



by
Michael
Mize

PRESIDENT

First Line Of Defense

I follow several Union pages on social media. Something that I notice all the time is people having issues with getting grievances filed or finding a steward. Having issues with the way things in the office are being done. Complaints about the union not fixing it.

It is important for the Union that ev-

eryone understands a couple of key points.

First point, you are the union. We are the Union, all of us. We need all your voices and assistance to be successful.

Second point, each member is the first line of defense. As a steward or as a President we may not know there is an issue in your office. Each member must stand up for their rights under our contract. Without your assistance it becomes a much harder battle for your stewards.

You are in the office every day. In

many cases a representative may not get to your office very often. You know the things we do not know. Offer your help, request a steward, get in the game with us. Every single member has something to bring.

Ask your supervisor for a steward. If they want to know what the issue is, tell them. Tell management you want to discuss your contract rights under article 15 with a steward. At that point it is management's responsibility to contact a steward for you. If you do not hear from anyone, ask again. Keep good notes, put your request in

an email for proof. If you still are unable to get a steward, then reach out to someone from the MPWU. We will assist you in getting a steward.

Once you get the steward, I suggest you have a conversation about your office. Work with the steward and determine if there are any issues. Is there a need for more union help, could you fill in those areas. Could you be a contact person for that office. There are many ways to help your steward and your Union.

Remember, you are the first line of defense!

Rest in peace, John

John P. Smeekeens, a beloved husband, father, and dedicated veteran, passed away on July 2, 2024, at the age of 76. John led a life marked by service, devotion, and a steadfast commitment to his family and fellow veterans. He was the devoted husband of the late Donna for 55 years, a partnership that stood as a testament to their enduring love and commitment. Together, they built a family and shared countless cherished memories.

A proud and honorable Vietnam veteran, John served in the US Army, specifically in the 1st Battalion, 46th Infantry Regiment, 198th Light Infantry Brigade, and the 23rd Infantry Americal Division. His service was marked by bravery and sacrifice, culminating in a life-threatening injury sustained in action. For his valor, he was awarded

the Commendation Medal and the Purple Heart. John's dedication to his fellow veterans continued long after his military service ended. He was a fierce advocate for the APWU and the Michigan Postal Workers Union, serving as the Veterans Director for the APWU 480-481 and the MSPB representative for the state board. His commitment to veterans' causes was further exemplified by his role as a National APWU Veterans Guard and Reservist Information Specialist and his active membership in the



John P. Smeekeens
June 28, 1948 – July 2, 2024

Vietnam Veterans of America Chapter 154.

Professionally, John was an automotive technician at VerHoven Chevrolet before joining the United States Postal Service, where he eventually retired. He was known for his hard work, expertise, and dedication in every role he undertook. John

found joy in simple pleasures, such as spending time at his cabin in Roscommon and tending to his vegetable garden. He was also a true Detroit Lions fan, holding season tickets for many years and cheering on his team with unwavering loyalty.

Above all, John was a devoted family man. He cherished every moment with his children and his beloved wife, Donna. His kindness extended to strangers, especially fellow veterans, whom he always greeted with a heartfelt, "Welcome home. Thank you for your service." John's legacy is one of courage, dedication, and love. He will be deeply missed by his family, friends, and all who had the privilege of knowing him. His memory will live on in the hearts of those who

were touched by his remarkable life.

John was the loving husband of the late Donna Smeekeens. The beloved father of Lisa (Brent) Johnson, Angela (Antonio) Principato, and Janet (Anthony) Galuszka. He was the cherished grandfather of Tiffany (Jerry), Heather, Kerrigan, Matthew, Sophia, Victor, Jake, Delaney, and Treyton. He was the caring great grandfather of McKenna and Colton. He was the dear brother-in-law of Martha (Pat) Craska, Ignazio Aleardi, and Carmelina Biscarner. He is also survived by many nieces and nephews. John was preceded in death by his parents Jack and Marie Smeekeens and his brothers-in-law Adolfo Aleardi, Al Aleardi, and sisters-in-law Geraldine Finazzo, and Agnes Aleardi.

Visitation for John will take place on Wednesday, July 10, 2024 from 2:00pm to 9:00pm at Resurrection Funeral Home, 40800 Hayes Road in Clinton Township. Military honors and rosary at 7:00pm. A Funeral Mass will be held on Thursday, July 11, 2024 at 9:30 am at St. Michael Catholic Church, 40501 Hayes Road in Sterling Heights. Friends may visit the church on Thursday beginning at 9:00 am.

John and his wife Donna will be placed at Great Lakes National Cemetery in Holly, Michigan at a later date. From [DignityMemorial.com](https://www.DignityMemorial.com)

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c/o Dustin Hume, Editor
P.O. Box 27303
Lansing, MI 48909-7303

EXECUTIVE SECRETARY



by
Eric
Chornoby

Yes, Management Is Incompetent

When I worked at Local Post Offices, we always joked that injured employees and suck-ups were promoted to Management over qualified people. The sad part is we experience it. Every. Single. Day. We all experienced bad orders, bad directions, and grumpy people.

The longer you work at the Post Office, the more and more you see unqualified people get promoted into positions, which makes you question how they got the job. I couldn't understand how some people got a 204B detail or how they became titled. It always seems the least qualified person is promoted. It turns out, that is exactly what the Post Office does.

The Peter Principle

A book came out in 1970, the same year as the Great Postal Strike. That book, *The Peter Principle*, explains how incompetent people get promoted. It has been fifty years, but not much has changed. This book is based on the research of Dr. Laurence J. Peter and dives into the exact phenomenon we see at the Post Office.

fice daily. People get promoted to jobs they are unqualified for and fail to do well.

The basic premise is that employers promote people who appear competent or excel in their current jobs. The promoted employee may not have the skill set to perform the job they are promoted into. The books give several examples, but I enjoy the Teacher example. A teacher was competent at educating children and could handle parents well. The teacher was

new position. That sounds familiar.

The 'Yes Man'

A Yes Man agrees with everything their boss says without questioning it. They may even defend the decision or be a cheerleader. This brown-nosing employee will always cheer Management on, even when moronic instructions come down. Overtime will be cut, but your facility needs more people to work the mail. When a Manager tells a Supervisor, 'all carriers must leave the

question who thought it was possible or even a good idea. Very few people in Management question bad ideas. Most people who are 'promoted' into Management learn early on that the most significant factor to promotion is saying yes.

Think back to the last person you know who was selected to be a 204B. I can guarantee they were not the most qualified person. Or someone you thought had innate leadership abilities. No, you have someone who, more often than not, was always promoting Management, agreeing with bad decisions, and not complaining about stupidity.

Once the Yes Man is selected to

be a 204B, they will do anything possible to keep the position and chase the promise of a promotion. This usually means we get Supervisors doing our work, working extremely long hours, working on off days, etc. The 204B will do whatever they are told, and for the most part, the job will get done. When it is time to be promoted, who is in the pool of potential candidates? The 204B Yes Man.

This concept is covered in *The Peter Principle*. People are often promoted in two ways. The book refers to this as the *continued on page 3*

"A Yes Man agrees with everything their boss says without questioning it. They may even defend the decision or be a cheerleader. This brown-nosing employee will always cheer Management on, even when moronic instructions come down."

promoted to assistant Principal and was competent because they could already deal with parents and had a good relationship with other teachers.

When promoted to Principal, the teacher floundered. The teacher could not foster and maintain good relationships with the school board and the superintendent. In this example, the teacher was promoted several times because they excelled in their previous role. In practice, this means the person who does well in their current role will be promoted over someone with the skills for the

building by 8 am,' they want it done, not a discussion if 8 am is even possible.

The Manager expects the Supervisor to say yes. The Supervisor then tells the clerks they must have all mail up by 7 am so the carriers can check the mail and leave on time. Your average clerk will say, 'Priority does not come in until 6:45; we can't throw it all in 15 minutes.' This average clerk will never get promoted. Who does? The clerk who keeps their mouth shut.

When instructions roll downhill at the Post Office, we at the bottom

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.....Eric Chornoby
U: (248) 543-3262; C: (586) 260-4572
F: (248) 543-2750
e-Mail: chornoby@apwu480.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.....Wendy Kempke
W: (517) 263-3795; C: (419) 377-4595
e-Mail: kempke.wk@gmail.com

Editor.....Dustin Hume
U: (231) 715-2019; C: (309) 756-7310
e-Mail: dustin@apwu300.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.....Dana Mclean
W: (231) 652-6677; C: (231) 638-7290
e-Mail: danamcleanapwu@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.....Al Lewis
U: (313) 532-9305; F: (313) 532-5433
e-Mail: alewis@apwudetroit.org

Veterans Director.....John Diem
U: (248) 543-3262; F: (248) 543-2750
e-Mail: mpwuvetdirector@ameritech.net

Area 1 Director (480/481).....Steve Wood
U: (248) 543-3262; C: (313) 530-9182
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
F: (810) 257-1514
e-Mail: fmalccod@comcast.net

Area 5 Director (486/487).....Amy Ridgway
C: (989) 820-7147; 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).....Dana Mclean
W: (231) 652-6677; C: (231) 638-7290
e-Mail: danamcleanapwu@gmail.com

Area 8 Director (492).....Vacant

Area 9 Director (493/494).....Brittany Thompson
W: (231) 854-1333; C: (231) 519-1971
e-Mail: bthompsonapwu@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).....Michelle Yuhasey
U: (906) 774-6303
e-Mail: myuhaseyapwu498-499@yahoo.com

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. Rep......Tamika Johnson-Smith
U: (313) 532-9305; F: (313) 532-5433
e-Mail: tjohnson-smith@apwudetroit.org

Regional Resource Assistant (RRA)
Coleen Maxwell.....fmalveep@comcast.net

Keith Combs.....combskeith24@gmail.com

State Retiree Chapter President.....Ray Novakoski
C: (616) 560-7747
e-Mail: raynova@sbcglobal.com

Vice President.....Joanna Atkinson

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MPWU Auxiliary President.....Vacant

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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	Gaylord
Central MI	Great Lakes Area
Detroit District	Mail Haulers
Farmington	Jackson
Flint	Muskegon
480-481	Southwest MI
486-487	Traverse City
498-499	Western MI

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



Yes, Management Is Incompetent

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'Push' and 'Pull' promotion methods. Push is when someone pushes their way into the position by gaining qualifications, credentials, and hard work. The other method is Pull. Pull is when a mentor or friend pulls you along or up.

At the Post Office, we see this every day. The person working hard may be chasing a position that is taken, or someone else is already in line for it. Management will select the Yes Man over the hard worker. It doesn't matter if the other candidate has more credentials or outside Management experience. The Yes Man wins because the primary qualification Management considers is someone who says yes and completes the work.

Competently Incompetent

Unlike most companies, the primary qualification at the entry level for Management at the Post Office is being a Yes Man. While other companies may promote people who may be underqualified, it is becoming less and less common. The job market seeks people who are overqualified for current positions. This often looks like degrees and years of experience for an entry-level position. While the same phenomenon occurs when people eventually get promoted into positions where they tread water, on the way up, they are more competent.

Those who move up at the Post Office have different qualifications. On the workroom floor, there is a large gap between the person who knows how to do the job per Standard Operating Procedures and the person who does it according to how Management tells them. This means you get Supervisors who may not be exceptionally knowledgeable. The problem is most in Management do not even realize how bad they are at their job. The primary qualification is just saying yes to everything you are told.

I call this competently incompetent. Several of our Supervisors have mastered the 'Yes' part of the job. Before a Manager or Postmaster can finish explaining an order, you have 204Bs, and Supervisors tell them they will do it. These people are highly competent in the aspect that will get you promoted. This Supervisor doesn't have the experience or skills they should have as they may not even have been good at their original job in the first place.

They are incompetent at every other aspect of the job. I have spoken to several people in Management positions who have yet to learn what they are doing. The number of times I had to explain what the ELM, the Contract, or a handbook says to Management boggles my mind. This is how Stewards win Grievances. Management can do a lot we disagree with, but they must do it correctly.

The Supervisor Shuffle

The *Peter Principle* also covers the common phenomenon of Supervisors

being moved around. The research identifies two main ways of being promoted. They are "*percussive sublimation*" and "*lateral arabesque*." Percussive Sublimation is when a person receives a 'promotion' because they are incompetent. Businesses do this because it gives the appearance that anyone can be promoted, and it often moves a bad employee into a position where they can do less damage.

In practice, you may have a Supervisor who can't get the mail out on time. They have dozens of Grievances against them for doing clerk work, for being abusive, etc. Management will give this person a promotion to cover up what happened and show all other Supervisors that Management will have your back for saying 'yes.' We see this quite a bit.

Lateral Arabesque is the act of a Supervisor being promoted despite being woefully incompetent in their position. This promotion is not an increase in pay or responsibilities and is only a promotion at face value. This is extremely common at the Post Office. I have several examples of this. When I was a PSE at Local Post Offices, a Supervisor went on administrative 'Stress Leave' after several complaints and issues. The Supervisor returned when she was given a 'promotion' to another Management position, which did not deal with employees.

Another example is that I had the pleasure of being a steward and dealing with a manager who had minimal USPS experience. This Manager was an expert in one facet of the job. After complaints and internal Management issues, this Manager was moved to Labor Relations. Suddenly, Supervisors were provided new instructions on handling common forms such as 3189s/Change of Schedules. I attempted to meet with this Manager and was told that the Manager disagreed with Postal Regulations and our Contract.

I was fuming, but I filed Grievances. Quickly, the policy was revoked once I got a case to Pre-Arbitration, and the Manager was shuffled to another facility. This may look like a promotion on paper, but in this case, all the movements were brief stints in different positions until that office wanted to send the Manager back. The entire purpose was to remove a problem from one area to another. While Management had a list of people who wished to or may be good in those positions, the problem employee often went into the position.

The Stress Problem

Management creates a huge problem when they promote a Yes Man. The first problem is that this new Supervisor, or 204B, is vastly underqualified to do the job and needs several new skills or qualities to do the job well. Good Supervisors tend to be the exception and not the rule. The bigger

problem is what happens on the workroom floor when someone like this is promoted.

A Supervisor I knew who was promoted was excellent at their job and always said yes to everything Management asked. This includes volunteering for events, committees, and more challenging work. This Supervisor became a favorite. Quickly, this person became a 204B and then a Supervisor. I will admit they were great at their job before being promoted.

Once promoted, reality set in. Management required reports on reports, dealing with rampant attendance issues, a lot of conduct issues, learning multiple programs, etc. A considerable skill a Supervisor needs is time management, which this person lacked. Unsurprisingly, this person quickly began working on off days and staying late. I even came in on a Sunday to work on Grievances and caught this Supervisor working when the facility was closed. This person adopted a management style that bordered on being toxic and involving constant micromanagement.

The unit quickly hated this Supervisor, and people bid out. This is the direct result of stress and is covered by *The Peter Principle*. Once someone reaches their level of incompetence, they become stressed. This person struggles to tread water and do the job while also trying to get promoted further. This stress response often manifests as irritability, inability to focus, forgetfulness, poor judgment, becoming easily agitated and frustrated, and feeling overwhelmed.

Suppose we apply these common stress responses to an incompetent Supervisor in the Post Office. In that case, we get someone who forgets they told you something, always feels overworked, gets upset when you talk to them, and makes stupid decisions. This sounds exactly like most Supervisors I have known. This Supervisor also has the qualities that create a Hostile Work Environment. This Supervisor is aggravated by their employees, makes terrible decisions, goes back on their word, makes false promises, and is incredibly dismissive. This sounds toxic to me.

Blind to the Problem

The person promoted due to this principle often doesn't realize what is happening. They don't know they are

incompetent. They think they were picked because they were exceptional or qualified. You usually get the attitude of Management of 'how dare you question me' from these individuals. When you have a hiring Manager who was promoted due to being a Yes Man, they don't even know what a qualified candidate looks like.

One of the core problems the USPS has is the need for better management. I have it on good authority (Not to throw my source under the bus) that this problem permeates to the top levels of Management. I was informed that a USPS VP initially declined the COVID-19 test Kit mailing program. The APWU and PMG DeJoy had a fit over turning down this work. But the APWU is full of people willing to question Management, and DeJoy is not Postal. If a VP is willing to turn down hundreds of millions of packages, can you expect Management to be competent?

We can't. And that is the problem. Management is incompetent by definition, and that is backed by science. Management is so inept that they fit the definitions to a 'T' of the prevailing incompetence research. As a Steward, I beat Management by understanding them and using this to my advantage. It is one of the most fundamental premises of negotiation. I had to accept that Management has been incompetent for over 50 years, and nothing we do will fix that.

The next time you see the 204B or Supervisor who can't get their job right, remember they are incompetent. They may have been a Yes Man, but if the USPS was not fundamentally flawed, their Yes Man ways wouldn't work. The next time you see a Steward talking to a Supervisor on your behalf, remember that good Stewards know their enemy. You don't beat an incompetent person by proving them wrong or yelling at them.

You beat an incompetent person by making them think doing what you want will benefit them. If I need a 3971 approved, I may argue that no one wants me to file a Grievance and force an adjustment after the fact, so let's approve it this one time. On the outside it doesn't look like the Union is 'fighting for you'. But the truth is you can't win an argument with someone incompetent. To quote Mark Twain, "Never argue with stupid people, they will drag you down to their level and then beat you with experience."

Boxing Up The House To Move?

Has your name changed? Are you moving? If so please submit the change to your steward or call your Union Hall so we are current on your mailing address.



27th BIENNIAL APWU NATIONAL



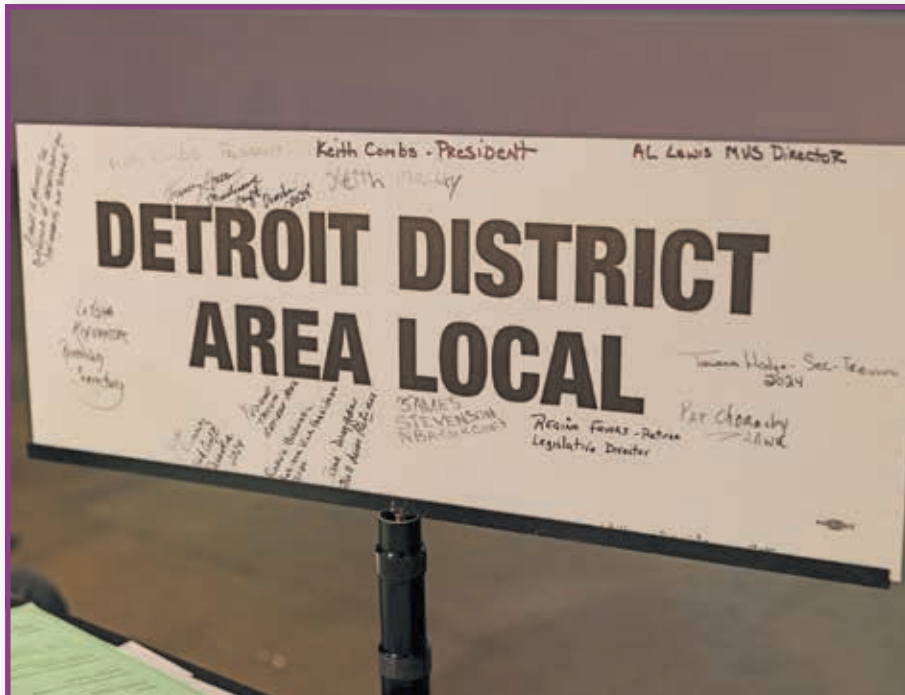
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27th BIENNIAL APWU NATIONAL CONVENTION HIGHLIGHTS

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EDITOR



by
Dustin
Hume

The Right Of Our Toilers

"Labor Day was created by the labor movement and is dedicated to the social and economic achievements of American workers." -The Library of Congress (LOC.gov), Labor Day: Topics in Chronicling America.

Tuesday, September 5, 1882, was the first time the Labor Day holiday was celebrated. According to the Department of Labor (DOL.gov), the Central Labor Union helped plan the celebration. The first ever Labor Day parade saw 10,000 workers take unpaid leave to march from City Hall to Union Square (History.com, Labor Day 2021, October 6, 2020). The

Central Labor Union also successfully planned a subsequent Labor Day celebration on September 5, 1883 (DOL.gov).

The Central Labor Union had been working hard to help create a nationwide holiday for workers. Several other cities had begun working on their own Labor Day celebrations. According to The Sun newspaper on September 1st, 1884, the Central Labor Union was fighting to have the "first Monday in September a universal holiday for the workingman." That year, the parade was expected to have 20,000 people (LOC.gov archives).

On September 8, 1885, the St. Paul Daily Globe ran the headline "The Workmen's Picnic." More than 2,000 workers came out to celebrate

a day they referred to as "peculiarly their own." This was the observance of the Labor Day holiday in the state of Minnesota. In the article, the author refers to Labor Day as "... a dedication to the cause of their advancement." (LOC.gov archives)

After 24 states had already adopted the Labor Day holiday, President Grover Cleveland signed a law declaring that the first Monday in September of each year a national holiday on June, 28, 1894 (DOL.gov).

The Salt Lake City, Utah newspaper, the Desert Evening News, referred to the Salt Lake City Labor Day celebration as the "finest labor demonstration in the city's history" and referred to the day as honoring those that "earn their bread by the

sweat of their brows and the skill of their hands." The paper went on to say that the Labor Day celebration "served to lay open the world of labor to those who know little of the toil" (September 2nd, 1901).

On August 31, 1894, The Iowa Register of Iowa, Kansas stated that Labor Day shows "the earnest of the cause of the workingman and shows the importance of his interests in the development of American civilization," declaring that "Congress has finally recognized the Right of Our Toilers." (LOC.gov archives)

To learn more, visit guides.loc.gov/chronicling-America-Labor-Day. I hope everyone was able to enjoy a wonderful Labor Day celebration, you've earned it!

AREA 7 DIRECTOR



by
Dana
Mclean

The Long Term Costs Of Letting Management Violate The Contract

Hello brothers and sisters, I hope everyone is enjoying their summers and making sure to take time for your family. That is the most important thing to do for your mental health.

I want to thank my local WMAL for sending me to the National Convention that was held in Detroit in July. It was so fun, exciting, educational and rejuvenating. The Detroit local did an amazing job organizing it and running it. Hats off to them! The speakers were great and it was exciting to rally outside, even though it was so hot and humid! My husband signed up for the auxiliary so he worked the during the convention and that was fun for him. As you know negotiations are still in the works for our new contract. It was definitely expressed by the members that PTFs need to be addressed. Postmasters are just taking advantage of them and hopefully we get significant changes in that area. I also hope that they get us compensated for all the work we did during covid. We'll see.

Before I went to the convention I was able to get a lot more of my office visits in. It was nice driving around to all the smaller towns and meeting everyone. Some cool postmasters that actually look out for their employees and some postmasters that want to just take advantage of their employees. Of course with office visits comes people not realizing they have union representation. Its upsetting when you walk into a post office and the clerk starts venting and breaks down. Its issues like that, that reassure me of my obligation. No one should feel like that at work. Especially when it's a small post office. Those

offices are supposed to be the fun ones to work at.

One issue I'd like to address that is common in small offices is when the employees willingly let management violate the contract. The contract represents the MUTUAL agreement between the USPS and the APWU. It

was a negotiated contract that ensures fair treatment, reasonable workloads and a host of benefits that safeguard the well being of postal workers. Yet in many offices there is a growing trend of clerks allowing management to violate the contract as to "help them out" or responding to short term pressures. While this might seem beneficial in the moment, the long term consequences detrimental to employees.

When USPS management chooses to overlook or outright violate the terms of the APWU contract, the implications are severe. These contracts are not just bureaucratic red tape, they are the result of extensive negotiations aimed at creating a fair and equitable work environment. By allowing management to sidestep these agreements, USPS undermines the trust that workers place in the system designed to protect them.

The immediate impact on employees is palpable. When contractual violations occur, whether its assigning ex-



cessive overtime, bypassing seniority rules or disregarding agreed upon safety measures, the postal workers are the ones who suffer.

In the long term, allowing such violations to persist is a dangerous precedent. If management is allowed to break the rules without consequence, it sends a clear

message that the contract if flexible and the protections it offers can be ignored when convenient.

We cannot stand by and let this happen. Every time management violates OUR contract we must stand together. We must hold them accountable to the contract THEY agreed to. This means speaking up when you see the violations occur. Don't let them take away what we've earned. Stand up for your contract!!!

One last comment. I was in the organizing class at the convention and heard a great quote from the National Organizer Anna Smith and it stuck with me! "If your not standing with me, you're standing against me". We all need to stand together.

Ok, this is the last comment . . . DON'T FORGET TO VOTE!!! Elections have consequences and we all need our voices to be heard!

In solidarity.

Michigan Messenger

Deadline for Newsletter Submissions

October 20, 2024

Legislative Director



by
Roscoe
Woods

Happy Fall Sisters And Brothers

As your legislative director I wanted to remind all of you to make sure you are registered to vote in the upcoming general election. Do not assume you are registered, double check. This can be done by pointing and clicking your way over to the MI Secretary of State web site. As legislative director it is my obligation to state as found in the MPWU Constitution it has been a longstanding motion that The MPWU

will align itself with the Michigan AFL-CIOs recommendations of and endorse those candidates for all elected offices in the Local, State, and National races/offices.

Therefore, I wish to inform the members of the MPWU that the MPWU supports and endorses the full slate of candidates endorsed by the Michigan AFL-CIO.

A partial list of those endorsements is as follows:

Kamala Harris for President

Elissa Slotkin for MI Senate

The following endorsements are

for the Congressional races:

MI 1 - Callie Barr

MI 2 - Michael Lynch

MI 3 - Hillary Scholten

MI 4 - Jessica Swartz

MI 5 - Libbi Urban

MI 6 - Debbie Dingell

MI 7 - Curtis Hertel

MI 8 - Kirsten McDonald Rivet

MI 9 - Clinton St. Mosely

MI 10 - Carl Marlinga

MI 11 - Haley Stevens

MI 12 - Rashida Talib

MI 13 - Shri Thanedar

Understanding we come from a va-

riety of backgrounds we understand not all may agree with these endorsements. All I can say to that is we position ourselves to elect congressional representatives we believe will best service the interests of our members and this great union. We encourage all of you to do your own research and make the decisions that are best for you, your family and your job and union.

The full list of endorsements for all national and state candidates supported by the MPWU can be found at: <https://miaflcio.vote/endorsements/>



by
Raymond
Novakoski

PRESIDENT, MPWU AL LABRECQUE RETIREE CHAPTER

— Retiree Corner —

The APWU Retiree Convention 2024, held over the weekend, was well attended by delegates from Michigan and various other states. Key topics discussed included health benefits, legislative issues, and National Convention resolutions.

Regarding health benefits, Legislative Director Judy Beard and APWU Health Plan Director Sara Jane Rodriguez provided valuable discussions and reports. The Postal Service Health Benefit (PSHB) will commence on January 1, 2025, and it's crucial to review the different available plans. Many plans have received conditional approval for 2025, following the established process. The rates for these plans will be revealed by mid-October. Currently, the focus is on the Special Enrollment Period (SEP). Here's some information about it:

If you are an annuitant as of January 1, 2025, and not enrolled in Medicare Part B, you are not obligated to enroll in Medicare Part B to maintain your health insurance coverage under the new PSHB Program. However, enrolling in Medicare Part B may lower your overall healthcare costs and provide better value.

Your covered spouse and eligible family members are also not required to enroll in Medicare Part B, even if they are 65 or older. Nonetheless, enrollment may reduce overall healthcare costs and offer greater value.

If you are an annuitant as of January 1, 2025, and already enrolled in Medicare Part B, you must remain enrolled to continue coverage under PSHB.

If you qualify for the SEP, you should have received a letter with instructions. If you believe you are eligible but haven't received the letter, contact USPS at 1-833-712-7742. The SEP, managed by USPS, is a

one-time opportunity available until September 30, 2024. Missing this window could result in penalties if you later decide to enroll in Medicare Part B after turning 65. Enrollment now will take effect on January 1, 2025. It's an important decision, so review all available information carefully.

On the legislative front, the APWU is advocating for the Social Security Fairness Act (H.R.82/S.597), which aims to repeal the Government Pension Offset (GPO) and the Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP), thereby

ending the reduction of earned benefits for Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS) retirees and their spouses who qualify for Social Security.

The APWU National Convention took place from Monday to Thursday, featuring speakers and presentations. While there were few retiree-specific issues, discussions primarily focused on the direction members want the negotiation team to pursue.

Both the Retiree and National Conventions were successful and well-managed. The democratic pro-

cess allowed for comprehensive discussions and voting on various issues. I plan to provide a more detailed report on the convention matters in my next article, as there was much to absorb.

I extend my gratitude to the membership for sending me to the conventions and for their support as President of the Michigan Postal Workers Union "Al LaBrecque" Retiree Chapter. I also thank the Executive Board Officers for their hard work and support at the retiree convention.

In Union Solidarity.

APWU

American Postal Workers Union, AFL-CIO

Wear Union Gear Every Thursday!!!

Let's show management our strength by wearing APWU gear every Thursday. Whether it's with a t-shirt, button or armband, wear your solidarity on your sleeve! To order union gear, visit APWUstore.org.

WE'RE FIGHTING FOR ECONOMIC JUSTICE

The Postal Service's economic proposals include:

- Eliminate cost-of-living adjustments as we know them;
- Increase employees' cost for healthcare coverage;
- Create a new lower pay scale for future career employees/reduce benefits;
- Increase the percentage of non-career employees;
- Weaken protection against layoffs.

APWU

- Eliminate the 2-Tier Pay System
- All Career Workforce
- Keep Our COLAs
- Good Wage Increases
- Job Security/Protections
- ✓ Good Service!
- ✓ Good Jobs!
- ✓ Good Contract!

In Solidarity,

AMERICAN POSTAL WORKERS UNION

