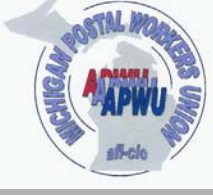


# MICHIGAN MESSENGER



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

Volume 31, Issue 118

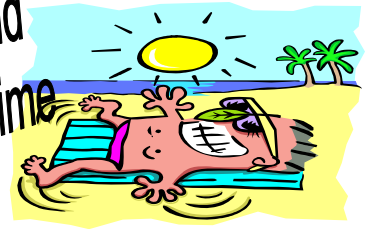
May / June 2005 Issue



## President's Report

Gary VanHoogstraten  
President

Have a Safe and  
Happy Summertime



As I sit here pondering how to begin this article, I would be remiss if I didn't address last week's educational convention. Words are hard to describe the entire behind the scene things that happen to help make any convention a success. From the moment I arrived at the hotel on Wednesday until I departed on Sunday, the only thing that comes to my mind is teamwork and success. Dealing with all the issues with the hotel was one of the easiest that I have ever been involved with. I could go on forever, but I am sure that all of you have the same feelings I have with the way we were treated by the hotel. I can say, if we have any kind of a function in that area, I would highly recommend the Radisson. Director of Education, Mark Hart in his first convention in that position can hold his head proud of his accomplishments and I hope he can now sit back and look forward to the next one. From the registration at the front desk to the meals and classes, everything was great. Debbie Brand and her assistants at our registration went more than smooth. June Affron and Terry Billheiner were right on top of things as I can tell you I never have any doubts with registration. The mem-

bers that were in attendance seem to enjoy their week and I know with the amount of classes and our instructors, they had a lot of information to take back to their own locals for the protection of their. Kudos' to all that were there and the same goes for all of our instructors.

Recently there was a big announcement concerning the elimination of some 25,000 U.S hourly jobs at GM by the end of 2008; also there was a mention of shutting an unspecified number of factories. The UAW said it wasn't convinced that GM could simply shrink its way out of its current problems. Then I read about Delta and Northwest airlines ailing problems with bankruptcy concerning pension obligations. It said also that airlines which collectively and under funded pensions by about \$30 billion. So many things are happening to the U.S today that brings be to my next topic. I hope that GM and the airlines have somewhat close to a program that we have in the Postal Service to assist their members. Last Thursday, we had two people that are on our EAP District Advisory Committee. Cynthia Gladyness, the District EAP consultant, and Dan Shannon the

President of Branch 246 from the Kalamazoo Letter Carriers Union did a presentation for the members. With all that is going on in the country now and numerous problems all must face, it is a blessing to have Cynthia and her staff there for our questions and concerns. Just a reminder for those that seek assistance from this program, it is a benefit to all of you and help is there and they are only a phone call away. Look at your bulletin boards and Union newspapers for numbers to call when needed.

I will be attending a rally at the Capitol in Lansing on the 29th of June. Michigan Legislatures will be leaving Lansing for the summer at the end of the month. Here are three major issues that they have failed to address in session: (1) raising the minimum wage, (2) increase and extend unemployment benefits, and (3) vote to create jobs in Michigan. Senator John Edwards has committed to attend the rally along with leadership from both chambers. Hopefully we will be able to convince our elected officials to act on these issues before break. We all know that Postal Reform is still alive and we must keep an eye on it and are in con-

*(Continued on page 9)*



## Secretary's Writings

Harold Juhl  
Executive Secretary

The State Educational Convention is over, and from what I saw it was a great success. The classes that were presented gave out a lot of good information for those who attended, so they could take it back to their perspective Locals. All of the instructors did an excellent job presenting the class materials, and I would like to thank all of them, for coming in and taking time out of their schedules to assist in the training. I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate Mark Hart for putting together one of our best Conventions, and being it was his first one, he did an excellent job with organizing this year's Convention. Mark, you had everything under control. Kudos' to you! I hope everyone enjoyed the comedy show on Thursday night. I was worried when I helped Mickey set it up. I wanted to make sure it was as good as the one we had in Lansing last year. I enjoyed it and I think all who attended it enjoyed it as well. The hospitality room was put together very nicely and a huge thanks to Mickey's Local for all of the work they put into it. Great job everyone.

I am looking forward to working with the Detroit Local on next year's State Convention and would take this time to let them know that they can contact me any time for assistance if they need it.

I would like to let all of the State Officers know that if they are in need of anything from me do not hesitate to give me a call. Should you need letterhead paper, envelopes, name badges, etc.

Just a reminder to all employees who work in the AO's to watch their hours and the hours that the postmasters are working and doing bargaining unit work. I know in our area hours are being cut and Postmasters and OIC's have been doing the work that belongs to the clerks. If this is happening in your areas contact your union representative. Let's keep the work in the clerk craft.

In closing, I hope to see everyone in Las Vegas for the first Multi-Craft Conference. This should prove to be a very interesting conference with all of the crafts together at one time. I am looking forward to attending it.

In Solidarity,  
*Harold*



## Education at Work

Mark Hart  
Director of Research and Education

The 15th Biennial MPWU Educational Convention was by all accounts a great success. This was my first educational convention since being appointed as the Director of Research and Education. It was a tremendous experience for me. I went into this convention not knowing what problem or things to expect. Everyone kept telling me everything would run smoothly and with all the good people around to help, it did. First I would like to thank all that were able to attend this convention. It is my hope that everyone was able to take back some useful information to their locals in our on-going fight with the Postal Service. SWMAL President Mickey Elmore and the entire local should be very proud of the job they did as host of this convention. Mickey and I go way back so I knew I could count on her and the SWMAL. The hospitality room was filled with great food and great people. MPWU President Gary Van was the brains behind this convention. He led me by the hand and tried to keep me somewhat calm even though I was a nervous wreck. I can never thank Gary enough for carrying me through this convention. Harold Juhl, Darren Joyce and Mike Long were always there when I needed them. I'm not going to try to name all the great people that made this convention such a huge success since I would surely leave someone out, but I would be remiss if I didn't thank one person who went out of their way to help me. Laura Bullock from my home local in Flint, and the Area 4 Director for the MPWU was a tremendous help to me during this convention. Laura has always been there for anyone in need. I don't believe there is a nicer person in the world than my friend Laura. I would especially like to thank all the instructors that taught during the convention. Without them we simply would have no convention. Education is the key to our success as a union; without it, we would only be an association or social club. We must, as a union, continue to educate not only officers and stewards but also our members that we represent. It has been several years since I have been to Kalamazoo what a beautiful city and The Radisson Hotel just might be the best hotel I have ever been to and believe me I've done some traveling in my years of union involvement.

Yours in Solidarity,

*Mark*



## The Long and Short of It

Michael A. Long  
Editor

I would like to begin this article by apologizing for the lateness of this edition of the Messenger. I was debating if it should come out before or after the Educational convention. I felt that it would be better for the membership as a whole that if I waited, the information would be more current and more relevant. I hope that it was the right choice.

I planned to keep my article really short this month, since the deadline for the next edition is only three weeks away; however, after reading that our contract might be extended once again, I hope I can still keep it within the confines of this one column.

President Burrus has stated that they are working with the USPS to extend the contract once again. While on the surface, it might be a good idea, I am wondering why the Postal Service is thinking it is a good idea also. Could it be, that with all of us bargaining at the same time, and since none of the unions seem to talk to each other, they might be able to use it a leverage. We don't have the same relationship with the other unions and they know it. Is the Postal Service going to negotiate a contract with one of the unions, and then try to push it on one of the other unions. We will have to wait and see I guess.

Additionally, when I read that they might create Retail Sales Assistants, staffed by our retirees; this was really the last straw. Our retirees deserve better benefits for their service to the US Postal Service, not an option of continuing to work after retirement. If that was the case, why retire? I understand that sometimes it is difficult to make ends meet when you retire; but going back to work for the Postal Service? President Burrus said that we would have absolute protection against any erosion in the number of Retail Sales Associates positions at postal facilities in order to agree to such a model. I can see it now—before beginning this, management will either abolish most of the jobs and either leave them vacant until after this program is underway (that way management can say they actually increase the amount of clerks) or they will staff them by PTF or PTRs. The proposal says that they wouldn't decrease the numbers; it didn't say anything about the amount of hours, just the number of positions.

*(Continued on page 12)*



## Legislative Report

Regina Favors  
Legislative Director

Hello Brothers and Sisters. Let me begin by thanking you for signing the petitions, makings calls, or whatever you are doing or have done to let your voices be heard and your feelings known. We have made some (a little) progress as far as the Social Security issue goes but it certainly is far from over. The President has toned down and laid back (just slightly) under the pressure of the town hall meetings, petitions and calls to our Senators and Reps to **NOT** privatize our social security, but we still cannot let up. Social Security is more than just a simple retirement income it is also a family insurance. I wonder how many of you know of, or have ever received benefits from social security because of the death or maybe even the disability of a loved one. If you have received benefits then you already know how invaluable it is. To everyone else let me assure you that it is something that most definitely **NEEDS TO BE CONTINUED!** I mean just picture if you will, losing your spouse while your child(ren) are at a very young age. You were a two-income family and now that has been slashed to one, Thank God for social security. It doesn't make you rich but it provides much needed help. Or say for instance you become disabled and it is not necessarily an "on the job" injury but maybe a disabling disease like multiple sclerosis, polio, debilitating arthritis, etc., Thank God for social security. Now think, do you really want this to be privatized or dependent on the so-called investment status, which would be controlled by the wealthy corporations of Wall Street. I shutter to think what would happen to those children who loses a parent, or the person (or parent) suffering that disability or even the widow who has no income after her husband dies. Please, please, people don't quit on this.

Bush has now shifted his focus to CAFTA.(Central American Free Trade Agreement) which was negotiated behind closed doors and signed by trade representatives in May 2004. CAFTA combines some of the worst provisions of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) and the World Trade Organization (WTO). CAFTA would reward companies that ship American jobs overseas with freer access to the U.S. market. CAFTA must now be approved by each of the participating countries, which are Guatemala, El. Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic and the United

*(Continued on page 8)*



## Clerk Craft Report

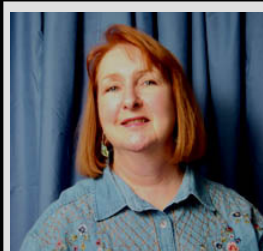
Bob Maloney  
Clerk Craft Director

In the last Michigan Messenger on the back page was a notice of the passing of Jeff Fors. As a friend of Jeff for many years, I feel a little more should be said about him. Jeff was President of the Pontiac Area Local for twenty years as well as a State Officer with the Michigan Postal Workers Union as an Area Director. But he was so much more as a person, a friend, and a husband.

To save the local money, at Conventions and district meetings, Jeff and I would share a room. It is there, we became good friends. On those long car trips to Iron Mountain or Gaylord, we would talk about Union stuff as well as his crazy dad, or his time growing up in Muskegon, or his favorite pass time--bashing management. We would spend hours just talking, plus when we were at a Union function Jeff would always try to tease and get me. At Jeff's funeral, I told my favorite story of the time we were at the Postal Press Association seminar in Orlando and we shared a room that had a balcony that faced the east. In the morning, we would get a great sun rise and at night we would get a nice moon set. Well, one morning I heard Jeff saying: "Bob you got to wake up and see this." I was facing away from the balcony door so I thought this must be a great sun rise, so I rolled over and there was Jeff standing in front of the doors mooning me. There was times that I got him back such as the time we were in Canton, Ohio for a President's Conference for two days and I signed Jeff's name to everybody's bar bill. When it came time to check out and they showed Jeff the bill, he nearly flipped out. He made me pay it of course, but I thought he was going to swallow his tongue. We have lost several people in the State Union over the last ten or so years and we are all a little poorer for it. A lot of the members never met these people and that is sad because they all stood up for you even if you never met them. I know I feel the loss in my life. I like to think that Jeff is up there in Heaven in that Union office there with the likes of Clyde Hartshorn, Jerry Martin, and even Walter Reuther. It makes it a little less painful to think he is with friends that he can tell his stories too.

Until next time,  
Yours in Solidarity,

*Bob*



## Maintenance Memo

Jane Duggan  
Maintenance Director

Our June 2005 Educational Seminar was a big success. National Assistant Director "A", Gary Kloepfer and our NBA, Troy Rorman came in for two days of training in Kalamazoo. About twenty people participated. These included some local presidents and clerk craft directors who are often tasked with representing maintenance members in their locals.

We started Friday afternoon with a group of template grievances referred to as Maintenance Issues Volume 5. The beauty of templates is that they present you with the articles, etc to cite, the union's thinking on the issue and a generic request for information. These ready-made grievances are helpful not only for new stewards but also for seasoned representatives.

Saturday morning, Gary Kloepfer taught the Subcontracting Workbook. In addition to a hard copy, we all got PowerPoint note taking sheets and a CD with the weekend's training. There was a lot of discussion.

In the afternoon, during the open forum, we discussed the Article 12 Q & A that had recently been signed off. After that, we went over 10 topics I had printed that are frequently asked questions. There is always plenty of room for discussion and time to learn from one another on a variety of approaches to any given issue.

In spite of the fact it was a beautiful day, our class went as scheduled until 4:30.

I want to take this opportunity to publicly thank Gary and Troy for coming in and spending the time with us. The training was well prepared and the sessions were lively.

### MSDP COMES TO MICHIGAN

I recently spent a week in Oklahoma at the NCED. I helped teach the last week of the Maintenance Skills Development Program. This offering included Grand Rapids as one of the nine participating sites.

The MSDP is taught on the satellite network. Students have a local classroom with two facilitators to keep things going between the on air sessions. The facilitators also

*(Continued on page 8)*



## MVS on the Move

Scott Larabel  
MVS Craft Director



## Area 1 Report

Larry Moyer  
Area 1 Director

It has been quite awhile since I have written an article, and I apologize for that. I could give you excuses such as I don't like writing reports, which I don't, or I'm so busy with grievances and other union business that it's hard to find the time, which it is, but you don't want to hear excuses, you want to be kept informed about issues affecting our craft. You deserve it and I will make a concerted effort to do so.

As you know the motor vehicle craft is constantly being scrutinized in attempts to contract out all or parts of vehicle maintenance and transportation operations. We have seen the trend at VMF's to contract out transmission and engine rebuilding and certain repairs on tractors, trailers and straight trucks.

Some of the excuses I've heard from around the state and country that management uses in attempts to justify their actions range from: were behind and our numbers are bad, we don't have to give overtime, overtime isn't helping anyway, it's personnel's fault we cant get vacant positions filled, were not authorized additional positions, we don't have the right equipment or tools, there's only one mechanic that works on the heavy trucks and he cant keep up, it's new work of the type not done here before so we don't have to start now. My favorite is, "the mechanics don't want to do that kind of work anyway"

On the transportation side, reasons for contracting out are plentiful also, such as: it's cheaper to have a contractor do it, We don't have enough drivers or equipment so we have to contract it out, we are not authorized any additional drivers, it's just temporary work, the mail volumes will be dropping and then we'll have to let drivers go, it's now clerk or mail handler work, express is not MVS work, those are star routes, A.O.'s, or HCR runs and we cant go there, it's not gutting, the HCR's are already going there anyway. Heard enough? I'm sure you have heard other excuses as well.

The increase use of non- MVS craft personnel and supervision running mail not only to city stations but also to A.O.'s on a daily basis has been a major problem. It has become so common place that they aren't even trying to

*(Continued on page 9)*

It has been some time since I have written a report for the *Michigan Messenger*. For the most part, things have been relatively quiet in the offices I represent as Area 1 Director. Like everyone else we are waiting to see how the final Postal "Reform" bill comes out of Congress, how detrimental it will be to Postal Workers, if we can minimize the damage to us and whether or not President George W. Bush will sign the bill into law.

**JCIM Training**-Back in February we had the Joint Contract Interpretation Manual training in the Royal Oak District. National Business Agent John Clark and Management Labor Rep Jane Pesonen. I found it interesting to have joint training by a union officer and a manager. The reason behind the JCIM was that with Congress watching us (management and the APWU) we needed to get the number of grievances pending Arbitration down. Never mind that the union "policies" the collective bargaining agreement and the union at the local level is doing what it is expected to do attempt to ensure the contract is abide by management. That said I thought the training was well presented but remained suspicious as to whether or not this would begin a new period of change toward both sides working to follow the contract.

My suspicions were realized when I sat down with the Step 2 designee in my office to discuss grievances at Step 2. I had **my JCIM** out but my **postmaster did not**. He told me he **did not have to follow the JCIM**.

The next day, the Royal Oak District management had a meeting for all union presidents and management organization presidents regarding problems in the Royal Oak Post office. Apparently, the tension on the floor is similar as it was preceding the Royal Oak shooting in 1991. US Senator Carl Levin requested that the USPS do an investigation and submit it to his office. Representing the Postmaster General John Potter and headquarters was the retired Manager of Contract Administration at Headquarters William Downes, representing the Area Vice president and the Great Lakes Area was Michael Milkar, Manager of Labor Relations, representing the Royal Oak District was the District Manager David Barthel and his staff. Mr. Downes explained that he was going to investigate and

*(Continued on page 9)*



## Area 8 Report

Dan McCloskey  
Area 8 Director




## NBA Report

Lynn Pallas-Barber  
NBA - Clerk Div. - Chicago

### Memorial Day Weekend

I'm writing this story on Memorial Day weekend and I'm not sure when it will be published. This weekend is not about what's on sale at Meijers or who is going to have the biggest fireworks. This weekend, this Memorial Day, is about remembering those who served. They served to protect and fight for the freedoms we have today. My father and two of his brothers served in WW II and my one Uncle died June 6, 1944. My brother and I both served in Vietnam and my brother died a few years after returning to the states. I retired from the U.S. Navy in 1992. And now the tradition continues with our twins serving this country during this war on terrorism. One serves in the Navy Seabee's for going on eight years and his sister is married to a Marine about to have their fourth child. These service members have fought and died for our freedoms and we should reach out and thank a veteran every chance we have. Whether you agree with this war or our leaders, please support our troops. While my politics will never agree with the union's point of view, but then again, I served twenty plus years in the Navy for us to have the right to choose our politics and our own beliefs.

*Dan*


  
***THE DEADLINE***  
***FOR SUBMITTING***  
***ARTICLES***  
***for the July - August***  
***2005 Edition of the***  
***MESSENGER***  
***is July 15, 2005***

### WOMEN IN THE LABOR MOVEMENT

#### Alzina Stevens

Alzina Stevens was born in Maine in 1849. She went to work in a local textile company at the age of 13. Shortly after her employment she lost her right index finger in an accident at work. Her loss became a perpetual reminder of the need to improve working conditions and control child labor.

When she was 18 she moved to Chicago and went to work in the printing trade as a typesetter and proofreader. Alzina became an active trade unionist and became one of the leaders of the Knights of Labor in Chicago.

Uriah Stephens and five other former members of the Garment Cutters' Association of Philadelphia founded the Noble Order of the Knights of Labor in 1869. The organization was open to all working people except bankers, lawyers, stockbrokers, doctors and liquor manufacturers. The Knights of Labor was actually a secret organization. It was the first union to attempt to organize women on a national scale.

In 1892 Alzina Stevens became a resident of Hull House where she was joined by other female social reformers. She became a key member of this group and one of the few women involved in Hull House who had first-hand experience of working class life.

Hull House was established in Chicago in 1889. Hull House was a large abandoned mansion which had been built by a wealthy business man, Charles J. Hull, in 1856. This large home was situated in Halstead Street in the run-down 19<sup>th</sup> Ward of Chicago. The neighborhood consisted mostly of recently arrived immigrants from all over Europe. Hull House evolved into a place where women could bring their young children.

One of the many visitors to Hull House was John Peter Altgeld. He was elected the governor of Illinois in 1892 and he appointed Florence Kelley as the state's first chief factory inspector. Alzina Stevens became her chief assistant

*(Continued on page 8)*



## Retiree Involvement

Al LaBrecque  
MPWU Retirees President

Alive and well...Thank You!! I received a couple of phone calls to find out if I was okay because I hadn't written an "R.I." column. Just got l-a-z-y-tired. It's nice to know someone cares and reads my rants. But, now I'm re-energized having been with "my kind of people" again at the State Education Convention. Although I had the privilege of conducting two classes, as always it was a learning experience for me as well.

The Friday a.m. Retirement session was devoted largely to legislation affecting retired members and the parent APWU. We kicked off with an excellent tape produced by the Alliance for Retired Americans on "Saving Social Security," narrated by Olympia Dukakis. The tape was furnished by the APWU Retirees Dept. to Local and State Retiree Chapters, and should be a must viewing for active Locals and Retiree Chapters across the APWU.

We thoroughly covered legislation on **Premium Conversion H.R.994** and **S.484** and the bills in the House and Senate to repeal the **Windfall Elimination Provision and Government Pension Offset H.R.147** and **S.619** known as the "Social Security Fairness Act of 2005." Stressed was the importance of contacting our Members of Congress on these vital pieces of legislation for retirees. Premium Conversion legislation would permit all federal CSRS/FERS retirees to deduct their Federal Employee Health Benefits Program (FEHBP) **premiums from pre-taxed annuity earnings**. Retired members are advised to inform your Congressperson and Senators that all active federal/postal employees already have this benefit, including themselves and their staffs.

CSRS/FERS retirees, who can afford it the least, still have to pay the most. It's a matter of equity! But, lip service won't get it done. We ALL have to write, phone, e-mail, and visit our Members of Congress district offices requesting that they co-sponsor this legislation, as well as the repeal of WEP/GPO which cheats CSRS employees who retired after Jan. 1, '86, out of their **earned** Social Security benefits. It's OUR \$\$!

Postal Reform legislation; H.R. 22 and S.662 pose a threat for the active membership. As this legislation progresses through the House and Senate committees, we must keep

alert and stand ready to launch a lobbying effort, such as we did in 2004 to oppose the "bad" parts of postal "reform". We had the issue of small P.O. closings to arouse public sentiment in our favor last time. That doesn't appear to be a part of proposed legislation so far. However, deep discounts afforded large business mailers should not exceed the USPS costs avoided, and the public should know this! We cannot allow our Members of Congress to dodge this issue. Again, lip service won't get it done!

The Sat. a.m. Retirement session was structured for active Local leaderships, as well as Local Retiree Chapters on how to **recognize and counsel** retiring members. As the USPS is phasing out their retirement counseling responsibilities to retiring employees, it is increasingly important that active Local leaderships give much greater attention to this important "detail". We could have spent a full day on this subject alone! A packet for active Local leaderships is available upon request. It was evident that active members are "hungry" for retirement seminars, such as was devised and presented by past Retirees Dept. Dir., John R. Smith. We will try to include that at next opportunity. However, it is equally important to include retiring members' options for continuing their membership to maintain a connection to their Union which served them so well during their work lives. It is vital to retain these retired members to best serve their needs and for their support on the issues facing the parent APWU. We need each other, active and retired, if we are to survive these dangerous times! The active membership is declining for a variety of reasons, while the retired membership is at 44,000 and growing!

**John R. Smith Retires! Douglas C. Holbrook** is appointed to Dir., APWU Retirees Dept.! Brother John R. retired on May 7th after nearly 13 years as the Dept's only Director. J.R. will be remembered as the "Father" of the APWU Retirees Dept. Doug Holbrook, retired past APWU Sec.-Treas., takes over in the interim 2 1/2 years until Retirees Dept. members will elect their first-ever Director. Holbrook resigned his E-Board position as AARP Sec.-Treas. to take the appointment. I'm encouraged by the actions Doug has already taken to organize more Local and State Retiree Chapters, and his willingness to communicate with the retiree leadership in the field. Holbrook has made it clear that he welcomes input from the retired members to best serve retiree interests. I suggest that we not be shy about furnishing Brother Holbrook our views on the direction which the Dept. should take. You can be assured that I have a 'laundry list'. We wish Brother John R. Smith a long, healthy and contented

*(Continued on page 11)*

(Continued from page 3)

Legislative Update Continued

States. So far however, Nicaragua, the Dominican Republic and Costa Rica have not ratified the treaty (at least at the time of this article). I know a lot of you are probably thinking that this has nothing to do with you (us maybe) as postal workers but in the end, a job loss is Michigan period affects all of us, and then too, eventually it could be your job. Watch for upcoming bills and information and continue to get involved, stay involved and most importantly to vote and elect those persons who care most about the survival of us as workers, laborers as opposed to those person who care most about status or position and the wealth of the already wealthy in all stages of the government, be it the city, state or whatever **STAY TUNED**

On another note, I attended the M.P.W.U. State Educational Convention in Kalamazoo. It was fantastic. Thank you very much to the Kalamazoo local. During opening session we heard from our guest speakers which included (just to name a few) our Regional Director from the National, Sharon Stone, N.B.A. John Clark (National), N.B.A. Lynn Pallas Barber and Mark Gaffney, President of the State AFL-CIO.

I had the privilege of assisting Brother Al LeBrecque in his Retiree (Legislative) class and also of assisting Sister Joyce Robinson in her Parliamentary Procedures Classes (click it) All of the training and classes excellent. Again, KUDOS to Kalamazoo. Also I see that this article is getting quite lengthy so maybe I can put some of the statistics, quotes and facts from the training in the next issue (I really hate being long and/or possibly boring to you guys) so I'll put an end to this-----

Until Next Time

Gina

As always for more info you can log on to your union website, or [www.miaflcio.org](http://www.miaflcio.org).

(Continued from page 4)

Maintenance Memo Continued

help with the hands on projects that are part of the eleven-week program. Most classrooms have 15 students although we had fewer in Michigan.

MSDP includes one week of IES/PATN. However, unlike the original Pilot Program in Detroit, the participants are not scheduled for IES in Norman until after they are promoted in their local office from the appropriate register.

Greater Michigan District decided to apply as a district so those employees in smaller facilities could have a chance at developmental training. This is the first site, as far as I know, to draw on a whole district. The next offering is scheduled for August. The Michigan classroom is moving to Lansing, I believe. I hope to participate in that offering as well.

One serious weakness of the Greater Michigan effort is that although the union was in on the program from the beginning, we were not given a chance to participate in the selection of facilitators. This is a big drawback and hopefully will be corrected before the next offering starts. It also probably means there will not be the best follow up on getting students through the MSS process.

If this approach works out well in Greater Michigan District, perhaps it can spread to other parts of the state in the same or similar format. Otherwise, the smaller offices are really at a loss for developmental training, which is unfair to our members around the state. Feel free to contact me if you have questions about the training program.

(Continued from page 6)

NBA Report Continued

and together the two women helped the governor to pass and enforce legislation that controlled child labor in the state of Illinois. This included a law limiting women and children to an 8-hour day. This success was short-lived and in 1895 big business, the Illinois Association of Manufacturers got the law repealed.

After the defeat of Governor Altgeld in 1896, Alzina Stevens became the first probation officer of the recently established Cook County Juvenile Court Committee. She continued her fight for the rights of children. Alzina Stevens died in 1900.

**MPWU CONVENTION**

It was again good to be back in Michigan for the off-year Educational Convention. Being given an opportunity to provide training for advanced stewards is one of the rewarding parts of this job. Over the years, I grew with the training I received from the MPWU. It's a good felling to give back and give some newer stewards and officers some direction and advice.

Congratulations to Gay Van and the rest of the E-board for a job well done. At times it's difficult not to be involved as I was in the past. Mark Hart did an excellent job and it is a relief to know that my predecessor is extremely willing and capable.

**MOU – ARBITRATION SCHEDULING AND GRIEVANCE REVIEW PROCESS**

On June 13, 2005 President Bill Burrus signed along with the USPS a MOU regarding the commitment to improve the grievance/arbitration process. The Direct Appeals will now be jointly reviewed together by both

(Continued on page 9)



parties. This new processes essentially gives us back Step 3 for all appealed cases. All the details have not been worked out. Currently with the rotation in the NBA's office Direct Appeals are currently my task. It is hoped that this will be worked out shortly and we will now be able to resolve more issues at pre-arb.

Until next time,

*Lynn*

*(Continued from page 1)*  
**President's Report Continued**

tact with our Legislative officials. Don't just sit back and hope the other guy/gal takes a part in it. This is your job/benefits/future. In closing, now that the warm weather is here upon us, make sure you all be careful on the roads and highways. Keep your seat belts on and have a Good Summer.

In Union Solidarity,



Gary Van Hoogstraten  
President

*(Continued from page 5)*  
**MVS On the Road Continued**

hide it. The ones being used to transport are doing it so often that they think its part of their job!

We have been very successful in winning these type grievances as long as the membership realizes the impact on our craft and continue to report these violations.

At the state conference in Kalamazoo we were very fortunate and grateful to have our national assistant motor vehicle division director Mike Foster and MVS national

business agent Merlie Bell come in. They gave two days of training to the small group who was there to learn about issues affecting our craft. These conferences are often the only time you get to meet with our craft national officers and discuss the current and future direction of motor vehicle services. We thank them for including us in the few opportunities they have to attend our state functions.

The information we receive and bring back to fellow stewards and the membership is an invaluable tool to be used in the protection and future growth of our craft. The most important part in the grievance process, the one essential thing that wins grievances at the lowest levels is "documentation". You should be going into that step one meeting with so much convincing documentation that it can be settled right there. You have a lawful and contractual right to any and all information you feel may be necessary for a grievance investigation. You must be given ample time for grievance processing. Don't allow management to set the amount of time they feel it should take to do a grievance. They have a right to ask the nature of your grievance and how much time do you think you will need, but you need not go into lengthy details nor should you rush your investigation. Request the amount of time you feel you need to do a thorough job. We owe it to ourselves, the union and the members we represent.

I was disappointed in the lack of MVS stewards and craft members from locals that have a transportation or vehicle repair operation that for whatever reason did not attend. Please let me know what your reason was. I hope to see many of you at our national craft conference in August.

*Scott*

*(Continued from page 5)*  
**Area 1 Report Continued**

write a report to send to Senator Levin's office. Mr. Downes took questions from the audience. I asked him to expand the investigation to other offices in the Royal Oak District. Then I told him of my experience with the JCIM in discussing grievances. **He became angry and told us that BOTH PARTIES must follow the JCIM,** and that he started preparing the JCIM with the APWU before he retired. I then asked Mr. Mlkar, "What will your labor reps do with the 40 grievances when they meet with our Business Agents, that my postmaster just denied and I am appealing to step 3 of the grievance procedure? He responded that, "**we will apply the JCIM to the grievances**". I responded "Could someone tell my postmaster to follow the JCIM so that I can save the time and expense of appealing these grievances? Mr. Mlkar said he would talk to my postmaster. In addition, the **Human Resources Manager put a notice out to all managers and postmasters in the district were to follow the JCIM.** If you work in another district than Royal Oak you should ask for a similar notice. If nothing else you can use it as a support document in future grievances that your local manager is not following the JCIM. Time will tell if the grievances appealed to step 3 will be settled using the JCIM or denied and appealed to arbitration, as was the past.

**USE OF DUAL APPOINTMENT CASUALS-** In one office I represent as Area Director management is using a dual appointment casual to work in the clerk craft and as a rural carrier. The OIC in this office scheduled the casual in to break down the mail, while leaving the PTF clerk at home. For unknown reasons, the casual did not report so the OIC broke down the mail by her self, and not calling in the PTF clerk to help. Did the OIC by attempt-

*(Continued on page 10)*

(Continued from page 9)

**Area 1 Report Continued**

ing to be “super Clerk” want to save hours to make a good impression to the postmaster (who is out on a detail) and to the Postal Operations Manager? Interestingly, the POOM agrees with me that the OIC’s action was wrong. The grievances on these issues hopefully will be resolved shortly.

**POSTMASTERS NOT PRESENT DURING WINDOW HOURS-** In many offices the postmaster desires to work 6 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. or 7 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. and leave to office staffed only by a clerk for the rest of the day. I feel this is wrong on two points. One point being Safety and Health. What if the post office is robbed or the clerk working alone suffers an injury? The other point is from a Customer Service standpoint. Some customers no matter what a window clerk (such as myself tells them) does not want to talk to a window clerk they want to talk to a **MANAGER**. Then you are dealing with an irate customer who wants to talk to a manger with no manager present. I brought this item up in a recent District Labor Management meeting. Our District Manage David Barthel stated that in his past experience as a POOM and as well as in the Royal Oak District he **expects his postmasters to be working during the hours the window is open for that office, unless otherwise approved by the POOM**. If your postmaster leaves the office before your window closes and you are in the Royal Oak District office I represent give me a call. If you work in another district your area Director should attempt to get a similar policy for your District. In the meantime, I am pursuing grievance for higher-level pay for the clerks working alone with out the postmaster present.

**HUGE MAINTENANCE CRAFT**

**SETTLEMENT-** Back in 1996 in my office of Troy we had a joint Labor Management staffing study done. The study determined that my office needed a Building Maintenance Mechanic, a General Mechanic, 3 40-hour Custodial Laborers and One 32 hour Custodial Laborer. Management and the APWU Central Region Staffing Specialist Larry Miller from the 480-481 Area Local, as well as the local Postmaster and myself as local President **all signed the staffing package**. Management dragged their feet in getting the Building Maintenance Mechanic position filled so I filed a grievance. Eight months latter a mechanic for another office filled the position. The grievance meantime was appealed to step 3 and then to arbitration. As for the Custodial Laborers a clerk transferred into the 32-hour position, but then quit the USPS to go to school in Alabama. This caused a vacancy in the 32-hour position. Our Postmaster tried to get the position filled but the then POOM Roger Blackwell refused to give his approval. So in 1997 I filed grievance on this issue as well. The grievance was appealed to step 3 and then to arbitration. The years passed without the 32-hour Custodial Laborer position being filled despite a proposed local settlement made by our local Secretary Michael Forgash and Maintenance Supervisor David Sutton. The settlement was a “go” except that Mr. Sutton needed to “run it by” our postmaster Richard Gauthier. Gauthier said no to the proposed settlement.

Last year at the MPWU Convention in Lansing, MI Union Advocate Larry Miller who was preparing to go to arbitration on these two grievances approached me. Brother Miller stated to me that Ed Novak Labor Relations Manager did not want to go to arbitration because management was losing these staffing grievances all over the country.

Brother Miller stated he was going to get “big Money” for our Mechanics and Custodial Laborers. I responded “Ok. So they get a couple of \$100 dollars right?” Miller said “No they are going to get **thousands**”. I thought you are so full of it buddy. To my surprise, Miller settled these grievances as follows:

- ⇒ **\$25,000** split between the two Mechanics for the eight-month delay in filling the Building Maintenance Mechanic position.
- ⇒ **\$150,000** split between three Custodial Laborers.

Our Postmaster Richard Gauthier was outraged and got Labor Relations Manager Ed Novak “called on the carpet” for this settlement. I believe this settlement and Gauthier’s refusal to settle this a few years ago along with his refusal to follow the JCIM are partly responsible for his removal as postmaster and his temporary detail to the Priority Mail Center in Romulus, MI.

More important for me than the money, was the fact that management had to fill the 32-hour Custodial Laborer position, which was recently filled. Now our building can be cleaned properly.

If you think being a member of the APWU does not pay, just ask these Maintenance Craft Members!!! Looking at it another way, if the average local has union dues of \$20.00 per pay period, applying this to the \$12,000 paid to Mechanics Vasaybel and Reed (after taxes) **covers union dues for 600 pay periods or approximately 23 years!** For the Custodial Laborers Ryan, Williams, and Kolatski the approximately \$45,000 paid to each (after taxes) **covers union dues for 2,250 pay periods or approximately 86 years!**

(Continued on page 11)

(Continued from page 10)  
Area 1 Report Continued

My congratulations to **TROY Maintenance Craft UNION MEMBERS** Vasybel, Reed, Ryan, Williams, and Kolatski!!! My sincere thanks to APWU Central Region Staffing Specialist and Union Advocate Larry Miller for a job well done!!!

**IN MEMORIAM-** In the past few months, we lost former National Business Agent Jerry Martin, Retired Pontiac, MI APWU President and former state officer Jeffrey Fors and Retired Farmington, MI APWU President Flossie MacDonald. I knew each of these fine unionists. In their own way made things better those who followed in their footsteps. I was closest to Jeff Fors and will always remember being able to discuss problems with him and getting good advice. In many ways Jeff was my "older union brother". In real life I have an older brother, but Jeff was my "older union brother". I enjoyed driving with him to APWU President's conferences held quarterly around the country. We went to conferences in Allentown PA, Cincinnati, OH and St. Louis, MO. Then there was the yearly trek to the North county of Iron Mountain, MI for the fall MPWU District Meetings. I asked at the MPWU Board meeting last year that we honor at this year's state Educational Convention Jeff Fors. It is with great sadness that we will do so posthumously. I offer my condolences to the families of Jerry, Jeff, and Flossie for their loss. May they rest in peace.

Until next time, if what is happening in your office doesn't seem right call me (if I am your Area Director) or your Area Director or Local Union Steward and file a grievance to get a just settlement to your issue or problem.

Yours in Union Solidarity;

*Larry*

(Continued from page 7)  
Retiree Involvement Continued

retirement, and Brother Doug Holbrook a successful tenure as APWU Retirees Dept. Director. I'm encouraged!

**Beth Cramer**, Southern Region National Retiree Delegate to the National Convention has suffered a severe heart condition which requires surgery in the near future, if not already. Sister Cramer has been an active voice at National Conventions for retired members' issues, and good friend to the MPWU. Please join me in keeping Sister Cramer's full recovery in our warm thoughts and prayers.

On the 600+ mile round-trip from Spruce to Kalamazoo, I was reminded several times of our late dear Brother **Jerry Martin** when along the roadways I witnessed the little birds chasing a hawk or raven across a field or above the woods. Also remembered at the convention were recent deceased retired members; Sister **Flossie MacDonald** past president of the Farmington Local and MPWU officer, **George Beattie**, past Trustee of the MPWU State Retiree Chapter, and Brother **Jeff Fors**, past president of the Pontiac Area Local, MPWU Area Director, and for whom the MPWU Ed Convention book was dedicated. All very dear friends. "May Perpetual Light shine upon them."

**Medicare.** One learning item of importance is that Medicare eligible diabetics can obtain 1 pair of diabetic footwear and 3 pair of heat molded inserts per year at little or no cost. Apparently this has been around for a while, but I had no idea of this benefit. If I didn't know, then it's possible some of you didn't either. I've already had an appointment with a provider and ordered my shoes and inserts. All you need to do is

obtain a prescription from your physician, locate a provider, get measured, and that's all there's to it. Protect your "wheels" by taking advantage of this little known Medicare benefit.

**Local Retiree Chapters.** With 4 organized Local Retiree Chapters in Michigan, we have the potential for 10, or more! It's up to the active Local leaderships to make the first move. All you have to have is ten (10) members of the APWU Retirees Dept. in your Local's representation jurisdiction to form a chapter. The State Retiree Chapter is committed to assisting Locals in the process of forming local chapters. All you have to do is ask! In my opinion, it will be much more conducive to form local retiree chapters if the 2006 National Convention, in its wisdom, adopts a resolution offered by the Ohio State Retiree Chapter in 2004 which never reached the floor called "40-40-20".

As it stands presently, State Retiree Chapters receive 40% of the dues paid by retired members who DO NOT belong to a local retiree chapter in the state. Local retiree chapters receive 40% of the dues of the members of their local retiree chapter. In each case, national retains 60% of the \$24. per year dues. Where there are no local or state retiree chapters, national retains 100% of the dues paid. Under the "40-40-20" proposal, State Retiree Chapters would receive 20% of the dues of ALL retiree members in the state, including those belonging to Local Retiree Chapters. The Local Chapters would continue to receive 40% and national would retain 40%. Currently, when a Local chapter is formed, the state chapter loses that revenue, which is little incentive for State Retiree Chapters to organize local chapters. The "40-40-20" proposal has several advantages. 1). State Retiree Chapters would continue to receive

(Continued from page 11)

**Retiree Involvement Continued**

sufficient revenues to remain solvent. 2). Local Retiree Chapters and their members would automatically be members of the State Chapter without having to pay a per capita, and 3). It gives State Retiree Chapters greater incentive to organize our retired members and Local Retiree Chapters. This is a high priority item on my 'laundry list' which I plan to collaborate with the Ohio retiree leadership in the form of a Resolution for the 2006 National Convention.

**What's The Holdup?** With precious little information forthcoming from the office of APWU Sec.-Treas, I'm curious as to just when we can expect to receive the 2004 amended APWU Constitution & By-Laws?! That curiosity is fueled by the burning desire to know if the inadvertently omitted" 2000 amendment to Article 16. Sec. 2 (h); "Local Retiree Chapter Membership Jurisdiction", is finally properly included. I sent a check in to the Order Dept. a couple of months ago. Still NO Constitutions! Frankly, after nearly 5 years my patience is wearing mighty thin! Likewise, has anyone seen the "Official Proceedings of the 2004 APWU National Convention" yet? I'm more than a little anxious to read the exact language of the debate and resolutions on our Retirees Dept. issues to determine if they are being properly implemented. After the stonewalling on the amendment to Local Retiree Chapter Membership Jurisdiction, these items require careful scrutiny.

**Hats Off** to the State MPWU for an excellent Ed Convention, es-

pecially to Brother Mark Hart in his first effort as Dir. of Education! I promise to be better prepared for retirement related classes in the future. The interest is obviously there. And to the host Southwest MI Area Local, Pres. Mickey Elmore and members of SMAL, along with members of the Western MI Area Local whose hospitality skills were top shelf! As for the hotel; they couldn't have been more accommodating! But, six days living out of a suitcase was a bit much for this ole traveler. I had to leave Kazoo for Flint on Sunday to stay overnight with one of my sons so I could attend a planning meeting for my 50th Year Class Reunion on Monday. The convention and the mini-reunion with classmates were extremely fulfilling, but it was good to get back to the north woods where the deep grass in my yard was waiting...and growing! I'm still basking in the warm glow of renewing old friendships and making new acquaintances. I'm confident that our Union in Michigan is in good hands for the future.

The MPWU State Ed Convention has re-charged my batteries, along with being encouraged that the Retirees Dept. is heading in a new direction under the leadership of Director, Doug Holbrook. As someone far wiser than me once said; "The proof of the pudding will be in the tasting"!

**Be Strong!**

*Al LaBrecque*

(Continued from page 3)

**The Long and Short of It Continued**

While I am on the subject of hours. I strongly recommend to everyone to keep watch of their hours on the window, especially if you are at an Associate Office. If a supervisor/postmaster starts doing your work, make sure you file a grievance. I understand that at small offices, it is more of a "family atmosphere;" however, management is "not your daddy or your mama" and to make themselves look good they will make sure that you are the "black sheep." Just keep your eyes open, and your ears "to the ground." When you hear it and see it, contact your steward and file it!

At the time of this writing, I was told of the passing of one of our Postal co-workers who worked at Greater Michigan District. The reason I bring this up -- from what I was told, it took more than four (4) hours to find a relative. His emergency information on file with the Postal Service was not updated since he hired in. Make sure you update yours. If you have moved, your next of kin has moved, changed their number, etc., make sure you update!

I would be like to take this opportunity to thank the SWMAL and the Mark and Gary for the outstanding job at this year's Educational convention. Great Job!! I would especially like to personally thank Geoff Higgins (DDAL) and Michelle Gregory (WMAL) for their generosity for letting me use their digital camera during the convention after mine was stolen. Thank You!!

In closing, I would be remiss if I didn't give you another discount. However, I am going to reiterate the biggest one of all. The Postal ID and Hotels. Recently a friend of mine went to Canada; when he returned I asked him if he used the discount. He wasn't aware that it worked in Canada too. Surprise, when I went on-line and looked at some prices, they gave me a discount for being a Federal employee also. Use It!

Until next time,

*Mike*



Michigan Postal Workers Union Educational Convention - June 2 - 4, 2005  
Photo Gallery



As many of you know, the union organization have requested that we boycott Coke. What is really interesting and a real an eye opener is: Water or Coke? We all know that water is important but I've never seen it written down like this before. WATER

1. 75% of Americans are chronically dehydrated.
2. In 37% of Americans, the thirst mechanism is so weak that it is often mistaken for hunger.
3. Even MILD dehydration will slow down one's metabolism as much as 3%.
4. One glass of water will shut down midnight hunger pangs for almost 100% of the dieters studied in a University of Washington study.
5. Lack of water, the #1 trigger of daytime fatigue.
6. Preliminary research indicates that 8-10 glasses of water a day could significantly ease back and joint pain for up to 80% of sufferers.
7. A mere 2% drop in body water can trigger fuzz short-term memory trouble with basic math, and difficulty focusing on the computer screen or on a printed page.
8. Drinking 5 glasses of water daily decreases the risk of colon cancer by 45%, plus it can slash the risk of breast cancer by 79%, and one is 50% less likely to develop bladder cancer.

And now for the properties of COKE:

1. In many states (in the USA) the highway patrol carries two gallons of coke in the truck to remove blood from the highway after a car accident.
2. You can put a T-bone steak in a bowl of Coke and it will be gone in two days.
3. To clean a toilet: Pour a can of Coca-Cola into the toilet bowl and let the "real thing" sit for one hour, then flush clean. The citric acid in Coke removes stains from vitreous China.
4. To remove rust spots from chrome car bumpers: Rub the bumper with a crumpled-up piece of Reynolds Wrap aluminum foil dipped in Coca-Cola.
5. To clean corrosion from car battery terminals: Pour a can of Coca-Cola over the terminals to bubble away the corrosion.
6. To loosen a rusted bolt: Applying a cloth soaked in Coca-Cola to the rusted bolt for several minutes.
7. To bake a moist ham: Empty a can of Coca-Cola into the baking pan, wrap the ham in aluminum foil, and bake. Thirty minutes before the ham is finished, remove the foil, allowing the drippings to mix with the Coke for a sumptuous brown gravy.
8. To remove grease from clothes: Empty a can of coke into a load of greasy clothes, add detergent, and run through a regular cycle. The Coca-Cola will help loosen grease stains.
9. It will also clean road haze from your windshield.

For Your Info:

1. The active ingredient in Coke is phosphoric acid. Its pH is 2.8. It will dissolve a nail in about 4 days. Phosphoric acid also leaches calcium from bones and is a major contributor to the rising increase in osteoporosis.
2. To carry Coca-Cola syrup (the concentrate) the commercial truck must use the Hazardous material placards reserved for Highly corrosive materials.
3. The distributors of Coke have been using it to clean the engines of their trucks for about 20 years!

*Now the question is, would you like a coke or a glass of water?*

## After 111 Years, Postage Stamps Go Private

### Bureau of Engraving Prints Its Last Rolls

The federal government printed its last postage stamps Friday. The end to 111 years of stamp production by the Bureau of Engraving and Printing (BEP) came without any public ceremony in the same 14th Street building where many of the nation's most famous stamps have been printed. Workers pulled a final roll of 37-cent flag stamps from an aging, four-color Andreotti press on the fourth floor. That simple act terminated a once-thriving business that the Treasury Department agency had monopolized for decades. Now, private printers will produce all the nation's stamps, a decision that U.S. Postal Service officials say will save tens of millions of dollars a year. The bureau will concentrate on printing currency, its other major product. For Washington's 60 remaining stamp printers and many stamp collectors, Friday marked a sad transition. Lawrence T. Graves, one of BEP's senior stamp officials, called it "bittersweet . . . a sad day." "It's the end of an era that reflected some of finest workmanship in government stamp design and security printing worldwide," said Rob Haeseler, an official of the American Philatelic Society, the nation's largest organization for stamp collectors. Finances and what BEP Director Thomas A. Ferguson said was a decision to no longer treat stamps like currency led postal officials away from the hand-engraved stamps that were the bureau's hallmark and toward cheaper, lithographed stamps. In the end, the bureau, with its elaborate security system, unionized printers and large government payroll, declared it could not compete with private printers.

The Postal Service actually began to chip away at the government printing with a contract that gave some commemorative stamps to private printers in 1978. The private printers' share of stamp production grew steadily and accelerated when the agency turned to self-adhesive stamps in the early 1990s. Even so, Jerry L. Hudson Sr., chief of BEP's stamp production, said officials were stunned when postal officials suggested in 1995 that they wanted to end the bureau's stamp production altogether.

## 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: Juhl1Gems@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, Mark Hart

U: 810-239-0931; FAX: 810-239-6879

### 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: 313-226-8685; H: 313-575-4926; U: 313-937-1100; e-Mail: Asstclerkcraft@hotmail.com



### 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: 616-776-1489; 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.net

### 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.net

### MPWU Auxiliary Liaison,

Position is Currently Vacant

### MPWU Historian, Debbie Brand

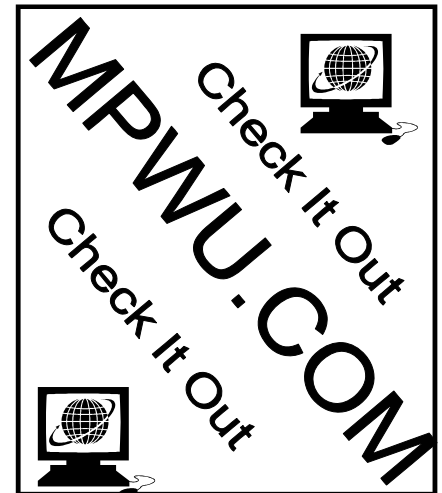
H: 269-729-9374

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 8 - 10, 2005 - National Multi-Craft Conference, Las Vegas, NV

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

Area 4, 5, 6 District Meeting (more information forthcoming)

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



## APWU & USPS Considering Contract Extension

APWU President William Burrus announced June 20 that the union and management have reached “an agreement on a framework” for a one-year extension of the Collective Bargaining Agreement, with specific details still under discussion. The current contract is set to expire Nov. 20.

“If an agreement can be finalized and if it is approved by the union membership,” Burrus said at a meeting of APWU local and state presidents, “it will include a raise, along with two cost-of-living adjustments, and upgrades of some positions in the clerk, maintenance, and motor vehicle crafts.”

There would be no change to employee contributions to the health benefit or retirement programs.

Speaking at the APWU National Presidents’ Conference in New Orleans, Burrus outlined the criteria he would use in deciding whether to extend the contract. “A major consideration is whether we can achieve through a contract extension improvements that we are unlikely to achieve in negotiation or arbitration.

“If we are able to reach agreement on an extension, we will avoid the risks inherent in any contract negotiation,” he said, noting that the union expected a major assault on workers’ health and retirement benefits in the upcoming negotiations, which would begin in August if an agreement is not reached before then.

In addition to a contract extension, the parties are also exploring an entirely new concept: the creation of Retail Sales Assistants who would work in grocery stores, malls, and other venues that are easily accessible to the public, the union president said. These positions would be reserved for retired postal employees, who would continue to draw their retirement annuities.

“This could create an opportunity for new jobs in areas where traditionally we have not had them,” Burrus said. “However, we would have to have absolute protection against any erosion in the number of Retail Sales Associate positions at postal facilities in order to agree to such a model.”

Extending the contract would mean that the collective bargaining agreements of the four largest postal unions — the APWU, the National Association of Letter Carriers, the National Postal Mail Handlers Union, and the National Rural Letter Carriers Association — would all expire on the same day, Nov. 20, 2006.

“No specific contract language has been agreed to,” Burrus cautioned, “and no papers have been signed.

“I expect to meet with postal officials in the coming weeks to see if we can come to an agreement that will best serve the interests of APWU members and the Postal Service.”

If a tentative agreement is reached, members of the APWU Rank and File Bargaining Committee must approve it before it can be sent to union members for a ratification vote.

In December 2002, APWU members voted to extend the 2000-2003 agreement, to this November. A contract extension this year would be only the second one in the union’s history

### - INSIDE THIS ISSUE OF THE MICHIGAN MESSENGER -

<i>President’s Report – Gary VanHooqstraten</i>	<i>Page 1</i>
<i>Secretary’s Writings - Harold Juhl</i>	<i>Page 2</i>
<i>Education at Work - Mark Hart</i>	<i>Page 2</i>
<i>Long and Short of It – Michael Long</i>	<i>Page 3</i>
<i>Legislative Update - Regina Favors</i>	<i>Page 3</i>
<i>Clerk Craft Report - Bob Maloney</i>	<i>Page 4</i>
<i>Maintenance Memo - Jane Duggan</i>	<i>Page 4</i>
<i>MVS on the Move - Scott Larabel</i>	<i>Page 5</i>
<i>Area 1 Report - Larry Moyer</i>	<i>Page 5</i>
<i>Area 8 Report - Dan McCloskey</i>	<i>Page 6</i>
<i>NBA Report - Lynn Pallas-Barber</i>	<i>Page 6</i>
<i>Retiree Involvement - Al LaBrecque</i>	<i>Page 7</i>
<i>2005 Educational Convention in Photos</i>	<i>Page 13</i>
<i>Information and Postal Shorts</i>	<i>Page 14</i>
<i>Officers and Executive Board Members</i>	<i>Page 15</i>
<i>Upcoming Events</i>	<i>Page 15</i>
<i>Contract Extension Information</i>	<i>Page 16</i>
<i>Index</i>	<i>Page 16</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