. We need Legislators that believe in collective bargaining and Unions.

We can get the people elected that we need by going out and voting. Do the research and vote for the people that support us. The MPWU does not have meetings that determine who we endorse. We do have language that states we follow the lead of the AFL-CIO State Fed. Most of the AFL-CIO sites have a

list of the candidates that they back in the elections. We can all look there for some guidance if wanted.

To be clear, I would love if everyone voted the exact same as I will vote. The reality is many will not, and I support that. We all have different positions and thoughts on issues. We live in the USA which allows and encourages differing ideas. This is what makes us great. Use your vote and have your voice!

Again, please look at those items we need to hold close. Do they support the USPS? Do they support the middle class? Do they support collective bargaining (UNIONS)? Make your educated decisions and cast your votes in this upcoming election.

**REMEMBER,  
YOUR VOTE —  
YOUR VOICE**

## Our Country's Enemy Is Within

by **Leo F. Persails, Retired  
Cen. Reg. Coordinator**

After years of conflict and countless battles to maintain our Democracy is anyone smarter than an American? The answer lies in our Revolution, our Civil War, our World Wars, for our outside battles. But we did not win by strength alone, it takes leadership and knowledge as well as an inner American love of freedom, and most of all a united America.

While our outside efforts are clear,

where does the average American rate with comparing inner politics? Is our basic unity in danger? How could a new political party leadership be smarter than millions of Americans? It doesn't seem possible, but historic voting has proven it to be.

1. How could one party that has continually attacked Social Security and Medicare in the Legislative Record, convince millions of senior Americans to vote for them? How, when that party has voted repeatedly to take funds from the S.S. and Medicare retirement fund for other than retirements. Issues like disability, handicap, minor children, and other government entitlements, that should have come from the general fund. Those attacks on the S.S. Retirement and Medicare funds are the reason those funds are in trouble today.

2. How could one Political Party continue to be called and voted for as Conservative by millions of Americans, when it's actions are anything but Conservative? How could the great tax shift from the rich to the middle-class in 1986 by one Political

Party result in millions of them reelecting the Party that did it?

3. How could one Political Party continue to Legislate laws to control women's bodies and still get their vote? Men's sins are between them and their God. Women's sins are between them and a Political Party. If new laws charge women with a felony for her choice, why is the man that got her pregnant ignored and not charged in that same law? DNA tests can easily determine the partner in that crime.

4. How could one Political Party support the attack on our Democracy so many have died to protect? The attack on our capitol was called by a former President that was still in office at the time. His actions in leading that insurrection has since been supported by almost his entire Political Party. It's time that new Party was recognized as anti-American, but instead they expect to win the Congress and Senate in the next election.

The conclusion to this is The New Republican Party Leadership must  
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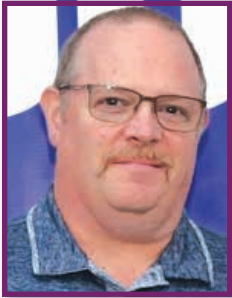
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Return to APWU/MPWU  
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by  
**John  
Greathouse**

## EDITOR

# Elections Have Consequences

You don't think the election will have an impact on your job, your life, your family? You should think again! It very much can and has, both good and bad.

So, let's get to the root of the problem from members that I have talked with, I don't know the candidates. While this is, to a point a legitimate excuse, it is quite lame! Look at the recent APWU election for President, HR and Legislative Directors. You had name recognition for president, Mark Dimondstein had a huge amount of recognition as he has been the APWU President for the past 3 terms yet of challenger John Marcotte had some as well having been the former Michigan State President, National Legislative and Health Plan Directors.

Now let's look at the next election we have coming, November 8th there are elections for the House, Senate, Governor, State House and Senate as well as Secretary of State and Attorney General for Michigan as well as many other states.

You don't know any of these folks personally, you only have what you have seen in commercials or if you attended a rally, what they have to say. Some of you have an opportunity to have a one-on-one discussion with them and will come away with a different impression of them.

As your editor, I have had numerous opportunities to meet and talk with

many of the candidates running for many of these offices and after reading their campaigns ads and watching their commercials as well as the "anti-commercials", I have seen how genuine they may or may not be. I have met one that can best be described as a "dirt lot use car salesman" and other that are just what you see, an open, warm and caring person who will fight for everyone, not just the special interest or rich donors.

When picking who you are going to vote for, please, please don't just pick

the letter at the end of their name, (D or R) or pick a candidate on just one issue. That kind of choice is very short sighted and will have consequences that can and will affect you. I won't vote for A because they did this, or I am voting for B because they said they will do that. Remember, campaign promises tend to fall short of what was pitched!

I am encouraging you to take some time before the election and do some research and learn more about every vote that you will be making as there

are a lot of very important issues that will be decided in this election, i.e., Women rights, voting right, control of Congress and the Michigan legislature. Each of these votes can and will have consequences that can and will affect you.

On a personal note, I know who I am going to be voting for and would be willing to share my thoughts, you just need to ask, I won't tell you how to vote, just the good and bad of each and let you make the call.

In Solidarity!

## AREA 4 DIRECTOR

# APWU National Convention

by **Sandy Rancour,**  
**Area 4 Director**

I was happy to have the privilege to attend the APWU National Convention held in National Harbor, D.C. August 13-19, 2022. We have not been able to attend a convention in a few years due to covid, so the excitement of going to the event was huge and the other delegates seemed to share my excitement.

It was a busy week with all the contract resolutions being voted on with representation from nearly all the 50 states and regions. I am so happy to say that the resolution I presented passed with flying colors!

But the credit goes to Rita Williams, a clerk in Flint Michigan, who walked up to me one day saying why isn't

there something in place for the post office to do a payout for sick leave balance when someone retires, much like they do with unused annual leave. I told Rita I was going to the State convention in a few weeks and would write up a resolution addressing this issue. With the help of Darren Joyce and National Executive Vice President Debby Szeredy I wrote a resolution and presented it to the convention. The resolution passed at State and was on its way next to the National Convention.

At the National Convention, as they read the resolution a round of applause radiated throughout the convention hall! The resolution was unanimously passed, and I could not have been more pleased!

Once I got back to Michigan, I contacted Rita to say the resolution passed and thanked her again for the wonderful idea. She was very happy to hear the news. Hopefully our national officers can get something worked out with management in the near future.

So, to anyone who has something they would like changed or added to our contract this is a perfect example on how it can happen. We all see things from a different point of view with our various jobs and this is how change takes place. Please let your steward know of a change you would like to see, and we will do our best and possibly your idea can become a change for the better.

In unity

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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     |                 |

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## MAINTENANCE CRAFT DIRECTOR

# New Fiscal Year Equals A Fresh Start To Get It Right!

by Marti Jablonski,  
Maintenance Craft Director

Many people try to get on the band wagon of they owe me money for my Line H right about the start of September. When postmasters are starting to panic because the union is requesting information from them, and then it trickles on down to you. The custodian or maintenance person in that office. Well, let me tell you that if you haven't been filling out your daily work log, work orders, route sheets (which are pretty much nonexistent), then you are probably too late. The union wants nothing more than to get you what you deserve and to FIX your maintenance package if you truly believe it isn't what you are doing, but we can't work miracles and we are not mind readers. We don't work in your office and we have no clue what work you may or may not be doing on a daily basis. It is up to you to help us help you! Don't trust your management team to tell you that you made the Line H in your office, if you have never been handed a route sheet, daily work log, or work order to do the work you do on a daily basis then you probably are not making it. Many of us think that our boss that "works" with us would never lie to us, WRONG! They have a boss just like you, and if that boss tells them to "make" their Line H because they are running low on hours, then you are going to just think they are letting you "help" them out a little more.

There is way more to a Line H custodial package than meets the eye. As I said previously you should be getting a daily route sheet, which is a piece of paper that very simply tells you what to clean, when to clean, how long it should take to clean, and so forth. If you are fixing a hamper, changing a bulb, running to take a stranded carrier a LLV (which I hope you are trained to drive), then you should be getting that on a work order. You see at the end of the day we all want what is rightfully do us and you, but you are not helping yourself if you think that sweet deal you have will last. The day will come when they are told you are no longer necessary because they have cut your hours back so far (on paper that you have never seen) you are no longer needed. Then when you retire, they will cut that position. Think of the future individuals that have watched from afar as you have done that job and enjoyed the perks of being treated so well and only hope to one day get it. Maybe it will be your child, a relative, friend of the family, or whomever, but they will never get the chance because all your sweet deals will end with you. The union is working hard at training Staffing Advocates to be able to go to the offices that believe their package is incorrect and make

sure we are all getting our just do, but if you are not talking with your local or state representative and when the requests for the hours to show the Line H are given to us showing you made it, then the union has to assume you have. Some of you are an APO with a RMPO attached to it, did you know that you are one office with multiple Line H packages? Did you know if it has been historically your job to handle all recycling, or say lock changes, or whatever oddities your office has, then it can be included on your Line H. Did you know that training is REQUIRED, and not just those service talks that they say they give you and never do. I am talking actual training, Asbestos if your building requires you to have it, Hazwoper, PPE, and so on.

Make sure you are punching correctly and please if you are not getting route sheets, DOCUMENT your times daily. You can make your own make shift route sheets and we can use those to fight your Line H. Say you start at 5, you gather your items to start your day, Clean the break room, 5:15 - 5:30, Bathroom 5:30-5:50, maybe you have to go clean up a leaky package(hence Hazwoper training) then you notate, clean up 5:50 -6:05, and so on . . . Make it to where next year when this time comes and you were supposed to spend 6.5 hours a day do DAILY cleaning, and you only spent 4.5, you will have proof and documentation to help us help you get what you are do. That is how the Line H works. Daily work cannot be made up at the

end of the Fiscal year by your boss telling you, I am short hours and you need to work 12 hours a day and your day off for the remainder of the fiscal year. They don't even care what you do in most instances, just as long as you are on the clock and on 747, your custodial function. Granted that paycheck will look nice but you will never get your staffing package corrected and the vicious cycle will continue. So don't look backwards, now that you know, move forward and help us help you!

Always remember we are here if you have questions or need assistance in figuring out what it is you do or do not need.

Thank you and as always, you are not in this fight alone!



by Eric  
Chornoby  
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It is a common troupe that we have all heard working at the Post Office. Whenever something goes wrong Management is quick to blame one of us. We have all heard the 'I need you to stay for overtime and finish the flats because Susan had to go home early' by a supervisor when you are heading out the door.

What your supervisor doesn't tell you is your lovely coworker Susan turned in a 3971 four weeks in advance and only requested two hours to pick up her granddaughter from the airport. To Management, it is a work emergency and it was impossible to prepare for or avoid. You are told at the last minute, and Management treats this as an emergency that no one could possibly see coming. And nine times out of ten, you blame Susan.

But Susan doesn't handle hiring. That's an EAS employee, or Management. Susan doesn't make the schedule, that's your supervisor. Take a wild guess who authorizes Overtime? Or who curtails mail? I guarantee it isn't Susan.

Management as a whole doesn't take responsibility for a chronic lack of planning. As a Steward it often feels like I am a third-grade teacher telling my students, "A lack of planning on your part does not constitute an emergency on my part" when a student forgets to do their homework. Except, for us, Management forgets how to Manage.

The solution Management always has is to blame us. The bargaining

## It's Us vs. Them

craft. It's your fault, your coworkers, the Carriers, the "Plant" or anyone but themselves. Even when all Postal Regulations, Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) and, heaven forbid, common sense tells us the problem could be avoided or handled in advance.

Management's cavalier attitude is common from the top down. As an employee, and Lead, at the Customer Care Center (Call Center) I have a unique insight to problems we experience across the country. I can guarantee you 99% of Local Post Offices say the same thing, 'Package at the Plant, hasn't arrived to Post Office' when a customer, the people who pay our salary, has a missing package.

When the customer calls me, or goes into their Local Post Office and yells at a clerk, Management takes the stance that the mythical Plant is to blame. And when the Call Center employee documents the customers issue and provides official headquarters information the local level will often tell customers 'They are not postal employees' or 'they don't know what they are talking about'.

It's always 'Us vs Them'. Management pits bargaining unit vs bargaining unit employee. It's the Clerks at the Plant. It's the Carriers. Its Susan's fault she needed a couple hours off.

The problem is, by USPS's own 'link articles,' we have all seen Management celebrating one of their own doing their job. I remember in 2019 a link article ([link.usps.com](http://link.usps.com)), Answering the Call, giving kudos to a Postmaster for doing her job and "put out a call for help". The article praised an Electronic Technician for 'answering the call'. We are not stupid. We know the Post Master didn't call multiple people asking for help. She emailed her District to find missing passports. We were expected to celebrate a Post Master doing the bare minimum.

But when a Post Master refuses to even send an email we get blamed. And 'nothing I can do' is the attitude we get if we bring it up to Management. We all know that is a lie. To make the whole thing worse, Management doubles down and blames 'us'. Sadly, I have seen my coworkers believing this. And from working at a

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Honoring all who served.



Veterans Day 2022



## LEGISLATIVE DIRECTOR



by  
Roscoe  
Woods

## At The Ballot Box, Michiganders Must Remember Lansing And DC Capitol Attacks To Protect Our Democracy.

As we prepare to head to the ballot box for this year's mid-term elections, I wanted to share the piece below with all of you, hope you find it as thought provoking as I did.

The following opinion was written by Michigan State Representative Mari Manoogian and posted on the Eclectablog home page. Thought provoking content such as this can be found at [www.eclectablog.com](http://www.eclectablog.com). This article was printed with the permission of Chris Savage the owner and publisher of Eclectablog and the co-host of The GOTMFV

Every day, it seems, we learn something new about investigations of the **January 6th Committee** and other investigations by various law enforcement agencies into the Big Lie. Former President Trump's election lies and his supporters' subsequent attacks on our democracy shocked all of us — and understanding the consequences and what we can do as voters to secure our democracy are vital for every American and the future of our republic.

I've followed the hearings closely. Every revelation from the hearings into this obvious criminal conspiracy to overturn the 2020 election results angers me. The testimony of those who were there and watching clips of the attack on our nation's Capitol, injuring more than 140 police officers, and leading to the deaths of several, still triggers a trauma response in me.

Here's why: nearly a year earlier, I was in the Michigan State Capitol building when Trump's tweets unleashed an angry armed mob to storm my workplace. Nearly 1,000 radical, agitated protestors — some armed, but all incensed by the former president's call to "LIBERATE MICHIGAN!" against Governor Whitmer's science-based executive orders designed to minimize the spread of COVID-19 — were welcomed into our state Capitol.

While peaceful protests are not unusual, that day felt different. The military-style rifles carried by men dressed in paramilitary fatigues. The signs with misogynistic, racist, and anti-Semitic language. The menacing mood that hung in the air. I remember walking past a snarling man referring to a **doll hanging by a noose** as Gretchen Whitmer. Walking from our office building to the Capitol, I watched as one of my Republican colleagues, amiably chatted with the protestors. I tried to hide my face, shoved my ID keycard and member's pin in my pocket, and slipped inside through a side door so I could show up and do my job.

When the armed mob entered the Michigan Capitol building, they were clearly intent on intimidating us — duly elected representatives and staff members alike. As their yells echoed in the hallways outside the chamber, some militia members stalked the Senate gallery — a fact I only found out from a tweet from a colleague, sitting in fear and horror only a few hundred feet away on the floor of the other chamber. I continued to do my job — debating policy and voting on legislation. As an air of potential violence simmered around us, I started to look for escape routes, places where I could run and hide. Everyone in my life was texting and calling me. My staff, friends, and family watched online helplessly from across the state, knowing they couldn't help me from afar.

I don't tell this story with any relish or embellishment. I don't tell it for sympathy or apologies from strangers, nor as some personal triumph over these insurrectionists.

I certainly don't tell it to give any grand lesson about the triumph of our democracy. If anything, the at-

tack on Michigan's Capitol shows our democracy's fragility — just how close we are to backsliding into authoritarianism.

We still haven't held those who stormed Michigan's Capitol or their ringleaders to account. We can't muster the will to do the bare minimum to protect our state's democratic institutions by reversing our policy allowing weapons into the building or establishing a security checkpoint at the entrance. Many of my colleagues continue to peddle election disinformation. Right now, a GOP colleague of mine is being investigated for allegedly trying to **smuggle 16 fake electors into the Capitol** to illegally certify a false Trump victory in the 2020 election — an act that would have rejected the will of millions of Michigan voters, sending our democracy into a downward spiral.

In fact, many of these same individuals are now nominees for major offices in Michigan, including Secretary of State and Attorney General, and won primaries for state legislative seats. Matt DePerno, the GOP

Attorney General candidate facing possible **criminal charges for election tampering**, is now repeating conspiracy theorists who falsely claim that the **2020 Michigan Supreme Court races were fraudulent**.

**More than anything, we still haven't fully reckoned with what is now clear to everyone — that the siege on Michigan's Capitol was a dress rehearsal for the attack on the U.S. Capitol less than nine months later.**

Evidence now shows us how Trump and his enablers in Congress, in the Executive Branch and in state legislatures around the country, including ours in Michigan, tried to wrest our democracy from us by force and intimidation — first that day in April in Lansing, and then in Washington, D.C. on Jan. 6. Believers of these election conspiracies have proven that they won't rest until they have rigged future elections to produce only outcomes favorable to them. The Michigan GOP won't rest until they elect extremist conspiracy theorists to our state legislature, choose whether your vote counts, and weaponize legislation and election disinformation to control levers of power for 2024 and future elections.

So, what can we do about it? How can we save our democracy?

For starters, we all must be educated, informed voters. I urge everyone to pay attention to the January 6th Committee hearings. Watch them *continued on page 7*



MPWU Legislator Director Roscoe Woods with Governor Gretchen Whitmer and Secretary of State Jocelyn Benson.

## AREA 9 DIRECTOR



by  
Dana  
Mclean

## Protecting Our Work

the postmasters are doing clerk work.

In August I had the great opportunity to go to the National Convention in National Harbor Maryland. Conventions are always a great learning opportunity and this one didn't disappoint. We had amazing speakers with Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez being one of them. For me it was a memorable time as I look up to her and admire how she stands up for women's rights! We also voted on resolutions presented from union locals around the country. It is interesting to see, hear and be part of this process. If you haven't had a chance to be part of the process, get involved in your local and go to the conventions. You won't regret it.

As November approaches us we need to remember that elections have consequences and we all need to use

our right and get out and vote! That being said, I hope that everyone has a peaceful and healthy holiday season.

In solidarity,







by  
Paul  
Browning

## RETIREE PRESIDENT

# Signs Of The Times

### APWU National Officer Elections

The results are in for our Union's elections. For those officers that APWU retirees were eligible to vote for, all four (4) incumbents were elected—Mark Dimondstein as President, Judy Beard as Legislative Director, Daleo Freeman as Human Relations Director, and Nancy Olumekor as Retirees Department Director. Despite what seemed like a very active effort to get out the rank-and-file vote via social media, in Local newsletters, and on the workroom floor, only 17% of the membership returned their ballots. It's an underwhelming response when less than 1 in 5 of the almost 200,000 members who had a ballot mailed directly to their homes with candidate statements and a postage paid return envelope for the ballot, bothered to take the time to educate and concern themselves about their Union's leadership and goals.

It brings to mind the old joke of "What's worse—ignorance or apathy? Answer—I don't know and I don't care". Now, I'm positive that not a day goes by in every Post Office in the country where some APWU member doesn't at least think if not say aloud, some negative thought or words regarding the Union they pay dues to and have the democratic privilege of voting for the leadership they are expressing dissatisfaction with. For that matter, those satisfied with leadership can show their support by simply marking a "X" a few times in a box on paper, and drop an envelope in the mail. And while APWU retirees with no Collective Bargaining Agreement to affect them, may not have as much interest in voting as still working members, their voter participation was considerably higher.

It's broken down like this: Out of approximately 160,000 still working members who received ballots, about 26,000 voted. That's 1 of 6 who could have voted. Out of approximately 32,000 retirees who received ballots, 1 out of 4 voted who could have. With all the complaining about the Contract, Federal Legislation or lack thereof, and Health Care costs compared to the benefits of three monetary raises a year that helped pad the paychecks of the still working members and which they all enthusiastically await, one would think members would be eager to express their like or dislike of APWU leadership. Apparently not. It's a shameful situation anyway it looked at. Such a lack of involvement and even interest does not bode well for APWU members. When USPS Management recognizes the pau-

city of commitment by the average member, it makes it that much easier for them to violate the Contract and work harder in negotiations or arbitration to impose regressive/takeaway conditions in the next Contract.

One further note about social media and the Internet—apparently there are such things as "Influencers" on the net with thousands if not hundreds of thousands of "followers" not to mention the various way out their posts from conspiracy theorists (ahem, My Pillow Guy) and just in general crazies/oddballs (Hello QAnon people). It would not surprise me if more APWU members paid attention to such posts than they did the hard copy election materials mailed directly to their homes. I'm not much for Bible quotes. One can always find one to contradict another one. But I do believe in "You reap what you sow".

### Medicare Present And Future

2023 individual Medicare Part B premiums will drop \$5 per person next year. This is due to several factors. One is the much less than predicted cost (and efficacy) of the newly developed Alzheimer's drug. It's not being prescribed as much as projected. Another reason is that the cost of insulin, a much-used prescription drug by many Medicare enrollees, is capped at \$35 a month. Also, for the first time, Medicare administrators will be able to directly negotiate with pharmaceutical companies the price of prescription drugs covered under Medicare. That negotiation process is something that private health care insurers have been able to do for years. Hence, the private insurers had less prescription drug costs that Medicare. Now it's an even playing field. The last two actions are a direct result of the Biden administration and Democrats. (You may remember President Trump with a Republican controlled Congress promising to lower Medicare covered drug costs with zero results) Sure, \$5 a month may not seem like much but it's a lot better than the yearly Medicare premium increases retirees are used to seeing.

As I've written before, present postal retirees do not have to belong to Medicare. However, any postal employee who retires after January 1, 2025, will have to enroll in Medicare to keep any insurance plan that was offered through USPS. What those plans will be is sort of an up in the air question as postal employees and retirees will be mandated into a Postal Employee Health Plan (PEHP). There have been a lot of claims from APWU leadership on how this is going to work but right now it's a loosely defined plan go-

ing forward. Specifics such as premiums, coverage, deductibles, etc. certainly, can't be predicted yet. All parties involved, which I guess means USPS, postal Unions, private insurers, even Congress, have under the recently passed Postal Reform Act two years to figure it out. So, cross your fingers on that one.

Just for reference—the average 2023 Federal Employee Health Benefit Plan premium for a Self Plus One plan will be well over \$500 a month. Throw in another \$300 or so a month for Medicare Part B and it's going to cost a retired couple around ten thousand dollars (\$10,000) a year for health insurance. It's up to the individual to decide if they want to spend that much. Alternatively, Medicare and a Medicare Advantage Plan or simply private insurance alone can be purchased for considerably less. The problem with those is there are numerous co-pays and limits on what's covered. Such costs for a serious health condition can be astronomical. As those who have incurred six or even seven figure dollars' worth of medical bills without paying a penny since reaching the age of 65 will tell you, the full coverage has been well worth it. So, it's up to you to roll the dice or not.

### 2022 Midterm Government Elections

It seems like the run up to the 2022 elections has been going on forever and a gazillion words have already been written about them. It's doubtful that whatever a Detroit City born and raised and later migrated to Northern Michigan old guy has to say will change anyone's mind on how they vote. Nonetheless, as a duly elected officer of the Michigan Postal Workers Union State Retiree Chapter and the American Postal Workers Union Central Region Retiree APWU Convention delegate (sidebar—neither position pays me a dime. I'm just another volunteer and I don't hold a candle in volunteer work compared to MPWU Retiree Chapter Secretary-Treasurer Jane

Dugan.) I do get to write a few more words about the upcoming elections.

My beef is when did the politics of hate become so acceptable? When did it become acceptable to display flags with vile obscenities directed towards the President of the United States? When did it become acceptable for seemingly half the country to hate the other half the country? When did blatant hypocrisy become so acceptable? When did it become commonplace to threaten politicians with violence? Or even threaten your neighborhood poll worker? When did the Machiavellian philosophy of the means, no matter how vile and disgusting, justify the ends? The melting pot of America I learned about in school, the checks and balances of the three branches of Government, and indeed even common civility, have given way to sticking up a figurative if not literal middle finger to anyone who disagrees with another.

I make no secret that I vote for Democrats. As someone who worked for a decent middle class living for over 40 years and now enjoys a moderately comfortable retirement, I look back and see these benefits were due to not just Democrats but also bipartisan legislation and policies. There used to be such a thing as moderate middle of the road Republicans. I even voted for the late Michigan Governor William Milliken. I figured that any Republican Governor who could get along with the late Detroit Mayor Coleman Young had to have something going for him. And vice versa for that matter. Heck, even 19 Republican Senators voted for the recent Infrastructure and Investment Act legislation which cost 1.2 trillion dollars. Said Republicans were subsequently vilified by the former President for being in favor of creating jobs and fixing our nation's aging infrastructure. And with the Donald Trump can do no wrong mentality so prevalent among some voters, it's no doubt those Senators may soon be out of office and join

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# What Are We Doing Or Better Said Not Doing!

by Sue Carney, Retired  
APWU National  
Human Relations Director

It's taken a minute – A dear friend and union sister once told me to 'step away from the keyboard' when I'm angry, upset, or experiencing some other useless emotion . . . I've relied on that advice often . . . and oh how I've tried this time around but the psychological framework of the 5x5 rule 4 days post-election of our national officers is prevailing – will it matter in 5 (days, weeks, months, years) if no don't waste 5 minutes on it . . . But from where I sit, in my opinion it is most definitely a yes – it will matter in '5' so the fight in my fight or flight human response brings me to my keyboard . . . I'm probably just shouting into the social media wind with futility but at least I will have said my piece . . . Apathy is an excuse that we give to our members who do not vote – I'm calling bs – stop making excuses for them – stop accepting excuses from them! As union members we are responsible to do more than pay dues – we are supposed to be more than a name on a list . . . accepting they're frustrated – sure they are – but that is still a totally unacceptable reason for them to do nothing – you'd think it would actually drive them to do something – vote! We need to educate them, encourage them, engage with them because their doing nothing; accepting the status quo; my vote won't make a difference; I don't know who to vote for; nothing will change with new leadership are all just more excuses. It was their job to vote and our job (your job) to tell them hell no - unacceptable – we vote! Btw only 13.7% of the membership voted including our retirees – with is that?! And seriously just 9% of our entire membership elected our president and top leadership. Come on people. What are we doing or better said not doing!

Why do we shun scabs – we all know why – but yet we don't push back on our own members when they're unwilling to do their part? It's not about the dues people! Why do we post a scab list or membership list but we don't post a list of voters thanking them for voting or a non-voters list with a heading asking where the heck they were and a subheading that states no right to complain? I'm confident we know the answer to that too – APWU is not a fee for service organization – it cost members nothing to do something but our nonvoting members' 'nothings' could cost us everything – yet they'll be the first to complain when the union can't save them when they did nothing – oh it's not happening to them (yet) but it's happening to another union brother or sister so it doesn't affect them – shame on them. The union is a family – it's not just about an individual – if someone attacked their brother

I'm pretty sure they would stand up for him but in this family they turned their back on their brothers and sisters yet they will expect us to fight for them – when Delivering for America puts them in the unemployment line, drastically cuts their hours, or forces them to travel to another office that's an hour further to work each day; or when they can no longer belong to their favored health plan or see their preferred doctor; or when they come to the realization that their annuity check is taking a hit for \$170 -\$340 more every month with no realized savings. It will be our fault not theirs. They will be the first one to complain no one fought for me, no one stood with me, no one protected me when they stood silent and did nothing to protect themselves (or anyone else) - (Grasshopper and the Ants).

And to those who voted for their chosen candidate for reasons other than the good of the membership

And to those who bought into the shiny, expensive propaganda without doing your own research about their records you let money dictate and blindly followed; to those who ignored their own negative experiences – the hostile work policies, the abusive working conditions, the destruction that's already occurred and the devastating plight that's heading our way – who instead said 'now is not the time for change' when your chosen candidates were the ones who put us in the path or left us in this situation – how do you really justify staying on the same course and expect a different outcome. You cannot. It's another cowardice response. If you believed in your choice you should be able to stand by your convictions and state why they are a better choice – to those I spoke with who offered this reason they weren't able to speak positively for their choice – many blamed their Executive Board and were unwilling to own even a part of it – in my opinion

We have to remove money from the equation so every member/candidate in good standing is on the same level playing field and has an equitable opportunity to get elected. And we have to be willing to call each other out because there is no place in this union, no place in our elections for egos, fear, self-serving behavior or blind loyalty to determine who our leaders should be.

With that I want to congratulate all the newly elected and re-elected officers in this election . . . I also want to thank all of our members who were selfless and courageous enough to run – who were willing to put the good of the members above themselves – I want to especially acknowledge John Marcotte and Tom Benson who I personally know put everything they had and their entire hearts and souls into improving our union, protecting our rights and benefits, restoring the integrity and identity of the Postal Service and rebuilding public trust. They put forth a valiant effort and should be commended accordingly.

To the victors – even the few I did not support I fervently hope you will never lose sight of the members you were entrusted to serve. That you have (find) the courage to do what is right even when it isn't the easy road; that you

find the leader within yourself rather than relying on others who use us and who are not our friends; that you leave our hard-earned benefits alone and refuse to entertain concessionary bargaining; that you never forget it is an honor and a privilege to serve – that it is never, never about you, your personal agenda or your personal wants – it's easier than you think to fall down that rabbit hole – if you find yourself there it's best to grab a ladder not a shovel . . . it is vitally important to regularly remind yourself that it always must be about the members. I wish all of you the best in succeeding in your endeavors.

And to those who were defeated in the election – don't be discouraged despite your disappointment – it was just an election – it's not life – their win is not a mandate – nor does it make you less of a person, less of a leader, unwanted or unappreciated – there is room for everyone in our union family even those who took on incumbents, who challenged others or who supported unsuccessful candidates – all should be embraced despite opposing points of view, different ideas and alternative strategies – we can learn from each other and if we are paying attention and not acting like self-anointed powerful control freaks who are more interested in political self-preservation than we are in being receptive to one another we will grow stronger and we will succeed. So please stay in the fight. We need you and your continued input to challenge our leadership and hold them to the task, to grow, to succeed.

In solidarity.

***“ . . . Apathy is an excuse that we give to our members who do not vote – I'm calling bs – stop making excuses for them – stop accepting excuses from them!*”**

– kick rocks – I find your motivation misguided, disgraceful and disgusting – you know who you are – you're the one who put your committee appointment, your chairmanship or any other perk you may receive above anything else – selfish and self-serving. And let's be clear I am not saying every committee member or chair but there were more than a few.

To those who selected their chosen candidate because you thought the opposing candidate had no chance – it wasn't a horse race where you were supposed to pick the winning horse you were supposed to make your choices based on who you thought would be the better leaders.

. . . To those who made their choice because it was a safer choice because you feared repercussions against you or your local for going the other way – that's not leadership that's cowardice. Doing the right thing isn't always easy. Twelve Angry Men. Someone has to be the first person to stand up and speak out. Find your courage and others will stand with you. And frankly if you had that fear that's all the more reason to stand up and speak out. Be the leader you were elected to be – that you are capable of being – it's not just a title.

To those who selected our leader because after s/he afforded you years of silence, lack of support and gas lighting your chosen candidate finally spoke to you, complimented you on a case win, returned a call or took you to lunch – in my opinion you got played and at best you put your ego above the good of the membership.

in these instances this was cover because there is something else in it for them promised down the road – they don't want to upset their political appecart or future opportunities, if not that then in my opinion they sit alongside others who fear repercussions but don't want to admit they're afraid. For the record I'm not pulling these determinations out of my backend – I have known these individuals I'm referencing for years; some decades – many I consider great friends.

Look I'm not dodging the fact that the election results did not go my way in a few of the races – just 3 in fact but please know I respect everyone who voted even when their choice did not align with mine when they truly believed their candidate was a better choice . . . but that wasn't the case in so many instances so we as a union – we as members have got to learn to get out of our own way. We have to stop accepting excuses for not voting and work together to find solutions to this systemic problem.

We should demand our national use the same resources and use them at least as frequently to educate members about our upcoming elections, the how's and the when's; and use them to encourage our members to vote with the same ferocity as they employed to glorify their records and make their names more recognizable before the ballots came out. Anything less is in my opinion internal voter suppression committed knowingly also in my opinion to keep voter turnout low because it is a fact that low turnouts most often result in re-elections.





## National Business Agent



by  
Linda  
Turney

## Assistance On Hostile Work Environment

**When you read, you empower yourself. When you write, you influence others.**

When being bullied, harassed or intimidated by a supervisor, do your best to keep cool. In the long run, they will be the one that suffers. Don't use foul language, don't raise your voice. Just be silent and ask for a steward. If you are a steward and being bullied, do your best to walk away.

The issue of your grievance is: Was the Supervisor and/or Postmaster creating or promoting a hostile work environment? If so, what is the remedy?

You must remember to be calculated to win. Use Article 14 Safety and Health and Article 19 Handbook and Manuals in your grievance.

ELM 862.1 states . . . "it is the policy of the Postal service to provide and maintain work environments that are

conducive to and promote the good health and safety of all employees."

You can also use Publication 552: pages 27 and 28, for questions to ask concerning the Grievant being bullied, harassed or intimidated. Management should conduct an IMIP in accordance with Publication 552.

You should outline exactly what the supervisor/PM is doing or did. You will need dates, times what they said, who they said it to, who were the witnesses that are willing to corroborate the incidents, what was the issue concerning the threat or intimidation, what was the listener's response. If there were other grievances filed regarding this supervisor or postmaster, include the numbers of those case files and the resolutions.

Witness statements are required in a grievance such as this. All witness statements must be signed and dated and have the date of the particular

incidents. We must have a strategy that makes it impossible to maneuver a defense at arbitration. The documentation and proof of the actions of the supervisor is the most important part of the grievance. We must prove — not just say — this is bullying, intimidation and harassment. This can mostly be done with witness statements and the listener's reaction. Further, it is easier to prove if there have been several incidents, not just a one-time occurrence.

This should be outlined in the grievance for each and every incident reported.

For your remedy, avoid asking for the supervisor to be "fired". Management interprets that remedy as false interpretation or meaning of the CBA, handbooks and manuals. They then use an "inappropriate remedy" argument. They state it cannot be used for other lesser dis-

cipline. Often an arbitrator will totally misread and misconstrue that remedy to mean that we won't take "discipline, demotion, or reassignment", leaving the arbitrator with nothing but an order to cease and desist. Arbitrators **normally** will not "fire". Ask for cease and desist in the remedy in addition to appropriate discipline of the supervisor for their actions with notice to the Union.

If Management always is speaking down to employees or angrily demanding employees to obey, ask for a remedy to have a Labor/Management meeting within 30 days of your settlement. The topics of discussion shall include workplace environment and allegations of a particular supervisor's harassment issues. Be sure to take notes of the meeting and get a local agreement. A labor/management meeting notes and agreement can be cited in arbitration.

## At The Ballot Box, Michiganders Must Remember Lansing And DC Capitol Attacks To Protect Our Democracy.

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live, follow them on Twitter, and read about them in reputable newspapers or news websites. Join with me and my colleagues in Lansing and across the country in calling for accountability for those enablers of the Big Lie. Know the

facts so that we can stand together to defend our democracy — starting with the integrity of our elections.

Support candidates who do not traffic in outright lies about our elections and voting processes. And, most of all, vote. Vote your entire ticket.

Do not leave any office blank. I know that it takes time, something that is a premium for us all, to research each candidate and office, but our democracy is worth taking an evening to sort through mailers and Google.

Trump and his supporters may

have failed to overturn the 2020 election results but they're still trying. We can't afford to let them succeed.

Hope you enjoyed the article — remember, register to vote, get to the ballot box and be certain to vote your entire ballot.

## Signs Of The Times

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the ranks of the nearly extinct collaborative Republican office holders.

Speaking of Trump, his signature legislative accomplishment was the 2017 Tax Cut and Jobs Act with a cost of 1.9 trillion dollars. Did it deliver? Well, the conservative Wall Street Journal in an article published BEFORE the pandemic noted that cutting taxes for those making more than half a million dollars a year plus reducing the corporate tax rate by 40% didn't create more jobs. It was simply that tired old left-over Ronald Reagan canard that by giving the wealthy more money it would trickle down (and there's a great word-trickle. You want a trickle of water coming out your kitchen faucet?) to those not wealthy. Never worked. We've got billionaires going up into outer Space while the workers they employ are eking out a living with inadequate wages and poor or no benefits.

Going to complain about inflation? Google Law of Supply and

Demand. Google Federal Reserve Board. Google OPEC+. If you think times are tough now, be glad you didn't live before the administration of Franklin Delano Roosevelt when Democrats started actually regulating business. Everybody is familiar with the pictures of children working in coal mines and hundreds of thousands standing in breadlines back when Government had a hands-off policy on private enterprise.

So, I vote for the politicians who gave me a decent living. I don't care about some Dr. Seuss book that's out of print or a CRT class that's only taught in some obscure law school seminar. Culture wars are just about culture. They really have nothing to do with actually running a country. While the Founding Fathers were surely not perfect (they did originally let only white male property owners vote in elections), they at least recognized they were indeed establishing a nation of diversity with Irish, Polish, Russian, Mexican, and immigrants flocking to our shores from all

over-that good old American melting pot.

As for the history of our country, isn't it just like our own personal history, full of sometimes right, sometimes wrong actions? If we acknowledge our own successes and failings, shouldn't we acknowledge the same in the history of the United States? The most destructive and costliest war in terms of death that was fought in our country was the Civil War. A war to end the horrendous practice of slavery, a war to make all Americans equal, a war to end the exploitation of human beings treated like property. Like it's been often quoted, "Those who do not learn from history are doomed to repeat it".

So yeah, I vote Democrat. I want the Government to have a major say in how the money made in this country is distributed and spent. I want the Government to put more money into the hands of the average Joe or Jane by investing in actual projects that create jobs with money spent right here at home. What I don't want

rich is guys making a ton of money off of the labor of others using it for joy rides in Outer Space.

## Our Country's Enemy Is Within

*continued from page 1*

be smarter than millions of Americans, and will do anything to stay in power. They actually no longer resemble the old Republican Party. This new Party of MAGA QAnon followers, has not consumed all members of the old Republican Party but it has their leaders. They have cast every vote, for this obvious American Clone of the greatest threat to Democracy in World War II. While outside Dictators like the one in World War II will never defeat us, the quest by a Dictator Wannabe from within, has caused the fall of many other countries. Will Americans be smart enough to avoid that, or is it too late?



by  
Devendra  
"D"  
Rathore

## BUSINESS AGENT

# Maximization Of Part-Time Flexibles To Full Time In Post Offices Level 20 Or Below

I hope everyone remains in good health during this challenging time and follows the appropriate safety precautions necessary for staying safe.

The language of the **Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA), Article 7.3, Employee Complements**, states,

A. "The employer shall staff all postal installations in the regular workforce as of the date of this agreement as follows:

1. "With respect to the Clerk Craft, there will no longer be part-time flexible (PTF) employees working in Function 1 or in post offices Level 21 and above. Part-time flexible (PTF) employees may work in Function 4 offices Level 20 and below. Offices, Level 20 and below, remain subject to the Article 7.3.B obligations to maximize the number of full-time employees and minimize the number of part-time flexible employees who have no fixed work schedules.

There will no longer be part-time regular (PTR) employees in the Clerk Craft.

2. With respect to the Motor Vehicle Craft, part-time flexible (PTF) employees will be capped at twenty percent (20%) of the Moto Vehicle Craft career complement by installation. The rounding up rule of .5 shall apply. (See **Memo, page 453**).

3. With respect to all other crafts, installations shall be staffed in accordance with the provisions of this Agreement. (See **Memos, pages 307-313 and 438**).

B. The Employer shall maximize the number of full-time employees and minimize the number of part-time employees who have no fixed work schedules in all postal installations.

C. A part-time flexible employee working eight (8) hours within ten (10), on the same five (5) days each week and the same assignment over a six month period will demonstrate the need for converting the assignment to

a full-time position. (See **Memo, page 312**).

D. The total number of part-time regular employees who may be employed 2 shall not exceed 2.5% of the total number of Maintenance Craft career employees covered by this Agreement."

### Documentation Needed

➤ Clock rings or time cards for all PTFs, PSEs, loaners, Cross-craft, etc. for at least a six (6) months period.

➤ Charts and graphs of the PTF's and PSEs hours for at least six (6) months to document Full-Time duty assignments from the hours worked.

➤ PTF's Seniority List.

➤ The listing of the current FT duty assignments in the section or office, including position descriptions, off days, and hours of work.

➤ List of unencumbered FT employees in the office as well as the date he/she became unencumbered.

➤ Documentation of any continuous and ongoing bargaining unit work hours by Management officials during the period of time covered by the grievance.

➤ PS Forms 3971s or weekly analysis reports to show the amount of leave taken.

➤ Weekly work schedules to show an increase or decrease in employee complement.

➤ Amount of overtime paid during the six months and Staffing/Flash Reports.

➤ The steward's notes taken from the interview with the supervisor.

➤ The steward's notes taken from the interview with all witnesses.

➤ Copies of letters that document any job reversions and/or abolishments.

➤ Steward's statement of the facts and contentions of the case.

### Tips for the Steward

1. Consistent with the Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) provisions, **Article 37.3.A.1 Clerk Craft, Posting, Bidding, and Application**, "Every effort will be made to create desirable

duty assignments from **all available work hours** for career employees to bid."

2. The parties agree that for Retail Operations in Level 20 and below offices, Non-Traditional Full-Time, (NTFT) duty assignments may be created when the Union can demonstrate the need for such nontraditional duty assignments and it is economically and operationally advantageous to do so.

3. In Function 4, Management may create as many clerk NTFT duty assignments of 30-48 hours in a facility as is operationally necessary.

4. In Level 21 and below offices, PSEs in retail/customer service (Function 4) who work the window will not exceed 20% of the career retail clerks in that installation whose duties included working the window. The rounding up of .5 and above applies.

5. When the hours worked by a PSE on the window demonstrate the need for a full-time preferred duty assignment, such assignment will be posted for bid within the section.

6. During the course of a service week, the Employer will make every effort to ensure that qualified and available part-time flexible employees are utilized at the straight-time rate prior to assigning such work to PSEs.

7. Conversions required pursuant to the **Full-Time Flexible Memorandum in the CBA** shall be in addition to (but not duplicative of) conversions that may be required pursuant to the **CBA Article 7.3.A.B and C**.

8. In accordance with the Full-Time Flexible Memorandum in the CBA, the senior PTF must be converted to FTF when the following requirements are met:

✓ The part-time flexible employee works at least thirty-nine hours per week during the previous six months (**paid leave hours count as work hours, except where taken to round out to forty hours**).

✓ The part-time flexible employee worked practically five eight-hour days each service week during the six-month period (consistent with the above thirty-nine-hour requirement).

✓ The employee works in an office with 125 or more work years.

✓ The part-time flexible employee was not working in a withheld position during the period.

✓ The work was performed in the employee's craft, occupational group, and Installation.

✓ The such employee has a flexible schedule which is established week-to-week and posted on the Wednesday preceding the service week. The schedule may involve varying daily reporting times, varying nonscheduled days, and varying reporting locations within the installation depending on operational requirements.

9. Employees converted to full-time flexible status are considered unassigned (unencumbered in the clerk craft) full-time employees who may bid on posted duty assignments or be assigned to residual duty assignments.

10. The steward should file the grievance as a "Class Action" instead of an individual grievance in case the senior PTF is no longer in the office or is no longer a PTF when the grievance is resolved or adjudicated.

### Appropriate Remedy

• That the senior PTF be converted to full-time status retroactively.

• That the PTF be made whole for all losses resulting from the delay in conversion to full-time.

• That the PTF be compensated for any overtime opportunities misses resulting from the delay in conversion to full-time status.

• That a copy of the PTF's PS Form 50 (Notification of Personnel Action) be provided to the Union to substantiate the conversion to full time status.

I want to ensure that all the relevant documents you are arguing with are included in your Step 1, Step 2, and Additions and Corrections when filing a grievance. If you do not receive a Request of Information (RFI) before appealing at Step 3, please argue in the additions and corrections that management failed to provide such information and include a copy of the RFI's the Union requested.

The steward must consist of all the documents that they need to support their argument to win cases.

All the documents sent to the Step 3 APWU NBA's must also be sent to the Labor Relations, USPS Tampa, FL.

In Solidarity.

## It's Us vs. Them

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Plant, Local Post Offices, and a Call Center it is all the same. Most of us believe it when Management claims they can't help or its 'our' fault.

This is the game Management plays. The more time we spend blaming each other the less time we spend fighting what Management does wrong. If you miss your anniversary dinner because Management gives you a direct order to work overtime, you blame Susan.

Don't blame Susan. Don't blame the Carriers. Don't blame the Plant. Don't blame the late truck. **Its Management!** Management has the authority to call overtime, make a schedule, hire, and curtail mail. The only people responsible are in Management. It's time we started acting like it.

**Michigan Messenger**  
**Deadline for**  
**Newsletter Submissions**  
**December 2, 2022**