



# Michigan Messenger

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## Presidential Report



**Gary VanHoogstraten**  
President

I have just returned from an evening spent at one of the local American Legion Halls on the anniversary of our presence in Iraq. Many veterans, spouses and friends gathered to talk and remember the last 5 years. I have been in communication with Senator Carl Levin and I looked at one of his first questions he asked me. He wants to know what the struggling American taxpayers are getting stuck with the bill for rebuilding Iraq. After all, the Iraqi government is expected to accrue more than \$100 billion in oil revenues during 2007 and 2008. That's more than double the estimated \$47 billion the United States Treasury as paid for reconstruction efforts since 2003. The Iraqi government has a large surplus from oil sales. It has perhaps \$30 billion in U.S. banks alone. It can and must do more to provide basic necessities, increased security, and a higher quality of life for its citizens. American money spent rebuilding Iraq is money we can't commit to important priorities here in Michigan. For these reasons, Senator Levin has sent a letter to the Government Accountability Office earlier this month asking for a review of Iraqi oil revenues and reconstruction spending. This letter

was cosigned by a Republican Senator John Warner, who is on the Senate Armed Services Committee. The American people have paid an enormous price to attempt to secure and to start to rebuild Iraq. It's long past time for the Iraqi government to use it's oil revenues to support these efforts. We have as of this date lost some 3,995 men and women in this war. Let's hope that this will end in the near future.

This morning, I opened this mornings paper and one of the headlines were "PASSPORT RECORDS VIOLATED." The article began by saying embarrassed officials said an investigation that began on Thursday has revealed that since the summer, one staff trainee and three contract workers in the department's passport bureau poked into passport application files that contain Social Security numbers and other personal and family information. Officials said they believe that this was motivated by nothing but curiosity. Officials said that they are still investigating whether the workers broke any law and whether lower level supervisors broke any rules. When you have not just one but a series of attempts to tap into peoples personal records, that is a problem for a question of how our government functions. As of now, the only three people that were mentioned were the candidates seeking the Presidency. You would think that they would be one of the top people who had their records violated with. I am sure we will be hearing more of this in the upcoming weeks. Hopefully all will come out for the better.

President Burrus sent out letters to Local and State Presidents encouraging them to write their US representatives, and asked them to co-sponsor and support the Mail

Network Protection Act (H.R. 4236). This bill would require the Postal Service to bargain with the Postal Unions before it engages in significant subcontracting. I have sent out letters to our State Representatives; have you? It is imperative that Union members contact their representatives and let them know that the bill is important to the future of the Postal Service and to postal workers. If this is passed, it could ensure that USPS contracting out decisions would be scrutinized by the workers most directly affected. More often than not, contracting job to non-postal contractors costs the Postal Service more than if the work were performed by postal employees in-house. I am sure that our legislative department will keep all of us informed as to the status of this bill.

By the time this paper goes to press we will be knocking at the doors of this year's State Convention. I urge all of you to look at what changes you desire in the National Contract and the State and National Constitution. Please send those concerns to your local, or if you are a Member at Large, please forward them to me or Harold before April 15<sup>th</sup>.

Until next time,

Yours in Solidarity,



### The Long and Short of It



Michael A. Long  
Editor

#### MPWU State Convention

By the time you receive this edition of the Michigan Messenger, only a month or so until the 2008 MPWU State Convention in Grand Rapids. If you would like to see something changed in the constitution, or contracts, please let us know. We need to have these by April 15 to ensure they are incorporated into the Resolution book.

#### Clarification/Elaboration to a Previous Article

I was approached by one of our local members the other day regarding an item in the last edition of the Michigan Messenger, regarding the Best Date to Retire in 2008. The article, written by John Grobe, was an article for all Federal employees. It stated: "Being able to carry over 204 hours of annual leave into the new year, and then accrue an additional 200 or 208 hours, can leave on with a large lump sum payment. The 2008 leave year ends January 3, 2009. Anyone retiring on that day (or on January 2<sup>nd</sup>, if their workweek were complete) would receive 208 additional hours. Some retiring on December 31<sup>st</sup> or January 1<sup>st</sup> would receive 200 additional hours." In case this made you wonder, here is a point of clarification. This states if the person retires on January 3, 2009 and doesn't use any annual leave in the 2008 year, carries over the 204 hours from 207, would have the additional leave to use in their retirement calculation for 2009. Just wanted to make sure you didn't think you could use that leave at the beginning of the 2008, just because they advanced it to you. You still have to earn it. Plus remember, as a Postal Employee we

have negotiated that we are allowed to carry over 440 hours from the previous year; so technically, as a Postal Employee, if you retired on January 2, 2009, you could technically retire with 440 hours from 2007 + 208 hours for 208 (for a total of 648 hours of annual leave).

#### Viewing Your On-Line OPF

With the personnel office a thing of the past, many employees now are forced to "fend for themselves." An individual can now view their OPF online. You need to log into the Liteblue website and use your Postal ID and Pin #. Click on eOPF and log in again. You must do this from a Non-Postal Computer. When you view, each page is a different scan. So it is better if you view it on a high-speed internet connection.

In closing, I look forward to seeing you at the upcoming convention in Grand Rapids. As the co-Chair of this event, when the convention proceedings are done during the day, we have numerous activities to keep you busy during the evening. Currently planned: Whitecaps Game, Bowling, Euchre tournament, and that is just the first two night.

Until next time, I remain ready to assist you. Please feel free to write or call.

Yours in Solidarity,  
*Mike*

### Legislative Report



Regina Favors  
Legislative Director

Greetings again brothers and sisters, and a happy, rousing and fun packed convention is my wish for everyone in only a few short months. I have just a few things to share with you this issue.

Governor Granholm spoke at a recent meeting and she briefly touched on the primary debacle. As of right now there is a committee of four (who had endorsed any candidate) that is in meetings with the DNC trying to come up with a fair and equitable way to resolve the problem caused by the early primary voting. One of the four is U.S. Senator Carl Levin, who in a Detroit News Article (Sat. 3-8-08) said he did not see a fair or practical way to conduct a second-chance contest that would satisfy national party leaders and give the state's delegates a place at the convention in Denver this August. Along with Senator Levin is U.S. Representative Carolyn Cheeks-Kilpatrick, UAW President Ron Get-

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telfinger and Democratic National Committeewoman Debbie Dingell. They are working on some type of resolution with the Democratic National Committee and the campaigns of Sens. Hillary Clinton and Barack Obama. We can only hope and pray that they **DO WORK OUT SOMETHING!!!!**

Also, as I understand it there was another state (New Hampshire) that jumped the gun and held an early primary but they have not lost any of their delegates, just Florida and Michigan have lost delegate seating, (hmmm I wonder why?) I do know that what ever comes of this catastrophe, I hope instead of being more disenfranchised you (we) become more motivated and energized and try to get things changed so that this can never happen again. I mean why can we not get together, come together whatever and say to our legislators that ALL of our votes should count in ALL elections. Let's do away with the electoral college bull---- and let the citizens speak and be heard vote by vote. That is one way or way or at least an easy simple way to fix things or try and get it right. (There again, that's just MY OPINION).

Another issue that was touched on at this meeting was the court systems and the laws that have been and are being changed right before your eyes (or behind your backs if you will). One for instance is, do you know that the right to a trial by a jury of your peers or by a judge is no longer your decision? As of now it is the PROSECUTOR who has the say as to whether it is (which) judge or jury. Another issue is, your supreme court is handing down more decisions against you (us, average citizens) and for the corporations, employers and insurers than ever before. People it is more than past time to wake up and get involved than at any other time in our history. Maybe when you have some time you can just scroll through and look at what laws have been changed and how many of our USED TO BE CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHTS have been erased, repealed, diluted or whatever. Everyday we are losing more and more.

Those of you who do not have computers or internet access, by all means please ask you children, (grands) or other relatives/friends to just look up these issues. Then as you research the issues also research the candidates, what they believe in, their voting records, and their legislative records. What have they done (or not done) legislatively, as far as your community, city, state, economy, job etc goes. Don't just believe (or dis-believe) what myself or anyone else says.

Please let us not forget about H.R. 4236 (The Mail Network Protection Act of 2007). Did you contact your legislators? Also watch out for any proposed regulations or acts that would jeopardize, weaken or destroy the FMLA Act of 1993. Don't forget the DMC Nurses and there continuing fight to belong to the union. Continue to pray for and support our union brothers and sisters of American Axle. And lastly, I know you are probably tired of this one but please pay attention to it because there are so many versions, bills resolutions and such about Health Care.

As you think about or engage in conversation about this, just remember that not everyone is without healthcare by choice. Then also think about what if it were a close relative or friend of yours who is in need because just as surely as yesterday we had job security and today we do not. Just as surely as yesterday there was affirmative action and today there is not. Just as surely as yesterday it was our right to be judged by a jury of our peers, what about today? What if it were your elder relative that had to choose whether to get their medicine or get food? Think about those elderly who did work and pay their dues to only now have their Medicare cut or those on Medicaid who had coverage and now it is cut or even worse none at all. I personally know of a young man that had a very good job with great benefits whose daughter suddenly became very ill and almost lost her life. She spent more the five months in the hospital and is still in therapy three times a week, still on life support and still requires 24 hour care. This young man has lost his job, is currently with-

out insurance/healthcare for himself but diligently cares for his daughter.

Maybe there are those who would have made another choice but I applaud this young man and I pray everyday that he does not become ill or get into an accident or anything because who or where could he get help? I also personally know of someone who is on Medicaid but can not get the medicine she had been on all along because of the cuts made to it. This person is a diabetic on insulin and recently received her insulin but was told that her needles are no longer covered! How can that be? Could that maybe one day be you or someone you know and love? Just a thought!!

On a final note, I would like to send my congratulations and much love and best wishes to Jane Duggan on her retirement from the Postal Service.

**DON'T FORGET TO REGISTER (if you are not) AND VOTE!!!!**

Remember to give generously to COPA and as always I wish you PEACE, LOVE

In strong Solidarity,

*Gina*

Articles for the  
May / June 2008  
Edition of the  
Michigan  
Messenger need to  
be submitted to the  
Editor not later  
than **May 15,  
2008.**

## Veteran's Report



John Smeekens  
Veterans Director

### CHEBOYGAN SOLDIER

In early January of 2008, about 100 family members, friends, and members of numerous Veterans' groups gathered to bid farewell to a Cheboygan

native killed in the Korean War more than 57 years ago. U. S. Army Pfc. Billy Miles MacLeod, 20 years old, died in the battle for the Chosin Reservoir on November 28, 1950. Mr. MacLeod's remains were repatriated from a mass grave in 2002, after a piece of heavy equipment, working on a road project, uncovered his remains.

### VERY SAD NEWS

Monday February 04, 2008, Mr. Harry R. Landis died at the age of 108, in Florida. Mr. Landis was one of two surviving U. S. World War I Veterans. As reported by the Department of Veterans Affairs, Mr. Frank Buckles, 107, of West Virginia is the last remaining Veteran of World War I, in America.

### MILEAGE INCREASE

Over a million eligible veterans will see their mileage reimbursement more than double starting February 01, 2008, for travel to Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) medical facilities. "This increase helps veterans - especially those living in rural areas, offset some of the gasoline costs as they travel to VA's world-class health care facilities," said Secretary of Veterans Affairs Dr. James B. Peake. "Increasing the mileage reimbursement is one more step by VA to help veterans access the health care they deserve." The 2008 appro-

priations act provided funding for VA to increase the beneficiary travel mileage reimbursement rate from 11 cents per mile to 28.5 cents per mile. The increase went into effect on Feb. 1, 2008. After little more than a month on the job, Secretary Peake used his authority to establish the first increase in the mileage reimbursement in 30 years, fulfilling a pledge he made during his Senate confirmation hearing last month.

### VETERANS STIMULUS

If you know of any Veterans who do not file a tax report with the I.R.S., you need to tell them that there are certain regulations to follow to get their economic stimulus check that the government is doling out this year. The sum of veterans' disability compensation, pension or survivors' benefits received from the Department of Veterans' Affairs in 2007, needs to be reported to make you eligible for the stimulus check. People are allowed to estimate their annual benefit by taking their monthly annual veterans' benefit, multiplying it by the number of months during the year they received benefits, and entering the number on Line 20a of Form 1040 or Line 14a of the Form 1040A. Check with a trusted and knowledgeable tax preparer, to learn what the proper procedure should be used for their situation. The I.R.S. can assist you, or give you the phone number of a service that may help you free of charge. Don't wait.

### SUICIDE

H. R. 327, the "Joshua Omvig Veterans Suicide Prevention Act," now P.L. 110-

110 directs the Secretary of the DVA (department of veterans affairs) to develop and carry out a comprehensive program designed to reduce the incidence of suicide among Veterans'. A recent report stated that 18 Veterans a day, yes a day, were committing suicide because they could not get help from the D.V.A The VA cares about each Veteran and their physical and mental health. Presently they have over 10,000 mental health workers who have dedicated themselves to helping Veterans cope with the issues and crises they face. The VA strongly encourages Veterans who may be considering harming themselves in some way to seek treatment from the VA immediately, or call the Veterans suicide hotline at 1-800-273-TALK (8255). The line is open 24 hours a day, seven days a week, to help any Veteran in need. For those who fight for it, freedom has a flavor the protected will never know.

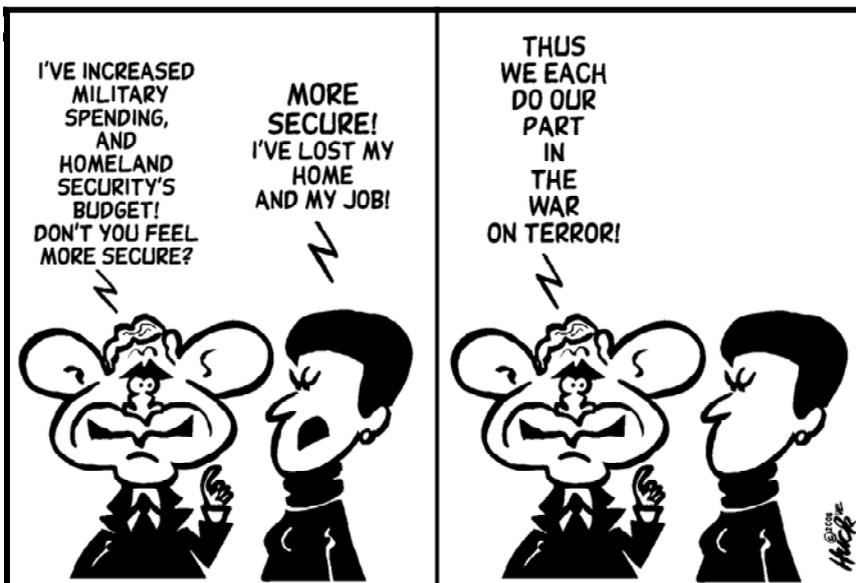
### NEW VET CENTERS

Secretary of Veterans Affairs Dr. James B. Peake said an expansion by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) of its Vet Centers, which provide readjustment counseling and outreach services to returning combat veterans, is well ahead of schedule.

In February 2007, VA announced it would open 23 new centers during the next two years. Fifteen of those centers are already operational, and five others are seeing patients in temporary facilities while finalizing their leases. The other three facilities will begin operations later this year.

"Building on our past successes, 2008 will see a permanent increase in the number of Vet Centers, as we bring the remaining facilities on line to reach a record 232 Vet Centers by the end of the year," Peake said. "To support this expansion and augment the staff at 61 existing Vet Centers, this year we are channeling a 44 percent increase in funding to the Re-

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Veterans Report Continued

adjustment Counseling Service, which operates the Vet Centers -- nearly \$50 million more than last year's budget," he added. The community-based Vet Centers are a key component of VA's mental health program, providing veterans with mental health screening and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) counseling, along with help for family members dealing with bereavement and loved ones with PTSD.

Two of the new Vet Centers that are open in permanent locations are in Escanaba, Mich. and Saginaw, Mich. Vet Centers provide counseling on employment, plus services on family issues, education and outreach, to combat veterans and their families. Vet Centers are staffed by small teams of professional counselors, outreach specialists and other specialists, many of whom are combat veterans themselves.

VA's Vet Centers have hired 100 combat veterans back from Iraq and Afghanistan as outreach specialists, often placing them near military processing stations, to brief servicemen and women leaving the military about VA benefits.

These outreach specialists meet with returning veterans, work through family assistance centers and visit military installations to carry the message that VA will be there for the troops and family members after discharge.

**HAND SALUTE**

You will be pleased to know that the recently enacted National Defense Authorization Act (H.R. 4986) includes provisions clarifying that members of the Armed Forces and veterans who are not in uniform may render the military salute during the hoisting, lowering, or passing of the U.S. flag. It passed the House by a vote of 369 to 46. In addition, The National Defense Authorization Act contains a number of provisions to improve the treatment of wounded service members returning from Iraq and Afghani-

stan. The legislation prohibits the increase of Tricare fees, freezes current pharmacy co-payment fees, and encourages pharmacies in the Tricare retail network to obtain pharmaceuticals at the same price that is available to Federal agencies, including the Department of Defense and VA.

**USS NEW YORK**

It's official. Saturday March 01, 2008, the USS New York, an amphibious assault ship, built with 7.5 tons of scrap steel in its bow, from the ruins of the World Trade Center, was christened. It took two hits of the christening bottle before the bottle broke, but that just shows you how tough the USS New York really is. The bow stem bore a shield with two gray bars to symbolize the twin towers and a banner over that declaring "NEVER FORGET," a slogan among New Yorkers. Thousands of people, including friends and families of those who died in the September 11, 2001 terrorist attack, gathered near the gray ship, trimmed with Red, White, and Blue banners, for the event.

**AK 47 bah!**

In a move that could be the most enduring imprint of U.S. influence in the Arab world, American military officials in Baghdad have begun a crash program to outfit the Iraqi army with M-16 rifles. The move marks a sharp break for a culture steeped in the traditions of the AK-47 assault rifle.

**STAR SPANGLED BANNER**

This famous song became our National Anthem in 1931, but the tradition of its singing at baseball games, began during the 1917 World Series, when it was originally sung in honor of World War I soldiers. The audience was so moved that it has been repeated at every game from then on.

*John*

**Do You Know the Union Difference?**

1. How much higher are the median weekly earning of union workers compared to non-union workers?
  - a. 6 percent
  - b. 12 percent
  - c. 30 percent
2. What percent of union workers get health benefits?
  - a. 80 percent
  - b. 60 percent
  - c. 28 percent
3. What percent of nonunion workers get health benefits?
  - a. 73 percent
  - b. 60 percent
  - c. 49 percent
4. What percent of union workers gets a guaranteed, defined-benefit pension?
  - a. 19 percent
  - b. 49 percent
  - c. 68 percent
5. What percent of nonunion workers get a guaranteed, defined benefit pension?
  - a. 60 percent
  - b. 27 percent
  - c. 14 percent
6. Of nonunion workers who aren't managers, what percent say they want a union in their workplace?
  - a. 17 percent
  - b. 30 percent
  - c. 58 percent
7. What percent of workers were members of unions last year?
  - a. 35 percent
  - b. 20 percent
  - c. 12 percent

Source: US Department of Labor, Employment and Earnings (January 2003) Bureau of Labor Statistics, Employee Benefits in Private Industry, 2000 Peter D. Hart Research Associates, February 2003.



Answers: 1c; 2a; 3c; 4c; 5c; 6c; 7c

## Maintenance Memo



Jane Duggan  
Maintenance Director

In January, I wrote about the In-service process and the need for maintenance officers and stewards to monitor the existence of Inservice registers. Since that time, I have had a number of follow up calls and/or emails. Recently, a new area came up that I would like to address.

### Telephonic Interviews

One of our members recently had an update interview (review panel) where none of the three panel members were physically present in the room. This type of interview had not been conducted previously in that office. I was aware that telephonic interviews do occur – particularly in small offices and/or remote areas – but could not recall the source for the guidelines. So, I sent out an inquiry.

The relevant policy was sent out to all MSS coordinators in May 2006 by Mangala P. Gandhi/USPS Manager of Selection, Evaluation and Recognition (SER). In a nutshell:

- o Applicants must always be physically present at a postal facility for interviews. This is required so that the postal ser-

vice can be assured that the person responding is the applicant.

- o For initial interviews (Entrance, Inservice, Incraft Non-Update), at least one USPS review panel member must be physically present as well.
- o For updates only, all parties – including the applicant – can participate telephonically but the applicant must be in a postal facility where someone can validate his/her identity.
- o All ET-10 interviews must include a representative from MTSC. That person always participates telephonically. There may be other instances where the costs of travel are so prohibitive that telephonic interviews take place.

### Snow Removal

Another instance where email was especially helpful occurred when one of our offices had problems with local management regarding snow removal. I sent out an email inquiry to my maintenance contacts and got seven responses. In every instance, our people were doing snow removal. The only understandable use of a contractor was when a front loader was needed to take physically remove a large amount of snow from the premises after our people had plowed.

I can't say enough about how helpful I have found email to be to get a lot of input in a short time and to be able to draw on a vast amount of knowledge and experience.

*“spouse, son, daughter, parent, or next of kin” to take up to 26 workweeks of leave to care for a “member of the Armed Forces, including a member of the National Guard or Reserves, who is undergoing medical treatment, recuperation, or therapy, is otherwise in outpatient status, or is otherwise on the temporary disability retired list, for a serious injury or illness.”*

This is a wonderful improvement for many of our members, not only veterans but the family members of veterans. As many people in the military are staying longer overseas, especially in Iraq and Afghanistan, they are often coming home in need of a lot of medical treatment. Family members are needed for support, transportation and other forms of assistance to the returning military person.

Allowing 26 workweeks of protected leave will be a literal life saver for many of our members who previously had only 12 weeks FMLA per year. Of course, our contractual right to 80 hours of “sick/dependent care” does not change whether we use it in conjunction with FMLA or not.

### A Fond Farewell

I know that by now many of you have heard that I retired from USPS on February 29<sup>th</sup>. As a result, I will not be running for Maintenance Craft Director at the upcoming constitutional convention. I can't submit my last article without extending a special thanks to each and all of you for the trust you put in me over the last five years that I served as MCD.

Working with MPWU has been one of the highlights of my time as a unionist. All the other state officers have been helpful and supportive and the overall experience has taught me a great deal. I will be a full dues paying member of APWU and expect to participate as much as possible and to serve in any way that I can in the future.

Let me close by wishing each of you good health, good friends and victory in struggle.

*Jane*



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### Veterans and Expanded FMLA

On January 28, 2008, President Bush signed into law H.R. 4986, the National Defense Authorization Act for FY 2008 (NDAA), Pub. L. 110-181.

*Among other things, section 585 of the NDAA amends the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 (FMLA) to permit a*

## Injury Comp Report



Ron Krumrie  
HR/Injury Comp Director

This will be my last article as your Human Relations / Injury Compensation Director. It has truly been an honor and a privilege to serve all the dues paying brothers and sisters of this great Union for the last eight years.

As I sit here writing this I have feelings of sadness and happiness at the same time. It has been a great joy in helping all the dues paying brothers and sisters with their claims for work related injuries, and I will miss it. On a good note, my union activity will continue.

I have been elected Traverse City Area Local's President, and I will continue to fight for our rights and benefits. So instead of OWCP issues, I now have overtime issues, loss of jobs, RI-399 issues and on and on.

The battles will never stop. We just change what we are fighting sometimes. I would like to thank two very special people who have helped me out in my union activity.

First I would like to thank Sue Carney our National Human Relations Director. Sue has been a true inspiration in her relentless fight for our rights and benefits under the Federal Employees' Compensation Act. She has testified before Congress on the attack on our benefits. She is in constant contact with the Department of Labor to discuss whatever issues we tell her about. Sue started a regional training seminar program, and continues to train our union officials when given the funds. She continues to help our wounded service members who are coming back from the war. Sue is a true hero and great leader. Thanks again Sue, I would go to into battle with you any time, any

place. Just let me know when and where.

My second thank you is for Lynn Charles Walker, my real hero. I was blessed to have Lynn share with me his knowledge and wisdom from day one as a new union official almost 12 years ago. Having one of the greatest union minds train you makes it easier to succeed. I was in a one on one teaching session with a Professor in college. Lynn may not have a piece of paper stating he is a college professor, but all of us who have been around him know that is just a formality. He is truly one of our greatest teachers on unionism in this great union

Lynn's lesson plans were really pretty simple. It was always about we and never about me. It was always take the names out and address the issues. It was always do the right thing, not the most popular thing. It was about what UNION really means U AND I.

I have always said that knowledge is power, use it, and share it. Lynn has always shared his knowledge and wisdom with all who will listen. Thanks again Lynn for always being there and guiding us in the right direction.

I really believe the great state of Michigan provides the best OWCP help to our union members in the country, and I hope it continues. It will take all of us to make it work. We all must work to convince all non-members to join our great union. If you want to enjoy union wages and benefits then you should be required to belong. We all must support the state organization as well. Remember what I told you Lynn taught me years ago, it's all about we, and never about

me.

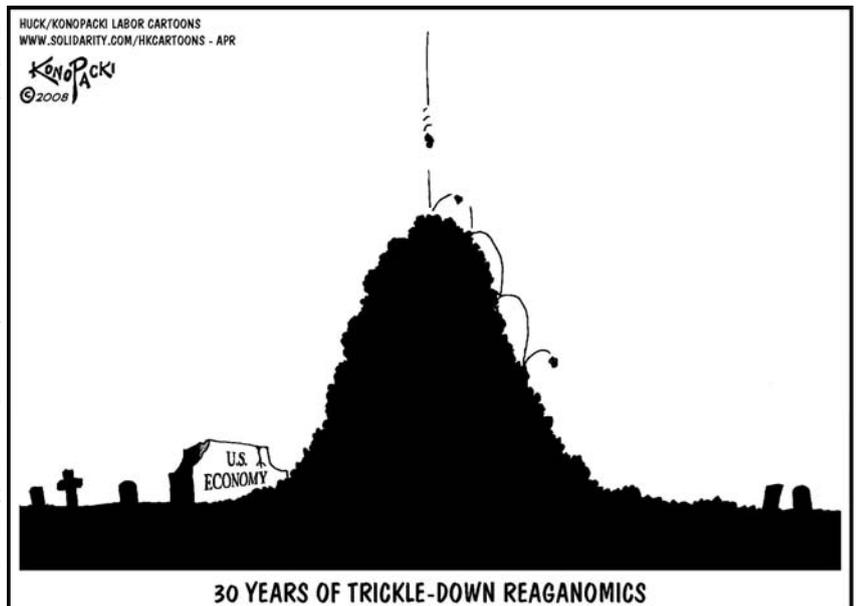
I would like to thank everyone I have served with on the state executive board for the last eight years. We have not always agreed on everything and that's OK, debate is good. If we all agreed on everything then this world would be pretty boring. This great country we live in is great because we can disagree and still get along. We can voice our opinion without fear, and that is a wonderful thing. I have had the opportunity to visit many countries during my career in the U. S. Navy and not everyone in the world can express their opinion without fear.

I truly believe we've come a long way in the last eight years in our ability to assist our dues paying brothers and sisters in the constant fight for our rights and benefits when we are injured at work. We must continue in this battle and I hope whoever is elected as our next Human relations/Injury Compensation Director gets the support that they will need to be successful. Once again it has truly been an honor and privilege to serve as your Human Relations/Injury Compensation Director.

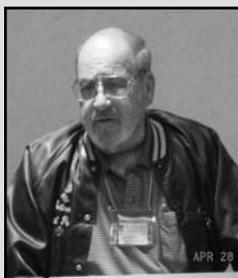
May all your grievances be winners and your claims approved.  
KNOWLEDGE IS POWER, USE IT AND SHARE IT!!!!

In Union Solidarity,

*Ron*



## Retiree Involvement



**Al LaBrecque**  
MPWU Retirees President

4th Biennial State Retiree Chapter Constitutional Convention...will convene on Friday, May 16, 2008 at 9:30 a.m., in Grand Rapids, MI in conjunction with the MPWU State Constitutional Convention. The State Chapter Convention Call is announced elsewhere in this issue with necessary details. The Convention will be considering any resolutions regarding retiree and Retirees' Dept. issues submitted to the State Union Convention intended to be ultimately submitted to the APWU National Convention in August at Las Vegas. Likewise; resolutions that may be submitted to amend or update the State Retiree Chapter Constitution & By-Laws, Elections of State Chapter officers, and determining the question of sending delegates to the pre-convention APWU Retirees' Dept. Conference scheduled to be held in Vegas in August, will be priority business on the agenda.

Newly elected APWU Retirees' Dept. Dir., Judy Beard, has been invited to address retiree delegates, and will hopefully be available throughout. We will feature a one-hour "open session" immediately after lunch at 1:30 p.m. (sharp) on Friday, May 16th, with a presentation by the Governor's appointed Director of the Michigan Office of Services to the Aging, which is a federally and state funded agency. Like to admit it, or not...that's US! Locals that have a Human Relations officer, or officers whose duties include H.R., are cordially invited to attend, as are spouses, guests, Local and State delegates and officers.

Hopefully, our four Michigan Local Retiree Chapters are planning on sending delegates. Members-At-Large (i.e. "M.A.L." Any member of the APWU Retirees' Dept. who does not belong to a Local Retiree Chapter) may attend and participate with one (1) vote. This is a

one-day Convention, so commuters are encouraged to attend at little expense. To be a recognized delegate, credentials must be issued and can be obtained by contacting me. The Chapter Convention Call provides those details.

Associate 1.6b Post Offices. The Jan./Feb. issue of the "Messenger" featured the text of the "Local Memorandum Of Understanding For Offices Without a Local Union Structure" recently negotiated by the APWU, a.k.a. the generic small office "contract". Not a resounding boon to the lone PTF (or rare Regular) in many of our rural P.O.'s, but better than the 'nothing' they had prior to this LMOU. From what I can ascertain after a first reading, is that the clerk(s) member had better have a National Agreement in hand for reference after reference to determine what their specific contractual rights are. Living in rural N.E. Michigan, I have occasion to visit several small A.O.'s. My involvement with the 1.6b small office surveys to establish a function baseline a couple of years ago was an enlightening experience. As a past Area Local office and MPWU Area Director, I am well aware of the particular "Hell" endured by many of our members out in the hinterlands.

Up here in the "Top 'O the Mitt", small 1.6b A.O.'s are even more isolated than those closer to metropolitan areas or APWU Area Locals, and the ill-advised postmaster and OIC dictatorships' treatment of their 'serf' PTF (or rare Regular) Clerk is abominable! POOM's act as if they are 'gods'. Contractual rights and practices, as well as a Union presence, are practically nonexistent. It's not unusual to have a PMR performing retail and clerk craft duties while the postmaster is also on duty. Rural letter carriers trained on retail duties to cover Saturdays and clerk/postmaster absences. I have to qualify this observation by stating members have ready access to Union representation through their MPWU Area Directors, but are all too often too intimidated to make the call. In several instances, the Union presence the 1.6b surveys provided, if ever so briefly, had some PM/OIC's uncomfortable as prostitutes in church with the eyes of the Union upon

them. It is encouraging to learn that the Clerk Division in the Nov., '07 Multi-Craft Conferences addressed revisiting the 1.6b A.O.'s to determine if the established baselines have changed. The sooner, the better!

Leap Year Anomaly. Just when retirees expected a short month between paydays, Leap Year gave us an extra day. The "extra day", Feb. 29th, fell on a Friday, thus March 1st landed on Saturday, and retiree annuity direct deposits weren't available until Monday, March 3rd! So, retirees had a 32-day 'month' between paydays! Retirees who live on a thin margin due to their meager monthly annuities and the steadily spiraling basic living expenses, felt the pinch.

This is not a new question, having been raised well before my own 'ride into the sunset'. When the first of the month falls on a Saturday, Sunday, or holiday, including up to a 3-day delay when the first of the month lands on a Saturday and Monday is an observed holiday, the government continues to reap the interest and use our money! It may only amount to nickels and dimes to the individual annuitant, but the government realizes millions at the expense of postal/federal retirees. In mulling this issue, it occurred to me that Social Security monthly payments are deposited on the closest Wednesday to the recipient's birthday, thus avoiding similar delays, except for perhaps, an occasional 4th of July. Maybe this isn't the most pressing of our many issues, but it's certainly something I continue to ponder. In this age of electronic technology, one has to question why OPM doesn't have the ability (or will) to deposit annuity funds to our designated financial institutions regardless on which day the 1st of the month falls? Let's think about this.

Black Tie? After the published report by the elected Eastern Region Retiree Delegate to the APWU National Convention, John P. Richards, regarding the installation of officers snub by the APWU leadership at the end of the APWU Multi-Craft Conferences and Retirees' Dept. Conference in Las Vegas in Nov., I've been asked if I attended the "\$35. per person black tie"

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**Retiree Involvement Continued**

event. While a simple "NO" might suffice, I'm compelled to share my position on that. As a Retirees' Dept. Conference delegate, I received a reservation form to attend the APWU Installation of Officers being held on Nov. 8th in Vegas. \$35. per person, or \$350. for a table of ten, and what really got my shorts in a bunch...black tie! Black tie?! I don't wear ANY tie anywhere, let alone even own a black tie or the tux to go with it! Since retiring, flannel shirts, jeans and sneakers are my attire, and that includes going to church! But, that's not the point since I had no desire to attend the installation ceremony, the first as I recall, to be held outside Wash., D.C.

What immediately came to my mind when I received the reservation form from APWU Hq., and read "black tie" is: "How can these people even begin to relate to the reality of life for the rank and file membership and retirees?" Are we a "Labor Union" or "Big Business"? Labor or Management? Blue collar or black tie? And, I recalled the credo adopted by my home Local many years ago coined by our 'favorite son', Leo Persails, who said of USPS management; "We don't think like 'em. We don't act like 'em. And, we don't want to look like 'em!" From that time on, we proudly considered ourselves to be "blue collar" and ditched the neck ropes. So, NO, I didn't attend the "black tie" Installation of APWU National Officers which excluded the five elected National Retiree Delegates to the APWU National Convention! Apparently, I don't think like 'em, I don't act like 'em, and I don't want to look like 'em! Just the humble opinion of this blue collar Union man in the field. See you in Grand Rapids, God willing and the creek don't rise.

Be Strong!

*AL*

## NBA Report



Lynn Pallas-Barber  
Central Region NBA—Clerk Craft

### DOCUMENTING AND DEVELOPING

It becomes ever more important that grievances are properly developed and documented. Management has become increasingly skilled and their advocates continually object to argument raised and evidence presented for the first time in arbitration.

As stewards, we are expected to be in compliance with Article 15, Section 2, Step 2.d of our CBA. This contractual provision is a requirement that both parties shall cooperate fully in an effort to develop all necessary facts, including the exchange of copies of all relevant papers or documents in accordance with Article 31 and the contractual provisions relied upon. It is extremely important that the contractual provision relied upon be incorporated in the body of the Step 2 appeal. It has occurred in arbitration, when the articles of the contract are not developed in the written Step 2 appeal and only testified to in arbitration, that new argument has now been established.

Documents relied upon by the Union must be exchanged with management and should be exchanged at the Step 2 meeting. Often times documents are placed in the file by a steward and when they are relied upon in arbitration management objects as they have never seen the document previously. This can be very difficult for the advocate. Should an important document be discovered after an appeal to Step 3 or Direct Appeal to Arbitration, the steward should notify the NBA in the file and should provide a copy to the USPS regional office to include in their file. Remember an advocate can only present in arbitration the case that was de-

veloped and documented at the local level.

### FAMILY MEDICAL LEAVE ACT

Recently I have dealt with some FMLA issues at Step 3 and would like to provide some guidance on this complicated and sometimes troublesome procedure to our members. If an employee has a question on how to properly apply for FMLA the joint Q&A found on the APWU web site can be extremely helpful.

Application for leave protected by FMLA must include a PS Form 3971 with the supporting documentation. Leave under the FMLA is not a separate category or type of leave. An employee may request annual leave, sick leave or LWOP for the absence under FMLA. APWU Form #2 Certification by Employee's Health Care Provider for Employee's Serious Illness or the Department of Labor (DOL) Form WH-380 must be properly completed by a health care provider and should also provide for the present period of incapacity and match the period requested on the PS Form 3971. This request triggers the period for the 12 weeks/ 480 hours of protected leave.

When the employee submits the APWU Form #2/WH-380 without a PS Form 3971 and a current period of incapacity, then management more than likely will reject the request. Both pieces of documentation are required when applying for protection of a serious health condition and a present period of incapacity is also required. Once all documentation requirements have been met and completely filled in by the health care provider, then and only then can management request clarification on the request and contact your physician with the permission of the employee. The proper completion of the PS Form 3971 is the responsibility of the employee. The proper completion of the APWU Form #2/ WH-380 is the responsibility of your physician. Employees should make your doctor aware that a current period of incapacity is required. Incomplete APWU Form #2-WH-380 can only be changed by your physician. Your steward, your NBA or an arbitrator can not change your

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**NBA Report Continued**

incomplete form. Incomplete information can not be resolved in the grievance procedure.

***APWU Form #1- Employee Certification of Own Serious Illness-***

FMLA can be used by an employee for absences of less than 3 days. This form can only be used once an employee has an approved FMLA protected serious health condition. The submission of a PS Form 3971 and the APWU Form #2/WH-380 is the only way to establish an approved claim for the employee's serious health condition. APWU Form #1 can be used only after that has been accepted and approved. Once again your steward, your NBA and an arbitrator cannot provide you with an approved FMLA serious health condition without the proper completed paper work.

**WORKERS MEMORIAL DAY**

Each April 28, since 1989, unions of the AFL-CIO observe Workers Memorial Day. This is a day to remember those who have suffered and died on the job. April 28 was chosen because it is the anniversary of the Occupational Safety and Health Administration and the day of similar remembrance in Canada. Every year, employees in hundreds of communities and work-sites recognize workers who have been killed or injured on the job. Trade unionists around the world now recognize April 28 as an International Day of Mourning. As we remember those who have died in the workplace because of violence, suffered disease and death because of exposure to toxic substances or have been injured because of dangerous conditions, we should rededicate ourselves to the fight for a safe workplace.

As postal workers, we have seen violence take the lives of our co-workers. We have seen the death of fellow workers because of anthrax in the mail. We have seen hundreds of our members injured because of ergonomic strain on the workroom floor. The struggle continues for each and every one of us to be involved in safety on the workroom floor. Our membership is often reluctant to use a PS Form 1767. We all have an obligation to be safety conscious!!

Yours in Union Solidarity

Until next time,

*Lynn*

**Everyone IS Entitled To My Opinion"**

**Here They Come.....**

by Michael B. Ganino, Jr.

In another life, not too long ago - working at my "nixie case" and as local/state APWU president as well as steward - on the work room floor I would always tell supervisors and managers that they should take no glee in the loss of craft jobs - that there time would come. Many responses were accompanied with a laugh & some worked harder to reduce jobs. Well, oh boy - here come the reductions and you know from where?

NO - NOT at headquarters!

NO - NOT the area!

NO - NOT at the district levels!

NO WAY - It will come from the bottom dwellers who so willingly took up arms, using their pencils so creatively, against "their" fellow employees!

Now I take NO pleasure in anyone losing a job - but you know - what goes around comes around. Apparently the "sheeples" were under the misconception that "they" were immune to the "axe". NO WAY

Based on information that I have obtained from the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Postal Worker Web Site (below) as well as discussions with other's from around the country, it has become obvious that those in the "ruling" class are now in line for some harsh treatment!

FLASH:

USPS to eliminate 2400 Supervisor positions. In the past week, Postmaster General Jack Potter and members of Headquarters staff have had conference calls with each USPS district manager and district staffs with direct instructions to reduce supervisory positions within each district. Each district has been given a target number of supervisory positions that must be eliminated ranging from 26 to 47 positions per district. USPS is committed to reducing management positions (as reported in Hierophant News in December 2007) and this phase is expected to yield a total reduction of approximately 2400 supervisor positions.

The news of the reductions comes after the conclusion of a national mail count for rural routes; wherein supervisor positions were a critically important part of the logistics of conducting the national mail count. Although the decisions to force the elimination of supervisor positions was made before the mail count, the actual directions

were withheld until now. News of the reductions is still not common knowledge and will come as a surprise to many supervisors thus targeted.

The "wrecking crews" (function four teams etc.) performed their jobs, "as directed" and then some! Just following orders, some would remark. Well here we are in 2008 and the grim reaper is now at the door of supervision and managers. Yes indeed, the "big bad wolf" is here to "blow down the roof"!

The very supervisors and lower level managers who were used to implement job reductions in the bargaining unit, many of whom thought that if they did the job the "correct" way, that would somehow inoculate them from the "cancer" that continues to envelope the postal "service".

If it is not readily apparent to all that the USPS is ruled by "The Enemy Within" (thanks to Leo Persails) who will implement the marching orders they receive from the president and "big" business, then shame on you!! Ironically many of the upper echelon of USPS "management" hail from Southern New England and Westchester County. Some of those who "scaled the highest mountain" have no memory of those they left behind on the work room floor.

The PMG & Labor Relations Major "Domo", both hail from "our neck of the woods" and both were even union stewards at one time. Wonder if whatever it is, that is being rammed down their throats causes them to choke or have they lost the gag reflex? Another high level postal official, when in charge of the CT District was accused of withholding information concerning the STILL UNSOLVED ANTHRAX attacks of many years ago. So I suppose "they" are NOT concerned about YOU and service???

Me thinks that while the USPS's "work share partners" SHARE more and more of the work formerly performed by the USPS and it's work force, those in "power" just keep on

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Everyone IS Entitled to My Opinion Continued

swallowing in the hopes that they will remain on "board" what is fast becoming the USPS TITANIC.

A great way to respond to this destruction of the finest mail service in the entire world is to VOTE! Donate and work for the candidate's of your choice. Let the candidates know that you are watching by calling and writing letters and mobilizing your family, friends and co-workers to the cause. Because in the real world it is YOUR job they are after.

Final thought: Yesterday a news story broke regarding the failure of the State Department to safeguard passport records. Many pundits and news organizations were quick to attack the "government employees" who are lazy, cannot work, etc., but you know what.

The State Department employees accused of peeking into the passport records of Senators Obama, Clinton and McCain are in fact CONTRACT workers.

Yes Sir and Ms., for every civil servant working in and for the State Department, The Passport Agency is actually dominated by CONTRACT workers NOT Civil Servants! Way up in New Hampshire sits a CONTRACT facility run by a PRIVATE company that in reality IS the "phantom" or quasi state department.

One day when the USPS is dominated by CONTRACT WORKERS who toil at wages that are one half that of FORMER postal workers – those CONTRACT WORKERS will have access to the mail that was at one time protected by guarantees contained in the CONSTITUTION of the United States.

Let us hope that one day we do not look back at the "passport" debacle as a comparison to the "postal" debacle that found that another "right of privacy" that is: the SANCTITY of the MAIL has slipped through OUR fingers!

Peace

*Michael B. Ganino, Jr.*

You can reach me at [magicmike@metrocast.net](mailto:magicmike@metrocast.net) or [michael-ganino@metrocast.net](mailto:michael-ganino@metrocast.net).

## Day in the Life of Joe Middle-Class

By John Gray Cincinnati, Ohio

Submitted by: Regina Favors via the Union Review Website

Joe gets up at 6:00am to prepare his morning coffee. He fills his pot full of good clean drinking water because some social activist fought for minimum water quality standards. He takes his daily medication with his first swallow of coffee. His medications are safe to take because some social activist fought to insure their safety and work as advertised. All but \$10.00 of his medications are paid for by his employers medical plan because some social activist union workers fought their employers for paid medical insurance, now Joe gets it too. He prepares his morning breakfast, bacon and eggs this day. Joe's bacon is safe to eat because some social activist fought for laws to regulate the meat packing industry.

Joe takes his morning shower reaching for his shampoo; His bottle is properly labeled with every ingredient and the amount of its contents because some social activist fought for his right to know what he was putting on his body and how much it contained. Joe dresses, walks outside and takes a deep breath. The air he breathes is clean because some tree hugging social activist fought for laws to stop industries from polluting our air. He walks to the subway station for his government subsidized ride to work; it saves him considerable money in parking and transportation fees. You see, some social activist fought for affordable public transportation, which gives everyone the opportunity to be a contributor.

Joe begins his work day; he has a good job with excellent pay, medicals benefits, retirement, paid holidays and vacation because some social activist union members fought and died for these working standards. Joe's employer pays these standards because Joe's employer doesn't want his employees to call the union. If Joe is hurt on the job or becomes unemployed he'll get a worker compensation or unemployment check because some social activist didn't think he should lose his home because of his temporary misfortune.

Its noon time, Joe needs to make a

Bank Deposit so he can pay some bills. Joe's deposit is federally insured by the FSLIC because some social activist wanted to protect Joe's money from unscrupulous bankers who ruined the banking system before the depression. Joe has to pay his Fannie Mae underwritten Mortgage and his below market federal student loan because some stupid social activist decided that Joe and the government would be better off if he was educated and earned more money over his life-time.

Joe is home from work, he plans to visit his father this evening at his farm home in the country. He gets in his car for the drive to dad's; his car is among the safest in the world because some social activist fought for car safety standards. He arrives at his boyhood home. He was the third generation to live in the house financed by Farmers Home Administration because bankers didn't want to make rural loans. The house didn't have electric until some big government social activist stuck his nose where it didn't belong and demanded rural electrification. (Those rural Republican's would still be sitting in the dark)

He is happy to see his dad who is now retired. His dad lives on Social Security and his union pension because some social activist made sure he could take care of himself so Joe wouldn't have to. After his visit with dad he gets back in his car for the ride home.

He turns on a radio talk show, the host's keeps saying that social activists are bad and conservatives are good. (He doesn't tell Joe that his beloved staunch conservatives have fought against every protection and benefit Joe enjoys throughout his day) Joe agrees, "We don't need those big government social activists ruining our lives; after all, I'm a self made man who believes everyone should take care of themselves, just like I have".

*John Gray*

## News You Can Use – Information on the Upcoming Stimulus Package

Learn when you'll get a tax rebate check

The IRS will begin sending out the first of 130 million economic stimulus checks May 2. When you get yours depends on your Social Security number.

The exact date you receive a stimulus check will depend largely on the last two digits of your Social Security number. More than 130 million stimulus payments will be sent out starting May 2, on a staggered schedule based on the last two digits of taxpayers' Social Security numbers, the Internal Revenue Service announced this week. On jointly filed returns, the mailing schedule will be based on the first Social Security number listed, the IRS said.

For taxpayers who file by April 15 and get their tax refunds deposited directly into a bank or other financial account, the IRS will send stimulus payments from May 2 through May 16. For taxpayers who file by April 15 but don't choose direct deposit, the IRS will mail checks from May 16 through July 11.

Procrastinators, take note: For stimulus payments to be part of this delivery schedule, the IRS said tax returns must be "processed" by April 15, not "filed." That implies that a later timetable may apply to taxpayers who mail their returns on or close to April 15, leaving little time for the returns to be processed by that date.

If you expect a tax refund and choose to directly deposit it into two or three separate accounts, the IRS will send your stimulus check in the mail. (To have your refund sent to more than one account requires you fill out Form 8888. See this IRS page for more information.)

If you owe taxes and are sending a payment to the IRS with your return, you can still have your stimulus payment deposited directly into a bank or other account, the IRS said. Simply fill out the appropriate section on your return related to direct deposit, detailing your account information. See this IRS page for FAQs on stimulus payments. If you do owe taxes, be sure to fill out your return and send payment as usual. That is, don't try deducting your expected stimulus payment from your

tax bill. If you don't pay your tax bill by April 15, you likely will owe interest and penalties, said Anthony Burke, an IRS spokesman.

However, if you have a past-due federal or state income-tax bill or some other type of past-due federal debt such as student loans or child support, your stimulus payment likely will be reduced by what you owe.

This is the stimulus payment schedule for tax returns processed by April 15, the IRS said:

Direct-deposit payment	
If the last two digits of your Social Security number are:	Your payment should be sent to your account by:
00-20	May 2
21-75	May 9
76-99	May 16

Paper check	
If the last two digits of your Social Security number are:	Your tax rebate check should be in the mail by:
00-09	May 16
10-18	May 23
19-25	May 30
26-38	June 6
39-51	June 13
52-63	June 20
64-75	June 27
76-87	July 4
88-99	July 11

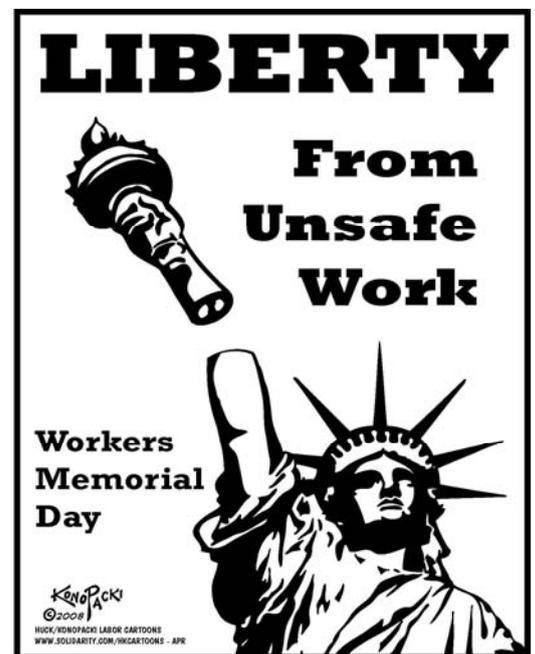
There may be exceptions, the IRS warned. "A small percentage of tax returns will require additional time to process and to compute a stimulus payment amount. For these returns, stimulus payments may not be issued in accordance with the schedule above, even if the tax return was processed by April 15," the IRS said in this week's press release.

"We have some returns that require a second look, that require us to pull them out of the processing for some reason or another," Burke said. "It may not be that there's anything wrong with the return."

The "vast majority of people" will receive stimulus payments according to the posted schedule, Burke said, "but it's a big system, a lot of returns go through our pipeline," so some returns may not go exactly according to schedule.

Also, the IRS said there's a new online calculator taxpayers can use to figure how big their stimulus payments will be. You'll need to have a completed 2007 tax return on hand to use the calculator.

*This article was reported and written by Andrea Coombes for MarketWatch.*



2008 MICHIGAN STATE RETIREE CHAPTER  
4th Biennial Constitutional Convention  
Friday, May 16, 2008  
Crowne Plaza Hotel & Conference Center  
Grand Rapids, MI

**RETIREE CHAPTER/DEPARTMENT CONVENTION CALL**

The 4th Biennial Constitutional Convention of the State Retiree Chapter, Michigan Postal Workers Union, AFL-CIO, will convene on Friday, May 16, 2008 at 9:30 a.m. at the Crowne Plaza Hotel & Conference Center in Grand Rapids, MI, in conjunction with the 21st Biennial Constitutional Convention of the Michigan Postal Workers Union, AFL-CIO. If business is not completed by adjournment on Friday, Convention will reconvene on Saturday. Time to be announced.

Registration: Thursday, May 15th, 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.; Friday, May 16th, 8:00 a.m. - 10:00 p.m.

Hotel Reservations: \$89. (plus 15% taxes. Includes self parking). Crown Plaza Hotel & Convention Center. 5700 28th St., S.E.; Grand Rapids MI 49546. Phone: 1-877-227-6963. Be sure to tell reservations that you are with "Group - MPWU" to receive the proper room rate.

Registration Fee: \$75.00 \*\*State Retiree Chapter E-Board officer registration fees will be Included in authorized expenses. (No registration fee will be charged for one-day commuter retiree delegates, EXCEPT retiree delegates attending Saturday Installation Dinner.)

Meal Package: There will be no American Plan. Everyone will be on their own for meals, EXCEPT for those registered delegates attending Saturday evening Installation Dinner. State Retiree Chapter E-Board officers meal expenses will be included in authorized expenses upon submission of receipts, beginning with Thursday dinner and ending with Sunday breakfast.

DELEGATES: Article 10., MPWU State Retiree Chapter Constitution states: "The voting strength of member Local Retiree Chapters at Convention shall be one (1) vote for every twenty (20) members, or fraction thereof. Representation shall be based upon the membership of each member Local Retiree Chapter in the year preceding the Convention. Members -At-Large shall be entitled to one (1) vote each. Each MPWU State Retiree Chapter officer holding an elective office shall have a voice and one (1) vote and shall be a delegate to the MPWU State Retiree Chapter Convention." (NOTE: In order to fulfill these provisions, Local Retiree Chapters are requested to bring their Local Chapter dues rebate printouts to the Convention to verify the voting strength of each Local Retiree Chapter. While it may not be necessary, we want to be correct and without question).

NOMINATION & ELECTION OF OFFICERS: Article 6. "Elections". "All regular elections shall be held in conjunction with the election of officers of the Michigan Postal Workers Union, AFL-CIO. Officers shall be elected by secret ballot vote. Notice of election shall be advertised in the Michigan Messenger at least thirty (30) days preceding the election. Nominations and elections procedures shall be in accordance with the MPWU Constitution. Appeals to the conduct of elections shall be in accordance with the elections appeals procedures of the MPWU Constitution."

ARTICLE 5. OFFICERS.

Section 1. "The elected officers of this State Chapter shall be: President, Vice-President, Secretary-Treasurer, and up to three (3) Trustees."

Section 2. "To be eligible for office, a member must be in good standing for three (3) months immediately preceding the election, as certified by the Secretary-Treasurer."

Section 3. "To be eligible to vote in an election of officers, a member must be in good standing for the three (3) months immediately preceding the election as certified by the Chapter Secretary-Treasurer."

Nominations for State Retiree Chapter officers will be the last order of business prior to lunch recess on Friday, May 16th. Elections of State Retiree Chapter officers will be conducted at 3:00 p.m., Friday, May 16th. Election results will be announced prior to adjournment on Friday, May 16th.

CREDENTIALS: Credential cards will be issued to MPWU State Retiree Chapter Executive Board officers. Credential cards for Local Retiree Chapter delegates and M.A.L. delegates may be obtained from: Al LaBrecque; 3550 Wilson St.; Spruce, MI 48762, or call 989-736-8173; or e-mail: al-lab@deepnet.net. Local Retiree Chapter credential cards are to be filled out showing both the name of the delegate and Local Retiree Chapter represented. Credentials must be typed or printed and signed by the Local Retiree Chapter President and Secretary, or Secretary-Treasurer. Green Cards should be furnished to the delegates for exchange with the Credentials Committee in Grand Rapids when registering. Return the Blue Card at once to: MPWU Sec.-Treas., Darren Joyce; P.O. Box 1124; Flint, MI 48501, no later than April 30th!

Resolutions: Resolutions intended to be submitted to the MPWU State Convention for consideration by the MPWU State Convention delegates, must be submitted through a Local Retiree Chapter's parent APWU Local for submission to, and received by MPWU State Exec.-Sec., Harold Juhl, by April 15, 2008. Resolutions intended to be considered by the delegates to the State Retiree Chapter Convention must be submitted to the Trustees no later than 12 Noon, May 16th.

Guest Speaker. Following lunch recess at 1:30 p.m. (sharp!) there will be a one-hour presentation by the Director of the Michigan Office of Services to the Aging, Sharon Gire, who is appointed by the Governor. This agency is federally and state funded. This will be an open session for anyone who wishes to attend. Active Locals that have a Human Relations officer, Local Union officers with Human Relations as part of their duties, guests and spouses are cordially invited to attend.

If you have any further questions, concerns, or need more information, please contact State Retiree President Al LaBrecque.



NOTE: You earn **Annual Leave**: Under 4 Years: 1 Hour per 20 hours worked; 4 Years - 15 Years: 1 Hour per 13 hours worked; Over 15 years: 1 Hour per pay period. You earn **Sick Leave** for 1 Hour per 20 hours worked (no matter how long you have worked for the Postal Service for a maximum of 4 hours per pay period).

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**Area 3 Director, Current Vacant**  
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The opinions expressed in this publication are those of the writer and not necessarily those of the Editor, the MPWU, the APWU or the Postal Press. Any and all correspondence to the Editor may be sent to: Michael Long, Editor, PO Box 280, Sheridan, MI 48884-0280; fax to: 616-776-1536; 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.

Lastly, 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.



Check Us Out on the Web

**MPWU.com**

**Upcoming Events to Plan For:**

- May 15 - 17, 2008 - MPWU State Convention, Grand Rapids, MI
- August 18 - 22, 2008 - National APWU Convention, Las Vegas, NV
- Area 4, 5, & 6 District Meeting - Currently being planned for Fall 2008
- June 12 - 14, 2009—MPWU Educational Convention, Bay City, MI

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

- |              |                 |
|--------------|-----------------|
| Alpena       | Battle Creek    |
| Central MI   | Detroit         |
| Farmington   | Flint           |
| 480-481      | 498-499         |
| Gaylord      | Hillsdale       |
| Jackson      | Ludington       |
| Muskegon     | Petoskey        |
| Pontiac      | Roger City      |
| Saginaw      | Sault Ste Marie |
| Southwest MI | Traverse City   |
| Troy Local   | Western MI      |



**2008 Michigan Postal Workers Union**  
**21st Biennial Constitutional, Retiree, & Auxiliary Convention**  
**May 15—17, 2008**  
**Crowne Plaza Hotel and Conference Center**  
**Grand Rapids, Michigan**

**CONVENTION CALL**

**The 21st Biennial Convention of the Michigan Postal Workers Union will convene on May 15, 2008 at 9:30 a.m. at the Crowne Plaza Hotel and Conference Center in Grand Rapids, Michigan and will adjourn at the conclusion of business on May 17, 2008**



**Costs:**

**Hotel: 89.00** (plus 15% taxes (total price includes self-parking )

**Registration: \$75.00** per delegate

- ⇒ Resolutions need to be submitted to and received by Executive Secretary Harold Juhl by April 15, 2008.
- ⇒ A list of all delegates attending the convention need to be submitted to the Executive Secretary by April 15, 2008.

⇒  
*The Official Convention call for the Retirees is included in this edition of the Michigan Messenger. For a complete Convention Call, please view the January/February edition of the Michigan Messenger.*

It's a mystery to me...why so many conservative American businessmen complain about American unions. ...What do they [workers] buy? They buy what conservative American businessmen are selling."

- George Will

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