

MICHIGAN MESSENGER



AFFILIATED WITH: AMERICAN POSTAL WORKERS UNION, AFL-CIO, APWU POSTAL PRESS ASSOCIATION, MICHIGAN STATE AFL-CIO

Volume 30, Issue 114

July / August 2004 Issue



President's Report

Gary VanHoogstraten
President

I would like to begin by sharing a couple of articles I came across during my time at the President's Conference in Montana. The first one had the heading of "Sara Lee to close five clothing plants and cut 4,175 jobs." It continued to say that Sara Lee was cutting five clothing facilities and cutting 2.9% of its workforce by the end of the year. This Chicago-based consumer-goods maker said these cuts would affect plants in Honduras, Mexico, and Port Rico, as well as part of a plant in the U.S. Experts predict the change will send manufacturing to countries where production costs are less; some of which have rules that govern trade through the World Trade Organization (WTO), and some that do not. A spokesperson for Sara Lee was quoted as saying "We are trying to make production as efficient as possible, so that it will be competitive with what will come from other countries". The final thing that we should all know is that China is among the countries that will benefit from lifting of apparel quotas, because its low production costs will help draw more manufacturing business. Just something for you to keep an eye on.

The next article was about a man named Steven Gentry. He was laid off from his job as a computer programmer with the Boeing Company. He was let go *after* he trained his replacement (a high-tech worker in India). He hasn't worked since, and is among those convinced that America's white-collar workers have to band together to keep their future from being exported to places where skilled labor comes cheap. Since being laid off, he has joined a Seattle-based union. This union is trying to organize tech workers from across the country. He was quoted as saying "There's no loyalty anymore. I feel my job was taken by corporate greed." In this article it said that while Union membership in the public sector has held steady over the past 20 years, private-sector membership has slipped.

In a recent four-day strike by the Communication Workers Union of America (SBC), management agreed, in principle, as a part of the settlement, to work with the Union to bring an estimated 3,000 company jobs in India and the Philippines back to the United States. This, I believe, is a huge breakthrough. During their

four-day strike, I joined in their struggle by walking and picketing with them. They appreciated the support and promised to support us in our fight with the Postal Commission. In his closing statement, Steven Gentry, the laid off programmer, said he overcame a deep aversion to Unions to become an active part of future organizing. We in the APWU must look right in our own backward and get these approximately 24% of our workers to join the Union and become whole again. The latest figure from the APWU Headquarters is that we have approximately 225,000 dues paying members; which is 76% of the all APWU represented employees in the Postal Service. Your local officers have a list of non-members. I am sure if you talk to them, they will be able to give you the names of whom we must organize.

At this President's Conference, which was held in Montana, I was kind of surprised of the turnout from our National Officers attending. I figured half of the Executive Board would be there but I was wrong. We were totally surprised by the no show from President Burrus. Executive Vice President Guffey did his best to fill in

(Continued on page 9)





Education at Work

Lynn Pallas-Barber
Director of Research & Education



The Long and Short of It

Michael A. Long
Editor

LINE "J" CASE – A BIG WINNER

The long awaited decision of Case #I94T-41-C 98116745 was rendered by Arbitrator Shyam Das on July 12, 2004. After four hearing dates over a year, a favorable decision was rendered and the Union's case was sustained. This case originated in my local in the Iron Mountain and Kingsford facilities. We have continued from the filing of the first case until today to argue this issue and have hundreds of cases being held in abeyance of this National Case. The monetary award from this case and all pending cases could be monumental.

I am also positive that many other locals have cases pending the outcome of this case as well. The monetary award nationwide could be one of the biggest monetary awards in the history of our union. The award as stated is:

"The issue raised in this arbitration is interpretive and, hence, arbitrable at the National level. The issue is decided on the basis set forth in the above findings. The underlying grievance from Iron Mountain, Michigan, is remanded to Step 3 to be resolved consistent with the findings in this decision."

Congratulations to our national officers and their endeavors and persistence in this case!! I only have to guess what kind of stall tactics management will attempt in trying to resolve this issue at Step 3.

DEATH TO THE 498-499 DELIVERY PILOT PROGRAM

I'm not sure if you'll remember but about two years ago I wrote a story about the Delivery Pilot Program which was implemented in three associate offices in our local, Marquette, Ishpeming, and Negaunee Michigan. It is my understanding that my local was reprinted in papers from other locals. I am happy to report that the Delivery Pilot Program in the 498-499 area was laid to final rest on June 19, 2004.

The program was intended to last one year with a review in six months. After nearly twenty two months manage-

(Continued on page 8)

Did someone forget to tell the meteorologists, and especially, Mother Nature that summer has begun. Maybe by the time you receive this edition of the Michigan Messenger, the weather will dry out, the heat will increase, and it will start feeling more like August.

With the upcoming union elections, articles will be screened quite heavily to ensure that no political propaganda is included. If you have submitted an article, and see that it had been changed/edited, please understand why. However, I would be remiss as a union member and a union officer if I didn't express my anger about a recent update that was distributed throughout the country which detailed that the union convention will go on as scheduled. In this update, it was stated that we, the union, demanded "assurances from hotel management that our delegates would not be subjected to any repercussions of the labor dispute during our convention." What? Have we totally lost sight of what a union is, and what it stands for? We can demand assurances that we won't have any repercussions from their dispute, but what about the hotel workers who are in dispute. We, as a union, must stand with our brothers and sisters who are trying to reach an agreement with management. If that meant that we put our weight behind them, and force their management to agree with the union demands, or we will move elsewhere....so be it. But no, we "have received written assurance that the labor dispute will not disrupt our stay in the Los Angeles area." As a member that will be attending the National Convention, I guess I should be glad that the labor dispute will not disrupt our stay. But what do we tell the Hotel Staff, the Housekeepers, and others, when they ask....why didn't we stand up for them? I am at a loss for words.

On a note closer to home, if you are moving, please send me a note to either PO Box 280, Sheridan, MI 48884, or e-Mail at mpwueditor@yahoo.com. Currently, it costs .70/address change that I receive from the Post Office. If we can cut costs in this area of the budget, we can direct those savings to other areas.

Until next time,

Yours in Solidarity,

Mike



Legislative Report

Regina Favors
Legislative Director

CRUCIAL CRUCIAL CRUCIAL

I know that you are probably as tired of hearing/reading this as I am, but the fact is this is exactly what the 2004 Election is. This is without a doubt one of the (if not the) most critical elections of all time. To those of you who think that your vote won't make a difference, please take a second or two and think again. If even one-tenth of the registered voters (who did not vote) had voted in the 2000 election, G.W. would not be sitting where he is today. If one-fifth of the non-registered voters would have registered and let their voices be heard, I do not believe G.W. would be where is right now. So again, I urge each and every one of to get out and vote. Don't let labor's voice continue to be silenced or worse, totally wiped out.

Before I had even completed the first paragraph of this article I heard three of Bush's anti-Kerry ads on the television; just that quickly, and one right after the other. Well my brothers and sisters I believe that they are selling us short. Don't they know that we can read between the lines and research the candidates and what they believe in and stand for on our own? According to an article from the Austin postal worker, the Bush Administration on May 29th, 2003 unveiled a plan to eliminate federal jobs and contract out the work to private companies. The Bush Administration has proposed legislation to allow the defense department to gut the current personnel system that governs workers' pay, salary increases, hiring, firing, job classifications and many other federal workplace rules. This same administration in November failed to alert postal employees the may have handled a package containing Ricin and we all know about the nine-member commission he appointed in December 2002 to "study" the U.S. Postal Service as part of his plan "to allow private contractors to compete for nearly half of the governments civilian jobs" (according to a Dec. 11, 2002 article in the Washington post) and these are just a few highlights from that (local 164) page. Another union local wrote- according to

(Continued on page 8)



Injury Comp Report

Ron Krumrie
Human Relations/Injury Comp. Dir.

Establishing The Essential Elements

For a claim to be approved by the Department of Labor five essential elements must be established. These five essential elements are Time, Civil Employee, fact of Injury, Performance of Duty, and Causal Relationship. We will talk about Time, Fact of Injury, and Causal Relationship now, and Civil Employee and Performance of Duty in my next article.

Time

All cases must first satisfy the statutory time requirements of the FECA:

a. *Provisions of the Law.* For injuries and deaths on or after September 7, 1974, the law provides that a claim for compensation must be filed within three years of the injury or death. Even if claim is not filed within three years, however, compensation may still be allowed if written notice of injury was given in 30 days or the immediate superior had actual knowledge of the injury or death within 30 days after occurrence. This knowledge may consist of written records or verbal notification; an entry into an employee's medical record may also satisfy this requirement if it is sufficient to place the agency on notice of a possible work-related injury or illness. The law also provides that the filing of a disability claim because of injury will satisfy the time requirements for a death claim based on the same injury. OWCP may excuse failure to comply with the three year time requirement because of exceptional circumstances (for example, being held prisoner of war). For injuries occurring before September 7, 1974, different provisions apply with respect to timeliness. Contact the district office concerning any case in this category.

b. *When Time Begins to Run.* For traumatic injury, the statutory time limitation begins to run from the date of injury. For a latent condition, it begins to run when an injured employee who has a compensable disability becomes aware, or reasonably should have been aware, of a possible relationship between the condition and the employment. In situations where the exposure to possibly

(Continued on page 10)



Maintenance Memo

Jane Duggan
Maintenance Director



Area 8 Report

Dan McCloskey
Area 8 Director

LIFE AFTER WITHHOLDING

Since our last issue, withholding that has affected much of the state has been lifted. This provides us with a new set of issues – namely how to fill the many custodial vacancies. For instance, in Detroit we have over two-dozen career custodial openings. Many people feel that management will use this opening to bring in favorite sons/daughters and bypass other eligible applicants.

Any and all custodians hired or coming in through change of craft requests must pass the 916 exam. Even those employees who took the old exam and were on registers in the past must take/pass the 916 to be on the new registers.

A lot of confusion is arising due to management's use of *e-reassign*. Some installations are telling career employees that they must use *e-reassign* as the method for applying to change crafts and come into maintenance through the custodial vacancies. Management can mandate the use of *e-reassign* but that does not override the mandate for the 916 exam and the use of registers in the order designated by the EL-304.

THE PECKING ORDER

Like all maintenance positions, custodial vacancies must be filled in accordance with the "pecking order." If you have Level 2's in maintenance they could be on the In-craft LC3 register. They have priority.

Next maintenance craft employees requesting transfer can be considered before or after those on the In-service register.

If there are maintenance craft employees who are qualified they are next, followed by maintenance employees who have been afforded an opportunity to qualify in order to be eligible for transfer consideration (EL-304, page 38).

Consider non-maintenance career postal employees, regardless of current craft or position, on the in-service register in score order.

(Continued on page 9)

Here we are in the middle of summer and it wasn't even seventy degree's today. I talked to another new member this past month and was asked what the benefits of joining were. I pointed out that as a Level 4 Mail Handler, I made less money than I do as a level three custodian. The APWU fought to get COLA and pay increases while my former craft gave in to accepting little bonuses and not the increases. In the past year, the APWU has lost over 59,000 members due to attrition, retirement etc. Ask your co-worker to join our union and help to continue the fights that still need to be fought.

In Solidarity,

Dan

One of the most popular diets in the US today requires you to reduce/cut your carbohydrates. However, this diet isn't just for the individual person; it is for the entire United States as a whole.

This diet is extremely easy. In a nut-shell, you need to go on a NO CARB diet. This would entail:

NO Cheney
NO Ashcroft
NO Rumsfield
NO Bush

And especially,
NO Rice either.

While this diet seems easy, it is going to require some work. Make sure you get out and vote, and hopefully, we all feel a lot lighter after November.



Retiree Involvement

Al LaBrecque
MPWU Retiree's Chapter Dir.

Hey, sports fans! It's kickoff time! Let the games begin! Not the Summer Olympics or football, and NOT games, but the very serious business of the APWU National Convention.

Each two years, some 3,000 Local and State APWU delegates from 50 states, Puerto Rico and U.S. Territories convene as the Union's highest governing body. The Union's governing document; the APWU Constitution & By-Laws, can only be amended by a two-thirds majority vote of the delegates in Convention.

Locals and State Unions come armed to the teeth to defend or defeat their paramount issues with resolutions. The most controversial and contentious resolutions usually come in the Constitution Committee Report. The 2004 APWU Convention in L.A. appears to have no shortage of hot topics, any one of which could result in the lengthy roll call process (e.g. Proposed Constitution amendments to extend national officer terms of office from 3 to 4 years, conducting national conventions every 3 years instead of 2, and elimination of some national officer positions, etc.) These are heavy issues that could overshadow our paramount retiree resolutions: **Establish The Position Of Director, APWU Retirees Department As An Elected Office,** and; **Retirees Department Members Eligibility To Vote For National Resident Officers.**

It is fully expected that delegates representing Michigan Locals will familiarize themselves with these resolutions and support them on the convention floor. Both resolutions were unanimously adopted by the MPWU State Convention. I am respectfully asking **any convention delegate** reading this to study these resolutions, paying particular attention to the 'Whereas' paragraphs which explain the 'Resolve', so as to make an informed decision when voting. Hopefully, you will support this effort to give your retired members a voice and vote in the Union they helped build. To that end, I am devoting the remainder of the "R.I." column to these two paramount retiree resolutions.

APWU CONSTITUTION & BY-LAWS; Article 3, Section 4(d); Retirees Department Members Eligibility To Vote For APWU National Resident Officers.

(Continued on page 12)



NBA Report

Jerome "Jerry" Martin
NBA - Clerk Div. - Chicago

Business as Usual

John, Percy and I have remained active in representing Clerks in Illinois and Michigan. Step 3 grievances seem to be down in numbers, as well as Direct Appeals to Arbitration. So, someone must be working at settling at the lowest possible level. Keep up the good work.

We continue to see Window Clerks getting nabbed by the Postal Inspection Service. Don't delete transactions, don't forget to scan your transactions, don't put money in your pocket to make change. They have you on video and you may win the Emmy for best actor or actress. Just don't do it!

Pontiac M. P. C.

Recent news reports announced that the USPS has purchased a 70 acre site in Pontiac, Michigan. This site will be used for an 850,000 square foot distribution center. I understand this new processing center will be called the Northeast Metro Michigan Processing and Distribution center. The USPS should look at a map. Pontiac is only north of Detroit and Troy. It isn't quite Gaylord or Traverse City tho'. Anyway, when this facility is completed in approximately 5 years, the current multiple buildings processing 480-483 mail as well as Flint will be consolidated. Problems to think about that may arise is over capacity. With the continuing upgrading of automation and the elimination of dual jobs, i.e., Expeditors from the Royal Oak buildings and the Flint MPC, excessing will again rear its ugly head. No one likes changes but change is the only consistent thing that the USPS sticks with.

Lance Armstrong Again!

What a great Tour De Lance. It's too bad that this is the last year the USPS will sponsor the team. The 5 year sponsorship cost \$25 million which is really cheap sponsorship considering all of the "free press" we received. At least Lance has something to "crow" about.

(Continued on page 11)

Michigan Postal Workers Union - 17th Biennial State Convention Lansing, Michigan - April 29 - May 1, 2004



Delegates at the Registration Desk



Some of the Veteran Delegates volunteering to Post / Present Colors



Delegates on the First Day Preparations



Delegates during the Posting of Colors



APWU Vice President Cliff Guffey addresses the Delegates



Michigan Representative Diane Byrum addressing the Delegates on the first day.



Joseph Nudi, 480-481 President, with members of his Executive Board announce to the delegates the reaffiliation with the state.



Delegates from the 486-487 Area Local pose for a picture



Central Region Coordinator, Sharyn Stone addresses the delegates



APWU Human Relations Director Sue Carney address the delegates



MVS Assistant Director Michael Foster (Left) Coordinator Stone (middle) MVS NBA Merile Bell (Right) enjoy a laugh together.



Members of the Flint Delegation (L-R, Scott Mitchell, Mark Hart, and Kenna Gay)



Delegates enjoy a laugh at the Thursday night Comedy show provided by the CMAL Local



Registration Desk Waiting for their next customer



Retiree's Convention attendees take time to pose for a picture



Leo Persails (Front) and NBAs John Clark (middle) and Percy Harrison (back)



Delegates reviewing and acting on resolutions



Detroit's POWER women before the POWER meeting.



MPWU State Retiree President Al LaBrecque addresses the delegates



The Detroit Delegation take time to pose for a picture



The Election Committee busy at work counting ballots.



Jim Sweeny's Family receive a plaque from the MPWU for all the work Jim did for the MPWU. The Convention was dedicated to Jim, who passed away in May 2003.



The new MPWU Executive Board and the Retiree Executive Board being sworn in by APWU Maintenance Director, Steve Raymer.

(Continued from page 2)
Education At Work Continued

ment announced on June 3, 2004 that the delivery pilot program would be terminated. Despite the supposedly achieved goals of the program, upper management in the Great Lakes Area would no longer justify the deliberate delay of mail in these three offices. On June 3, 2004 meetings were held in all three offices. Management thanked employees for their participation. Participation in this program was not voluntary. Participation in this program adversely affected Clerk Craft hours in each of the three offices. Participation in this program was a deliberate delay of mail to postal customers in these communities.

For the good news, management is supposedly going to have to hire some career employees in these offices. In Negaunee and Ishpeming PTF clerks should be hired and two PTF clerks should be converted in Marquette with four new PTF clerks on the rolls. In the end postal management simply conducted a strategic retreat and was not willing to admit defeat.

APWU COPA

The threat of the Presidential Postal Commission still hangs heavy over our heads. It continues to be extremely important that all members contribute to COPA. Contributions have been made easy with the use of Postal Ease. There is NO excuse why all members should be making some sort of contribution. The job you save will be your own. It's time to sign up and give your fair share.

In Solidarity,

Until next time,

Lynn

(Continued from page 3)
Legislative Update Continued

White House Spokesman Scott McClellan "The President is going to reach out to everyone in the African-American community and ask for their vote based on his record and his vision for the country." However, in George's infinite wisdom he decided **not** to speak to the NAACP because he feels that the group's comments about him are 'openly hostile'. Hmmmmm. I, myself, heard that G.W. said that "the NAACP preaches/teaches racial division. Please, please get out and vote.

The time is now and all of us in the labor movement needs to come together to keep labor alive!. I feel like if just all of us in the unions across America cast our votes then G.W. is as good as gone. I have been out walking for labor with other unions and fellow AFL-CIO members urging everyone to make sure their voice is heard on Election Day and speaking with them on the issues that most concern them. I tell you it has been truly a fun, as well as rewarding and enlightening, experience. I urge you, if asked by your union or legislative, or political leader to please get out and help, your help is needed and would truly be very much appreciated.

On another note, I received, as did all of my POWER sisters, a letter from Joyce Robinson (National APWU Director of Research and Education) and she re-iterates the seriousness of the presidential commissions recommendations to remove postal employees from federal status for retirement, health benefits, and workers' compensation. Now to all of you postal women out there, we are all

POWER sisters. (Post Office Women for Equal Rights) but some of you just do not have local POWER committees. (hopefully you soon will establish one) but as Sister Robinson writes if adopted, these radical recommendations will result in the loss of millions of dollars in benefits and the elimination of thousands of jobs across the country. We cannot allow this to happen. We must use every resource to protect our postal jobs and benefits. One of the best ways to accomplish the goal is we must raise money for COPA. The unfortunate reality of America's political system is that 'money talks'. Sister Robinson asks and I am asking that each of us send a check or money order for 25.00 payable to "APWU COPA." If you cannot do 25.00 then send what you can. It is Sister Robinsons' intent to present the monies collected from APWU POWER at the National Convention so please give the checks to your local coordinator (if you have one), or send it to—APWU COPA, c/o Joyce B. Robinson, Director, Research & Education, 1300 L street Washington DC 20005 or you can contact me at 20530 Southfield Rd, Detroit, MI 48235, (313) 532-9305, or (313) 289-3193.

Thank You and As Always

In Union Solidarity,

Regina

APWU
APWU
APWU

(Continued from page 4)

Maintenance Memo

Consider current career employees for return to the maintenance craft to a position previously held or to any position of equal or lower level for which s/he holds a rating. (To be eligible in this category, a person must have been in maintenance one year and the return must be within three years).

Consider those on the entrance register in score order.

Consider is the operative word here. Management does not have to take a person on in-service or entrance registers. However, it is the APWU's position that management would have to have very compelling reasons to bypass an employee on an in-service register. If you have a member bypassed, please investigate the case.

THE TIE BREAKER

After determining who should be hired, please be sure that the "tie-breaker" in Article 38 of the National Agreement is applied in determining how the employees select an assignment (shift and off days). Proper weight must be given to postal seniority and the other designated factors any time two or more people are promoted or hired on the same day.

Feel free to contact me if you run into difficulties in enforcing these provisions. Because so many people want to come into maintenance right now, there can be a lot of subjectivity in this area.

Solidarity,

Jane

(Continued from page 1)

President Report Continued

but I am sure that there were questions that only Burrus could have answered for us but chose not to attend for some reason. I guess enough said about the trip but I can say that Montana did an outstanding job in their preparations for us to enjoy ourselves. They had tours set up and we also did a picket at one of the local movie theaters that were having labor problems. The union members at this theater were impressed by our support that evening. We wish the best of luck to them in their struggle.

As most of you know by the posting on our MPWU web site, the COPA cruise we were planning didn't materialize. In order to make this a success, I figured that we needed to about 200 people to make it viable. Unfortunately, we were well below the figure of 100; thus I decided to cancel it. But we will not give up on our goal set by the National as far as COPA! We have to do is get the members on the work-room floor to do their part on making contributions. Wherever we go for meetings, we as Union Officials give each and every time we meet. Please try and let the members know that this is their struggle too and donating to COPA is helping in that regard.

The National Convention is in August and Michigan will be well represented. Keep your eye on our web site for any and all meetings that are in the near future. The next District Meeting will be held in Traverse City in November. The President of the Traverse City Area Local, Steve Duede, and the Executive Board have the hotel booked, and the classes lined up. They have also arranged many plans and activities to keep us busy while we are there. I look forward to another successful meeting, as we always do, in Traverse City.

In closing, I hope all of you enjoy your summer, once the weather warms up. Be careful and be safe.

Until Next Time.

In Union Solidarity,

Gary Van Hoogstraten
President

THE DEADLINE
FOR SUBMITTING
ARTICLES
for the September/
October 2004 Edition
of the
MICHIGAN
MESSENGER
is September 15th



Make your voice
heard on Capitol Hill.
Write your
congressional
representatives!

injurious employment-related conditions continues after this knowledge, the time for filing begins to run on the date of the employee's last exposure to the implicated conditions.

In death cases resulting from traumatic injury, time begins to run from the date of death. Where death is due to disease, time begins to run when the beneficiary is aware, or reasonably should have been aware, of causal relationship between the death and the factors of employment. For a minor, the time limitations do not begin to run until the person reaches the age of 21 or has a legal representative. For a person who is mentally incompetent, the time limitations do not begin to run until the person has a legal representative.

c. *Written Notice.* Form CA-1 or CA-2 constitutes notice of injury. A claim for compensation (Form CA-7 in disability cases, CA-5 or CA-5b in death cases) may also constitute notice of injury. Moreover, OWCP will accept as a notice of injury or death any written statement which is signed by the person claiming benefits or someone acting on his or her behalf and which states the name of the employee; the name and address of the person claiming benefits; the time and location of the injury or death; and the cause and nature of the injury or death.

d. *Actual Knowledge.* An agency official may acquire actual knowledge through firsthand observation of the incident, from another employee, or from medical personnel at the agency's medical facility. This knowledge must place the employing establishment reasonably on notice of an on-the-job injury or death. An entry into the employee's medical records may be considered actual knowledge, as may the results of tests conducted by agency personnel in

connection with known occupational hazards. The date on which the agency or OWCP receives written notice will be considered the date of filing. Information addressing the issue of actual knowledge is needed only when the agency did not receive written notice within three years.

Fact of Injury

It must be established whether the employee in fact sustained an injury or disease. Two factors are involved in this determination:

a. *Occurrence of Event.* Whether the employee actually experienced the accident, event, or employment factor which is alleged to have occurred. This is resolved on the basis of factual evidence, including statements from the employee, the supervisor, and any witnesses. An injury need not be witnessed in order to be compensable.

b. *Medical Condition.* Whether the accident or employment factor resulted in an injury or disease; this is determined on the basis of the attending physician's statement that a medical condition is present which may be related to the incident. Simple exposure, for instance to a contagious condition or dusty environment, does not constitute an injury.

Causal Relationship

Causal relationship involves establishment of a connection between the injury and the condition found. This factor is based entirely on medical evidence provided by physicians who have examined and treated the employee. Opinions of the employee, supervisor or witness are not considered, nor is general medical information contained in published articles.

a. *Kinds of Causal Relation-*

ship. An injury or disease may be related to employment factors in any one of four ways:

(1) *Direct Causation.* This term refers to situations where the injury or factors of employment result in the condition claimed through a natural and unbroken sequence.

(2) *Aggravation.* If a pre-existing condition is worsened, either temporarily or permanently, by a work-related injury, that condition is said to be aggravated.

(a) *Temporary aggravation* involves a limited period of medical treatment and/or disability, after which the employee returns to his or her previous physical status. Compensation is payable only for the period of aggravation established by the medical evidence, and not for any disability caused by the underlying disease. This is true even if the employee cannot return to the job held at time of injury because the pre-existing condition may be aggravated again. For example, if exposure to dust at work temporarily aggravates an employee's pre-existing allergy, compensation will be payable for the period of work-related disability but not for any subsequent period, even though further exposure in the work place may cause another aggravation.

(b) *Permanent aggravation* occurs when a condition will persist indefinitely due to the effects of the work-related injury or when a condition is materially worsened by a factor of employment such that it will not return to the pre-injury state.

(3) *Acceleration.* A work-related injury or disease may hasten the development of an underlying condition, and acceleration is said to occur when the ordinary course of the disease does not account for the speed with which a condition develops.

(Continued on page 11)

(Continued from page 10)
Injury Comp Report Continued

(4) Precipitation. This term refers to a latent condition which would not have manifested itself on this occasion but for the employment. For example, an employee's latent tuberculosis may be precipitated by work-related exposure.

a. *Medical Evidence.* The issue of causal relationship almost always requires reasoned medical opinion for resolution. This opinion must be obtained from a physician who has examined or treated the employee for the condition claimed. In any case where a pre-existing condition involving the same part of the body is present, the physician must provide rationalized medical opinion which differentiates between the effects of the employment-related injury or disease and the pre-existing condition. Such evidence will permit the proper kind of acceptance (temporary vs. permanent aggravation, for instance). To establish causal relationship, additional medical opinion may be requested of OWCP's District Medical Director/Adviser or from a specialist in the medical field pertinent to the injury or disease. In a claim for a psychiatric condition, a report from a psychiatrist or licensed clinical psychologist will be required to meet this criterion. In claims for occupational hearing loss and pulmonary disease, the OWCP will refer the employee for examination by an appropriate specialist after exposure to the hazardous substance or condition has been established.

b. *Consequential and Intervening Injuries.* Sometimes an injury occurring outside performance of duty may affect the compensability of a work-related injury.

(1) A consequential injury is a new injury which occurs as the result of a

work-related injury; for example, it occurs because of weakness or impairment caused by a work-related injury. Included in this definition are injuries sustained while obtaining medical care for a work-related injury. Consequential injuries are compensable.

(2) An intervening injury is one which occurs outside the performance of duty to the same part of the body originally injured. The resulting condition will be considered related to the original injury unless the second injury alone is established as its cause.

Until next time, may all your grievances be winners and your claims be approved.

KNOWLEDGE IS POWER, USE IT, AND SHARE IT!!!

In Union Solidarity,

Ron

(Continued from page 5)
NBA Report Continued

Withholding to Increase?

Currently the only Chicago area withholding is because of the APPS at the Chicago Surface Hub (Busse). Thirty-three Clerk positions may be excessed. The Palatine Plant may lose 145 Clerk positions because of APPS although there has not been any additional withholdings announced because of APPS plan on it.

USPS Advertising Campaign to Feature Letter Carriers

President Burrus has chastised the USPS for their upcoming advertising campaign featuring Letter Carriers. Hey, Clerks, Mail Processors, Maintenance and Motor Vehicle employees apparently don't exist in Potter's peoples mind.

Sports & Stuff

The Cubs and White Sox have self destructed along with a few major injuries. It sure looks like the Cardinals will beat the New York Yankees for all the marbles.

NFL Football - both the Lions and Bears will finish at 9 - 7 this year. Bet on it.

Michigan will win the big 10 with the Spartans in a tie for second with Ohio State.

Late Summer Flicks

I Robot - No this is not Jim McCarthy at a seminar. This is Will Smith as a Chicago Detective who hates robots. This movie has 900 special affects. Will should stick with Robots in Black!

The Village - Adrian Brady, Sigourney Weaver and William Hurt. A group of people move next to some strange creatures. This is similar to an APWU Executive Board Meeting.

Collateral - Tom Cruise needs to make more films. Finally, he is an evil assassin. Jamie Foxx ends up as a dead taxi driver. Jamie should have run over Tom while on cruise control!

Shall we Dance - Richard Gere and J-Lo. She is a dance teacher for Gere who plays a Chicago lawyer. This goes to prove that Chicago lawyers are too easy.

Catwoman - Halle Berry is pushed too far by Sharon Stone. No not our Coordinator, the other one with the nervous leg twitch. This movie has 9 lives, about 8 too many.

At Home at the End of the World -

(Continued on page 12)

(Continued from page 11)

NBA Report Continued

No, it isn't home video about Bill Burrus' house. This is a chick flick 'nough said.

The Manchurian Candidate – This is an update with Denzel Washington playing the Frank Sinatra role. This is directed by Jonathan Demme which means it a good one.

Exorcist, the Beginning – Come on. This is a prequel. The sequels were all so bad, this can only be worse.

Anaconda, the Hunt For Blood Orchids – Without J-Lo. This movie really sucks. This takes place in Borneo. I thought anacondas were in South America! Go figure!

Some of the other flicks are so bad you'll have to see them on video. Save your popcorn money this summer and eat some real corn.

Now for some good eating.

Meat Loaf Wellington

- 1 can (10-1/2 ounces) beef gravy, divided
- 1-1/2 cups cubed day-old bread
- 1/4 cup chopped onion
- 1 egg
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 pounds ground beef
- 1 tube (8 ounces) refrigerated crescent rolls

In a bowl, combine 1/4 cup gravy, bread cubes, onion, egg and salt. Crumble beef over mixture and mix well. Press into a greased 9-in. x 5 in. loaf pan. Bake, uncovered, at 375 degrees for 1 hour or until meat is no longer pink and a meat thermometer reads 160 degrees. Remove loaf from pan; drain on paper towels.

Place on a greased 13-in. x 9-in. baking pan. Unroll crescent roll dough; seal perforations. Cover the top and

sides of meat loaf with dough; trim excess. Bake 10-15 minutes longer or until pastry is golden brown. Heat the remaining gravy; serve with meat loaf.

Southern Fried Chicken

- 1 cup pancake mix
- 2 to 3 teaspoons salt
- 1/4 teaspoon pepper
- 1/4 teaspoon paprika
- 1 broiler/fryer chicken (3 to 4 pounds), cut up
- Oil for deep-fat frying

In a large resealable plastic bag, combine the pancake mix, salt, pepper and paprika. Add the chicken, a few pieces at a time; shake to coat. Heat 2 in. of oil in an electric skillet or deep-fat fryer to 375 degrees. Fry the chicken, a few pieces at a time, for 6 minutes; turn and cook 6 minutes longer or until golden brown and juices run clear.

Until then, I remain---

Jerry

(Continued from page 5)

Retiree Involvement Continued

Whereas; Members in good standing of the Clerk, Maintenance and Motor Vehicle Divisions vote for National Resident Officers, while Retirees Department members in good standing can only for the National Retiree Delegate to the National Convention in their Region; and

Whereas; the estimated 40,000 members of the APWU Retirees Department paying \$24. dues per annum accounts for approximately \$960,000. The APWU general fund receives in annual revenue, and the Retirees Department is financially self-sustaining; and

Whereas; Administrative expenses for Retirees Department members are

minimal when considering not incurring the cost of the grievance-arbitration process, and salaries of craft NBA's, Regional Coordinators and hired staff required in the representation of the active membership; and

Whereas; Retired members who built this great Union who have "paid their dues" through a career of loyal service and membership, should not be required to "buy" the right to vote for their national Union leadership by requiring payment of full local and national per capital dues; and

Whereas; The objections of full dues-paying retired members are without merit when considering, in addition to their eligibility to vote for national resident officers, their full dues paying status allows them to be candidates for, and vote for Local, State, and National office, State and National Convention delegate, and officers of the last Division they retired from; and

Whereas; It is recognized that \$24. per annum dues-paying members of the APWU Retirees Department are not eligible to be a candidate for any Local, State, or National APWU office other than National Retiree delegate in their Region, and possibly Director, Retirees Department; and who only seek eligibility to vote for APWU National President, Executive Vice-President, Secretary-Treasurer, Legislative and Human Relations Department officers and Health Plan Director; and

Whereas; Currently, Retirees Department members merely only have a token five (5) delegate votes at a National Convention as their only voice, providing little incentive for national APWU leadership to be accountable or responsive to Retirees Department dues-paying membership needs and objectives; **be it therefore**

RESOLVED: To amend the APWU Constitution & By-Laws; Article 3.

(Continued on page 13)

(Continued from page 12)

Retiree Involvement Continued

Section 4(d) to read: "**Members of the APWU Retirees Department shall be eligible to vote for APWU National Resident Officers; President, Executive Vice-President, Secretary-Treasurer, and to include ; Legislative and Human Relations Department officers, and Director, APWU Health Plan; excluding all Local, State, and national craft/division officers not specifically mentioned herein, or in any matter pertaining to national agreement ratification, LMOU's, or proposed work stoppage.**"

APWU CONSTITUTION & BY-LAWS; Article 3, Section 4(d); Article 9, Section 8; Article 11, Section 2 (m), Article 11, Section 3(a). Establish Position of Director, APWU Retirees Department As An Elected Office.

Whereas; The position of Director, APWU Retirees Department has been appointed since 1993, and the Department has grown to an estimated 40,000 - \$24. per-annum dues-paying members in the nearly 12 years since its inception, generating about \$960,000 annually in retiree per-capita revenue into the APWU general fund; and

Whereas; Local and State Retiree Chapter leaderships and members in the field have expressed strong sentiments to have a voice in the selection of their Retirees Department leadership by election to insure continued growth of the Department, the ability to meet the Department's stated objectives at APWU Headquarters level and in the field, thereby providing greater accountability to the to the dues-paying retiree membership; and

Whereas; Subordinate bodies of the

APWU; the APWU Auxiliary, the National APWU Postal Press Association, both subsidized by the parent APWU, and the Accident Benefit Association, elect their respective leaderships, as do the active Craft/Division membership by electing their Division officers; **be it therefore**

RESOLVED; That the position of Director, APWU Retirees Department be established as an elected office by amending the following Articles and Sections of the APWU Constitution & By-Laws as follows:

Article 3, Section 4(d): "All retirees who desire to become members of the APWU Retirees Department shall pay Twenty-Four (\$24.00) per year per capita tax to the National Union. Such retirees shall elect **the Retirees Department Director** and five (5) delegates to the national convention. **The Retirees Department Director** and each Retiree National Convention Delegate will have a voice and one (1) vote at the national convention..."

Article 9, Section 8.: (Move present Section 8. to Section 9.) "**The Director, APWU Retirees Department shall be responsible for the Department. He/She shall be charged with the responsibility of directing the objectives of the Department, but not limited to; legislative and political activity, administering retirement educational programs, organizing new Retirees Department members and Local and State Retiree Chapters, to Service the needs of the retired members and their survivors, and such other duties as may be assigned to him/her. His / Her salary shall be \$89,176.00 per annum, plus expenses.**" (Salary as shown in 2002 LM Report, or current salary, whichever is greater).

Article 11, Section 2(m): "Candidates for **Director, APWU Retirees Department and** Retiree National Con-

vention Delegate must be members in good standing of the APWU Retirees Department, paying Twenty-Four (\$24.00) Dollars per year per capita tax to the National Union. A member of the APWU Retirees Department may request a nominating petition and may nominate himself or herself or any other member in good standing of the APWU Retirees Department to be a candidate for **Director, APWU Retirees Department and he/she will be elected by members of the APWU Retirees Department nationwide, or a candidate for** Retiree National Convention Delegate for the region he/she will represent, and he/she will be elected from that region..."

Article 11, Section 3(a): ("...last sentence)...Candidates for **Director, APWU Retirees Department and** Retiree National Convention Delegate shall certify that they are members in good standing of the APWU Retirees Department are are not employed by the United States Postal Service."

So, there they are in a nutshell! I will be furnishing 'Position Statements' to our State MPWU delegates to the convention, MPWU affiliated Locals, and any delegate requesting same on each of these resolutions.

It is, and always has been **about accountability** to dues-paying members of the APWU Retirees Department in the field and in Local and State Retiree Chapters. **Please...open the door for retired members to enter the Union house we helped build!**

Be Strong!

Al

BILL SMITH AWARDED BRONZE STAR MEDAL

Submitted by: Al LaBrecque

The citation reads: **"The Bronze Star Medal"** **"William H. Smith, Corporal, Infantry, Army of the United States"** *"For meritorious achievement while serving with Company B, 347th Infantry Regiment, 87th Infantry Division, European Theater of Operations on 17 January 1945, in military operations against an armed enemy of the United States during World War II. Corporal Smith's exemplary performance of duty in active ground combat was in keeping with the finest traditions of military service and reflects great credit upon himself, the 347th Infantry Regiment, and the Army of the United States."*

U.S. Senator Carl Levin-D Michigan, presented the Bronze Star Medal and Combat Infantryman Badge to retired past president, Central MI Area Local, past MPWU Secretary-Treasurer, and member of the MPWU State Retiree Chapter; **William "Bill" Smith**, in a recent ceremony on the steps of the State Capitol in Lansing.

Bill was part of General Patton's 3rd Army whose mission was to break through the German lines to help liberate the 101st Airborne Division which was surrounded in the Belgian city of Bastogne. A Purple Heart recipient due to shrapnel wounds, out of the 168 men in Bill's unit 116 were wounded or killed in action in the Battle of the Ardennes, most often referred to as the Battle of the Bulge.

In conversation with Bill at a CMAL retiree dinner in Lansing a few years ago, he had mentioned he'd been wounded in combat during WWII, but didn't elaborate. I'll bet very few who knew Bill & Kate Smith through their Union activities had a clue as to Bill's military service. As it turns out, in what some call the greatest battle of WWII, Bill was one of one million troops involved, with 200,000 American, British and German soldiers either killed or wounded. In a recent phone conversation with Bill it struck me how several times he said that he couldn't believe seeing so many dead, theirs and ours. And, in the bitter cold and deep snow, Bill froze his feet, and said often medics couldn't get to a wounded

G.I. due to German sniper fire, and after a day or two they would freeze to death. Bill recalls that horses the Germans used to pull artillery pieces were among the casualties and had to be shot to be put out of their agony. Bill said; "It was horrible".

Bill's unit, along with Patton's tanks, was among the first to cross the Rhine River into Germany. Smith, now 78, was recuperating in an army hospital when the medals were first awarded 60 years ago, and knew nothing about them until a historian from Smith's Infantry Division discovered the omission during a review of the 347th Infantry Regiment. Upon his return to the U.S., Bill said he spent a year in the hospital suffering from 'combat fatigue'.

Bill told me; "...hey, I was 18 and scared as hell, but you did what you had to do. I was just lucky to have survived." Then he said; "That was a just war we **had** to fight. War should be only what we **have** to do, never what we **want** to do. Like, what **is** that mess we're in Iraq?!"

Kate said after they were notified that Bill would be receiving his long overdue medal, they expected that it would come in the mail. There was something else Bill said which struck me; "Ain't that something! The Senator would come here to do this?" Well yeah, Bill....that really IS "something"! Not that Senator Levin, as senior Senator on the Armed Services Committee, would personally award you the Bronze Star Medal, but what you did 60 years ago....now THAT'S "SOMETHING"!!

Your retired and active Sisters and Brothers salute you, Bill! Your service to a grateful nation and Union is recognized and appreciated, even if it comes 60 years late. (Bill's wife **Kate**, also a retired member, was the first MPWU State OWCP Director who developed that office and served in that capacity with distinction).

The Ultimate Disrespect

On the afternoon of June 23, 2004, the line holding the US Flag, which was being flown at half-mast in honor of the passing of Former President Ronald Regan, in front of the Post Office in Grand Rapids broke. This caused the entire flag to fall to the ground in the parking lot. A customer picked up the flag and brought it into our service counter and explained where it had been found.

I am deeply involved in veterans affairs, setting up a large veterans display every year in November at the Post Office and doing constant volunteer work at our local Veterans Home as a member of the Military Order of the Purple Heart, Chapter 91. I was called down to retrieve the flag to have it properly disposed of by burning (in a ceremony put on the local Veterans Organization and the Boy Scouts that bring tears to all who have ever seen on of these ceremonies). But before I arrived at the Service Counter, our Acting Manager (Michael Blundell), took the flag up to the Maintenance Department area. I found the flag laying on a bench in the hall and took it to have it properly disposed of, as I was allowed to do with a tattered flag of the same size and price just a few weeks before this.

It seems that management decided this time, because the flag costs \$254.03, that they would have it dry cleaned and re-use it. Instead of showing it the proper respect of cremation, they took it away from me. I informed them that they spend more than that on coffee and donuts each time they hold a meeting, but I was quickly fluffed off.

Mr. Blundell conferred with our Installation Head (Mr. Gregory Chanski) and they decided the flag code gives them the option of cleaning or cremation, so the choice is theirs, not

the publics, employees, or anyone else.

I wanted to make it clear that our Postmaster knew nothing about what was going behind her back. I again asked for the flag to have it properly honored and was told no. At this time, I asked that we call (and let decide) a 3rd party of their choice. They called the local US Marine Corp division, who stated they just had the same thing happen, and out of respect for the flag they had it properly cremated. But still, the Post Office said no, they would have it dry cleaned, and re-use it.

What has happened to patriotism? This flag was being flown to honor the passing of President Regan. This flag was being flown at a time when we are at war, having young men and women in uniform dying to make sure No American Flag anywhere is ever dragged in the Dirt. Yet this seems not to matter to these people.

The employees offered to take up a collection and buy the flag from the Post Office so we could have it properly laid to rest, but Mr. Blundell said No – stating they could not sell any government property to employees so they have it cleaned and re-use it.

About an hour later, I was called to Mr. Blundell's office and in front of my APWU Union Rep. he stated that if I would write a personal check made out the Postmaster for \$260.00 (remember, the flag costs \$254.03), he would give me the flag and I could do whatever I wanted to do with it. I did not hesitate to write the check.

To all the families who have lost loved ones in uniform, and all my country men, I beg your forgiveness for what has happened here. Not all the tears from all your hearts shed for President Regan, nor tears shed by all the military families who have lost

loved ones during this period of turmoil over this flag could ever was the dirt from it – EVER. This flag, like all our US flags are very special, but this one even more so, because of the time and conditions it was being flown.

Mr. Chanski (the Installation Head) who made all these decisions just sent me a personal check for \$20.00 to offset the \$260.00 cost of me buying the flag to have it properly honored. I considered this a real slap in the face. I sent his check back to him telling him: "No Thanks. I would never accept money from anyone who feels a flag being flown in honor of a deceased President and during a time when we have troops dying to keep our flags from ever touching the ground, is worth so little (life has a special meaning to those who fought and almost died for it – the protected with never know).

I expect extreme repercussions, but as a disabled vet – after two tours in Vietnam, I believe there is nothing I would not do to protect the respect our flag deserves. The Star Spangled Banner will always wave for the Land of the Free and the Home of the Brave. God Bless America and All of our Troops.

Donald Kramer, Jr.,
Custodian, GR- P&DC
Vice Commander, Military Order of the Purple Heart, Chapter 91.

Editors Note: This is a copy of the letter that was sent to over 30 politicians and news agencies in Michigan and the US. On Thursday, July 15, Mr. Kramer was interviewed by a Grand Rapids Press writer concerning this issue. On Monday, July 19, Mr. Kramer and that article was in the Grand Rapids Press; making Page 1 of Local area (Section B). For me and the other veterans out there, I would like to thank Don for his actions.

Costco, Wal-Mart duel in political arena

Warehouse-store giants give money to opposing parties

By MICHAEL FORSYTHE AND RACHEL KATZ

BLOOMBERG NEWS

Wednesday, July 21, 2004

Executives at Costco Wholesale Corp. and Wal-Mart Stores Inc., competitors in the \$76 billion U.S. warehouse-club market, have taken their rivalry to a new level: national politics.

Costco Chief Executive Officer Jim Sinegal, 68, is a Democrat who says President Bush's \$1.7 trillion in tax cuts unfairly benefit the wealthy. He opposed the Iraq war and supports Sen. John Kerry of Massachusetts for president. And he's the only chief executive of a company in the Standard & Poor's 500 Index to donate money to independent political groups formed to oust Bush, Internal Revenue Service records show.

Wal-Mart, the world's largest retailer and owner of Sam's Club warehouse stores, gives more money to Republican candidates than any other company does. Its top three managers, including Chief Executive H. Lee Scott, donated the individual maximum \$2,000 to Bush, and Jay Allen, vice president for corporate affairs, raised at least \$100,000 to re-elect the president, earning him the Bush campaign's designation of "Pioneer."

Wal-Mart -- two-thirds of whose 3,580 stores are in the "red states" that voted for Bush in 2000 -- is backing White House policies on everything from trade to limiting overtime pay.

"Wal-Mart is extremely strong in Republican strongholds; they are a red-state retailer," said Amy Bonkoski, an investment adviser at Cleveland-based National City Corp.'s private-client group, which manages about \$26 billion, including Wal-Mart and Costco shares.

"Costco is stronger in Democratic states. Costco is a friend to labor. Unions hate Wal-Mart."

The differences are based on more than ideology: Each retailer has a stake in the

election's outcome in areas from health care to the minimum wage to the way unions can organize work forces.

Kerry, 60, a four-term senator, pledges to induce more employers to insure workers with a \$257 billion proposal calling for the government to pay most so-called catastrophic health-care costs -- only for companies that provide comprehensive coverage. He'd raise the minimum wage and make it easier for workers to join unions.

Those policies might benefit Costco and hurt Wal-Mart. Issaquah-based Costco offers comprehensive health insurance to most of its 78,000 U.S. employees, making it eligible for Kerry's plan, said Kerry's top domestic policy adviser, Sarah Bianchi, 31. That could cut 10 percent, or \$35 million, off its annual health care premiums.

Wal-Mart's health plan for its 1.3 million U.S. workers is probably not broad enough to qualify for the savings that Kerry's proposal would bring, since it doesn't cover enough workers, said Jason Furman, 33, the Democrat's chief economic-policy adviser. Fewer than half of Wal-Mart's employees are enrolled in the company health plan, according to figures supplied by the retailer.

Costco wouldn't have to raise salaries with Kerry's proposal to increase the minimum wage to \$7 an hour, from \$5.15 now. It already pays hot-dog vendors as much as \$16 an hour, and the lowest wage it pays is \$10 an hour.

That's higher than the \$9.96 average wage paid at discount stores bearing the Wal-Mart name. Sam's Club spokeswoman Jolanda Stewart declined to provide wage information for the warehouse unit.

Bentonville, Ark.-based Wal-Mart sup-

ports the Bush administration's expansion of free-trade agreements and its bid to curtail the number of workers eligible for overtime pay, according to its lobby disclosure reports.

Wal-Mart has benefited from the president's opposition to raising the minimum wage, since some employees make less than \$7 an hour, and from the Republican-controlled Congress' reluctance to make it easier for workers to unionize. Wal-Mart has no unions; about one-sixth of Costco's workers are represented by labor groups.

"President Bush and his administration have made a real concerted effort to reach out to Wal-Mart and try to understand what our experience is," said Allen, 47, the vice president.

Wal-Mart and Costco aren't the only companies in the same industry whose executives are on opposing sides in the election.

Google Inc. Chief Executive Eric Schmidt is backing Kerry, while Internet rival Yahoo! Inc. CEO Terry Semel endorsed Bush, 58. William Harrison, CEO of J.P. Morgan Chase & Co., is giving more money to Democrats than to Republicans, in contrast to peers at Goldman Sachs Group Inc., Morgan Stanley and Bear Stearns Cos., federal disclosures show.

What makes the Wal-Mart and Costco rivalry stand out is that their political donations are so partisan and both companies are likely to gain if their party wins in November.

IRS disclosure records show that Sinegal and Costco Chairman Jeffrey Brotman each gave \$95,000 last December to the fund-raising arm of America Coming Together, a group organizing voters against Bush, and the Media Fund, which

(Continued from page 16)

is running anti-Bush advertisements.

Wal-Mart's political action committee, the biggest company PAC, gave Republicans 81 percent of its \$1.3 million in donations in the past two years, a higher proportion than any of the top 25 corporate PACs, says PoliticalMoneyLine, a non-partisan, Washington-based group.

Vice President Dick Cheney underlined Wal-Mart's ties to the White House on May 3 when he visited the retailer's headquarters -- his first talk with a company work force in the 40 months since he took office, according to the White House Web site.

"This is one of our nation's great companies," Cheney said.

Sixty-seven percent of Wal-Mart's stores are in the 30 states that voted for Bush and Cheney in 2000, according to a comparison of store-location figures in the Wal-Mart 2003 annual report and election results.

Costco's stores are mostly on either coast, with 208 of its 321 stores in the higher-wage, more union-friendly 20 states that voted for Democrat Al Gore in 2000.

Sinegal makes no apologies for Costco's policies, saying higher wages reduce employee turnover, which lowers training costs.

"I'm not a social engineer," he said in an interview. "Paying good wages is simply good business."

© 1998-2004 Seattle Post-Intelligencer

Editor's Note: I receive word from members across the state that I should list places that are union friendly. Since the union makes no qualms about WalMart and their work practices, it is nice to see a store that is not only union friendly, but supports issues that are close to those of this union. I am aware that there are Costco stores on the eastside of the state. Now there will be one on the Westside. A new one is being built in Grand Rapids and is scheduled to be open sometime next year.

PATRIOT TAX

by Leo F. Persails

In today's reality of terrorism, our citizens have become great patriots. From the police and firefighters in New York that served and died in the World Trade Center, to the Americans that died in the Pennsylvania field, and to our Troops in Iraq, this country has bonded and returned to its patriotic roots. We have respected and flown the Stars and Stripes more than ever, and have become far more aware of the value of freedom. We all stand side by side and love our country in spite of its faults.

We have even seen some of our Freedoms challenged when Congress and the President passed the Patriot Act, and for the most part, accepted it. We all know it's our turn in history to make sacrifices for our country.

We are all patriots in this time of need, well, almost all of us are. While patriots sacrifice to keep our freedom and protect our values, some of our corporations are not acting like patriots. Corporations are leaving and taking our American jobs to foreign shores, in their search of cheap labor. When our patriotic troops return home from Afghanistan, Iraq, Korea, and other places around the world, they will find many of our corporations have left, and taken their jobs with them.

How could this happen in one of our nation's greatest times of patriotism? Are there no patriotic CEOs and corporate leaders left in this great country? Times have changed. This country needs all of us to be patriots to survive terrorism. While Congress reduces our freedom to combat terrorism through legislation like the Patriot Act, they continue to feed our corporations greed, to our detriment, through NAFTA and GATT.

Did Congress know when they voted for NAFTA that it had nothing to do with foreign trade? Wasn't it obvious that it was simply an opportunity to

expand our corporate greed? Does Congress believe the same way now that they have seen the outcome? Don't they see what the flight of corporations is doing to our country? Don't they see the effect it has on national security and the financial drain it puts on our patriots?

Enough is enough; it is time for a PATRIOT TAX. If our corporations are going to desert our country for greed, then its time they paid for it. Its time they had a PATRIOT TAX, and its time Congress knew it. If corporations build less than 50% of their products in this country, they should not receive tax breaks. If corporations build products outside our country and bring them back here to sell, the PATRIOT TAX would equal 25% of the cost of the same U.S. built product, and with no tax break. Make no mistake, this is not a tariff, it is a PATRIOT TAX on our own corporations that ignore the patriots of our country.

If passed, the PATRIOT TAX would be designed and spent for specific reasons.

TRAINING AND BENEFITS: 40% will be used to provide training and unemployment benefits for our returning troops, and those American patriots that lost their jobs to the flight of corporations.

DEFENSE: 25% will go to defense. This will also release funds now earmarked for defense from the general fund that can be used to assist other patriotic programs.

HOMELAND SECURITY: 25% will be used for homeland security. This will provide thousands of jobs to real American Patriots.

VETERAN JOBS: 10% will be directed to the United States Postal Service to fund specific jobs for our wounded and disabled patriotic veterans.

Its time we were all patriots in this country and sacrificed the same under the Patriot Act. For those corporations that refuse to be Patriots, they can pay the PATRIOT TAX.

The Difference Between You and Your Boss:

- When you take a long time, you're slow. When your boss takes a long time, he's thorough.
- When you do it on your own, you're overstepping your bounds. When your boss does it, she is demonstrating initiative.
- When you don't get something done, you're lazy. When your boss doesn't get something done, he is too busy.
- When you make a mistake, maybe you're not qualified for the position. When your boss makes a mistake, she is only human.
- When you do it your own way, you don't do what you are told. When your boss does it, she's showing creativity.
- When you do a good job, you get a pat on the back. When he does a good job, he gets a bonus.
- When you please your boss, you're brown-nosing. When your boss pleases her boss, she is being cooperative.
- When you help a peer, you're not busy enough. When your boss does it, he is a team player.
- When someone else does your work, you are passing the buck. When someone else does her work, she is assigning responsibility.
- When you are out of the office, you're wandering around. When your boss is out of the office, he is on business.
- When you take a stand, you are being bull-headed. When your boss takes a stand, she's just doing her job.

On the Lighter Side of Life.

Reprinted from Michigan Fun Fax

- When you are seen shopping during work hours, you're a slacker. When your boss is doing the same, he's picking up office supplies.
- When you call in sick, you're going golfing. When your boss calls in sick, she must be very ill.
- When you get a raise, you're lucky. When he gets one, he really earned it.

Top Ten Road Signs We'd like to See but Never will.

10. Hey, you missed your exit.
9. Express Worm-Hole, use left lane.
8. Caution Sign Ahead
7. Put down the cell phone, newspaper, breakfast burrito, and coffee mug and DRIVE.
6. Yellow Brick Road and Oz, Next Right
5. Supermodel Crossing Ahead
4. Just ask for directions you putz.
3. Please check to make sure your left turn signal has not been blinking for the past hour.
2. Men not really working.
1. Caution, Operators of other vehicles are crazier than they appear.

Actual Story: As I was driving home from work one day, I stopped to watch a local Little League baseball game that was being played in a park near my home. As I sat down behind the bench on the first-baseline, I asked one of the boys what the score was.

"We're behind 14 to nothing," he answered with a smile.
"Really," I said. "I have to say you don't look very discouraged."
"Discouraged?" the boy asked with a puzzled look on his face. "Why should we be discouraged? We haven't been up to bat yet."

Man's Best Friend

"I wonder what goes through his mind when he sees us peeing in his water bowl?" - Penny Ward Moser

"A dog teaches a boy fidelity, perseverance and to turn around three times before lying down." - Robert Benchley

"I wonder if other dogs think poodles are members of a weird cult?" - Rita Rudner

"In dog years, I'm dead." - unknown

Brother John entered the 'Monastery of Silence' and the Chief Priest said, "Brother, this is a silent monastery, you are welcome here as long as you like, but you may not speak until I direct you to do so."

Brother John lived in the monastery for a full year before the Chief Priest said to him: "Brother John, you have been here for a year now, you may speak two words."

Brother John said, "Hard Bed."
"I'm sorry to hear that" the Chief Priest said. "We will get you a better bed."

The next year, Brother John was called by the Chief Priest. "You may say another two words Brother John."

"Cold Food," said Brother John, and the Chief Priest assured him that the food would be better in the future.

On his third anniversary at the monastery, the Chief Priest again called Brother John into his office. "Two words you may say today."

"I Quit," said Brother John.
"It is probably best," said the Chief Priest. "All you have done since you got here was complain."

Postal Wisdom
The size of the screw up is directly proportional to the level of management that created it!

MPWU OFFICERS/EXECUTIVE BOARD

President, Gary VanHoogstraten

H: 989-894-2656; e-Mail: MIPREZ1@Chartermi.net

Executive Secretary, Harold Juhl

W: 517-337-8753; H: 517-651-7115; FAX: 517-332-4391; e-Mail: JuhlHGems@hotmail.com

Secretary-Treasurer, Darren Joyce

W: 810-257-1530; U: 810-239-0931; H: 810-732-7459; FAX: 810-239-6879

Director of Education & Research, Lynn Pallas-Barber

W: 906-774-6804; U: 906-774-6303; H: 906-774-2083; FAX: 906-774-7353; e-Mail: APWU498-499@sbcglobal.net

Editor, Michael Long

W: 616-776-1485; H: 616-225-0846; U: 616-776-1489; Cell: 616-302-1409; Fax: 419-781-7160; e-Mail: MPWUEditor@yahoo.com

Legislative Dir., Regina Favors

W: 313-532-9305; H: 313-837-2739; F: 313-532-5433; e-Mail: GinaFav@aol.com

Clerk Craft Director, Bob Maloney

W: 248-454-2423; H: 248-373-8433

HR/Injury Comp Dir., Ron Krumrie

W: 231-933-1020; U: 231-933-4525; FAX: 231-933-4821; H: 231-946-7796

Motor Vehicle Service Craft Dir., Scott Larabel

U: 616-776-1489; F: 616-776-1536; C: 616-822-3520; e-Mail: silouetter@msn.com

Maintenance Craft Director,

Jane Duggan

W: 313-234-8839; H: 313-566-2262
e-Mail: mpwumaint@yahoo.com

Area 1 Director, Larry Moyer

W: 248-619-1590; H: 810-793-1872; e-Mail: APWU6723@bignet.net

Area 2 Director, Christopher Umler

W: 313-937-1100

Area 3 Director, Richard Blake

H: 734-433-5461; U: 313-532-9305; W: 734-665-1107; e-Mail: Rwb139@aol.com

Area 4 Director, Laura Bullock

W: 810-257-1567; U: 810-239-0931; H: 810-235-7297

Area 5 Director, Joan Norton

W: 989-771-5718; H: 989-686-6257; e-Mail: JMNorton14@aol.com

Area 6 Director, Mary Stephenson

W: 517-337-8767; U: 517-337-8753; H: 517-627-2608

Area 7 Director, George Corneail

W: 269-353-5067; U: 269-353-1888

Area 8 Director, Dan McCloskey

W (517) 768-0723;
e-Mail: oldmandan52@webtv.net

Area 9 Director, Jennifer Gilbert

W: 616-977-1046; U: 616-977-1050
e-Mail: Jenilee6@aol.com

Area 10 Director, Terry Nelson

W: 231-933-1020; H: 231-883-1014;
e-Mail: Area10Dir@hotmail.com

Area 11 Director, Mike Wekwert

W: 989-354-2520; H: 989-356-2302;
e-Mail: Wekwertm@chartermi.net

Area 12 Director, Dennis Barber

U: 906-774-6303; H: 906-774-2083; FAX: 906-774-7353; e-Mail: APWU498-499@sbcglobal.com

P.O.W.E.R. Rep, Aloha Inmon

H: 313-835-8517

State Retiree Chapter President, Al LaBrecque

H: 989-736-8173; e-Mail: allab@deepnet.com

MPWU Auxiliary Liaison,

Position is Currently Vacant

MPWU Historian, Debbie Brand

H: 269-729-9374



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

The opinions expressed in this publication are not necessarily those of the Editor, the MPWU, or anyone in particular. Any correspondence to the Editor may be sent to: Michael Long, Editor, PO Box 280, Sheridan, MI 48884-0280; fax to: 419-781-7160; or e-Mail to: MPWUEditor@yahoo.com.

Your articles are welcome! They must be signed to be printed, but your name will be withheld upon request. Articles sent via electronic media will be treated as being signed. Be aware that articles may be edited to fit the confines of this publication.

In addition, this paper is designed with everyone in mind, please be aware that all mistakes are intentional for the express purpose of keeping those happy that are most happy when finding errors in others.



Upcoming Events to Plan For:

August 19 - 27, 2004 - APWU Biennial Convention, Los Angeles, CA

November 5-6 2004 - District Meeting, Waterfront Inn, Traverse City, MI

June 2005 - MPWU Educational Convention, Radisson Hotel, Kalamazoo, MI

August 10 - 13, 2005 - National APWU Postal Press Convention, Reno, NV

April/May 2006 - MPWU Biennial Convention, Detroit, MI



Milestones in Postal Labor History

July/August

July

1
1971 – Five craft union merge to form the largest postal union in the world, the American Postal Workers Union, AFL-CIO.

2
1918 – National Federation of Post office Clerks, Railway mail Associate and National Associate of Letter Carriers address a joint letter to Postmaster General Burleson asking for department recognition of postal unions.

5
1935 – National labor Relations Act, or Wagner Act signed into law recognizing workers' rights to organize and bargain collectively. The act also established the National Labor Relations Board to administer union representative's elections, define employers' unfair labor practices, and enforce the legal rights of employees to join unions.

1965 – Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), federal agency which investigates discrimination charges became operational.

10
1987 – 5,000 APWU and NALC members demonstrate outside USPS headquarters to

demand a fair contract.

20
1971 – First labor contract in the history of the federal government signed by postal unions and the postal service through the collective bargaining process.

21
1979 – Walkout by postal workers in New Jersey and California ignites campaign to defeat contract with capped Cost of Living Adjustments (COLA).

August

14
1935 – President Franklin D. Roosevelt signs Social Security Act, and sign into law a bill to reduce hours of labor for postal employees from 44 to 40 hours per week.

24
1924 – Lloyd-Lafollette Act passed by Congress. It guaranteed postal workers the right to join association which did not obligate them to engage in strikes, and the right of postal workers, either individually or collectively, to petition Congress.

25
1964 – Postal Press Association found at United Federation of Postal Clerks (UFPC) National Convention. In 1971, the UFPC Press Association merged with the National Postal Union Press Association to form the APWU national Postal Press Association.

26
1948 – National Association of Post Office Mechanics and Maintenance Employees merge with National Association of Post Office Custodial Employees at convention in Cincinnati, Ohio.

27
1906 – First convention, National Federation of Post Office Clerks, Chicago, Illinois.

31
1991 – 4,000 APWU members join 325,000 trade unionists for Solidarity Day 1991 in Washington DC.

And now you know!!

- INSIDE THIS ISSUE OF THE MICHIGAN MESSENGER -

<i>President's Report - Gary VanHoogstraten</i>	<i>Page 1</i>
<i>Education at Work - Lynn Pallas-Barber</i>	<i>Page 2</i>
<i>Long and Short of It - Michael Long</i>	<i>Page 2</i>
<i>Legislative Update - Regina Favors</i>	<i>Page 3</i>
<i>Injury Comp Report - Ron Krumrie</i>	<i>Page 3</i>
<i>Maintenance Memo - Jane Duggan</i>	<i>Page 4</i>
<i>Area 8 Report - Dan McCloskey</i>	<i>Page 4</i>
<i>Retiree Involvement - Al LaBrecque</i>	<i>Page 5</i>
<i>NBA Report - Jerry Martin</i>	<i>Page 5</i>
<i>MPWU State Convention in Pictures</i>	<i>Page 6-7</i>
<i>Bill Smith Awarded the Bronze Star</i>	<i>Page 14</i>
<i>The Ultimate Disrespect</i>	<i>Page 15</i>
<i>Cosco, Walmart Duel</i>	<i>Page 16</i>
<i>Patriot Tax - Leo Persalls</i>	<i>Page 17</i>
<i>On the Lighter Side</i>	<i>Page 18</i>
<i>Officers and Executive Board Members</i>	<i>Page 19</i>
<i>Upcoming Events</i>	<i>Page 19</i>
<i>Milestones in Labor History</i>	<i>Page 20</i>

Return to APWU/MPWU
 c/o Michael Long, Editor
 P.O. Box 280
 Sheridan, MI 48884-0280
 Address Service Requested

Non-profit Organization
 U.S. Postage PAID
 Grand Rapids, MI
 Permit No. 1