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In This Edition

Post Office Under Attack	2
Elections DO Matter	3
Elections And Elections	3
Health News	4
A View From The Mitt	5
Veteran News	6
Does Bitter Divorce Loom?.....	7
Requesting Information For Non-Bargaining Unite Employees	8

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

What's At Risk



by
**Michael
Mize**

I want to take a moment to tell everyone what is at risk. Many of us have become tired of the masks, tired of being unable to do the things we want. We have some leaders that continue to minimize the risks of COVID-19. Many people have not experienced any personal loss of life to drive the risk home.

It has become much easier over time to have small gatherings with people

that you know are tested or being safe. People that we believe are low risk. We have in a sense let our guard down. We see numbers on the rise all over the country again. As the State President I see the numbers on the rise in the Post Office and in more places than the first time.

Even myself and my family have been in contact with more family than we had for months. Seemingly safe as we know they were tested and being safe. Well, as it turns out we should have skipped the family get together. Now I feel fine, but I know I was ex-

posed and have quarantined. I must wait for test results to know for certain. I sit here now worried about other members of my family.

I am also terribly upset with myself. Why be so vigilant for months and let your guard down? Why take risks that you did not have to take? No, I am not upset with anyone else in the family. We all knew what our risks were. We all thought we would be fine. I feel bad for my relative that visited and exposed us. Why? They took the precautions; they were tested prior to the visit. I feel bad because I know they are devastated by

the fact that they exposed us. I pray that if any of us get sick it is minor. I pray that for each of us and the relative that came in.

I tell you all this as a reminder that we all must remain vigilant. I have worked hard with other Union President's and Management to try and keep our membership safe. By the time you read this it should all be in the past, I pray. One thing that I can say it is a huge mental strain and my mind is just racing.

Please, stay safe and healthy my Union family.

The Billionaire News Media

by **Leo F. Persails**

The power of television's news media has slowly become the strongest force in a free society. It can mold and change minds of otherwise strong-willed people. Millions of Americans believe that television news is factual and never has a hidden agenda. The problem is, when in the hands of the wrong people, television can change history. Social media also plays a part, but it is magnified numerous times and to millions more when television repeats it on news media broadcasts. Trump and his tweet attacks are a good example of how the news media multiplies social media. The new USPS Retiree Propaganda Rag by our new Postmaster General DeJoy is another example. The publication tries to paint him as a great business man with a plan to save the Post Office. While the publication declares that falsehood, he is simultaneously dismantling the greatest Postal Service in the world. Many will say Postal Workers can see right through that phony attempt of a glossy press release. Don't be too sure of that, polls estimated there were 37% of Postal Workers that voted for trump. He is now threatening to VETO any aid Congress passes to save the Postal Service. This is the same Trump that is now leading the destruction of the Postal Service with DeJoy. Destroying the Postal Service will also include the jobs of the 37% that voted for him. Civil Service Retirements will also dry up without worker contributions.

Trump won that election because of

a 24/7 barrage of attacks on Clinton. Those attacks were effective, not because Trump said them, but because the TV media repeated them daily. Benghazi and private emails were constantly attacked by the media. I know, Trump calls the media "fake



news", but that's just another of his "words without merit". With the television news media as his Super Pac, Trump was able to bring the Republican Party out of the closet, and 100% behind him. The republican party of Lincoln and Reagan was transformed to the party of Trump, and millions of republicans embraced him regardless of his attacks on Democracy. Trump is still in control of the Media, they follow him and REPEAT his every word. The Power of the media has continued to quote and therefore promote him 24/7 for the last 4 years. Trump is actually a creation of the television news media.

Trump has been fact checked at OVER 20,000 lies, but those lies have been repeated so often by ALL the national media that his 20,000 lies have been heard over a million times. Telling the same lie a million times, will finally be accepted as truth by a lot of

people. Trump may not be Hitler, but all too often it's hard to separate their actions. That's even true during this pandemic when millions of sheltered Americans are spending more time in front of televisions, and Trump's lies are 90% of the coverage.

The National News Media is available to everyone in a free country except for the fact it is controlled and owned by a few billionaires. Unions and their leadership don't own or control any part of the Power of the National News Network. Unions at their peak of power missed the boat

by not combining to acquire their own network. Everyone knows that Fox News is Trump's MAIN Super Pac, and it repeats his lies over and over. The unions missed out when they didn't establish a foothold of their own for working class Americans, with their own National Television News Network. A Network that would have broadcast the truth to ALL working-class Americans. Sure, we have our own union publications, but they can't compare to the power of REPEATED coverage of the NATIONAL TV NEWS MEDIA. The fact that polls show 37% of Postal Workers voted for Trump demonstrates clearly, the power of billionaire owned television. How many will vote for him again when he has attacked their jobs, health care, and even retirements, while the news media repeats his denials.

I worked with hundreds of Postal Workers of different races and color. I represented thousands of them in the grievance arbitration procedure. Many of them may have demonstrated, but I don't believe any one of them would have participated in the looting and rioting. Trump and the television news media coverage of those events, have painted a totally different view of ALL black people.

Some of the 37% of Trump voters may still believe Trump, that's still your right in a free America. To those of you that believe in freedom for all Americans, turn off the television and join me in voting to end Trump's reign of terror.



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Post Office Under Attack

by Omar Gonzalez, Western Regional Coordinator

The new “Business Plan” being implementation is generating concerns over negative impacts to services provided to communities and mailers.

Also the “Agreement” reached by PMG DeJoy and the U.S. Treasury Department for a “loan” of \$10 billion further signals that the privatization plan is well underway. The plan begins with slowing down service to upset postal patrons and erode confidence in the nation’s postal services.

When service is eroded it chips away at the confidence Americans have for their Postal Service and postal workers.

When postage is unreasonably increased customers go elsewhere.

When window service is cut, frustration increases and so does the ill will towards postal workers and the US Mail.

“It is one hell of a plan and it is deliberate,” said Coordinator Gonzalez. “Postal workers need to take heed and take steps to protect their jobs which they took to provide quality service to the American people and earn a decent living”, he added.

The Worst Kind of Enemy

The battle to maintain quality service and job security is sure to escalate when the “Treasury Agreement” details are fully vetted. As in any conflict there are obvious enemies but the more sinister ones are those within.

“A PMG pushing an agenda to gut services should alarm all of us including middle and work floor

management. If they get rid of postal worker jobs they won’t need the managers,” expounded Omar. Some managers are disquieted over the changes.

However, there is concern that an overbearing PMG will embolden many abusive managers thinking they have impunity to demand speed ups, harass workers, violate the contract and other skirting of laws, regulations and contract protections related to wages, hours and working conditions. “Internal and external adversaries will be attacking our flanks and we must be prepared to fight back tooth and nail,” said Gonzalez.

There is no magic wand or potion to stop these abusers. We have to use the grievance procedure, EEO, and other avenues of redress. Whatever you do Don’t Blame The Union because the UNION IS YOU !

Get Your Head Out Of The Sand!

by Leo Vargaz

VOTE! VOTE! VOTE!

Face reality, the Stimulus check you received was your hard-earned taxes, not the Generosity of the President.

VOTE! Vote like your job and benefits depend on it! Plus your Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid and Your Pension are on the line!

A quote by Thomas Jefferson...

“He who permits himself to tell a lie once, finds it much easier to do it a second and third time, till at length it becomes habitual; he tells lies without attending to it, and truths without the world’s believing him. This falsehood to the tongue leads to that of the heart, and in time depraves all its good dispositions.”

And Abraham Lincoln...

Government of the People, By the People, For the People November 19, 1863



There are many of us who have failed to challenge the “Status Quo” – We need to topple the current regime and embrace all mankind and woman-hood equally – We Welcome

a New Democratic Era!
So, get out and VOTE!
— Retired WMAL Member

Keep American Values Strong

Of, by and for the people. The United States is the world’s oldest democracy, and we understand the importance of constantly striving to live up to our greatest ideal — a country governed of, by and for the people.

Equal justice. “Equal justice under law” is the noble goal carved in stone above the entrance to the U.S. Supreme Court, and it’s a promise we all must resolve to keep.

Freedom. The basic premise of American equality means all of us, regardless of our differences, enjoy the freedom to live, love and work as we see fit, and that includes joining and forming unions to negotiate for fair pay and benefits.

Unity. What unites us is far stronger than anything that might divide us, which is the founding truth of America. Unity is never more vital than when it seems the most difficult to achieve. In unity, there is always strength.

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.



E·D·I·T·O·R



by
**John
Greathouse**

Elections DO Matter

Greetings Brothers and Sisters,

Words escape me... well not exactly, it is more like there are more words than can be put in to an article that is fit for the general public to read do not contain a large number of colorful metaphors!

Our political environment is a toxic cesspool right now!

Our work environment is one step short of an insane asylum!

Everywhere we turn, the PO is under attack by the President, PMG, GOP, USP, FedEx and more.

Absentee Ballots are starting to flow and political flyers are a bumper crop!

The constant babel of the media pundits and the President, stating that Voting by Mail is bad but Absentee Ballots are good and that the PO can't handle the volume... This is less mail volume is less than what we do at Christmas and we can do that daily so an election, we can do that! Folks cannot not wait till November 2nd and expect it to be there on the 3rd!

Keep an eye out for ballots, if you find them where they should not be, tell your manager.... Done!

With the removal of machines and longer run times plus the games by the PMG, our backs are against the wall and we will get it done, we will not fail!

MPA's

One to some better stuff... MPA's or COVID-19 replacement workers have been here for a while and if you

actually read the MOU, you will find that there are a lot of managers are not using them correctly!

Elections

As the election is rapidly approaching, we need to do our civic duty and VOTE! Vote like your life depends on it!

What scares me the most is the voters who only vote on one issue! If that candidate is against or in favor of it, that's is who they vote for! That is very short sighted and you should do more research as to what else they support!

ACA (Obama Care)

With the ACA hanging by a thread and about to go in front of the Supreme Court. Should this be overturned, the real threat to Americans is the insurance companies can and will refuse to cover folks with preexisting conditions! Translations, were you

ever pregnant? Preexisting! Ever have knee surgery? Preexisting! Diabetic? Preexisting! It goes on and on and we are the big losers! There are just a few winners... The insurance companies win and everyone else loses!

Just in...

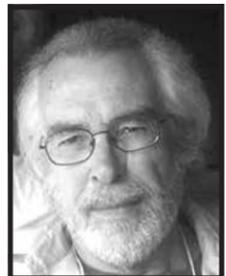
The PO just finished a test and as of October 1st, customers and extend their Change of Address (forwarding) for a fee! They can add an additional 18 months, in 6-month increments.

I hope that our SSA members actually get the service talk on this before this edition lands on their doorstep but... I am not holding my breath!

Stay safe, wear a mask, take care of yourself, support each other, and Stay Strong!

In SOLIDARITY!

R·E·T·I·R·E·E·P·R·E·S·I·D·E·N·T



by
**Paul
Browning**

Elections And Elections

In August of this year, APWU National Secretary Elizabeth Powell informed all Locals and Retiree Chapters, that according to U.S. Department of Labor regulation-if their respective Constitutions required it-Officer elections must be conducted. Both the State Union and State Retiree Chapter per their Constitutions state that Officer elections must be held in 2020. Unfortunately, with the coronavirus situation, the normally scheduled 2020 State Convention (where elections are routinely held) had to be postponed until 2021. Consequently, on September 15 a ZOOM meeting occurred in conjunction with representatives from both the MPWU and Retiree Chapters for the purpose of taking nominations for Officers. At the meeting various nominations were made and MPWU State President Mike Mize appointed a three-member Election Committee to run the election. Ballots were mailed via Express Mail to the MPWU Retiree Chapter Executive Board members as well as Presidents of the five (5) Local Retiree Chapters with the Constitutionally required one (1) ballot for every twenty (20) members. Ballots were counted on October 1 by the Election Committee. As a result, the following State Retiree Chapter Officers were elected: President-Paul Browning, Vice President-Joanna Atkinson, Secretary/Treasurer-Jane Duggan, Trustees-Al Fouche, Teresa Williams, and Deb Gorney.

I believe I speak for all Retiree Chapters Michigan in thanking profusely the State Union for its help in these elections. Without Election Committee Member Roscoe Woods (who set up and hosted the ZOOM meeting) and his fellow Committee members Coleen Maxwell and Dionne Davis, our State Retiree Chapter would have been in violation of DOL regulations and subject to financial penalties. APWU members in Michigan are fortunate that still working members and retirees not only care but about each other but work closely together. True Union Solidarity exists here in our State.

Retiree Chapter officers serve as

activists and educators. While many officers are currently limited by the coronavirus protocols and location, Union Sisters Jane Duggan and Deb Gorney of the State Chapter have been literally leading members on the streets in Detroit and Flint. Jane has organized Car caravans driving in Detroit in support of members working in the Detroit Post Office. She has also been instrumental in educational rallies for the local community and in obtaining Congressional support for USPS financial relief legislation. In Flint, Deb has led informational pickets in support of the Post Office as well as participating in political campaigns for APWU and USPS friendly Congressional candi-

dates. While everyone cannot match the outstanding efforts of these women, there is still much we can do.

VOTE for candidates who support your Union and your retirement. Let those running for office know how important these issues are to you, your family, friends, and community. No matter who is elected, contact them via phone calls, letters, emails or all three and emphasize how much you rely on the continuation of your level of retirement benefits, how Unions have raised the standard of living for all Americans, and how a healthy USPS is vital to maintain a communication/delivery system "from sea to shining sea".

MPWU Officers – 2020 Election Results

President	Michael Mize	Area 6 Director (488/489)	No Nomination
Executive Secretary	Michael Long	Area 7 Director (490/491)	No Nomination
Secretary-Treasurer	Darren Joyce	Area 8 Director (492)	Wendy Kempke
Research and Ed	Lisa Borchardt	Area 9 Director (493/494)	Dana McLean
Editor	John Greathouse	Area 10 Director (496)	Vince Nichols
Legislative Director	Roscoe Woods	Area 11 Director (497)	Randy Blue
HR/Injury Comp Dir	Keith Combs	Area 12 Director (498/499)	No Nomination
Veterans Director	John Smeekens		
Clerk Craft Director	Wendy Kempke		
Maintenance Craft Director			
	Email received requesting to be appointed		
Motor Vehicle Craft Director	Rico Cameron		
Area 1 Director (480/483)			
	Email received requesting to be appointed		
Area 2 Director (481)	Patrick Chornoby		
Area 3 Director (481)	Robin Ely		
Area 4 Director (484)	Sandra Rancour		
Area 5 Director (486/487)	No Nomination		

Retiree Chapter 2020 Election Results

President	Paul Browning
Vice President	Joanna Atkinson
Secretary-Treasurer	Jane Duggan
Trustee #1	Deb Gorney
Trustee #2	Al Fouche
Trustee #3	Theresa Williams

Listed above has some vacant positions and current officers. If an area director position is open and someone is interested, please contact President Mike Mize.

USPS Email Tells Managers Not To Reconnect Sorting Machines

How The USPS Became A Political Battleground

While Postmaster General Louis DeJoy may be suspending changes to postal service operations, it doesn't necessarily mean machines that had been removed will be put back in use, according to an

email obtained by CNN.

The email, sent hours after DeJoy's public suspension of changes on Tuesday, instructs postal workers not to reconnect any mail sorting machines that have previously been disconnected.

"Please message out to your respective Maintenance Managers tonight," wrote Kevin Couch, a director of maintenance operations. "They are not to reconnect/reinstall machines that have been previously disconnected without approval from HQ Maintenance, no matter what direction they

are getting from their plant manager."

DeJoy announced he would pause many of the new policies he put in place, including the removal of high-volume mail sorting machines, after postal workers, the public and some lawmakers, sounded alarms the changes were causing massive delivery delays, potentially putting the November election in peril.

It's unclear if there's been additional guidance since Couch sent the email, which appeared to have been sent to managers in the western region.

With slower mail and election concerns, Trump's postmaster general is in the hot seat. The USPS has not been attempting to reassemble or replace the mail sorting machines or letter collection recently removed in at least nine states, according to the union officials CNN spoke to in those states.

CNN spoke with union officials across the US on the local, regional and national level, and was only able to identify two facilities Dallas and Tacoma, Washington that had attempted to reassemble and reintroduce mail sorting machines back into USPS's daily operations.

The Postmaster General and USPS have been under intense scrutiny in recent weeks over changes put in motion ahead of the 2020 election. Many Americans have since grown concerned over the USPS' ability to handle the expected influx of ballots as more voters choose to vote by mail because of the Covid-19 global pandemic.

Dallas facility tried to restore removed mail sorting machines Yared Wonde, the president of the American Postal Workers Union's Dallas Area Local, told CNN that management at the Dallas processing and distribution center, which serves nearly all of Dallas, unsuccessfully tried to put back four delivery barcode sorter machines. Problems at the post office could devastate these small businesses.

DBCS machines make up the bulk of the mail sorting operation across USPS, handling envelopes which includes ballots heading to voters.

The machines, which Wonde says were removed in July, cannot be put back into service because they are missing pieces. Wonde said it was unclear what moved management at the Dallas facility to attempt to reassemble the DBCS machines.



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HEALTH NEWS

Avoid the 'Twindemic:' Get Your Flu Shot Now

by Dennis Thompson, HealthDay Reporter

TUESDAY, Sept. 22, 2020 (HealthDay News) -- The best time to get your flu shot is now if you want to protect yourself against a potential "twindemic" infection of influenza and COVID-19, experts say.

"Early September, at the very least early October, is the best time to get your flu shot. That really allows your body to build up the appropriate immune response in time for the peak prevalence of influenza in the community," Dr. Nadia Eltaki, director of clinical operations for Sibley Memorial Hospital in Washington, D.C., said during an HD Live! interview on Tuesday.

A massive effort is underway to get as many people as possible inoculated with the seasonal flu vaccine, to reduce the risk of combination influenza/COVID-19 epidemics overwhelming local or regional health systems in the United States. The "twindemic" risk to individuals is twofold, Eltaki said. Infection with either virus will deal your immune system such a blow that you will be more susceptible to a more savage follow-up bout with the other, Eltaki said.

"One virus can weaken your immune system enough to make you susceptible to the other virus or any other respiratory virus or illness," Eltaki said. Your body will be less able to stave off initial infection or to hold the line against a cascading viral onslaught throughout your body, she said. Worse, some people could be unlucky enough to contract both viruses at the same time, Eltaki added. "Unfortunately, it is possible to contract both the influenza virus and the novel coronavirus," she said. "If you are infected with both viruses together, the resulting impact could lead to even more severe outcomes than either infection independently."

The flu and COVID have strikingly similar symptoms, including fever, runny nose, sore throat, cough, body aches, headaches and GI upset, Eltaki said. The only major symptom that definitely points toward COVID rather than flu is the loss of smell and taste. "We ask that if you have any of those symptoms to call your physician, explain your symptoms and self quarantine until you know exactly what you have," Eltaki said. Public outreach regarding the importance of this year's flu shot is crucial. Doctors have seen a decline in immunizations, health screenings and other types of patient visits, because people are afraid they'll contract COVID-19 if they go to a doctor, Eltaki said.

Doctor's offices and clinics have put a number of infection-control measures in place to protect people, she said. These include pre-appointment screening questionnaires, universal masking of patients and staff, temperature screenings upon arrival, and strict disinfecting procedures between patients. People still not reassured by these measures have other options, Eltaki added. Major grocery store and commercial pharmacy chains not only offer quick and easy flu shots, but some have been offering coupons or gift cards for people who get the shot during their shopping trip.

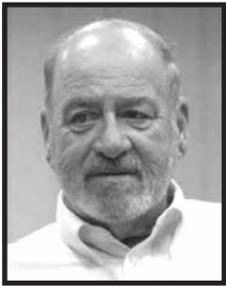
Some folks also might be reluctant to get the flu shot because of some of the myths that have cropped up around the inoculation, Eltaki noted. The most common misperception is that you'll get the flu from the flu shot. "The flu shot is made from a dead virus. You cannot get the flu from getting the flu shot," Eltaki said.

"However, you can experience some symptoms, which is the result of your body mounting an immune response," Eltaki continued. "You may have a low-grade fever or body aches, but that's not the flu, that's just your body matching the appropriate immune response to the flu shot." There also is no evidence that a flu shot increases a person's risk of contracting COVID-19 or any other respiratory virus, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention said.

Flu shots are needed every year because influenza virus mutates so quickly that humans cannot mount a lasting preventive immunity against it. Each year, doctors make their best prediction regarding the strains of flu most likely to circulate widely in humans. The annual flu vaccine protects against either three or four of the leading contenders, depending on which vaccine you get. "Studies have shown that the influenza vaccine is about 60% effective in preventing the flu," Eltaki said. "Even though those odds are fair, we know if you do get the flu and you have received the flu shot, the severity, length, intensity and duration of your symptoms will still be less than the person who has not received a flu shot and gets the flu. There is some protective effect." You should get the flu shot rather than the nasal spray vaccine, Eltaki added.

"More and more, health care practitioners are steering away from the nasal mist because of presumed better efficacy of the shot," she said. "Any child above the age of 6 months should get a flu shot." Pregnant women, the elderly and the immune-compromised also would do better with a flu shot than the nasal spray, Eltaki said.

More information The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has more about flu vaccine misconceptions.
SOURCE: Nadia Eltaki, M.D., director, clinical operations, Sibley Memorial Hospital, Washington, D.C.
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~~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

How many American lives might have been saved with that early warning is anyone's guess? Be it one (1) or 100,161; THAT'S ON HIM!

Help Me Understand! Seriously. I've asked and have yet to receive a response that makes sense. Reminds me of back in the '60's asking a couple Teamster friends, one a B.A. Local #322; how they could support, let alone stomach, a Union president like mob-connected, Jimmy Hoffa? To paraphrase; "We don't care about what he does, Jimmy takes care of the membership." The blind eye justification to suit their sole purpose. What I used to refer to as; 'hooray for me, and screw you' mindset. I can't help but draw the parallels. The dark side of human nature in my view. The abject disrespect for the passing of Justice of the Supreme Court, the venerable Ruth Bader Ginsburg, and in the next breath the bold POTUS, Senate Majority Leader McConnell, and Senate Committee Chair, Lindsey Graham, sanctimonious flip-flop politicizing the appointment process for RBG's successor. Apparently in the GOP book of principles; what's good for the Dem goose, ain't good for the GOP gander. Despicable. **Greed Over People!** The shameless right-wing of the hijacked **Grand Old Party** exploitation of single-issue faith-based disciples of the 'Unholy Trinity' of POTUS, McConnell, and Graham, whose only "god" is the golden calf of absolute POWER and WEALTH. Absolute power corrupts absolutely!

The Great Redeeming Factor: Fmr. Sec. of State Gen. Colin Powell. Fmr. Gen. Jim Mattis. Fmr. MI Gov. Rick Snyder. Fmr CA Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger. Renowned conservative political commentators; George Will and Bill Kristol. Fmr. RNC Chair Michael Steel, Fmr. Bush Admin. official, Steve Schmit. Late Fmr. First Lady Barbara Bush and late President George H.W. Bush. Late Sen. John McCain Family. Fmr. OH Congressman and Gov. John Kasich. POTUS's own Niece and Fmr. federal judge Sister. A laundry list of former Trump administration personnel, and the Lincoln Project of prominent "Never Trump" GOP stalwarts, including POTUS mouthpiece Kellyanne Conway's attorney husband. All Republicans who have declared their support for BIDEN-HARRIS, or that they cannot in good conscience vote another 4 years of POTUS. If that doesn't convince any Union postal worker, senior, retiree; I don't know what will. We're fairly past undecided voters by now. It all comes down to a huge turnout of voters of all ages, faiths, race, color, and gender. Neither our Democratic Republic, nor the United States Postal Service are for sale! Vote accordingly.

Understand; this is not your father's, grandfather's Grand Old Party! It's a

complete aberration of traditional Republican principles and values. This isn't to hold the Democratic Party up as a Party without its flaws. It's far better to work from within than from without. Regardless of our political preferences; this election is like none other in our experience. It's in our hands to do the right thing based on everything we know. The ancient philosopher Pericles admonition has never been more appropriate; "*You may not be interested in politics, but politics is interested in you.*" Whether we like it, or not; politics govern our lives, and never more so than now!

Whether by the U.S. mails, a combination of ballot by mail and hand carry to a drop box, or masked and distanced at your precinct polling place, we have a sacred obligation to VOTE! The most important thing we can do at this juncture to preserve our democratic way of life, our own self interests of livelihood, health, and security is to VOTE! It's incomprehensible, with so much at stake, that we wouldn't figuratively crawl through broken glass to cast a ballot. Consider the wisdom of G.T. Nathan who declared; "**Bad officials are elected by good citizens who do not vote.**" Failure to vote is a vote for the incumbent. A protest vote for a 3rd Party candidate is a vote for POTUS, for Mitch McConnell, for PMG DeJoy.

Obviously, the gist of this VIEW column is to leave no doubt as to the importance of the presidential election of a lifetime. How it's outcome will, one way or another, profoundly impact our lives as seniors, postal workers, postal retirees, parents or grandparents, safety and health of mankind and the earth, security from all enemies, foreign and domestic, and futures of our children and grandchildren. It's that critical. I'm all out of reasons, as if there aren't more than enough, **To Vote!**

VETERANS! Help me understand.

SOLIDarity Forever!

Is There More?

by Mike Mize

Yes, there is more at risk. As a Postal employee your very way of life is at risk. This country is in a spiral. I know many of you do not agree with the political position of the Union or myself. I am a big believer in everyone having a right to vote for what they believe. I think I have said this before in a previous publication. My position on that has not changed. I am going to ask you to look at a few things on this issue and consider them. No matter who wins this election we will all need to work together to better this world and our great nation.

Particularly those Sister & Brother vets who experienced the horrors of war, or ever proudly worn the uniform. Help me understand how ANY vet of any of the Services can, in good conscience, support in any way a Commander-In-Chief who referred to the White Crosses and Stars of David in the military cemetery of American casualties at WWI Belleau Wood as 'losers' and "Suckers". Same "Sucker" comment at Arlington gravesite of a General's son KIA. A POTUS who derides the military that he dodged except to perform with Pomp and Circumstance, flyovers, and wrap himself in martial music and the flag. A show of HIS might akin to that of his dictator role models; Putin, Kim Jong Un, Xi, Erdogan and a murderous Saudi Prince. Benito Mussolini resurrected! How anyone who served can disrespect the oath we took, and the uniform we wore, regardless of political stripe, and still support this despot defies comprehension. I really don't get it!

Cash Pay Members! Are your dues current? Extremely important, especially for retired members enrolled in the APWU Health Plan. Don't allow your membership to lapse and become dues delinquent. Don't forfeit your APWU magazine or critical Union communications. Stay connected to the Union that represented your best interests during your work lives.

Let Me Leave You to Ponder every election cycle pearl of wisdom coined by former 8-year, PPA award winning editor of the "*Flint Facts*", and Al's spouse; Michelle. "**If you don't vote for who or what you want, don't complain about who or what you get!**" Remember; patriots wear face masks and keep their distance. Be A Patriot!

I want you to look at how things are in this country today.

I want you to look at the Union and the ability the Union has in representing you.

I want you think hard about what we have and how we got where we are.

Finally, and most important, VOTE!! That is right, if you have not already, I want you to vote, VOTE!! Whomever you believe to be the best, think about the issues, think about this country, think about your rights, exercise your rights.

VOTE!!!

"Just because we're retired, we're NEVER out of the Arena!"

(Correction: Apologies for writing in two places in the previous "Mitt" column where I stated Nov. 4th as the election of a lifetime. You may not have noticed, but to me it stuck out like a sore thumb. Mea Maxima Culpa.)

Brace Ourselves For The Most Impactful Political Event Of Our Lifetimes: Ladies & Gentlemen; I give you challengers BIDEN-HARRIS vs. incumbents POTUS & VPOTUS, November 3rd, 2020. You are encouraged to participate by casting your ballot by mail or in person. Vote your livelihood, working or retired. Vote your pocketbook, your bread and butter. Stack your moral and patriotic values against that of the candidates and vote your true conscience. Can't lie to yourself. Country over Party. Postal workers have a huge stake in the outcome of this election. In my view; to Save Our Public Postal Service, we've got to oust "hatchet man" PMG DeJoy. To dump DeJoy, we've got to Dump Trump! That in itself should sound an alarm. Retiree's don't get off with our obligation either. POTUS has emphatically stated he intends to "cut payroll taxes" that will bankrupt Social Security by 2023. Medicare will be adversely affected. Who in their right mind would vote for "That" to justify their perceived single issue; be it the right to a woman's choice, or gun rights? Sacrifice of practical self-interests on the altar of fear and hypocrisy. Exploitation of faith by an avowed faithless. Does anyone really believe either POTUS, VPOTUS, Mitch, Barr give one hoot for women's rights one way or another, other than to politicize it in their favor? Again, in my considered view.

VOTE! Vote Smart! Vote Your Future! I have to relate my view of POTUS's non-handling of the COVID-19 pandemic responsibilities that began within days, if not hours, of his Inauguration that I can still see him gleefully signing Executive Order after E.O. in a grand flourish of his trademark felt pen scrawl, holding each up for the cameras with a cat that ate the canary smirk. Mark that as the stake in the heart of early detection of COVID-19 and saving of, at this writing; 200,330 American deaths attributed to the virus. In POTUS's delirious rush to wipe out anything remotely having Obama's fingerprints on it; he signed an E.O. dissolving an Obama established a program of expert scientific viral epidemic personnel to monitor worldwide blooms of exotic viral killers, an early warning system. An early warning system POTUS willfully dissolved.

VETERANS' DIRECTOR



by
**John P.
Smeekens**

Veteran News

VETERANS' COLA — TIE IN

Veterans receiving government benefits will see a cost-of-living boost in 2021, if Social Security officials approve one for their recipients later this year. Recently, the Senate unanimously passed legislation to link the two federal payouts, sending it to the White House to become law. President Donald Trump is expected to sign the measure when made available.

The bill is not controversial, and routinely passes Congress each year without opposition. But, under current law, lawmakers must approve linking the two increases for veterans to see the pay boost. Efforts to permanently tie the two sets of increases have made little progress in recent years. In a statement, Senate Veterans Affairs Committee Chairman Jerry Moran, R-Kan., and committee ranking member Jon Tester, D-Mont., praised the bill's passage as important for veterans and the country. "Our men and women in uniform deserve to have Washington in their corner working tirelessly to ensure they can keep up with the rising costs of housing, utilities, and food when they return to civilian life," Tester said. "Today's passage is a clear sign that we're making good on our promises to those who've served." Earlier this year, bill sponsor Rep. Eliane Luria, D-Va., called it Congress' "duty" to ensure veterans' benefits keep pace with rising costs. Social Security officials are expected in coming weeks to announce the size of the annual cost-of-living adjustment, if there is one. Last year, the figure was 1.6 percent. Two years ago, it was 2.8 percent. Veterans benefits covered include disability compensation, compensation for dependents, clothing allowances, and dependency and indemnity compensation checks.

If there is a COLA increase to benefits checks, it will go into effect starting this December.

HOUSTON P. O. NAME CHANGE???

Legislation to rename a Houston post office after slain Fort Hood soldier Spc. Vanessa Guillen was introduced in the House recently, the same day that would have been the soldier's 21st birthday. Rep. Sylvia Garcia, D-Texas, filed the legislation to rename the post office located at 5302 Galveston Rd. in south Houston in honor Guillen, a native of the city. "This post office is located just a few blocks away from Vanessa's high school, and it is my hope that her memory will inspire future generations of students for years to come," Garcia said in a statement. She represents the

Houston district where Guillen was from and where the soldier's family lives.

Fort Hood was the soldier's first and only duty station. She was killed April 22 in an arms room on base by a fellow soldier. It took Army investigators more than two months to find her body buried near the Leon River about 20 miles from the base. The search for Guillen captured international media attention and has led to a number of ongoing investigations into Fort Hood and the Army. Subpanels of the House Committees on Oversight and Reform and Armed Services have an ongoing joint investigation into the base's policies and practices, with a focus on Guillen and six other soldiers who died this year while stationed at Fort Hood. Garcia was joined in her bill to rename the post office by a bipartisan group of members of the Texas Congressional Delegation, including Democratic Reps. Joaquin Castro, Vicente Gonzalez, Lloyd Doggett, Filemon Vela, Henry Cuellar, Marc Veasey, Colin Allred, Al Green and Veronica Escobar. Republicans include Reps. John Carter, Chip Roy, Roger Williams, Van Taylor, Will Hurd, Brian Babin and Dan Crenshaw.

VA WINS AN AWARD

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) announced that it received the highest level of distinction within the Gears of Government President's Award program for three innovations that have greatly improved services for Veterans at VA hospitals across the country.

The award recognized Veterans Health Administration Innovation Ecosystem (VHA IE) staff responsible for curating, funding and expanding in-house innovations, which include practices to de-prescribe unnecessary medicine to Veterans, prevent hospital acquired pneumonia and reduce opioid overdose deaths at VA campuses. "The VHA IE team has transformed the way VA employees view the culture of innovation in our organization," said VA Secretary Robert Wilkie. "VHA IE truly

empowers frontline employees to help improve services for Veterans by investing in the infrastructure necessary to adopt cutting edge solutions in collaboration with academic and industry partners. By providing staff with proper resources to develop their ideas, we are now able to turn those ideas into real, workable concepts."

Since its reconfiguration in 2018, VHA IE has helped reshape employees' ability to discover and spread their innovations throughout the VA health care system. To date, VHA IE innovation projects have improved care for more than 1 million Veterans, lowered costs for taxpayers by over \$40 million, saved lives from opioid overdoses and advanced care for the entire field of medicine. VHA IE was selected from over 200 teams and individuals for outstanding mission results, customer service and accountable stewardship.

ON LINE INFO FROM 90 TO PRESENT

The third issue of *Military Exposures & Your Health*, a biannual newsletter for Veterans with service from 1990 to the present, is now online. Read about coronavirus risk and prevention; the expanding telehealth option for Environmental Health Registry Exams; and temporary roles taken by VA Environmental Health Coordinators and Clinicians related to the pandemic. This issue also highlights Gulf War Veteran William "Bill" Watts, Sr.'s commendable volunteer work, Veteran Douglas Turner's technology assistance for the Airborne Hazards and Open Burn Pit Registry, and more. Find the newsletter online at <https://www.publichealth.va.gov/exposures/publications/military-exposures/meyh-3/index.asp>

ASSISTANCE FOR FAMILY CAREGIVERS

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers (PCAFC) offers enhanced clinical support for caregivers of eligible Veterans

who are seriously injured. VA is making changes to expand and enhance the PCAFC. The first phase of these changes goes into effect immediately based on a new regulation authorized by the VA MISSION Act of 2018. The first phase allows eligible Veterans who incurred or aggravated a serious injury (including serious illness) in the line of duty on or after September 11, 2001, and on or before May 7, 1975. WWII, Korean War and Vietnam Veterans will be able to apply. The eligibility requirements include:

- Veteran has single or combined service-connected disability rating of 70% or more.
- Veteran must need in-person personal care services for a minimum of six (6) continuous months based on either:
- An inability to perform an activity of daily living (ADL) each time performed, **or**
- A need for supervision, protection, or instruction which means a functional impairment that directly impacts his/her ability to maintain his or her personal safety, on a daily basis.

Veteran has a functional impairment that directly impacts his or her ability to maintain his or her personal safety, daily. If you or someone you know may be eligible for benefits under the new PCAFC eligibility criteria, they can obtain more information, including how to apply and the benefits and services offered under the expanded Program at https://www.caregiver.va.gov/support/support_benefits.asp.

If you and your Family Caregiver(s) were approved and designated by VA as eligible for PCAFC before October 1, 2020, no immediate action is required if you want to stay in the Caregiver Program. You will automatically maintain your eligibility for one year.

And don't forget to contact your local V.S.O. for more in-depth information.

How To Cure The Virus

by Kirk Schroeder

Vote. Like you life depended on it. Of course the virus I am talking about is the Republican party. From the top all the way down they have lost their way.

We should vote out everyone of them that we have the ability to vote out.

Their constant support of the want to be king or tyrant, no matter how stupid and ugly the things he does are. They have pushed America to the tipping



point. All to keep the power and of course for the almighty dollar.

They no longer have the best interest of the people in mind. When the majority constantly disagrees with almost every-

thing they say or do, then it's time for change. Especially with the hypocrisy of their very own words.

I know I can not change some people's minds on this matter. The kool aid taste to good for them to see the light I have continually tried to show them. But the only way America gets better is by the R's taking a thumping on November 3rd.

Then they can straighten out their
continued on page 7

DOES BITTER DIVORCE LOOM?

Honeymoon Over Before It Begins With PMG 'Delay'!



by Omar Gonzalez, APWU
Western Regional Coordinator

WASHINGTON DC— Responding to the deliberate acts of PMG DeJoy, to delay service to the American public, the 200,000 member strong Union is mobilizing to fight back and fight hard.

PMG Louis DeJoy issued directives that run contrary to the long established mission of the people's post office. Under the guise of cutting cost by eliminating overtime, the orders actually deliberately delay the nation's mail in a pandemic.

Without consultation nor communication the PMG set on a course to thwart the delivery of mail. Dedicated employees are already seeing the piling up of deliberately delayed mail and parcels.

Off To A Bad Relationship

The National Union expressed concerns about the appointment of PMG DeJoy but was willing to give him the benefit of the doubt on his choices for USPS and it's workers.

DeJoy made his choice quickly with his delay the mail dictate prompting the Union's National Executive

Board to meet and commit to strategies to combat the PMG's destructive course.

Adding insult to injury the PMG issued a cynical July 27th communique that reveals the devastation in store for postal workers, their families and communities everywhere. "Better adherence to 'existing operating

plans to meet service standards', 'redoubling plans to improve operational efficiency' and 'controlling expenditures' are all buzz words for more cuts, more harassment, more discipline, more abolishments and involuntary reassignments", said Regional Coordinator Omar Gonzalez.

— Postal Worker West

How To Cure The Virus

continued from page 6

party and give America a real two party system not based on this evil division.

Then maybe we can all take a step towards the middle instead of the far side of either party.

And let me remind you all how much our jobs are on the line. If we don't accomplish what I have said above. They all have to go. Or we will be listening to them say that about us and unions if we lose.

Vote. Vote. Vote. Don't trust the polls. We have to do this.

Hoping to be United we stand. Not divided we fall.
— ShowMe News



Open Season Hotline: (800) PIC-APWU
Open Season questions: virtualopenseason@apwuhp.com
www.apwuhp.com

OPEN SEASON 2020
Nov. 9th - Dec. 14th

NEW 2021 BENEFITS!

ENHANCEMENTS DESIGNED TO REDUCE YOUR COST.

Introducing MEDICARE ADVANTAGE! Same High Option premium with more benefits	High Option: \$25 copay for most insulin	High Option: Lower your blood sugar with a \$0 copay for generic oral medications	New \$25 wellness incentive for Consumer Driven Option members
A Nationwide Network (Cigna & UHC)		No Referrals Needed	

HIGH OPTION 2021 PREMIUMS				Cigna Postal Biweekly		
Enrollment type	Enrollment code	Non-postal biweekly	Non-postal monthly	Category 1	Category 2	APWU career greater than 1 year
Self Only	471	\$103.66	\$224.60	\$100.30	\$90.24	\$103.66
Self Plus One	473	\$207.51	\$449.61	\$200.32	\$178.76	\$207.51
Self and Family	472	\$266.30	\$576.98	\$258.49	\$235.07	\$266.30

Postal rates apply to certain United States Postal Service employees as follows:
 • Postal Category 1 rates apply to career bargaining unit employees who are represented by the following agreements: NALC.
 • Postal Category 2 rates apply to career bargaining unit employees who are represented by the following agreement: PPOA.
 APWU rates apply to career Postal employees represented by APWU.
 Non-Postal rates apply to most non-Postal employees. If you are in a special enrollment category, contact the agency that maintains your health benefits enrollment. Non-Postal rates apply to all career non-bargaining unit Postal Service employees and career employee represented by the NRLCA, APWU, NPMHU agreements. Non-Postal rates apply to Postal executive, Law Enforcement, Management Association and NPPN. Postal rates do not apply to non-career Postal employees, Postal retirees, and associate members of any Postal employee organization who are not career Postal employees.

CONSUMER DRIVEN OPTION 2021 PREMIUMS				United Healthcare Postal Biweekly		
Enrollment type	Enrollment code	Nonpostal biweekly	Non-postal monthly	Category 1	Category 2	APWU career greater than 1 year
Self Only	474	\$69.65	\$150.91	\$66.87	\$57.81	\$13.93
Self Plus One	476	\$151.38	\$327.99	\$145.33	\$125.65	\$37.76
Self and Family	475	\$165.14	\$357.81	\$158.54	\$137.07	\$43.67

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#bettertogether60+years

NATIONAL BUSINESS AGENT . . .



by James Stevenson

Requesting Information For Non-Bargaining Unit Employees (Relevancy Request Management)

There will often become times when it is necessary to request information on non-bargaining unit employees such as EAS management officials (whether it be supervisors, managers, or postmasters). There also will be times when you need to request information for employees out side of the craft you represent in particular when you are utilizing various craft employees for a comparative analysis on differences in treatment or the investigating of crossing craft violations. Typically, the first thing out of managements mouth is "You are not entitled to information for employees you do not represent" and or "We are not required to provide you information for EAS employees." Both assertions are false when the information is needed to investigate whether or not to file a grievance and or the union has a pending grievance in which non-craft employees are involved.

When management requests "rel-

evancy" as it relates to an information request you have submitted make sure that you respond to that relevancy request preferably in writing (the relevancy request by management should also be in writing). Your response need not be in great detail as it is sufficient to demonstrate a "colorable" need for the information as it relates to your investigation. Examples:

1. Please provide a copy of all employees 3972's including but not limited to clerks, carriers, custodians, and supervisors. Relevancy response: "The information is needed for a comparative analysis on the difference in treatment and application of attendance regulations."

2. Please provide a copy of the Title Supervisors form 50 and official bid assignment. Relevancy response: "The Union is investigating a grievance regarding whether the 204B is being utilized improperly." [If the Title Supervisor does not actually hold a bid assignment at the office or there actually is no title supervisor position one could claim that the 204B is not covering an authorized vacancy or absence.

How does one cover a position which actually does not exist?]

3. Please provide a copy of the "employee everything report" for the City Carrier Assistants (CCA's) who worked on December 25 in Hollis Queens." Relevancy response: "The union is investigating a crossing-craft violation."

As you can see the response need not be very detailed as an APWU official is not required to expose all of the arguments or potential violations which will be cited in the grievance. It is sufficient to demonstrate the need for the information without revealing your tactics in moving forward with the grievance.

There are times when the information is actually considered "presumptively relevant" which basically means that the union is entitled to the information upon request without any questions being asked such as when an employee receives a Letter of Warning for attendance and the Union requests a copy of the 3971's, clock rings, and the investigative interview for the employee.

Even when you feel that the information requested is presumptively relevant always respond to a relevancy request as often the employer may simply be utilizing the "relevancy" question as a stall tactic in providing the information.

Please find below some relevant law on the requirement of the employer to provide information to the union on non-bargaining unit employees.

The Supreme Court has described the relevance standard of information requested by union as liberal, "discovery-type" standard. NLRB v. ACME Indus. Co., 385 U.S. 432, 437 (1967). See also Pfizer, Inc., 268 NLRB 916, 115 LRRM 1105 (1984), enf'd. sub nom. NLRB v. Electrical Workers (IBEW) Local 309, 763 F.2D887 (8th Cir. 1985) (applying the same "liberal, discovery type" standard of relevance when a union requests information concerning matters outside the bargaining unit); SBC Midwest, 346 NLRB No. 8, 178 LRRM 1441 (2005). As such, "threshold for relevance is low." Country Ford Trucks, Inc, v. NLRB

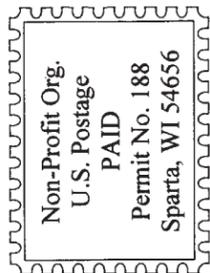
229 F.33d 1184, 1191 (D.C. Cir. 2000). Moreover, "[i]nformation related to wages, benefits, hours, [and] working conditions" all of unit employees is presumptively relevant.

Requested information will be deemed relevant if it seems probable that the information will be of legitimate use t the union in carrying out its duties and responsibilities as bargaining agent. See NLRB v. Acme Indus. Co., 385 U.S. 432, 437, 1 L. Ed. 2d 495, 87 S. Ct. 565 (1967), Put another way, requested information must be likely to be of material assistance in evaluating strategies that may open to the union as part of its struggle to minimize the adverse effects of the employer's decision-making process on persons within the bargaining unit. See Western Mass. Elec, Co. v. NLRB 589 F.2d 42 48 (1st Cir. 1978).

A union can also satisfy its burden by demonstrating a reasonable belief supported by objective evidence for requesting the information Knappton Maritime Corp., 292 NLRB 236, 238-239, 130 LRRM 1119 (1998).

Always-always remember. In the event that the employer refuses to provide the information you are not required to drop down on bended knee and beg for it, move the grievance along and specifically cite in the grievance that the employer has violated Article 17 and 31 in not providing the information. Additionally, if you believe that a violation exists and the employer has failed or refused to provide the requested information FILE the grievance. If you see or are aware of a carrier performing clerk work on December 25 you can file the grievance by holding the Step 1 and submitting the RFI at the same time. The RFI is only going to be utilized to support a violation which you are aware has already occurred. No need to lose compensable violation dates waiting on the return of an RFI as each day that you do not file cuts down how far back the 14 days extends prior to the filing of the grievance. One may still capture any prospective (future) violations in an "ongoing and continuing" grievance but going back in time beyond the 14 days is much more difficult.

In Solidarity.



Return to APWU/MPWU c/o John Greathouse, Editor P.O. Box 27303 Lansing, MI 48909-7303

Change of Service Requested

DEADLINE for articles for the next issue of the Michigan Messenger is November 28, 2020