



PRESIDENT



by
**Michael
Mize**

Our Customers Matter

As I wrote about previously there are changes coming to many post offices across the nation. There are changes coming to the network and trucking schedules as well. Many of us have already started seeing some of these changes. While some of these changes will cause adjustments to our positions, we will strive to keep those to a minimum as the Contract requires management to keep the impact to us as little as they can. My concern currently is for the Service and our customers.

Our customer's, the people of the United States of America, deserve a strong and dependable Postal Service. From what I can see it appears that some have lost sight of that in USPS Management and likely some of them never had that goal in the first place. What can we do to help our customers in this battle for their Service?

As an employee in the Service, we see when changes cause failure. We see when the Express mail run that was there last week is removed, and it causes mail to be delayed a day and result in a failure to deliver. I would ask that you make notes of these failures caused by the changes they make. Then contact your Union Presidents with that information. There are many types of failures that could be discussed. What I am speaking of here is a change to the process that has been used that directly results in mail

not meeting the delivery standards. I would suggest that the firsthand knowledge you have could be relayed to our Legislators, so they have information concerning how these changes are impacting the American people. As

intentional drive to make the Service dysfunctional. I believe that we are currently being led by an individual that has no understanding of what the Service is or why we are important. I believe what we are watching is a

this American treasure. I believe we must use the tools we have to fight this push to the bottom. Delays in our service are not what the people want currently. People want things fast and do not want excuses.

Our customer's, the people of the United States of America, deserve a strong and dependable Postal Service. From what I can see it appears that some have lost sight of that in USPS Management and likely some of them never had that goal in the first place.

a Union we are in regular contact with many of the Legislators concerning the issues we face. The information you have is worth far more than my words alone. To be clear this is an issue that both Republican and Democrat leaders are concerned about.

What I believe we are seeing is an

move get the American people to lose faith in the Service. The fastest way to privatize a government service and make it run by corporations for profit is to get the people to believe that is the best thing to do. This drive to push the people away from the Service is one of the things that could destroy

Breaking down the network and closing facilities does not provide the people with what our Constitution says they should have. Call us, call your Representative or Senator. Just please, help the customers. Why? BECAUSE OUR CUSTOMERS MATTER!!!

Peters Presses For Transparency On Potential Impacts Of Postal Service's Network Plan

The tireless efforts of your union and its officers is seeing results. Now is not the time to sit quietly, we must continue to report service failures and we must continue to engage our elected representatives We have seen the damages consolidations can do to not only our jobs but our service. Step up, get engaged and work with your union

to protect Americas Postal Service.
by Brett Kleiman
WASHINGTON, DC – U.S. Senator Gary Peters (MI), Chairman of the Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee, is pressing the

facilities. Peters raised concerns about the pace of these changes, and called on the Postal Service to provide full transparency on its long-term plans to ensure that any changes will not harm delivery service. Peters also



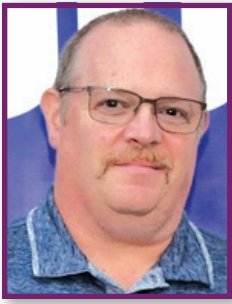
United States Postal Service (USPS) to provide transparency on the potential impacts of its Network Plan on delivery service and communities. In a letter, Peters requested details and analyses of the full scope and associated impacts of the Postal Service's plans, which include changes to some

urged the Postal Service to fully cooperate with ongoing, independent oversight efforts by the Postal Regulatory Commission (PRC) and USPS Office of Inspector General. "In line with the Postal Service's mission of reliably serving every com-
continued on page 8

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



by
John
Greathouse

EDITOR

Crazier Than A Post Office Job!

Having had the opportunity to service this country in not just one but 3 different federal agencies, I am appalled by what is going on here at the PO. While each agency has had its own unique level of "stupidity" or "craziness" and I am at a loss seeing, almost on a daily basis just how low the PMG and his 10-yr plan can go!

First, we do need to change DeJoy's nickname from DeLay to DeStroy! We know the "wonderful" 10-year plan is nothing more than his plan to destroy and privatize America's Post Office!

So . . . what can we do? We need to start with being the "squeaky wheel" and demand action by doing the following.

1. Read Brother Roscoe's article and write to Senator Gary Peters asking him to take action and hold DeStroy accountable for his actions.

2. To the right is a template for a postcard.

a. Take it and put it on your copier, make 1 copy, place it next to the original and print them, flip the paper and print on the back.

b. You will have 4 postcard per sheet of paper.

c. Cut them.

d. Get your members to fill it out and put on a stamp

and send them to President Biden.

e. Drop them into the mail on January 1st!

We need to demand that President Biden nominate both **U.S. Rep. Brenda Lawrence** and **Sarah Anderson** for the USPS Board of Governors.

Both are very strong candidates that can fill the two vacant positions on the BOG and then to remove DeStroy from the USPS and then work on getting someone in to the PMG seat that has the best interest of America's Post Office and not their pocket!

Currently there is a online petition drive to have DeStroy fired. It currently has around 37,600 signatures. While that is a very noble effort, that is 37,600 signatures and it would be around 20 pages of paper. But take 37,600 postcards arriving in the White House mailbox! That would be fantastic! What if it was even more! 100,000? 200,000? It is all up to you to act and act now! Local Editors and Legislative directors who received this paper, lets aim at printing the postcard and getting them signed and do a mass mail drop on January 1st, then wait and see what happens. We have nothing to lose by using the mail to take our fight for change to the President!

In Solidarity.

Tell Biden to save the USPS and appoint Rep. Brenda Lawrence and Sarah Anderson to the USPS Board of Governors Now. Click here https://actionnetwork.org/forms/usps-bog?-source=group-courage-campaign&referrer=group-courage-campaign&redirect=https%3A%2F%2Fsecure.actblue.com%2Fdonate%2Fusps1130_bgs

President Biden,

America is in need of having a full **Postal Board of Governors** to be in place to save America's Post Office.

Please nominate **U.S. Rep. Brenda Lawrence** and **Sarah Anderson** to fill the two vacant seats on the BOG.

Sign _____

Name _____

Zip Code _____

The White House
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MPWU Historian Vacant

MPWU Advisor Vacant

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 | Great Lakes Area |
| Central MI | Mail Haulers |
| Detroit District | Jackson |
| Farmington | Muskegon |
| Flint | Southwest MI |
| 480-481 | Traverse City |
| 486-487 | Troy Local |
| 498-499 | Western MI |
| Gaylord | |

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

The opinions expressed in this publication are 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.

Affiliated with: American Postal Workers Union, AFL-CIO; APWU National Postal Press Association, Michigan State AFL-CIO & Michigan Labor Press





by
Roscoe
Woods

LEGISLATIVE DIRECTOR

The Fox Is In The Hen House

An Open Letter to Senator Gary Peters

Dear Senator Peters,

As a local union official, I have known you for a long time. We have always been grateful for your leadership and hard work on issues that matter to all working people and that includes the hard-working men and women of the APWU.

When you were in the House of Representatives and after you became our Senator, you have always done all you could to protect America's Postal Service. You have always understood that our service is essential to this nation's people.

Most recently, you have been working with the MPWU, Detroit, Flint, and 480-481 Area Locals to engage the USPS OIG to investigate why filling vacant clerk side jobs in this district takes far too long. We are very grateful for your assistance, but the Postmaster General must be asked for much more.

In the last two years, the PMG DeJoy has asked for five postage rate increases, while we have witnessed reductions in delivery standards for some of our premium services. In essence, our customers are getting less service for more money.

As we have stated in the past, we have never witnessed consolidations of our network that were not followed by reductions in our service standards. Looking at the current ten-year plan, we have no reason not to expect more of the same.

If we do not act swiftly, the damage will render this agency a shell of what it currently is. Nothing short of our ability to meet our universal mandate is at stake.

We respectfully ask that your committee call the PMG to the Hill, put a pause on the current 10-year plan and ask PMG DeJoy direct questions related to how he reconciles the increases to postage versus this service reporting for fiscal year 2023 a \$6,500,000,000.00 deficit.

We need your committee to get to the bottom of why this agency is losing so much revenue under our current Postmaster General's leadership. Louis DeJoy is a successful businessperson; he is undoubtedly an intelligent man, but watching him in this critical role as he moves his plans forward without respect for the cost now or into the future is frustrating. As the head guy at XPO Logistics, he'd be

more responsible with his cash and uncomfortable running at such a massive deficit while asserting XPO would be fine in ten years.

It is clear to us that he is operating with the understanding that it is not his money or his bottom line that he is bankrupting. It is the future of this nation's postal service that our PMG is putting at significant risk.

We watch daily as this service

addresses at an affordable cost.

Adding insult to injury, we have been told that this agency sets aside over \$500,000,000.00 a fiscal year to address the expense of noncompliance with our collective bargaining agreements. We need a review of every aspect of this agency from the ground up.

Employee retention is awful; in most cases, the reasons for newer

part, they do not understand what the folks we represent actually do.

This service is built on a stack of lies that grows larger every day. There is widespread fraud, from something as simple as an office reporting when the mail is ready to be delivered to when the post office box mail is ready for our customers to pick up.

We have more and more members retiring sooner than they would like because the atmosphere in their offices is just toxic. Employees are harassed to do more daily, while this agency fails them at every turn.

No training, rural carriers not getting paid, this agency is hemorrhaging hundreds of thousands of dollars for non-compliance with agreed-upon contracts, and the list continues. We need to repeat, the fiscal year 2023 deficit was \$6,500,000,000.00

How can an office fail to fill jobs, which results in it costing the service hundreds of thousands of dollars, and no one is ever held accountable?

We need you to safeguard what the Postmaster General is refusing to. We need you to be the leader you have always been, the one to ask tough questions, investigate this agency, understand where it is failing, and then work towards fixing what is broken in this centuries-old service.

We are asking you to protect this agency from the #1 enemy within, the Postmaster General.

Respectfully,

If any of you feel as we do that the current PMG needs to come before the Senate to explain why so many things are in disarray in your office contact Senator Peters at:

Hart Senate Office Building
Suite 724

Washington, D.C. 20510
DC: Phone: (202) 224-6221

Toll Free: (844) 506-7420

Make sure you identify yourself as a member of the APWU when you call.



wastes revenue, whether failing to staff an office resulting in unnecessary overtime, or his mandate to get it done at any expense. It has led to widespread noncompliance with our agreed-upon contracts, resulting in millions of dollars in wasted revenue. Simply put, he would never run XPO this way; why does he run the people's postal service this way?

The USPS is not a private sector employer it cannot be run like one.

We are undergoing staffing reviews nationwide, especially on the clerk side, where the mail is sorted and prepared for the carriers to deliver. We expect to see widespread staffing cuts in the coming months. We have no reason not to believe these cuts will not result in further reduced delivery standards as meeting our delivery commitments with reduced staffing becomes more challenging.

What we have seen over the last few years leads us to the conclusion that the PMG does not value people, nor does he care about our universal mandate to deliver to all this nation's

employees resigning deal directly with the atmosphere in the individual offices and the fact that employees are, disrespected, demeaned, and do not feel valued.

Speaking from my local in the Michigan 1 District, this agency does not train its new hires meaningfully. New hires are given little to no training and berated when they cannot complete a task. Managers in Michigan 1 District do not communicate; for the most

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT

New Area 7 Director

by Mike Mize, President, MPWU

I want to thank Dana McLean for stepping up and taking on Area 7. We spoke over the weekend and worked out some details. From Wendy and I, we can't express

enough how much we appreciate Dana taking this on.

Dana has been doing an excellent job representing in Area 9 and I am certain will be well received by our members in Area 7.

MAINTENANCE CRAFT DIRECTOR

Happy Shoveling . . . Happy Shoveling . . . It's That Time Of Year!

by Marti Jablonski,

Well, the holidays are upon us, and I hope everyone has a safe one. Take time to relax and spend time with those you love. Holidays are stressful and this time of the year at the post office can just add to that stress.

From the custodial side of the winter season, it means switching your hats from mowing the lawn to shoveling the sidewalks. I have had some ask me if this is a custodial function or higher level and if it was included in the 4852's? The answer is, "it should be". If you are unsure talk to your local management team and ask to see a copy of your 4852. Then on the right-hand side of the 4852 usually down near the bottom it will have snow with an allotted number of times or "frequencies" to follow it. Please make sure you are getting accurate time and if not, this should be documented for next year's Line H. If you are new to the custodial side of your office and you must utilize the snow-blower or tractor to do the job, make sure you have been properly trained to do so. Also make sure you are documenting if they have contracted out your office and yet you are being given instructions to go clean up after them, yes this is happening. We need



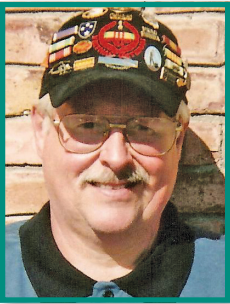
to know, and it needs to be documented. Please make sure you are doing your part to keep the side walks clear and safe for the employees and the customers, but while doing so make sure you are keeping yourself safe. Don't rush, it will cause you to slip, or worse pull a muscle and then your holiday season will be pain filled and not enjoyable. Make sure you take the time to stretch and bend to warm up the muscles you will be using to get

the job done. If you are plowing the lot, take the time to make sure your path is free of obstacles and hazards. Sometimes we take for granted that everything will be as it was but under that layer of snow can be hidden dangers and objects. Remember there is much more to your job as a custodian than just mopping floors and emptying trash. You are an integral part of the whole operation.

One thing I would like all of us do,

is the next time you walk into your facility don't just walk in and punch the time clock and start your day. Walk in like you have never been there before and look at it as if you were a brand-new employee or customer. I have recently been to a few facilities that are in complete shambles and yet the employees just accepted that as normal. You, the employee should never be expected to reach your hand in the back of a toilet to pull the stopper to make it flush. You should have proper equipment and functional equipment. You should never have to work in filth or in situations that put your safety and health at risk. Fill out the 1776's and get the problems corrected. Your boss expects you to do your job efficiently and in a timely manner well it is the Post offices job and your management teams to make sure the building and all equipment are running and functioning so that you may do so.

In closing, I would like to send my condolences to our Veterans Director John Smeekens and his family in the loss of his wife Donna. John and Donna were a team. Donna would make blankets for raffles; I can say I am one of the lucky ones to have won one of these beautiful creations! She was a part of the union family and will be greatly missed.



by
John P.
Smeekens

VETERANS' DIRECTOR

Veterans' Briefs

Ladies and Gentlemen, Friends, and Veterans.

We would like to recognize our Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines and Coast Guard Veterans who have

sacrificed, both in war and in peace, to protect America and the American way of life. We honor our brave men and women who have proudly served this great Nation. The majority of Veterans no longer actively serve or wear a military uniform. Many have gone on to become

postal employee's, teachers, police officers, firefighters, and neighbors. Whether they wear the military uniform today or wore it previously, Veterans represent an unwavering dedication and exemplify the highest ideals of service to this Country. Our men and women in uniform both past and present, have been, and are, the most powerful line of defense in all conflicts against those who set out to harm our way of life. They have answered the call to duty from all across America. As our service members depart from our shores, we look forward to their safe return home. But we know that some of them will not. It is our responsibility to honor those who return home, especially our wounded warriors. And, we must never forget those who paid for our freedom with the ultimate sacrifice. We must also honor the families of our Veterans, who sacrifice in their own, often uncelebrated ways.

America is fortunate to have service members who exemplify the

commitment to duty, willingly display valor under fire, and favor humility over glory. This notion of selflessness and sacrifice – the likes of which are exhibited each and every day by Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, Marines, and Coast Guardsmen – is the bedrock of our all-volunteer force.

To our Veterans – our service members of all ages – who have engaged in combat, stability, and humanitarian operations – we honor you. To those service members who paid the ultimate price or who are still missing or unaccounted for – we honor them by remembering the sacrifices they and their families made for our great Nation.

So, this Veterans Day is a day of Honor, and a day to Honor. During these celebrations and reflections, we thank everyone who has worn a U.S. military uniform for their honorable service and for our freedom. And to all Veterans;

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SERVICE, WELCOME HOME!!!

Reprinted from *The Communicator*,
Local 480-481

Boxing Up The House To Move?

Has your name changed? Are you moving? If so please submit the change to your steward or call your Union Hall so we are current on your mailing address.



AREA 9 DIRECTOR



by
Dana
Mclean

The Crucial Role Of Requesting A Union Steward

In the realm of worker's rights, employees often find themselves facing various challenges in the workplace. One powerful tool is the presence of a union steward. Requesting a union steward is not just a procedural step, it is a crucial aspect of ensuring fair treatment, protecting rights, and maintaining a balanced work environment.

One of the primary roles of a union steward is to act as an advocate for employees. By requesting the presence of a steward, workers gain a powerful ally who can support their cause during discipline, disputes or negotiations. The fear of retaliation is also a common concern when employees consider addressing work-

place issues. Requesting a union steward also adds a layer of protection for individuals who might be hes-

By requesting the presence of a steward, workers gain a powerful ally who can support their cause during discipline, disputes or negotiations.

itant to voice their concerns on their own. This being said, you have to be the one to request your steward and management is required to get you a steward.

How many of you have had plans and had to change them because you had to work. If only you had a guaran-

tee that you could have that time off. Well guess what, you do. One of the benefits of working for the postal ser-

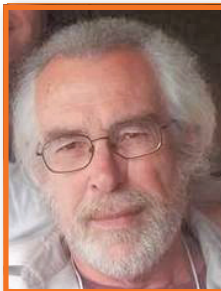
vice is the leave we earn. Why does management think they can deny us to use our leave? Check your LMOU, if you have one and to see what the specific details are when it comes to the number of employees allowed off. Fill out your 3971 AND get a signature of it being received. Your 3971 has to be

given back, approved or disapproved in a certain amount of time. The most annoying complaint I have heard from PTF's in small offices is that "there is no one to cover me". That is not our problem. We earn the leave and we also earn the right to use it.

As we come to the end of the year, I hope everyone is making sure to take time for yourself. I know it can get stressful and sometimes overwhelming this part of the year but we need to make sure our mental health is our first priority. Enjoy your family and count your blessings.

From my family to yours, Merry Christmas, Happy Hanukkah and Happy New Year. In solidarity.

RETIREE PRESIDENT



by
Paul
Browning

— One For All —

machines take over. And there's no turning back.

Technology is not just the wave of the future any more, its here today and is not going away. But technology alone doesn't produce results. It has to be managed with insight and not just blind faith stumbling ahead. Meanwhile, Postmaster General DeJoy continues with his 10 year Delivering for America plan with a justification that automation technology and slower service will provide a financially profitable Postal Service. To put it politely, such a rationalization is nothing less than horse manure.

DeJoy predicted that by the second year of his plan USPS would turn a profit. Nope, USPS operations continued to operate in the red. Now, DeJoy readily acknowledges that USPS will lose billions of dollars again this year. All the while, DeJoy continues his spending of huge amounts of Postal Service dollars investing in building mega mail sorting plants and transporting mail farther and farther from its delivery point. Mail service steadily declines as mail travels long trips to go to actual short distances away delivery points.

DeJoy's plan certainly seems like madness to this writer and also to the APWU Local Union Presidents who condemned it at a National Presidents Conference. Indeed, at the 2022 APWU National Convention, delegates voted overwhelmingly for the removal of PMG DeJoy. Unfortunately, it was a case of a lot of noise from people actually affected by DeJoy's plans and little attention paid

by those not directly affected.

Way back in my first paragraph here, I mentioned the decline in APWU membership. I don't know about the other postal Unions, but at the least automation has negatively impacted them (come on, cameras in mail trucks so Supervisors back in the office can monitor letter carriers every minute on a delivery route). Ruthless management flows from the top down and DeJoy's flawed numbers are all about machines and transportation with little regard for workers.

It's times for leaders of the four (4) Postal Unions to pay attention to numbers, namely the numbers of their members. One Union leader speaking for 200,000 is one thing. But a Union leader speaking for 600,000 members is even better. Way back in the 1990's, the

APWU incorporated language into its National Constitution that APWU leadership would meet early or every other year to discuss eventual merger of postal Unions. Obviously, that hasn't worked out. Who wants to surrender being head honcho to a subservient position?

I say it's time to put egos aside and become ONE GREAT POSTAL UNION. Enough bickering over craft assignments and internal policies. DeJoy's 10 year plan is nothing more than another repeat of the numerous failed poorly managed postal reorganizations that hurt rather than helped the Post Office as America's premier delivery service. One voice speaking for a united Postal Union works a helluva lot better than four men each looking out for their own interests.

In 1993 the APWU had 306,000 members. The NALC had 212,000 members, the NARLC 43,000 members, and the Mail Handlers Union 52,000 members. The APWU total was prior to the establishment of the Retirees Department. However, the 306,000 number for APWU did include approximately 35,000 individuals who paid \$35 a year to be associate members of the APWU so they could enroll in the APWU Health Plan. Hence the APWU had over 270,000 full dues paying members.

Today APWU President Mark Diamondstein will frequently quote that the APWU has over 220,000 members—a rather precipitous drop from the early 90's figure of 306,000. What makes it even smaller (worse) is that that number includes retirees and associate members for the APWU health Plan. Therefore, the number of full dues paying APWU members has fallen from 270,000 to around 160,000 in the last 30 years.

Why the decrease? It's not for lack of organizing attempts by National, State and Local Union officers. It's all about automation. While the number of actual human beings working in retail and sorting operations has, the number of machines used in selling Postal services and processing the mail has risen dramatically. Every year more and more machines are introduced into bigger and bigger consolidated Sorting and Distribution Centers. Jobs in the Clerk Craft disappear as the

Michigan Messenger
Deadline for
Newsletter Submissions
February 3, 2024



by Eric
Chornoby

Steward
Customer
Care Center
APWU 480-481
Area Local

In 2023, hundreds of thousands of Americans went on strike. What we now see as a historic year for labor started as embers during the pandemic. This movement reached several countries and industries. Thanks to this movement, the APWU has the potential to gain huge ground.

A Storm Was Brewing

During the pandemic, those people still working were called “essential workers.” As we know, essential

The Year Of The Strike And What It Means For The APWU

means you are forced to come to work and don't get paid more. Workers were disgruntled. When COVID restrictions seemingly began to slow down, praise for ‘essential workers’ began to diminish.

Several industries did not stop during COVID. Health Care, Food, Sanitation, Postal Services, Teachers, etc., kept working. Corporate profits increased. Housing prices increased. Inflation skyrocketed. But wages were stagnant. This was the spark that caused the ripple effect of several Unions striking leading up to and into 2023.

Some strikes lasted years and did not benefit the workers. Such as the

Warrior Met Coal Strike (2021 - 2023) which saw no increase in wages. But, the workers cost their company over one Billion Dollars. Even when workers lost, the company did not win.

The Hot Labor Summer

The Strikes in California became known as the Hot Labor Summer. Various Unions went on strike. One such example is the Los Angeles Teachers Strike, which saw tens of thousands of teachers walk off the job and caused an estimated 500,000 students to miss school. The teachers were striking for wages, working conditions, and their coworkers.

The majority of support staff lived

below the poverty line. The schools did not have sufficient support staff. Buildings were dirty. Coming to work every day during the pandemic was not enough, especially when the Government didn't have enough employees to do the job. This sounds a lot like the Post Office, where each craft has its own issues and staffing problems.

The result was a 30% pay increase for the low-paid support staff who made 25,000 a year and back pay. The LA Teachers Strike is just one example of working and standing together to help each other. 2023 saw dozens of labor organizations holding strikes.

The Looming Threat Of A Strike

The real power of a strike is solidarity. The teachers showed that they could rally behind their coworkers to get them more money and it worked. The factors included half a million children who went without education over a couple of days. The strike had a ripple effect. When a parent is forced to miss work because the schools are closed, it becomes a personal problem and impacts the economy as a whole.

If the social pressure is not enough, companies and Governments lost Billions from strikes in 2023. While some companies still want to gamble with workers, others are paying attention. No one wins when a strike happens. Either workers got what they deserved or they held out as long as possible. This looming threat of a strike gave our industry the leverage it needed.

The UPS Effect

2023 also saw the threat of a strike cause companies to fold. The most impactful for us is UPS. The Teamsters leveraged the economic impact a strike would have to attain the largest contract the Teamsters ever earned.

Some highlights of the agreement include an immediate raise to no less than \$21 an hour for part-time UPS employees. Full-time employees gained a 2.75-an-hour raise in 2023, with a contract raise totaling 7.50 an hour. Abolishment of the two-tier pay scale. No more forced off day overtime. UPS had 60 contractual improvements. All with zero concessions.

UPS is a massive shipping and logistics company. That was the worker's leverage. However, USPS has more volume and could cause a larger economic impact.

What This Means For The APWU

The elephant in the room. The APWU cannot strike. Federal law prohibits us from striking. It is the main reason why the Great Postal Strike was such a risky move. Strikers were

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2024 APWU Secretary-Treasurer's Training In Maryland

March 4-March 6, 2024

MGM National Harbor

101 MGM National Avenue • National Harbor, MD 20745

Hotel Rate: \$259.00/night and \$18.00/night resort fee + taxes

The resort fee includes the following:

- In-Room Internet Access
- Property Wide Wireless Internet Access
- Access to Fitness Center

***Cut-off date to make reservations is Monday, February 5, 2024.**

Reservations can be made online at <https://book.passkey.com/e/50669502>

***For travel purposes, please count on classes going until 5:00 pm on Thursday, March 7, 2024.**

If you have any questions concerning the conferences, please contact Hannah Decker, Executive Assistant to the Secretary-Treasurer at hdecker@apwu.org.





NATIONAL BUSINESS AGENT



by
James
Stephenson

Hold The Line Officers And Stewards

To all Local Officers and Stewards. There are times when all of us feel overwhelmed and may even begin to doubt ourselves but that is when you dig in and say, "Screw it, I am going to fight like hell and go down kicking and screaming." Right now, the USPS is lodging a full frontal assault on the clerk craft and the APWU not just in Michigan and Illinois but all across the country. Our very existence is at stake as the USPS implements these changes which by large have had and are having a negative impact on the clerk craft in particular. You may not know it but I often think about being an elementary school

teacher (imagine my old tail starting over on a "bucket list") but our work here is not yet done. The enemy is at the gate and the employees need each and every one of you as their sword and shield now more than ever.

Trying to create despair and frustration is an art of war by the USPS which is why they often retaliate or try to discipline union officials as it is a tactical method called "Cutting the Head off the Snake." If we (the Union Officials) fall the house of cards comes tumbling down and the employees are at the mercy of management. To all the local Officers and Stewards know that the National and Regional Officers are absolutely nothing and I do mean nothing without our local Presidents, local

officers, and local Stewards. It is no different than an actual war. You can have the "Brass" in war formulate the greatest battle plan ever but if the infantry (boots on the ground) get discouraged or give up the war is over and there is no strategical plan that can overcome surrendering.

Working the way that we do takes it's toll, not just on us but also on our families. What I think about when I am at a low point is how the early labor leaders and workers were physically attacked and sometimes killed standing up for what they believed in. Imagine that, they paid the ultimate sacrifice. I see the old films and videos and one would ask, "How the hell did they endure in the face of such adversity?"

It is because you and the rest of us are here not just to file grievances

and protect jobs but also to preserve a standard of living and way of life for the people thus failure for us is not an option. Most of us are in the "twilight" portion of both our Postal and Union careers as our bodies are breaking down a little more each day, the stress often seems unbearable, and sometimes no matter what you do the employees may make you feel like why am I even subjecting myself to all of this.

The short answer is, "BECAUSE THIS IS WHAT WE DO!"

You are not in this battle alone so just hold on, there will come a day when we all can drink Tim Horton coffee all day and throw our cell phones in the lake but that day is not yet upon us. We got work to do Brothers and Sisters.

In Solidarity.

CHICAGO DISTRICT NATIONAL BUSINESS AGENT



by
Linda
Turney

Off The Clock Marijuana

An employee can do what they want on their own time. It is none of the employer's business. When it comes to off duty conduct, it is management's responsibility to show that there is a relationship between the off duty conduct and the workplace. Management can claim that permissiveness or restrictions of federal law may not matter to them, however, the employee behavior is impaired.

The USPS can attempt to negotiate a rule or policy with the Union to prevent off duty use of Marijuana, however, an employee using marijuana for recreational purposes is not a violation off the premises and off

the clock in Michigan. Other states have different restrictions concerning Marijuana.

If management believes that the Grievant is using marijuana on the clock and on the premise. It is management's burden to show that an employee is impaired by marijuana. People can testify or write witness statements as to the employee's behavior. American Addiction Centers state that, "*THC, the component of Marijuana, a highly fat-soluble compound, has a very long half-life — the amount of time it takes the concentration of THC in the body to decrease by half. How long residual THC levels remain in the body depends on an individual's marijuana use. For example, one study found that the half-life was 1.3 days for individuals who in-*

frequently used marijuana. More frequent use showed a half-life of somewhere between 5 and 13 days."

If we have an employee who is smoking on the job, that discipline will most likely be upheld. The USPS has a rule that there should be no federal illegal substances at the USPS.

As far as Marijuana is concerned, management can testify as to the results of any drug-test and the validity of the test, but they will not be able to legitimately testify as to the impairment or influence of the marijuana. They can state the Grievant has glassy eyes, inattention to work, or behavior such as eating too many

chocolate cookies. Proving this would be difficult.

If management disciplines a person for off-duty conduct, they must show a basis for the relationship to the job. Often called a "Nexis". Nexis could be a photo on Facebook smoking marijuana and then stating you are a postal employee. It could be something in the newspaper that ties you to the Postal Service and your marijuana use. Nexis links your behavior and your connection to the Postal Service.

Have a Happy Holiday Season. May your world be bright and your families safe and happy.

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likely to go to jail if the strike failed.

Those of us who have lived through a few contracts recognize a pattern. If one Postal Union gives a concession, the rest are likely to follow. One Union gaining ground is likely to benefit the whole. With the NALC currently negotiating their contract, the APWU can pick up momentum going into our next negotiation.

The APWU has an ace up its sleeve. The Postal Reorganization Act of 1970. The act requires USPS to pay its workers comparable to the private sector. We are likely to see a pay increase for the USPS to comply with the law. It was not just UPS, oth-

er Unions in our industry such as the Communication Workers Union in the UK gained a 10% raise and a lump sum bonus. When every other mail company is seeing raises, it is a great time to be entering Contract negotiations.

2023 has been solidarity in action. Each time a strike happens, corporations notice. When profits and the bottom line are all that matter, it often becomes a game of chicken. When we support our fellow workers and they hold out, it gives us leverage in our contract negotiations. When your neighbor is striking for better wages or working conditions, it benefits us all to stand together.

MAY THE GOOD TIMES AND
TREASURES OF THE PRESENT
BECOME THE GOLDEN
MEMORIES OF TOMORROW.
WISH YOU LOTS OF LOVE,
JOY AND HAPPINESS.
MERRY CHRISTMAS



Area 7 Director



by
Dana
Mclean

Strength In Numbers

Joining the union is crucial for workers as it provides a collective voice to advocate for workers rights, fair wages and improve working conditions. In the past year it's been more apparent than ever with UPS and UAW going on strike to negotiate better wages and benefits. They were successful and the unity of the union was on display nationwide! We need the APWU to be as strong and that begins with increasing membership. Since I will be the new

area 7 director and representing the offices in the 490/491, I received the clerk list so I can start reaching out to the clerks. I noticed there are quite a few clerks that are non-members. The union is as strong as its members and there is strength in num-



I have noticed that there are offices still not scheduling clerks for the 4-hour guarantee. The contract is clear. When a PTF is scheduled, they are guaranteed at least 4 hours. If there is a break MORE than 2 hours, they are guaranteed another 4 hours. This rule doesn't change just because it's a Sat-

urday. If you are scheduled to come back in the afternoon on Saturdays make sure they are scheduling you for 4 hours. For PSE's it's a 2-hour guarantee.

I will be making office visits after the first of the year. I look forward to meeting the clerks of 490/491 offices. Until then if you have any questions or concerns feel free to reach out to me. My cell phone is 231-638-7290 or email me at danamcleanapwu@gmail.com

I hope everyone has a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

In solidarity.

Peters Presses For Transparency On Potential Impacts Of Postal Service's Network Plan

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community, it is essential to ensure full transparency about these plans and ensure any changes will not adversely impact service," wrote Senator Peters. "It is essential that USPS study and disclose details about the impacts of any changes, including impacts on service. I urge the Postal Service to fully study the impacts of early facility changes before moving forward with plans."

Peters has championed efforts to protect the Postal Service and its 250-year tradition of delivery service to all Americans. Peters authored and led passage of a historic, bipartisan law to set the Postal Service on a more sustainable financial footing and support the goal of providing long-term reliable service across the country. The law made the first major reforms to the Postal Service in more than 15 years, including requiring six-day delivery.

The text of the letter is copied below and available here.

Dear Postmaster General DeJoy,

I write to request details about the U.S. Postal Service's (USPS) planned and ongoing implementation of changes to its network, including additional information on the scope of these plans and their associated impacts. I urge the Postal Service to fully study the impacts of its plans, provide transparency, and comply with oversight from the Postal Regulatory Commission (PRC) and USPS Office of Inspector General (OIG). In line with the Postal Service's mission of reliably serving every community, it is essential to ensure full transparency about these plans and ensure any changes will not adversely impact service.

USPS previewed potential changes to network in its ten-year strategic plan ("Delivering for America") and subsequent communications. Since then, USPS has gradually released additional details about a long-term plan for changes to its nationwide processing and delivery operations

network (hereinafter "the Network Plan"), and has begun to implement changes including moving processing operations within and between facilities. The plan includes moving local processing operations in some areas from "Delivery Units" (often co-located with post offices) into new and more centralized "Sorting and Delivery Centers," as well as transferring some operations at regional facilities (particularly package processing) to nearby facilities, with the stated goal of improving efficiency and service. USPS has said this plan will not entail closure of post offices or result in employee layoffs, and has committed to not reducing any retail services.

USPS indicated it would study and continuously monitor the impacts of initial changes before moving forward with the plan. However, USPS has already moved forward with changes to over 25 facilities and is studying more than 160 facilities for future changes. These changes are occurring at an accelerated pace, with new details emerging intermittently for USPS customers and employees. I am concerned about the pace of these changes and urge USPS to provide full transparency on its plans moving forward. It is essential that USPS study and disclose details about the impacts of any changes, including impacts on service. I urge the Postal Service to fully study the impacts of early facility changes before moving forward with plans. I also urge USPS to fully cooperate with oversight of its network plans, including the PRC's and OIG's independent inquiries.

I request that USPS respond to the following questions by February 5, 2024, to provide additional transparency on the Network Plan and its impacts:

1. Please explain in detail how USPS has assessed the projected service impacts of these network changes. USPS has said it holistically evaluated various factors and data prior to executing each facility change. How is the Postal Service studying potential or projected service

impacts before execution of each facility change?

a. Please provide details on any data that support the service projections. Explain in detail which data USPS has analyzed prior to executing changes and provide examples.

2. Please explain how much time USPS has taken to evaluate actual service impacts at facilities where USPS implemented changes. USPS indicated that it has collected service performance data at facility sites after implementing changes. Please send available service performance data for implemented sites.

a. USPS implemented 14 Sorting and Delivery Center (S&DC) facilities by June 2023, and 7 more by September (3 months later). It appears the time between rounds of implemented sites is too short to draw statistically meaningful conclusions about the extent of the service impacts. Why has USPS moved forward with additional rounds of S&DC implementation, before receiving more service data to make conclusions about past rounds?

3. USPS has stated the overall goal of this plan is to achieve service excellence and financial sustainability. How is USPS calculating any associated financial impacts of these facility changes (new costs and savings), and how is it measuring projections against results? Please explain the methodology used and factors analyzed.

4. Why has USPS not released a full list of facilities under review for possible future changes (including for S&DCs, Local Processing Centers, and Regional Processing & Distribution Centers)?

a. Please provide a full list of all facilities USPS is targeting for implementation in 2024, including those still under review, and expected timelines for continued study.

5. Please provide a complete list of all impact studies USPS has completed on its Network Plan as a whole, including service impacts, community impacts, and employee impacts.

6. In deciding where to move forward with plans, USPS has conducted reviews of potential facility sites, considering factors such as delivery route impacts, employee commute times, sequence of mail and package flows, staffing impacts, and financial rigor. Please provide a list of all factors USPS has studied prior to moving forward with changes.

7. How has USPS assessed the Network Plan's potential and actual impacts on employees? Please list any employee conditions USPS expects to change, as well as impact assessments USPS has completed.

a. USPS has committed that there will be no employee layoffs as part of its plan. Does the Network Plan assume any net impact on job numbers due to the planned changes (compared to status quo), including jobs reduced by attrition?

b. Changes associated with S&DCs may alter local employees' commute to work. What are the average changes in commute time for employees, and what are the outliers (range)?

8. USPS asserts it has communicated regularly with employee groups about its plans. It is important to involve employees in discussions of tentative plans, before such plans are final. What is the earliest notification USPS provides to local employees about a potential facility change?

a. USPS is currently evaluating more than 100 new S&DC locations. Has USPS involved employee groups in the evaluation process for these potential changes? Will USPS commit to sharing early lists of potential changes and incorporating employee groups' feedback?

9. USPS has stated that as individual facility work progresses, it may be prudent to change plans if unanticipated events develop. How is USPS evaluating the need to change plans? Would USPS stop progression of the Network Plan and reassess if it observes unintended adverse impacts on service, customers, or employees?