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In This Edition

Editor's Report.....	2
MPWU 26th Biennial Constitutional Retiree and Auxiliary Convention	3
Human Relations Director	4
Maintenance Craft Director.....	4
Veterans Report.....	5
MPWU Retiree Advisor.....	6
Area 2 Director	7
Area 12 Director	8

P.R.E.S.I.D.E.N.T



by
**Michael
Mize**

Vacation Anyone?

One of the most important benefits that we have as Postal employee's hands down is vacation time. But if Management does not allow you to take the time you have earned its not much good for anything.

I have been receiving a fair amount of calls where a Postmaster is denying leave because they claim to be short or have loaned the other PTF to a different office. So, what!!! There are many ways for Management to cover Annual Leave and you deserve the time off. I understand and agree that working together in the offices helps to create and maintain a good working environment. But this should not be at the expense of your vacation time.

The National Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for offices without a Local Union is very clear that other than December a minimum of one APWU bargaining unit employee per Craft will be allowed off at any one time on annual leave in each Installation. (Installation is defined as the APO, Administrative Post Office, and all RMPO's, Remotely Managed Post

Office's, under the APO.) If there is no one on annual leave then the fact is, you should be allowed off. If Manage-

ment don't address the problem, then Management will continue to play the stacked deck card game against you

ment again violated your rights in the MOU. You should have made your selections by then and Management should have posted the approved vacation schedule by February 15th. Did they? Only you as the member in the office know the answer and only you can seek to correct this problem by informing the Union. We want you to get the leave and be able to plan your family trip. Again, help us to help you!



Some time ago we mailed out copies of this MOU to each of the MPWU members. If you do not have one it can be found on the APWU page. You can contact your representative and a digital copy can be sent to you. We will provide a digital copy to your Postmaster if needed, although there should be no need as they should know what the rule is if they know their job.

If you are a member in a Local Union, you would need to contact your Local Union for your Local Memorandum of Understanding (LMOU) and find the rules for leave in your office.

I wish you all a happy and fun vacation season! I know I am ready for the snow and cold to GO AWAY!!

In Unity.

ment will not approve your leave then you should request a Union steward.

I wish that would always mean your leave would get approved immediately, but we may have to file a grievance to correct the situation. If

every time you want leave. Stand up and help us to correct the egregious behavior of Management.

Did you get to make choice vacation selections in your office before February 1st? If not, then Manage-

Define Patriotism???

by **John P. Smeekens**

This article is in response to an earlier article, addressing Patriotism, in *The Michigan Messenger*.

Patriotism, defined by Webster is (*yes I do have a Dictionary, I'm old school*), **love and loyal or zealous support of one's Country**. A lot of the article exuded to Colin Kaepernick, and the NFL players who have knelt during the playing of our National Anthem. If you've noticed, for quite a few weeks now, the start of the game DOES NOT SHOW THE PLAYING AND SIGNING OF OUR NATIONAL ANTHEM. They go to break and come back to show the kick off and start of the game. So how does anyone even know if they are still protesting???

I attended the "Salute To Service" Lions game on Sunday November 12, 2017, the day after Veterans Day. As everyone in Ford Field stood for the playing and signing of our National Anthem, when it started, I came to attention and Saluted during its rendition. As I gazed around the entire field, looking at both teams, I noticed that NO ONE was kneeling. Not players, not coaches, not cheerleaders, not referee's, not field staff,

not even news media. NO ONE!!! But what I did notice was before the Anthems rendition, several players went to the end zone, two were carrying American Flags on a staff, and they all proceeded to kneel for a minute or two, then proceeded back to their team's benches. So, is this the new way to show their protest?

Since these players have started their kneeling protest, many things have come out in regards to their show of disrespect, to our Flag, our Country, and many of its Veterans. Did they even understand what the flag of this country meant to so many of its citizens before they choose to "take a knee"? You think they have the right to disrespect the flag of the United States, the one our veterans fought for, risked limbs and mental stability to defend, and in many cases died for. In reality, they are overpaid entertainers, who exist solely for our enjoyment! Their kneeling antics were neither entertaining nor enjoyable, but rather a disgrace to this country, its citizens, many of our veterans and their families. They can protest policies, the current government, or anything else they choose, that is their right. But when they use our Flag and Anthem, in a disgraceful manner, as a

part of their protest, they are insulting the nation we all live in and love. They are insulting a lot of those who have served, been injured, or died to keep it free. Kaepernick has recently been likened to Jane Fonda and her protest's during the Vietnam War. Slogans such as "we stand for our Anthem, and Kneel for our fallen," and "those who are kneeling have never been handed a folded Flag" are just a few slogans that have come out in support of our Anthem and Flag.

Our country is far from perfect, but if someone can point to any other country where their freedom and opportunities are better than they are here, then someone should let the kneelers know, in case they might want to go there and show respect for that Country's flag, without disrespecting those who fight, fought, and died for it!

Patriotism is about love and support of one's Country, and the show of respect for those who have, and continue to support and defend it.

And opinions, they're like rectums, everybody's got one, and they all stink!!!



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by John Greathouse

Greetings Brothers and Sisters. I have often spoken of family and this month

EDITOR

Family

has had many of those events but was a highlighted by my mom's 80th birthday surprise party. First time she was ever truly surprised for her birthday!

I am going to keep this article short

as there are so many articles in this edition with lots of important information to help you keep management at bay!

In Solidarity.

MEMBER EDITORIAL:

Keep The MM Focused

Over the past few issues of the *Michigan Messenger*, basically since the POTUS election, I have noticed a trend in our paper. I am and have been for some time the Maintenance Craft Director for APWU Local 273.

I have noticed a trend of bashing Trump. Now I know that Unions tend to be Democrat and wants its members to vote that way for various reasons. But why must we bash the opponent? Why can't the articles that are political in nature be more positive rather than negative? But really why should a Union paper focus on political viewpoints anyway? I think this polarizes our membership and potential membership. We all work for the USPS for one main reason, to provide. We all enjoy the benefits our Union has bargained for. Why should our paper drive a political wedge between our membership? I feel this is harmful to the solidarity of our membership and we need to stick together now more than ever. Now sticking together does not mean to pick a political side but rather stick together to fight management and what they are doing to the work force of the Post Office. I'm sure it's a trend in your office to see PSE's working 40-50 hrs. Was this the intent of the PSE position? No. Management saw it as a vehicle to get full time work without paying all the benefits. Management has abused the PSE position and etched away at what the Union fought for years. We all know the PSE feels the pressure of not making waves because they may not be rehired.

Back on track, my point being that there are much better things to put in our paper than content that drives a wedge between us. We must not let our political viewpoints be the thing that

breaks down the solidarity of Union involvement. We are a diverse work force and need to stay focused on what our mission is. Working conditions, wages and reasonable hours.

The latest issue of the *Michigan Messenger* prompted me to contact the editor. I saw a Trump bashing comic and that kind of made me roll my eyes. But then being the Feb issue, I saw an image of Kapepernick kneeling with the words Black history month. I thought to myself "really?". Now I understand that there are supporting and non-supporting sides to the whole kneeling issue. But I really don't think a Union paper is the place to express those thoughts. Again causing further division amongst members. This is a very sensitive subject and I get that. But do you open your Union paper to read about or see such

polarizing issues? I think that there could have been a much better image to represent Black history month. I know many USPS employees are Veterans and many of those are disabled Veterans. The way the flag is treated is very sacred to those that have fought for it.

The editor encouraged me to write an article for the paper on my concerns. My intent is not to offend anyone or cause controversy. My intent is to express what I would think many of us feel and that is to keep the content of the MI messenger focused and on point of issues closer to home and that is our work and Union. Whether you agree with me or disagree that is fine. But I took this opportunity to express my concerns and hopefully do my part to bring us closer together.

Pray For The Dead And Fight For The Living!

Those words are attributed to the great labor organizer and activist, Mother Jones. On April 28, 2018, we will renew our fight for safe jobs in our workplaces.

April 28th of each year is known as Workers' Memorial Day – a day to remember those who have lost their lives, suffered injuries, or occupational illnesses on the job. This is also the day that together we let the Post Office know we will Stand Up for Safe Jobs!

The Post Office is a dangerous place to work. Based just on the accidents and injuries reported, the Postal Service is the most dangerous government agency to work for

(Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2016). More of our sisters and brothers are injured at work than at nearly all other federal agencies combined.

Always be cognizant that you could be the next statistic for the Postal Service if you get hurt! You go to work to earn a living, not to get injured or die.

You have the right to a safe work place and to return home every day in one piece. We encourage you to enforce your safety rights through the Union by acting together with your co-workers, by filling out PS Form 1767s, filing grievances, signing petitions and speaking up! And avoid buying into management plans, like the "Safety Ambassador" program, which are set up to pit worker against worker and bypass your union and union involvement as the most effective path of addressing safety concerns.

Let's not have another post office named after a worker killed on the job. Join your union brothers and sisters around the world on April 28, 2018 and Stand Up for Safe Jobs – a Right of Every Worker!

— Vance Zimmerman, Industrial Relations Director, APWU, AFL-CIO

—Mark Dimondstein, President, APWU, AFL-CIO

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

Battle Creek	480-481	Jackson	Stevensville
Central MI	486-487	Ludington	Traverse City
Cheboygan	498-499	Muskegon	Troy Local
Detroit District	Gaylord	Roger City	Western MI
Farmington	Great Lakes Area	Sault Ste Marie	
Flint	Mail Haulers	Southwest MI	

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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. Articles and correspondence to the Editor may be sent to MPWU – Michigan Messenger, John Greathouse – Editor, PO Box 27303, Lansing, MI 48909-7303. Articles must be signed to be printed (your name may be withheld upon request). Articles may be edited to fit the confines of this publication.

The USPS Is Suffering From An Identify Crisis

by Bob Dyer

It is truly a sorry sight when someone does not know who they are in life. All manner of behavioral dysfunctions appear, as that person lives out fantasies of various sorts — illusions of grandeur; imaginary friends and foes; denial; displaced anger; irrational and compulsive controlling behavior and even psychosis. The quest for living out such fantasies feeds the need for personal recognition, that is, the need for an “identity”. **This is the current plight of the United States Postal Service.**

Peculiar and unprecedented in the federal government, the US Postal Service is currently suffering from an identity crisis; however, the

proverbial ego (Freud’s observation) is not at issue. **No, we postal workers know who we are, but it is the leadership within the US Postal Service — the id — which is out of control, and in desperate need of therapy.**

Sigmund Freud, the father of psychoanalysis, theorized that the human personality is made up of three parts — the ego, superego and the id.

Ego is defined by Webster’s New Encyclopedic Dictionary as: The one of the three divisions of the personality in psychoanalytic theory that acts as a go-between demands of the outside world and basic inner drives.

This would correspond to the craft employees of the US Postal Service. We are the go between which is in direct contact with the public; we deliver the mail.

The USPS – a healthy ego

The ego of the US Postal Service is functioning very well. We have the best mail delivery system in the world. We have a service oriented system, which frees up the Postal Service to zero-in on the goals of service-oriented mail delivery, and the good of the American public.

The USPS is working very well — if delivery of the mail to serve the American public is truly the goal of the organization.

The American public is generally pleased with their mail delivery, and there is no public servant more beloved in America than the mail carrier who delivers to the front door seven days a week now — thanks to the Amazon contract. **Few in public service experience the public’s respect and trust like those who wear a US Postal Service uniform.**

Although the Postal Service is a “service” and not a business, nevertheless, it is a good thing for not-for-profit organizations to be in the black, as opposed to operating in the red. **But herein lies the rub — there are those who just cannot accept the existence of any organization which is not driven by**
continued on page 7

MICHIGAN POSTAL WORKERS UNION

26TH Biennial Constitutional, Retiree, And Auxiliary Convention

May 3-5, 2018 – Great Wolf Lodge – Traverse City, Michigan

CONVENTION CALL

The 26th Biennial Convention of the Michigan Postal Workers Union will convene on May 3, 2018 at 9:30 a.m. at the Great Wolf Lodge Convention Center, Traverse City, Michigan and will adjourn at the conclusion of business on May 5, 2018.

COSTS: Hotel: \$93.00 (plus applicable taxes (6% state sales tax and 7% county assessment), along with a \$9.99 daily resort fee.

REGISTRATION: \$100.00 per delegate (submitted prior to May 1, 2018)

→ Resolutions need to be submitted to and received by Executive Secretary Michael Long by April 1, 2018. Resolutions need to be signed by both the President and Secretary of the local submitting (hard copy) along with a copy on digital media (e.g. Flash Drive or e-mail). A template for resolutions is available on the website.

→ A list of all delegates attending the convention need to be submitted by April 1, 2018.

Article 7 of the MPWU Constitution states: “Time of the Convention and Election of Officers”

Section 1. The Michigan Postal Workers Union, AFL-CIO shall convene the same year as the National Convention of the American Postal Workers Union, AFL-CIO, on any Thursday, Friday, and Saturday in April or May. In any week except that which precedes Easter Sunday.

Section 2. It shall be the sole responsibility of the State Union to plan and expedite the proceedings of the Convention, including suitable and ample accommodations for delegates. It shall further be the responsibility of the State President to appoint two (2) members of the Michigan Postal Workers Union, AFL-CIO, and the President of the State Convention Committee to work with any Local who represents the Convention location as voted under Article 7, Section 5. The financial responsibility

of the State Convention shall be solely that of the Michigan Postal Workers Union, AFL-CIO. All contracts with hotels will be reviewed by the President, Executive Secretary, Secretary-Treasurer and Director of Research and Education prior to signing or agreeing to any contract.

Section 3. The Convention shall convene at 9:30 a.m. on the first day and recess at 11:30 a.m., immediately after the committee assignments and reconvene at 3:00 p.m. This time is to be utilized for official use by the committees. The Convention shall remain in session until completed.

Section 4. Nominations for all candidates for all elected offices of the MPWU shall be the last order of business on Friday of the Convention. A member, in good standing not at the Convention, can provide a written nomination for themselves for any elected office of the MPWU, which will serve as their acceptance. All written nominations must be received by the MPWU Executive Secretary via US Mail, faxed, or hand delivered, by the close of nominations for the elective office of the MPWU Convention.

No candidate shall be allowed to run for more than one (1) office, except a person running for a Craft Director position, may run also for Area Director of his/her area. Any nominee must accept or decline a nomination for office, prior to the closing of nominations for that office.

Convention Delegates, as well as the Convention City, shall take place in conjunction with Executive Board/Officers nominations.

Saturday, from 10:00 a.m. until 1:00 p.m., shall be reserved exclusively for the purpose of caucuses.

Section 5. The election of Officers will take place at 1:00 p.m. on Saturday of the Convention. President, Secretary-Treasurer, Executive Secretary, Director of Education, Human Relations/Compensation Director, Legislative Director, Editor, Three(3) Craft Directors, Area Directors, Veterans Director,

Convention Delegates, plus Convention City, will be elected at this time, by secret ballot.

Section 6. [A]. The three (3) Craft Directors shall be elected by secret ballot in accordance with Section 5 above, but Craft Directors shall be elected from delegates from their Craft only.

[B]. Area Directors shall be elected by secret ballot from delegates, present from their Area only. If a Craft or Area Director is not represented by at least one delegate to the Convention, or if there are no candidates from a specific Craft or Area, for the position of Craft or Area Director, then the President shall appoint a member of that Craft or Area to that position, with the advice and consent of a majority of the Executive Board.

[C]. If after three (3) ballots have been cast, a tie exists, a toss of a coin will break the tie.

Section 7. All terms of office shall be from the date of the certification by Election Committee, until the conclusions of elections, at the next scheduled MPWU State Convention.

Section 8. Any retired member, who is paying full dues to their Local Union, may hold office in this Union. Any retired member who retires from State Office, can at the discretion of the President, be used in an advisory capacity.

Section 9. The MPWU constitution committee shall consist of (1) one local president (or designee) from each active chartered local in the MPWU.

In addition, Article 9 (Representation), Section 1, states: Each Local Union or Area local affiliated with the MPWU shall be entitled to representation in the State Convention on the following basis: All locals shall receive one delegate for each twenty (20) members or any portion thereof. To be computed on the basis of the previous twenty-four (24) month’s average paid membership. In addition, no Local may pay more than three (3) months back dues at one time, prior to the State Convention.

HUMAN RELATIONS DIRECTOR . . .



by
Keith
Combs

Causal Relationship In OWCP Federal Workers Compensation Claims

When filing a Worker's Compensation claim, the burden of proof is on the Employee. Therefore, it is the Employee's responsibility to show a causal relationship between his or her disability and the on the job injury, or his or her claimed occupational disease and conditions of employment.

To qualify for worker's compensation, the Employee must be covered under the Federal Employee's Compensation Act (FECA); there must be an injury or disease claimed to be related to employment; the employee must make a timely filing of the claim within the provisions of FECA; the injury or disease must be the result of activity in the performance of duty; and the employee's injury or disease must have been proximately caused by, or aggravated by, a work-related injury or by the employment conditions, i.e., there must be a causal relationship.

There are two kinds of evidence under FECA: factual, which refers to evidence submitted by the Employee; and medical, which refers to evidence submitted by physician.

In addition to factual evidence, reliable and substantial medical evidence which established an accurate history of injury in Traumatic injury claims, or an accurate description of working conditions in Occupational illness claims must be submitted on order to establish a causal relationship. This medical information must be provided by a qualified physician defined as one of the following: medical doctor (M.D.), osteopath (D.O.), podiatrist, optometrist, dentist, clinical psychologist, psychiatrist, or chiropractor (if manipulation of the spine is involved).

The employee must first write a statement describing the work-related injury illness, the conditions of employment, including daily on the job activities, and how the employee believes specific work activities and conditions caused his or her injury illness. This statement (whether it be for a Traumatic injury (CA-1) or Occupational illness (CA-2) must go into specific detail of the work activities and conditions relevant to the claimed injury or disease because the claims examine and OWCP doctor will not otherwise have the necessary information to properly discuss and decide a claim. For example, if the employee is claiming an injury to a knee that resulted from repeated dismounting and mounting, he or she should describe in minute detail what is involved in getting in and out of the Postal Vehicle used and how many dismounts a day are involved; the employee can

then multiply that daily amount by the number of workdays per year to get the yearly number.

The employee's statement should also include all other functions of his or her duties and list them in terms of what is performed 55% of the time and what is performed 20% of the time and what is performed 15% and then what is performed the last 10% of the time. He or she must then ensure that his or her physician reads the statement and completes the five medical requirements for a valid claim.

If the employee is claiming a disability based on an on-the-injury, OWCP form CA-1 should be used. The five basic requirements of the medical evidence are as follows:

(1) The employee's physician should read the employee's statement and refer to it in his or her own medical statement indicating that he or she has read the employee's description of the injury sustained and has knowledge of the injury. This gives the physician a frame of reference upon which to base a medical opinion. The physician should state something like the following; "I have read the statement dated _____ prepared by _____ regarding the injury sustained on _____."

(2) The physician must give a definitive, conclusive diagnosis, refer-

ring to any relevant tests, x-rays, etc. impressions to not satisfy this requirement.

(3) The physician must give a definitive, conclusive opinion that the employee's disability was caused, aggravated, precipitated or accelerated by the work-related injury. Speculative language such as the use of the words "perhaps related," "probably related" or "might be" will not support the claim. If the disability is temporary, the opinion must state the time during which the employee will be disabled.

(4) The physician must give his or her medical reasoning (or rationale) for the diagnosis and opinion. In other words, the physician must show how he or she reached the opinion given, ie, what are the medical reasons for the opinion.

(5) The physician must state the period the disability will last and the extent of the disability. If the disability is partial, the statement must indicate the work limitations of the employee during the period of the disability.

Let's wake up and pay attention

I have been a part of several of the upcoming November Election Candidate Meet and Greets lately. I feel it is important to say something regarding what the climate looks like in and around Washington D.C. today.

We have seen countless firings in Washington, almost resembling the reality show format of Donald Trump the current President of the United States prior to him becoming the Commander of Chief.

It is time that we wake up to the facts that the middle class is under attack by the superrich. Unions are under attack by the parties that we don't support. Our kids are under attack by legislatures in Washington D.C. that don't have the courage to address **GUN CONTROL**. Our Spouses, Daughters, Mothers and Sisters are under attack by men who don't understand words like **No!** or **Stop!** or **Me too**. **All this must change**.

I have one question to ask, when our elected leaders fail our children and allow their innocent blood to be spilled anywhere, then don't you think we must elect new leaders?

We have seen far too much killing, far too much hate, and far too less fighting for what is right, just and honest.

Our leaders are supposed to be for the **PEOPLE** by the **PEOPLE**.

Until next time my Brothers and Sister remember that Happiness doesn't depend on outward conditions. It depends on inner conditions.

MAINTENANCE CRAFT DIRECTOR . . .



by
Sterling
Bouier

I'm Here To Serve You

later than one hundred fifty (150) days from March 31st, provided the applications have been properly completed by the applicants.

If you complete the testing process (test and interview) and are deemed eligible for a position, your name will be placed on the appropriate (PER) promotion eligibility register until such time that a vacancy occurs and it is offered to you in accordance to the pecking order.

Once you have tested for a position but did not qualify, you are eligible to apply for updates (re-tests) every 120 days.

If you choose not to apply to test at all, then you would have to wait and apply during next open season, which occurs every three years.

If you have previously taken an exam for a position, then you may re-test under the update process every 120 days as well.

In the meantime, maintenance craft needs to focus as much as possible on ensuring that our staffing packages are accurate and sufficient to maintain all maintenance responsibilities in each particular facility. That includes custodial duties, MPE duties, BEM duties, and MSC duties as well.

Please challenge any/all discrepancies and file the necessary grievances if needed. We must work together to protect our jobs and keep maintenance work in maintenance! We can not allow the postal service to continue to contract out our work and eliminate our jobs!!!!

As always feel free to contact me if there are any questions or if you are in need of my services. I am here to serve. I can be contacted at 313 965-1398 (maintenance office @GWY Detroit) or by email at sbouier@apwudetroit.org. Thank you all for allowing me to serve.

In Union Solidarity.

Hello MPWU Brothers and Sisters.

My name is **Sterling Bouier** and I serve as the **Michigan Postal Workers Union Maintenance Craft Director**. I ask for any/all input or ideas for ways that I may better serve the needs of our members.

As a reminder, **OPEN SEASON** was **March 1 – 31st, 2018** for the **Maintenance Craft**. For those that do not know, Open Season is an opportunity for all maintenance employees to request to be tested for any maintenance position that is available within your bid cluster that you **have not previously been tested for or that you have previously been deemed to have abandoned the process. Article 38.5.B.7 states . . .** The employees that apply will receive their results of their application(s) no

VETERANS' DIRECTOR

Veterans' News



by
**John P.
Smeekens**

BATTLE CREEK BREATH OF LIFE FOR A.N.G.

After nearly closing 12 years ago, the Battle Creek Air National Guard Base has taken another breath of new life! Two United States Senators were among those who attended an activation ceremony for the 272nd Cyber Operations Squadron, completing the transformation of the missions at the 60-year-old base. Senators Stabenow and Peters attended the activation ceremony for the 272nd Cyber Operations Squadron at the Battle Creek Air National Guard base, where the 110th Attack Wing will begin a new mission defending Department of Defense networks from cyber-attacks. Considering the impact of Computers in today's world, the how's and why's of battle may be looking at a new forefront!!!

FIREWORKS FREE

Yeah I know it's early, but I've been told that the spots go quickly for this special program. Fireworks-Free Fourth of July offers quieter camping for veterans. Looking for a quieter Fourth of July camping experience this year? Fireworks-Free Fourth of July at **several Michigan state parks** offer veterans, pet owners and other visitors camping options farther away from traditional community firework displays July 2-6. The DNR and the Michigan Veterans Affairs Agency have worked together for the fourth year to coordinate this opportunity.

Camping reservations can be made up to six months in advance, which means that the window to reserve these campsites is already here. To make a reservation, visit midnrreservations.com or call 1-800-44PARKS!!!

VETERANS HISTORY PROJECT

As the New Year gets underway and we look to what's ahead, it's vital that we preserve our past, and the experiences of our fellow citizens. That's why we need to support the Library of Congress' Veterans History Project which encourages Veterans in our community who have served our nation to chronicle their story. The goal of the project is to record and preserve the personal accounts of American war Veterans so that future generations may hear directly from Veterans and better understand the realities of war and service to our country. The project requires the Veteran to complete an interview discussing their service, which is then sent to Washington, DC and added to a growing collection of Veterans' stories. The Veterans' History Project is a great way for citizens to connect with Veterans, provide community service, or complete an Eagle Scout project. To learn more or get started, visit the

Veterans History Project website @ <http://www.loc.gov/vets/vets-home.html>

SLOWING SEQUESTRATION

In a bipartisan deal recently passed, Congress voted to increase sequestration spending caps for fiscal years (FY) 2018 and 2019, keep the government open, and ease the impact of sequestration on our service members, Veterans, and their families. Several Veterans organizations have long called for an end to sequestration which has caused dangerous budget cuts harmful to the military and VA. These organizations are glad Congress has recognized that arbitrary caps set in 2011 no longer reflect the reality of today's demands on our military and VA's obligation to provide care to those who have served. This action by Congress raises those caps by nearly \$300 billion for both defense and non-defense spending over FY18

and FY19. We applaud the actions of Congress, but Congress needs to call for the permanent repeal of sequestration, to protect our service members, Veterans, and their families.

V.A. CAREGIVER PROGRAM

The House Committee on Veterans' Affairs, recently held a hearing to discuss VA's Caregiver Program. Committee members focused on improvements made to the current caregiver program, as well as how to fairly and effectively expand the program to veterans who served before Sept. 11, 2001. Secretary of Veterans Affairs David J. Shulkin testified in support of expanding the program and explained that VA views the program as not only the morally correct thing to do, but that expansion may save taxpayer dollars in the long run. The Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs has advanced a bill which would expand this important program, but the House Committee on Veterans'

Affairs has yet to do so, despite showing public support for expansion.

VA BUDGET PROPOSAL

Recently, the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs examined President Trump's budget proposal for VA. Totaling \$198.6 billion, the budget includes a 5 percent increase in mandatory spending and an 8 percent increase in discretionary spending. Nearly 7,000 additional employees would be added — most being health professionals — while just over 600 would be added to work on reducing the appeals backlog. Major priorities for the budget include mental health care that would receive \$468 million more than the fiscal year 2018 budget, the new electronic health record system that would be interoperable with the military's record, and construction. The DAV, VFW, and PVA have expressed support for the increased funding for VA health care, IT, and construction.

Upcoming Special Events

DAV Mobile Service Office Stop - Saint Ignace.....	08 May\1000-1800	313-964-6595
DAV Mobile Service Office Stop - Gaylord	09 May\1000-1800	313-964-6595
DAV Mobile Service Office Stop - Standish.....	10 May\1000-1800	313-964-6595
DAV Mobile Service Office Stop - Saginaw	11 May\1000-1800	313-964-6595
Veterans Stand Down - Traverse City	14 Jun 231-775-4401 x15732\ 989-497-2500 x11773	
Veterans Stand Down - Cadillac.....	19 Jun 989-497-2500 x11773\231-775-4401 x15732	
DAV Mobile Service Office Stop - Traverse City	11 Sep\1000-1800.....	313-964-6595
DAV Mobile Service Office Stop - Cadillac.....	12 Sep\1000-1800.....	313-964-6595
DAV Mobile Service Office Stop - Mt. Pleasant.....	13 Sep\1000-1800.....	313-964-6595
DAV Mobile Service Office Stop - Lansing	14 Sep\1000-1800.....	313-964-6595
Veterans Stand Down - Bad Axe.....	18 Sep..... 989-269-7445 x15628\ 497-2500 x15636	

Call the listed numbers for more information and locations!!!

AREA-3 DIRECTOR



by
**Robin
Ely**

We Need To Protect Our Jobs

With every New Year we are still struggling with the same issues. Who ever came up with the idea to offer an early retirement because we have too many clerks. We do not have enough clerks to perform all the work in the offices and then the bright idea to offer early out. What happened to Customer Service? It is no longer important? With all the clerks that have not been replaced in all these offices the customer pays the price.

When they offered the early out I thought here we go again. I do not see an abundance of clerks just sit-

ting around twittling their thumbs waiting for work to show up. I see clerks trying to get as much done as they can and deciding what needs to wait until tomorrow.

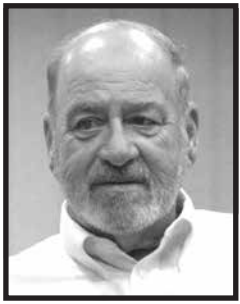
We need to protect our jobs. If you see management or any member

from another craft doing clerk work take notes. Document the date, time and the duties they are performing. If your postmaster or OIC are performing more than 15 hours of work in the small offices document that also.

Please help us help you.

GET INVOLVED WITH YOUR UNION!

M·P·W·U·R·E·T·I·R·E·E·A·D·V·I·S·O·R



by
Al
LaBrecque

A View From The Mitt

"Beware The Ides Of March!" *The Soothsayer.*

Julius Caesar - by Wm. Shakespeare.

March 15th - The Ides of March. Deadline for *the Messenger!* Didn't work out so well for Julius either. Mar. 15th formerly Income Tax filing deadline. Lower Peninsula inland lakes permanent ice fishing shanties must be removed by Mar. 15th or face stiff DNR fines. March 15th - last day to legally fish for walleye and northern pike in inland lakes until the spawn is over by the end of April. While Minnesota is known as the 'Land of 10,000 Lakes'; Michigan has over 11,000 inland lakes of over 10 acres. Last day before the NCAA National Basketball Tourney begins to fill out your brackets. Spartans on to the Final Four! Go Green! Go White! Late NBA Jerry Martin has to be smiling down on his beloved MSU right now. I'll even be pulling for the U.M. Wolverines until and unless, God Forbid, they should collide with MSU again! It's just a game, fun and a healthy diversion from the crap in our lives.

Get Well Right Now! And, that's an order, MPWU Dir. Education & Research, **Sister Lucy Morton!** You still have lots of work to do! Your first job assignment is to get back on your feet. Easier said than done, I know. Just know you're respected and loved big time! And then the same 'order' to my dear **Brother Lynn Charles Walker,** State Chapter V.P., Past President Traverse City Area Local, Past President Michigan Postal Workers Union, and Michigan H.S. Basketball Coaches Hall of Fame inductee with whom I personally share so many parallels. Lynn is the only sane roundball coach I've ever known! He says I'm the only football coach he's ever liked! Remember them in our prayers.

Hopeful Medicare News: Read an e-mailed national Alliance for Retired Americans (ARA) bulletin that 2018 changes in Medicare coverage includes removing the cap on Physical Therapy (P.T.) and Occupational Therapy (O.T.) as long as the patient/client continues to demonstrate progress. I don't regard that as 'gospel' until I learn more. My extensive experience with P.T. and O.T. was maddening, just when you are getting over the hump; "Oops! Last session. You've reached the Medicare (money) cap!" Stay tuned!

Convention Season! MPWU State Retiree Chapter Convention Call was in the last issue of *the Messenger.* The APWU National Convention in Pittsburgh later this summer. I call on every Michigan Local Retiree Chapter to send as many delegates to **your** State Re-

tiree Chapter Convention as you can. State Retiree Chapter **President Paul Browning** is our point man now, and well prepared. Paul is your **Central Region National Retiree Delegate to the National Convention** as well. Give Paul the same level of love and support I was privileged to enjoy throughout my tenure.

Retiree Representation: The paramount retiree **Resolution** being submitted to the MPWU State Union Convention will be proportionate **retiree delegate Representation** in APWU National Convention. It will be the second attempt to amend the APWU Constitution to provide retiree Chapters seating in Convention with voice and vote. Michigan and California State Chapter leaderships are the lead in promoting this endeavor. Both Brothers Browning (MI) and Bobby Donelson (CA) have written extensively the valid reasons why retiree Representation in Conventions' time has come. The Resolution will have to run the gamut from the State Convention, to submission (by either/or States & Locals), to the APWU Constitution Committee, before it sees the light of day on the APWU Convention floor. I recommend and support it 100%! At the same time, I've vowed to get out of the way, allowing the lead principles to carry the ball.

Be Not Afraid! Retirees don't want "to run the Union"! Otherwise we wouldn't have retired! Nope. Retirees are counted in the 200,000 APWU membership when, in fact, there's reportedly 160,000 active, and 39-40,000 members of the APWU Retirees Dept. Retirees pay **full dues** too. It's **\$36. per year.** Retirees paid

required full dues during our active careers . . . 30 years, more or less. It's time to decide if retirees are **full partners** in APWU, or just when it's convenient to recruit for Contract Action Teams, pickets, lobbying Members of Congress on APWU paramount legislation, or a Staples boycott. Allay fears that retiree delegates could vote on contractual issues that don't affect them. Uh, a lot of us helped negotiate and enforce that contract since the first in 1971. Retired members "know a little" about the CBA. Besides; active delegates can, and do, vote on retiree issues in Convention.

Here's the reality of permitting APWU Local and State Retiree Chapters to seat bona-fide, elected delegates at APWU National Conventions. Retiree Chapters are funded by dues rebates based on their membership totals. It's "skinny" to say the least. Most Local Chapters would be hard pressed to send more than 1 or 2 delegates given travel, lodging and meals expenses. I know the exorbitant costs as past State Chapter president for 20 years! Yes, they would carry delegate votes based on their membership totals, but that's only in case of a roll call vote. That, unfortunately, hasn't happened since 1996! There's nothing to fear by opening the door to full APWU membership for retirees who helped build this Union and the building housing APWU Hq. In my humble opinion; to reject retiree inclusion in the business of the APWU is to look a gift horse in the mouth.

Hope Springs Eternal! How about those masses of **high school kids** out there demonstrating for safe schools, some facing disciplinary action for walk-

ing out. One can only hope that this isn't a one shot deal to be forgotten next week! It's probably the most effective, valuable civics lesson these up and coming voters ever could receive as to how our government works, or is **supposed to work!** God bless those teachers who stand with them! How about those **West Virginia Teachers** who struck for better wages and benefits in the best traditions of the modern labor movement . . . **on the picket line!** Finally, How about the bellweather U.S. House special election for a vacant PA seat in a traditionally GOP district with the **upset election of a Democrat!** Follows recent trends in Mississippi and Virginia. Is there **hope** that in the rust belt states of **Pennsylvania, Ohio, Illinois, and Michigan** that blue collar voters could see the light? Lord! Let's hope so!

Al's Briefs: State Chapter President Paul Browning mentioned in his last column that he takes no issue with active/working officer's recent articles in *The Messenger* educating active/working members on the procedures for retiring, life and health insurance benefits, the spousal benefit, etc. Neither do I. Active officers informing active members. That's how it should work. The APWU Retirees' Dept., State and Local Retiree Chapters represent retirees and retiree issues, both internally and externally. However! Unfortunately, well-intentioned writers seem to forget mentioning joining the APWU Retirees' Dept. to stay connected to the Union that served them so well during their work lives. Retirees may not still be in the trenches, but we're **never out of the arena! All For One . . .**

Solidarity Forever!

A·R·E·A·4·D·I·R·E·C·T·O·R



by
Angelynn
Gebstadt

It's Time For Me To Move On

Another two year term has gone by. Starting in May you will have a new Area 4 Director as I am moving towards possible retirement. I have enjoyed my time representing you and I am sure you will be equally pleased with my replacement.

While I didn't get the chance to get out and see as many of you as I had in my past term due to my surgery — it was good to see those of you I did. This term hasn't been to bumpy — A new contract has come to pass.

Amazon which was new in the last term is still here and larger than ever. We finally got the NTFTy holiday pay issues ironed out with your Postmasters

and the majority of the clerks in Area 4 have started OSHA mandated training for cleaning for offices without a custodian meeting the criteria outlined in the contract . . . yes it sucks . . . but it not only should have provided hours you didn't have before — its nationally mandated in the contract. Yes I know most of you were not overjoyed.

Do we still have problems in our Area? Sure. Amazon has been a blessing and a curse. We still have RCA's & CCA's performing your jobs — and if you haven't contacted me about it, you are giving them your hours. Some of you are not reporting not being paid for travel for the OSHA training — depending on where you are originating both mileage and the

time driving may be on the clock. — This is all money out of your paycheck.

It has been gratifying to serve as your Area 4 Director this term and please welcome your new director and continue the good work.

DEADLINE
for articles for the
next issue of the
Michigan Messenger
is May 11, 2018.

AREA 2 DIRECTOR



by
Patrick
Chornoby

Window Clerks 'ROCK'

Greetings Brothers and Sisters. Yes, indeed . . . window clerks rock! In all of the Post Offices I represent, I normally enter through the front of the building, and I patiently wait in line for the next available window clerk, to gain access to the building. While waiting to get in, I watch customers interact with the Sales and Service Associates. Waiting in line gives me the opportunity to witness the enormous responsibility and work involved in serving our customers, and believe me, it is no easy task.

I have believed for years that our Sales and Service Associates should be paid at a much higher rate of pay than they currently do. Although, I be-

lieve all postal employees should be paid more money, there is a certain amount or responsibility, financially and physically, that is required of our SSAs while servicing at the window.

Irate customers immediately come to mind. I have seen a few of them, when our Associates have to play the part of 'mediator' or 'consultant' between customers and their letter carrier, or between a customer and a supervisor who may have given them the run-around when they are trying to locate their mail.

Sales and Service Associates are great people, and basically do a great job. You know our customers rarely see the rest of us working inside the office. They only see the window clerks and letter carriers, and customers use the impression they get from you, to

judge all of the rest of us in the office. Remember, you speak for all the rest of us. Thank you for making us look good, and thank you for all that you do for our customers.

Now, for the more serious functions of your job. Please keep your eyes open for customers who try to scam the USPS. Most recently, there have been a few scams going around in my area involving the Sales Associates and money orders. I would like remind ALL Associates to be extra careful when a customer comes in and requests to purchase a money order for a thousand dollars or more, or purchase multiple money orders. This should red-flag you to be extremely cautious.

In the last postal quarter, in my offices alone, two window clerks had been scammed for a thousand dollars

each, involving money orders. Keep a close eye on money order sales and customers who do a lot of double talking during a money order transaction. Try to keep your eyes on every money order at all times, as customers have reached over the counter and grabbed money orders when the Associate turns their back on them. Last, if the money order is voided out, IMMEDIATELY put it in the POS system, don't wait until the end of the day to complete the transaction. Take the time you need to follow procedure.

When our Associates are scammed, the postal service does very little, and sometimes nothing at all, to retrieve the money they lost, even if our members can identify the customer with a name and address. It is much easier for them to make you pay for it. Be careful, and you still "ROCK".

The USPS Is Suffering From An Identify Crisis

continued from page 3

an underlying greed for more, and more and MORE profit. This is where the id comes in . . .

The ill-behaved id

Id is defined by Webster's as:

The one of the three divisions of the psyche in psychoanalytic theory that is completely unconscious and is the source . . . of energy derived from instinctual needs and drives.

The sordid, soft underbelly of the id is always lurking somewhere nearby just out of sight . . . and the id is where the problem lies in the Postal Service.

This would be the upper management of the United States Postal Service . . .

It's not that the id is inherently evil — it is an integral part of the personality — but if left to itself the id may manifest all manner of sociopathic behavior, as unchecked inner drives — some of which are not necessarily healthy — are allowed to run rampant without restriction or conscience.

The ego of the US Postal Service — those who deliver the mail — are very aware of the existence of the id — upper management — and also of the fact that **the id is not a cognizant part of the conscious function of the USPS.** Craft employees are painfully aware that upper management is totally "unconscious" much of the time, and driven by visceral and basic desires and needs in their decision making — **needs which are not necessarily interested in providing a "service" to the American public.**

The USPS inner sanctum

The driving instincts of those in upper management are clearly, and fairly

portrayed as manifestations of the unconscious — **the deep, dark, dank recesses of the United States Postal Service personality, where all the dirty little secrets reside, and where greed and the irrational, sociopathic need to establish an alternate identity — other than that which it was born with — is fermenting in the miscreant nefarious mind of the id.**

Greed — the instinctive need for profit and the unfettered pursuit of such — is not a good thing.

It destroys the service/client relationship that has well served America for over two centuries. It is also not consistent with the personality of the Postal Service, as it was created, and is something other than what the US Constitution mandates. Greed is the driving force that is at the very heart of the id of the United States Postal Service.

It is also the substance of the dreams of those who wait in the eaves—UPS, Fed Ex et al — hoping and dreaming [Freud & Jung's observation] for the demise of the USPS existence **Oddly, it is not a desire for the id to make and retain money for the US Postal Service budget, but rather, the desire to destroy the inherent personality of the US Postal Service in favor of a new "business" model, and to allow the multi-billion dollar USPS annual revenues to flow into the hands of businesses who care nothing about a not-for-profit service to the American public.**

These businesses have only one thing in mind — **to make more and More and MORE MONEY!!!** They don't give a hoot or a holler about providing a "service" to American citizens, or the public abroad; however, this is

not the only problem in the Postal Service's personality these days.

USPS a split personality?

In essence, the USPS is suffering from personality disintegration, as the id has declared war upon the ego, and is attempting to eliminate, or at least minimize the ego's role in the Postal Service. This is where the superego enters the picture.

The superego is defined by Webster's to be:

The one part of the three divisions of the psyche in psychoanalytic theory that . . . represents the incorporation of parental conscience and the rules of society . . .

Superego — the Union

Prior to 1971, decisions concerning wages in the Post Office were decided by the United States Congress and unions could only negotiate working conditions; however, **since 1971, with the passing of the Postal Reorganization Act by President Nixon, decisions concerning both wages and working conditions in the Postal Service were placed within the jurisdiction of collective bargaining, and the unions came to the forefront of the picture to represent Postal Service employees.**

Since then, the unions — including the APWU — have taken on the role of the superego in the Postal Service, but not entirely. The Postal Service is still under the direction of the United States government and the US Constitution which requires the id to provide a **universal postal service to the American public, and to enter into both collective bargaining and binding arbitration with the unions.**

This is what is driving the id en-

tirely insane — unless the Postal Service is privatized, the unions, the decisions of national arbitrators and the US Congress must be dealt with, and the id currently has no choice in the matter.

The id is not happy about this . . . the id is tired of having to answer to the superego. Binding arbitration with the superego is viewed, by the id, as the source of every problem within the Postal Service — **a sort of postal "inferiority complex"** [Alfred Adler's observation]. The id is therefore hell-bent on eliminating the ego, the superego and binding arbitration.

Saving the service

It is time for the American public to come to the aid of the US Postal Service, before the id destroys the fine personality that our founding forefathers created when the United States originally gave birth to the Post Office Department, and which our federal government has so carefully nurtured through its infancy and into adolescence.

If the id is allowed to destroy the ego and superego, then the US Postal Service will cease to exist as a service to the American public, and the ramifications to the personality of the USPS will be irreversible.

An integral part of the cure is for the id to simply admit that its mission is to serve, not to profit from service. The Postal Service has always been a service, not a business.

We postal workers are "federal employees", no matter how bad the id wants us to be privatized. Why do you suppose that postal workers are covered by FEHB — Federal Employees Health Benefits? Why are we postal workers a part of FERS — the

continued on page 8

AREA 12 DIRECTOR



by
Theresa
Granquist

Jury Duty

One of the first issues I ever encountered with Postal Management concerned jury duty. My acting supervisor told me he was denying my leave. I mentioned it to the Union Steward who informed me I needed to call the Court House and inform them I would not be available for duty because I was not allowed off work. I didn't realize the can of worms that phone call would open.

The next day I found myself in the Postmaster's Office getting threatened with everything but a pay raise.

When I arrived for Jury duty the clerk asked if I had any issues with getting the time off. I told the clerk what the Postmaster had said and informed her that I believed I wouldn't be able to serve as a juror for fear of losing my job or being disciplined. While I waited they called him on the telephone and "explained" the law to him.

30 years later and I'm still surprised when a member asks me if their Postmaster can deny them time off for Jury duty, the answer is NO. It is illegal, and the Postmaster may be guilty of a misdemeanor and could be held in contempt of court.

As members we must do a few things to protect ourselves:

1. Submit a PS Form 3971 with a copy of the summons as soon as you get one for Jury Duty.

2. Get your answer in writing, do not accept a verbal denial.

3. If the courthouse is several miles away or takes time to get there from your Post Office, attach driving directions with the amount of time to get to and from the courthouse to your work location. I've had a few Postmasters tell an employee you can be off for the time you are at the courthouse but not the travel time. Postmasters do not always realize an employees Jury Duty location can be 70 or 80 miles away.

4. If you are denied Jury Duty Leave contact your Union Steward immediately. Do Not wait until after 5pm the Friday before you are scheduled to appear.

Your steward will need time to contact your Postmaster and get everything worked out prior to your having to appear at the courthouse. If things can not be worked out with the Postmaster, the next step is to contact the County Clerk and get them involved. Yours In Solidarity.

The USPS Is Suffering From An Identify Crisis

continued from page 7
Federal Employees Retirement System?

Because US Postal Service employees ARE "federal employees".

The id must admit that it has a problem, if the Postal Service is going to find **self actualization** of any kind [Maslow's observation]. This will only happen if the US Congress

says no to the id's plans for privatization and profiteering off the revenues generated by the Postal Service.

It is time for our leaders to step up to the plate and say, "No, we are not going to privatize the Postal Service. We are going to continue to provide a service to the public, and will not sell-out our citizens by turning over their mail delivery to the whim of greedy, self-serving strictly for-profit businesses."

It is time for the United States Congress to stop "enabling" the id to engage in the arbitrary and capricious self-destructive behavior of privatization.

It is time for the USPS leadership to openly admit that they are supposed to provide a service, not operate a business, in America, and that we postal workers are legitimate federal employees, not the bastard children of private enterprise.

The id entertains the fantasy that we are a private business on a daily basis, but the delusional id has a very selective memory when it comes to referring to us as **"federal employees"**, which is demonstrative of the kind of denial which is present in the id — a **clear indication of the pathological dysfunction of those in upper management.**

USPS management's mental breakdown

It is a schizophrenic manifestation for the id to continue to pervasively entertain fantasies of privatization, when the very personality of the US Postal Service would be destroyed if such a tragedy ever take place. **In that case, only a priest could be of any help—exorcism would be the sole remaining option.**

The only hope of salvaging the fine personality which has been the United States Postal Service for so many years is if the postal unions, US Congress oversight, and the collective bargaining process are allowed to continue to function and fulfill their respective roles in the process of **giving the USPS the service oriented personality that Ben Franklin envisioned, and created.**

The ill-behaved id needs to lay down on a couch, reflect on its childhood, and seriously consider the motivations that are behind these delusional dreams of privatization, instead of seeking to turn the US Postal Service into a living nightmare.

"Our labor unions are not narrow, self-seeking groups. They have raised wages, shortened hours, and provided supplemental benefits. Through collective bargaining and grievance procedures, they have brought justice and democracy to the shop floor." — John F. Kennedy
— Evergreen State Postal Worker

Pray for the dead and Fight for the living!

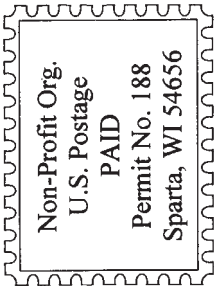
- Mary Harris 'Mother' Jones

The APWU encourages all members to wear a sticker and participate in a safety action on

Workers Memorial Day April 28, 2018.

Contact to your local/state officer or steward for more information about events and/or actions in your area.

www.apwu.org



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Change of Service Requested