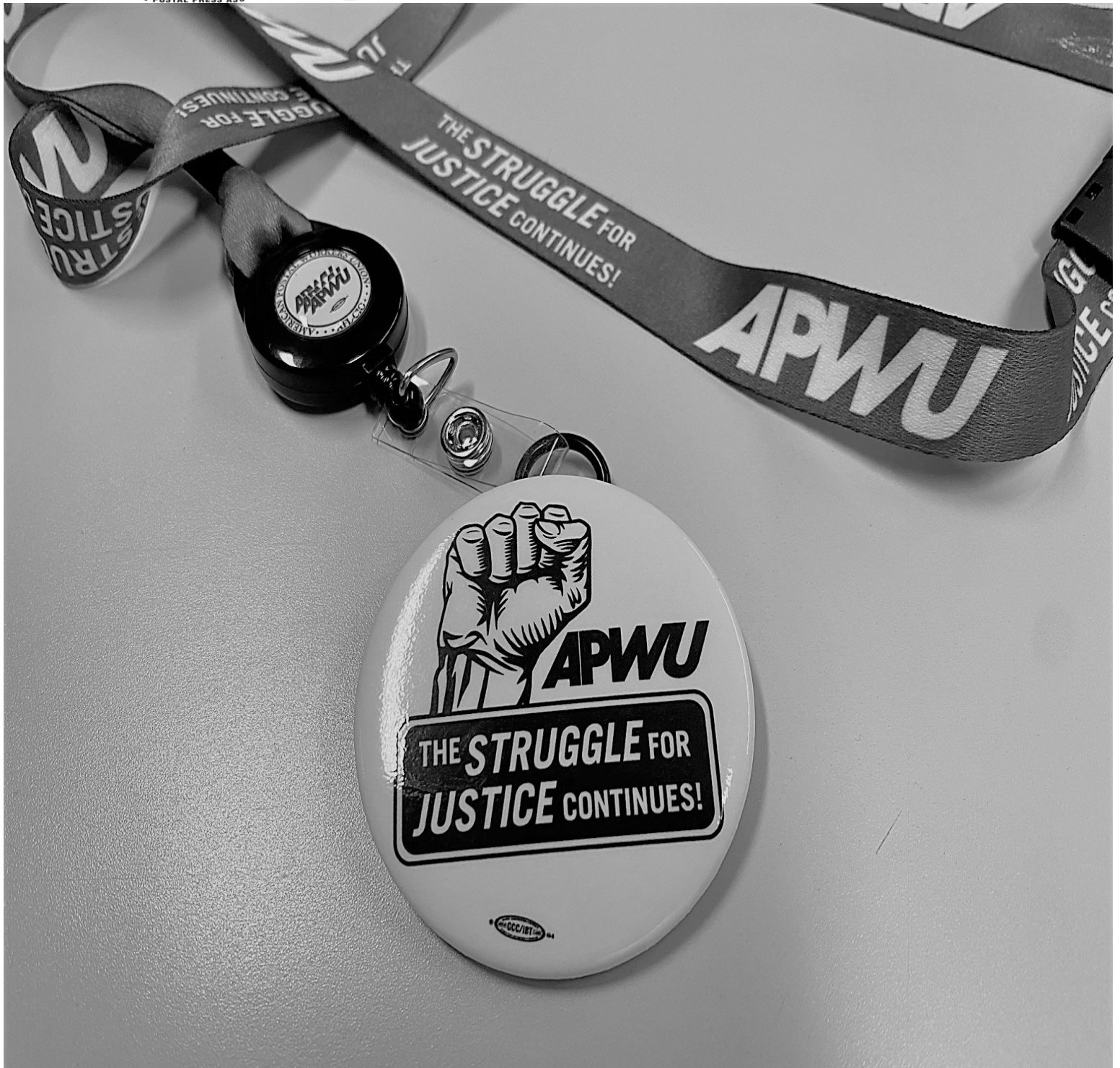


# WMAL VOICE



OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE WESTERN MICHIGAN AREA LOCAL,  
AMERICAN POSTAL WORKERS UNION, AFL-CIO



# WMAL Voice

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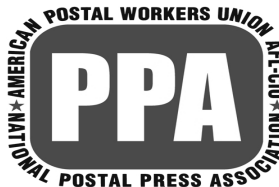
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**Editorial Policy:** Submissions are welcome from all APWU members, sent to the address or email listed above. In accordance with the local constitution, the editor reserves the right to determine if material submitted to this publication shall be printed, and reserves the right to edit as needed for space and clarity. The views and opinions expressed within are those of the individual authors and do not necessarily reflect the official policy or position of the editor, local officers, or the APWU. All material must be signed, though names may be withheld upon request. The WMAL Voice is published bimonthly.

As of March 2005, a policy was instated to publish member condolences, births, marriages, and anniversaries. Please let me know at **wmalvoice@gmail.com** of anything you would like included. Pictures are welcomed!

# We Need You To Step Up

By David Janes  
*Clerk Craft Director B*

I hope everyone has had a spectacular year thus far. As this summer begins to close, here's hoping everyone was allowed to take the time with their families to have the most enjoyable memories possible. There's so many fun things to do this time, and now that this pandemic has taught people how to best protect themselves and still have fun responsibly, here's hoping that everyone was able to do things like we did back in 2019. I'm wishing that nobody got sick and was still able to enjoy every day that they could.

As I begin the twilight part of my time on the executive board, I'm finding that enough people don't really understand what it is to be in the union. Over the last 6 years, I have learned an incredible amount of information, and a lot of that came from our current president by learning the history behind why we do things in the manner that we do. The important fact here is that it was taught to me. About half of this current executive board is getting close to retirement, and if we don't pass that knowledge on to the next board, this information will retire with us leaving the membership having to learn this without the benefit of those that were there. This is a serious issue for those who still have 20-30 years left in their careers with the postal service.

A great way to gain this knowledge is to just attend the union meetings. During our reports, we deliver way more information to any member there who may have questions about what the contract offers to better understand what they may want to know. Amy will give a lot of incredibly useful information about the P&DC side as well as an incredible knowledge of the customer service side. We are not the sole proprietors of this information. You pay your dues for this information, and many people don't attend the meetings. If you were to pick up a bag of oranges in the grocery store, do you not look at the oranges that you want to buy? Most of us will look at that bag and examine every orange before putting it in the grocery basket. You already pay your dues for this union; it behooves you to see what you are buying. Please make every effort to attend these meetings, because local elections are coming up, and you may want to learn some things about what you want going forward

for your next selection of the ones you want representing you on the board.

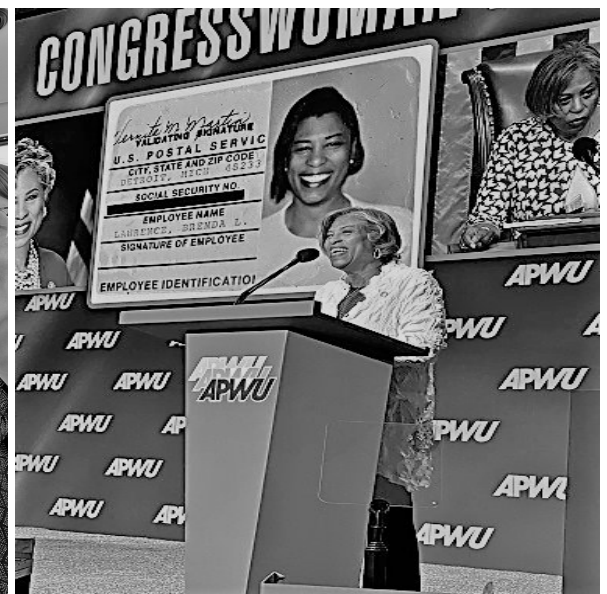
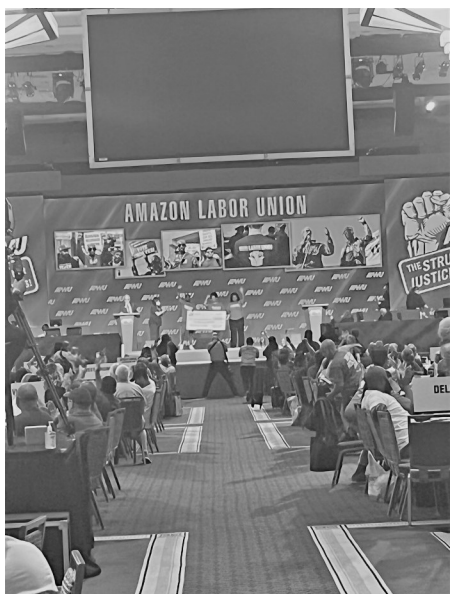
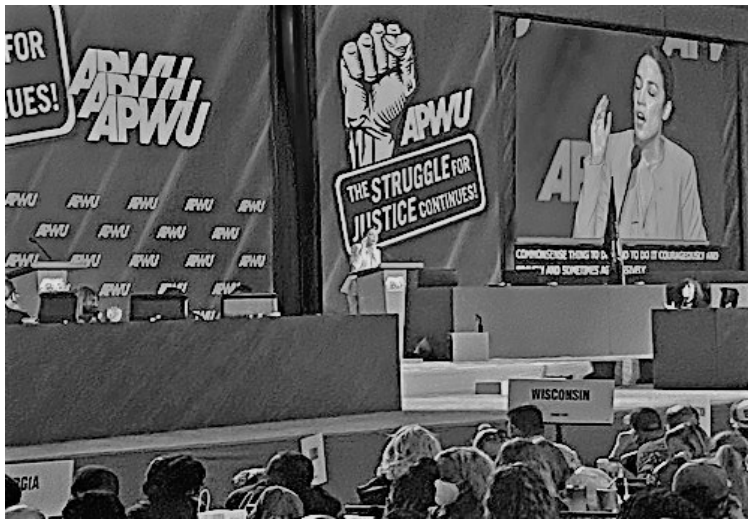
In closing, I would like to thank the membership for the trust that you gave to me for the time I spent on this board. As I have said before, I will not be running for the next term. That way I can make sure that I am there to represent anyone that I have filed grievances for, without you having to worry about me coming out of retirement to ensure that I will be there for an arbitration. It is my full intent that if I had your grievance go past step 2, that I will stay there for each one, until it's resolution. This contract is for everyone, and everyone should be looking out for each other in it. Management will exploit any bad feelings we have for each other to make sure that you don't stand up against them, and an injury to one, is an injury to all. Stay strong with each other, and the people that you stand for today, will stand for you tomorrow. Now let's get ready for this next Christmas rush! Management may not know it, but we got this covered. Because we are great workers and will work the best of our ability every day, the mail will get through because of us!

David

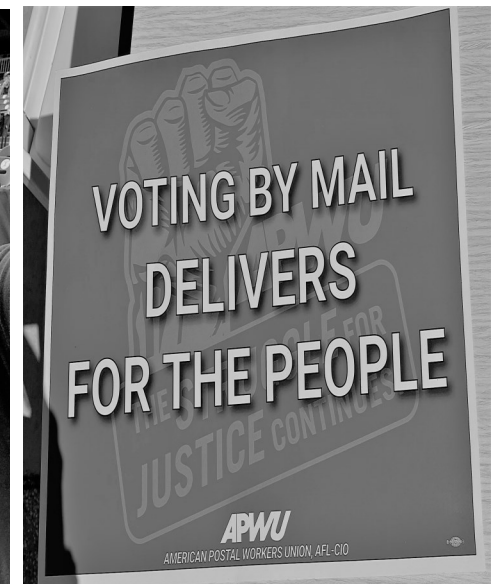
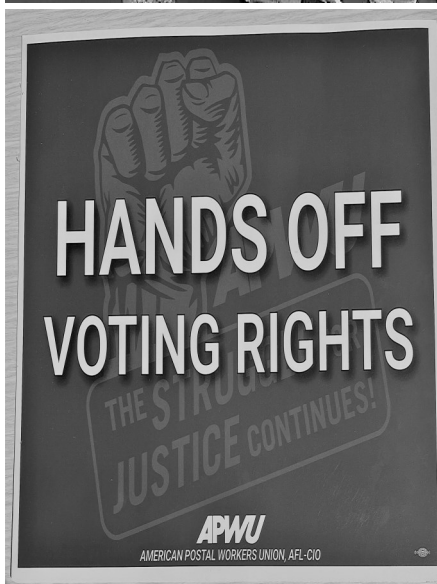
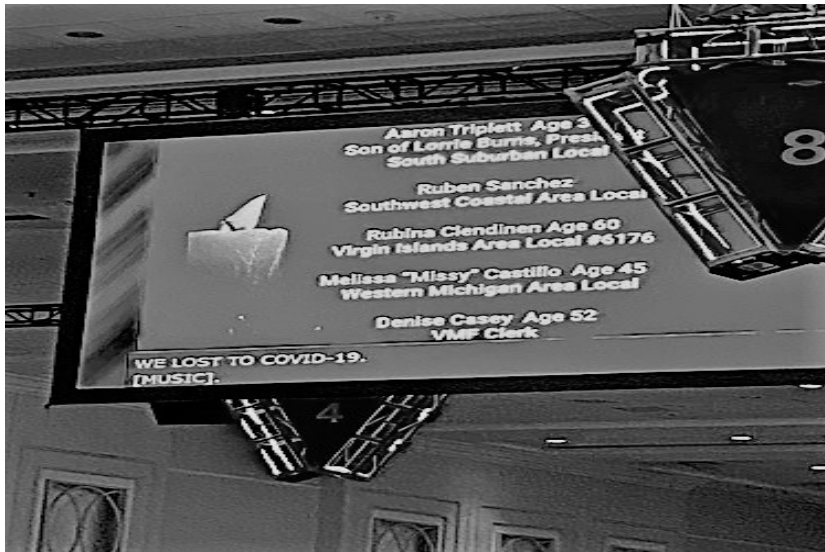




## **Pictures from the 2022 National Convention**









By Michael Greene  
WMAL Editor ([wmalvoice@yahoo.com](mailto:wmalvoice@yahoo.com))

Greetings all. I'm hoping these words find you well. The end of the summer is upon us. The older I get the faster it seems to go past. Not sure I care for it, but there's not much I can do about it. On to business. My appreciation again to the local for allowing me to go to the

APWU National Convention. Attending these are a great opportunity to really understand the innerworkings of the union and to hear from guest speakers who you typically wouldn't get to see in person. The passion they shared for what we do. The reminder of the importance we play in connecting Americans and filling their needs. The support that we give them as they join their brothers and sisters in the fight for fair pay, rights, etc. Some of my favorites were Congresswoman Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez (aka AOC), Congresswoman Brenda Lawrence (Detroit) and Amazon Labor Union President Christian Smalls. It was a good reminder that we have people who understand what we are up against, have our backs and use us as a blueprint for the battles they are undertaking. If anything, you see why being part of the union is so vital in the struggle for what is fair and right.

In full disclosure, it is not a vacation. The days are long and there is A LOT that goes into it. There are plenty of things to vote on and while doing so you listen to differing opinions about it. Why it would be beneficial or detrimental. Perspectives that you may not have considered. How many times have you passed judgement while only hearing one perspective on an issue, but when you heard the other side, you reconsidered your stance? It can be informative but there are also plenty of politics and agendas being pushed. If working at the post office has taught me anything is that there are people in the company who will have no problem kissing enough ass to get themselves up the ladder (I'm referring to EAS at this point). I've seen it plenty of times and heard it directly from the lips of people who have done it. Not my thing. Never will be. There is a point where you have to look yourself in the mirror and hold yourself accountable for the decisions you've made. Did you bend when you should have stood tall? Did you compromise yourself for a few extra dollars in your pocket? Did you do what was right in your heart when you had the opportunity? All in all, I walked away from the week looking forward to my future in the union.

Being observant is something I tend to do more often than I'd like. The words people choose and the way they carry themselves in good times and bad. Are they straight shooters or do they fold when adversity knocks on the door? I'm a guy who understands that we're all human and yes, we sometimes go left when we should've gone right. Slowed down instead of rushing through. Mistakes are a part of life, but another thing is being a stand-up individual. When people look to you for help or an answer, you give them not what they hope to hear but the truth. Coming away from the meetings, I gained a level of respect for the APWU President Mark Dimondstein and our local President Amy Puhalski. I

## National Convention Review And Giving My Thanks!

find Mark to be a smart, witty, and a man who adjusts as needed for the good of the membership, but also willing to put his foot down as needed. I can't say enough good things about Aim. I watched her move like a machine between her duties on the committee she was appointed to, helping the delegates of the WMAL, all while dealing with issues back home. These positions – being the President of a local or the national – I don't know if people really grasp how much is on their shoulders. How many fires they have to extinguish. How often that phone rings or the lack of appreciation you might not get. Think of it this way: you have kids and you take the time to give them a birthday party. Kids get what they want, have a good time and at the end of the day there is no thank you. No appreciation for the effort or sacrifice. But if the party was lacking in any facet, you'd see the kids' pouty faces and all. Going to all their friends and whining about what was or wasn't. I sometimes feel the same way when I see and hear what's going on with us. (As usual, these are my opinions from what I see firsthand. And me? I am the guy who doesn't mind pointing out things that aren't right.) We are a union. We are supposed to be UNITED. Do we agree on everything all the time? We really shouldn't. That would make us puppets or followers. But we can disagree in a respectful manner. We can arrive at work and plan on giving them the eight hours of work for eight hours of pay and avoid all the extras things that aren't included in the paycheck. Doesn't take a rocket scientist to comprehend what I'm getting at.

As the editor, I get a chance to read everyone's articles ahead of time (David's resonated with me). I initially did this position because it had been vacated and Amy didn't have anyone to fill in. Amy is my friend, and I didn't think it right to leave her with one more thing on her plate. Truthfully, when I leave work, I'm busy as it is with other things and goals I'm working towards, and it has been hard to squeeze in the time for this at some points. Doubling back to what I initially wrote about, I have watched the others before me. The years of service they put in. The grievances they have fought. The awards they have gotten us collectively or individually. It's a thankless position, but they do it. Day after day. Year after year. I for one appreciate ALL OF YOU. I'm sure we may not have seen eye to eye at one point or another. It happens. Personally, I don't typically hold grudges unless you're a habitual offender against me then it is what it is. I understand we all have our moments. Bad days. I don't know what you're going through, and I won't label you from a moment of being out of character. It ain't that serious and there are bigger concerns in life.

I think I'm going to have a little bit of space to fill, so I'm going to add in this riddle I saw in the movie 16 Blocks (there's a part where Mos Def is in the back of the police car with Bruce Willis and he says there's this "ancient riddle" that gives you an idea about where you are in life). To paraphrase (and this is one of the parts that doesn't make sense to me, cause he says it's an ancient riddle), you're driving along (apparently a two seater) in a hurricane and you come up at a bus stop and there



*(Cont'd from previous page)*

are 3 people. An old lady who is going to die. Your best friend who saved your life. The woman of your dreams. Who do you save and why? Guess he's saying it's supposed to tell you what you value or some junk. Course, I was thinking if it's ancient, how was there a car involved? Any who – to be honest, I'd probably go with the best friend. Reason being, I figure the old lady had a good run. The girl of my dreams? I saw the clip from The Titanic. Leonardo DiCaprio was dying in the water next to the girl of his dreams and that joker had enough room on that junk she was floating on to let him up and keep it going. She wanted leg room. Skip that. I'd have to go with the best friend who saved my life. Always pay your debts. If you're challenging that body to get some changes and have started doing a few of the suggestions (fingers crossed), then I got another for you. Cleaner eating, core work, and daily warm-ups/flexibility training to start. From here, 1) eat more through the day (up those calories to help you recover, provide fuel, and help your body to change) 2) incorporate some light balancing drills (check on line for a few – ex. Single leg with knee to waist or extended to the side – stand near something

stable initially until you gain your confidence. Maybe fifteen seconds to start?) & 3) let's start doing some body weight exercises (low rep, 5 – 8 range). No weights. Just using your body weight. Think squats, push-ups (off your knees is fine), or pull-ups (use a chair for assistance or a thick, elastic band if you're at a gym). When you work out, realize it's not a race. Focus on your tempo, but also the mind-muscle connection. What are you working out? Where should you be feeling it at? Visualize the improvements you want to see. Don't just do the work. And please stop doing thirty minutes of cardio before you go lift weights. You're zapping your energy for the workout (which is more important). I might elaborate a bit more next issue, but I think I went on too long. Y'all take care!

Michael

## Second COLA Increase Announced

*August 10, 2022*

In accordance with the 2021-2024 Collective Bargaining Agreement, career employees represented by the APWU will receive a \$1.18 per hour cost-of-living adjustment (COLA), effective August 27, 2022. The increase is the result of a rise in the Consumer Price Index (CPI-W). It will appear in paychecks dated September 16, 2022 (Pay Period 19-2022). The value of the COLA for full-time employees in each step and grade will increase by \$2,455.00 annually, and the hourly rates for part-time employees will be adjusted accordingly.

The COLAs are in addition to general wage increases. This is the second cost-of-living increase under the 2021 contract. The first, effective in February, amounted to \$0.63 per hour or \$1,310 annually. The COLAs received so far during the 2021-2024 National Agreement total \$3,765.00 this year.

In light of the fact that Postal Support Employees (PSEs) do not receive cost-of-living increases, they have received several additional increases beyond the general wage increases for all employees in the APWU bargaining unit under the 2021 contract.

Rising inflation underscores just how important the continuation of our negotiated Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) is in our outstanding new union contract. The COLA is our best protection against inflation. Postal Workers are some of the few U.S. workers who receive COLA increases. Even in the postal world, we are the only postal union that has maintained full COLA in our union contract.

"At times of high inflation, our union-won COLA is invaluable to ourselves and our families," said APWU President Mark Dimondstein. "It pays to be union! It's always a struggle to keep these COLA provisions and every postal worker should be proud we fought hard and prevailed to keep full COLA in our latest contract."

Go to [apwu.org/pay-information](https://apwu.org/pay-information) to view pay scales.

*(Via APWU.org)*



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*(Via USPS.com)*



## The Retiree's Corner

By Ray Novakowski  
*Retiree Chapter President*

The West Michigan Area Local Retiree Chapter is up and running again. On March 29, 2022, the chapter held a meeting called by then chapter president, George Hendricks. The purpose of the meeting was election of officers. Elections were held and our new officers are as follows:

President – Ray Novakowski  
Vice President – Vacant  
Secretary/Treasurer – Sonia Bergers  
Trustee – James Weber  
Trustee – Harry Emmert  
Trustee – Harley Kilgore

Congratulations to the new officers and thank you for stepping up.

I would like to thank past president, George Hendricks, for all his work for the chapter.

The Michigan Postal Workers Retiree Convention was held in Grand Rapids in May. Some of the retirees had a chance to attend. The new officers were sworn in by APWU Retiree Director, Nancy Olumeker. The APWU National Convention was held in August and after much discussion, the retirees are getting some recognition by allowing chapters to have official delegates at the national convention in the future.

The new local retiree chapter officers met in August and made some decisions to help increase meeting attendance. We have decided to hold the meetings at the union hall at 2554 Burlingame SW, Wyoming MI, and have them on the same day and time each month. We will meet on the second Tuesday of the month in February, April, June, September and November, at 11am. The first meeting will be November 8, 2022, at 11am at the WMAL Union Hall. We have decided to skip the September meeting because of our current lack of addresses to contact members.

I ask you to be patient with me at this time, as I try to get everything straightened out and would like some input as to what, as a retiree, you want out of the Chapter and what direction we need to go. I hope we can have a pro-

ductive meeting in November and get some ideas from you the members.

If you have any questions or concerns, feel free to call me at 616-560-7747 or email me at [raynova@sbcglobal.net](mailto:raynova@sbcglobal.net).

Yours in Union Solidarity,  
Ray Novakowski, President WMAL Retiree Chapter



\*\*\***EVERY THURSDAY**\*\*\*

**WEAR YOUR UNION GEAR!**

**Shirts, hats, pins**

**SHOW YOUR UNION PRIDE!**

**SHOW OUR SOLIDARITY!**

# PRENATAL CARE

Women who suspect they may be pregnant should schedule a visit to their healthcare provider to begin prenatal care. Prenatal visits to a healthcare provider usually include a physical exam, weight checks, and providing a urine sample. Depending on the stage of the pregnancy, healthcare providers may also do blood tests and imaging tests, such as ultrasound exams. These visits also include discussions about the mother's health, the fetus's health, and any questions about the pregnancy.

Prenatal care can help prevent complications and inform women about important steps they can take to protect their infant and ensure a healthy pregnancy. With regular prenatal care women can:

- Reduce the risk of pregnancy complications. Following a healthy, safe diet; getting regular exercise as advised by a healthcare provider; and avoiding exposure to potentially harmful substances such as lead and radiation can help reduce the risk for problems during pregnancy and promote fetal health and development. Controlling existing conditions, such as high blood pressure and diabetes, is important to prevent serious complications and their effects.
- Reduce the fetus's and infant's risk for complications. Tobacco smoke and alcohol use during pregnancy have been shown to increase the risk for Sudden Infant Death Syndrome. Alcohol use also increases the risk for fetal alcohol spectrum disorders, which can cause a variety of problems such as abnormal facial features, having a small head, poor coordination, poor memory, intellectual disability, and problems with the heart, kidneys, or bones. According to one recent study supported by the NIH, these and other long-term problems can occur even with low levels of prenatal alcohol exposure.
- Help ensure the medications they take are safe. Women should not take certain medications, including some acne treatments and dietary and herbal supplements, during pregnancy because they can harm the fetus.



Source: <https://www.nichd.nih.gov/health/topics/pregnancy/conditioninfo/prenatal-care>

## HOW CAN THE APWU HEALTH PLAN HELP?

**You'll be happy to hear that both our plans - the High Option and the Consumer Driven Option - offer 100% coverage for in-network maternity care including prenatal care! So you can rest assured that you and your baby will be covered throughout your entire pregnancy.**



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(800) 222-2798



## For our sister, Amy...



Loss is never easy. Letting go of those we love is a day we never want to see. Why our loved ones are called away, why we never get to hear their voice again, share our love with them or hold them close in good times and bad....maybe one day we will truly understand.....

If you're a person of faith you believe that God works in all ways. That those we loved dearly will be the first to welcome us to the eternal kingdom, a life after.

Your WMAL family extends our condolences to you during this time of sorrow. God bless you and your family....

# JCIM (Joint Contract Interpretation Manual)

(\*\*Learn something new about the contract\*\*)

USPS-APWU Joint Contract Interpretation Manual

December 2020

An employee is "unable to perform the functions of the position" when the health care provider finds that the employee is unable to work at all or is unable to perform any one of the essential functions of the employee's position.

## SERIOUS HEALTH CONDITION

Other than incapacity due to pregnancy, the circumstances determine whether a condition is serious, not the diagnosis. Therefore, every request for FMLA leave must be considered on a case-by-case basis, applying the definitions of a serious health condition, as defined by the statute and regulations, to the information provided by the employee and the employee's health care provider.

## WORK HOUR REQUIREMENT

Any career or noncareer employees may qualify for protected leave if they meet the eligibility requirements at the time the leave starts, that is, they have been employed by the Postal Service for an accumulated total of twelve (12) months over the past seven (7) years (including any prior career or noncareer service) and have worked a minimum of 1250 hours (including any prior career or noncareer service) during the 12-month period immediately preceding the date the leave begins. The 1250 work hours includes overtime, but excludes any paid or unpaid absence. The only exception is Military Leave and periods of Back Pay.

## CALCULATING THE 1250 HOURS PER CONDITION, PER LEAVE YEAR

Where a qualifying condition causes a series of intermittent absences, the 1250 work hour eligibility test is applied only once during the 12-month leave year, at the beginning of a series of intermittent absences. The employee remains eligible throughout that leave year for that condition, even if the employee later falls below the 1250 work hour requirement.

In the Postal Service, FMLA leave is calculated on the basis of the postal leave year.

If an employee has a different serious health condition during the leave year, the employee must meet the 1250 work hour eligibility test at the beginning date of the leave for the second condition. If the employee does so, he/she is eligible for FMLA protection of absences for both conditions for the remainder of the leave year, or until the twelve-week entitlement has been exhausted.

However, if the employee is unable to meet the 1250 work hour requirement for the second condition in the leave year, the employee is not entitled to FMLA protection for the second condition, but remains entitled to FMLA protection for the first condition for the remainder of the leave year or until the twelve-week entitlement has been exhausted.

The 1250 work hour eligibility requirement must be recalculated at the beginning date of the leave taken for each separate condition, in order to determine eligibility for each condition in each leave year.

The 1250 work hour eligibility requirement is recalculated upon the first absence related to the FMLA certified condition in the new leave year. However, this does not mean that the employee is required to recertify the serious health condition.

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Article 10, page 18

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## DBCS STAFFING (8/24/16)

**1. Is the current Delivery Bar Code Sorter System (DBCS) normal staffing of two (2) clerks per machine a minimum requirement to address certain safety and ergonomic issues as identified by the APWU?**

**Response:** Pursuant to Article 14, Section 1 "It is the responsibility of management to provide safe working conditions in all present and future installations and to develop a safe working force" and in accordance with the Employee and Labor Relations Manual (ELM), Section 891, Authority, "The Postal Service complies with applicable federal laws, regulations, and OSHA guidance materials regarding ergonomics."

**2. Does the 2012 JCIM, Article 37, page 76, OCR – BCS – DBCS STAFFING Questions and Answers, address the only exceptions to the normal staffing of two (2) Mail Processing Clerks on the DBCS at all times?**

**Response:** Yes. During the exception periods described in the 2012 JCIM Q&As, the second Mail Processing Clerk may perform allied duties as assigned in the OCR-BCS-DBCS area.

**3. Does the 2016 language address minimum staffing?**

**Response:** Yes, and the 2016 language is not intended to impact those offices where there have been agreements and past practices involving more than two clerks per machine (due to unique rotations or other local factors.)

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Article 37, page 73

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## Article 1.5

### NEW POSITIONS

Article 1.5 requires that the Postal Service consult with the APWU at the National Level prior to assigning any new or revised position which contains non-managerial and non-supervisory duties to the most appropriate National craft bargaining unit subject to the standards that must be used when assigning a new position.

Assignment, at the National Level to the National craft unit most appropriate for performance of such work, must be done within thirty (30) days.

Article 1.5 also provides that the Union will be promptly notified of the decision and any dispute concerning the assignment is grievable at the National Level within thirty (30) days from the date the Union receives notification of the assignment.

## Article 1.6

### SUPERVISORS PERFORMING BARGAINING UNIT WORK

Supervisors are prohibited from performing bargaining unit work, except for the circumstances outlined in Article 1.6. Bargaining unit employees acting as temporary supervisors (204(b)) are considered as supervisors for the purposes of Article 1.6.

Article 1.6.B provides in offices with less than 100 bargaining unit employees, postmasters and supervisors are prohibited from performing bargaining unit work except as enumerated in Article 1.6.A or when the duties are included in the postmaster's or supervisor's position description.

In offices, Level 20 and above, with less than 100 bargaining unit employees, postmasters and supervisors may only perform bargaining unit work in accordance with Article 1.6.A.

In Level 18 offices, the postmaster is permitted to perform no more than fifteen (15) hours of bargaining unit work per week. There will be no PMR usage in Level 18 offices.

Where bargaining unit work which would have been assigned to employees is performed by a supervisor and such work hours are not de minimus, the bargaining unit employee(s) who would have been assigned the work shall be paid for the time involved at the applicable rate.

### EMERGENCIES

It is understood that an emergency is defined as "an unforeseen circumstance or a combination of circumstances which calls for immediate action in a situation which is not expected to be of a recurring nature."

### 204(b) DETAIL

PS Form 1723, which shows the times and dates of the 204(b) detail, is the controlling document for determining whether an employee is in a 204(b) status. A separate PS Form 1723 must be used for each detail and a copy of the Form 1723 shall be provided in advance, to the Union at the Local Level.

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Article 1, page 2

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## Article 7.1.B.1

### POSTAL SUPPORT EMPLOYEES

The postal support employee (PSE) workforce will be comprised of noncareer, bargaining unit employees, which is the only category of noncareer employees established to work within APWU bargaining units.

During the course of a service week, the Employer will make every effort to ensure that qualified and available part-time flexible employees are utilized at the straight-time rate prior to assigning such work to PSEs.

### POSTAL SUPPORT EMPLOYEES – CONVERSION TO CAREER

Hiring lists for PSEs will be established by craft and employees will be converted to career according to their standing on the appropriate PSE roll. Career employees may be hired from appropriate hiring lists only when there are no PSEs on the appropriate roll in the installation eligible for conversion to career.

PSEs will be converted to career based upon their craft (or in the case of MVS, occupational group) seniority in the installation. Changing between crafts will alter a PSE's standing on the roll.

## Article 7.1.B.2

### PTF SCHEDULING

Part-time flexible employees working at the straight-time rate shall be given priority in scheduling over PSE employees. However, that scheduling obligation must be met during the course of a "service week," and the part-time flexible employees must be qualified and available."

(A "service week" begins at 12:01 a.m. Saturday and ends at 12:00 midnight the following Friday).

A violation of Article 7.1.B.2 may occur when: 1) management schedules a PSE for work which a part-time flexible employee could have performed instead and, 2) the part-time flexible employee had less than 40 straight-time hours (either work or a combination of work and paid leave) during the service week.

For example, if, when scheduling part-time flexible employees, management consistently and regularly underestimates the work which will remain at the end of the week for part-time flexible employees, and this results in PSEs working at the beginning or the middle of the service week while the part-time flexible employees do not obtain a forty-hour week, this practice would constitute a violation of Article 7.1.B.2.

## Article 7.1.B.3 & Workforce Structure & PSE Conversion Implementation Agreement

In the Maintenance Craft, upon completion of all conversions in 2015, the category of Postal Support Employees ceased to exist and references to the term "Maintenance Craft PSE" was deleted from the National Agreement. (Attachment B, page 265 CBA)

The completed conversion of all Maintenance Craft PSEs to career status in the Maintenance Craft pursuant to the 2015 Agreement fully resolves all disputes as they relate to PSEs. Any such outstanding disputes, in any forum, shall be withdrawn.

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Article 7, page 2



## SEE YOUR DOCTOR WITHIN 30 DAYS OF BEING DISCHARGED FROM THE ER

**L**eaving the emergency department after receiving mental health or substance abuse treatment can be a vulnerable time. To help protect the health and safety of APWU Health Plan members, anyone who receives treatment in the emergency department or hospital for mental health or substance abuse must have a follow-up appointment with a primary care doctor within 30 days.

According to the National Institute of Mental Health, about one in five U.S. adults live with a mental illness of some kind, and 24.3 million received behavioral health services in 2020. Research suggests that follow-up care for people with mental illness is linked to fewer repeat emergency department visits and avoidable readmissions, improved physical and mental function, and increased compliance with follow-up instructions. Among other benefits, close follow-up:

- Reduces incidents of suicidal ideation, suicide attempts, and completed suicide
- Reduces substance abuse and improves entry into recovery
- Reduces emergency department use and hospital admissions, and lengths of stay
- Leads to better identification and treatment of behavioral and physical health issues

This is also important when seeking substance use treatment. Hospitals are increasingly filled with people suffering from medical complications of substance use disorders (SUD). Patients with SUD have longer lengths of stay, higher costs, and higher readmission rates.



### HOW CAN THE APWU HEALTH PLAN HELP?

Both the **High Option** and the **Consumer Driven Option** cover mental health and substance abuse care. For services received in a network emergency department, members pay 15 percent of the plan allowance. Please refer to your plan documents for more details about your specific coverage.

The APWU Health Plan can also help you find a doctor for your post-discharge check-up. **Call us at:**

**1-800-222-2798**

**1-800-622-2511 (TTY)**

8:30 a.m. – 6:30 p.m. ET

Monday – Friday

For the APWU Health Plan Provider Directory, visit our website using the following link:  
<https://www.apwuhp.com/our-plans/see-provider-networks/>



**TOGETHER.  
BETTER HEALTH.**

[www.apwuhp.com](http://www.apwuhp.com)  
(800) 222-2798

### VETERAN'S CRISIS LINE

If a veteran or service member you know is showing signs of crisis, such as hopelessness, anxiety, or withdrawal, call on the caring professionals at the VA's Veterans Crisis Line who are ready to listen and provide support.

The Veterans Crisis Line is a free, confidential resource. Veterans, service members, and their families can access the line anytime.

There are three ways to take advantage of this benefit:

- Call 1-800-273-8255 and choose option one
- Go to [VeteransCrisisLine.net/Chat](https://VeteransCrisisLine.net/Chat)
- Text 838255

Each option has free, confidential support 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year.

You can start a conversation today! Visit [VeteransCrisisLine.net](https://VeteransCrisisLine.net) to download free Veterans Crisis Line materials so you can tell others how to do it, too.

# Looking for a way to give your financial security a boost?

## That's why you need insurance from Aflac!

Aflac insurance policies help give you control when life seems to take it away. Aflac helps with stuff major medical doesn't cover—cash benefits paid directly to you, unless otherwise assigned, to help pay any expenses you like, including:

- Rent, mortgage, or car payments
- Child care or tuition
- Gas, Electric, or telephone bills

For the members of American Postal Workers Union



Cancer/Specified-Disease Insurance Policy<sup>1</sup>  
Specified Health Event Insurance Policy<sup>2</sup>

**To Apply or Inquire:**  
Please contact your rep below  
**Paul Kilduff**  
(857) 303-2029  
[paul\\_kilduffjr@us.aflac.com](mailto:paul_kilduffjr@us.aflac.com)

<sup>1</sup> In ID, Policies A-75100-ID, A-75200-ID, and A-75300-ID;  
in OK, Policies A-75100-OK, A-75200-OK, and A-75300-OK  
<sup>2</sup> In ID, Policies A71100ID and A71200ID; in OK,  
Policies A71100OK and A71200OK



For residents of New York, coverage is available from American Family Life Assurance Company of New York (Aflac New York).

American Family Life Assurance Company of Columbus (Aflac)  
Worldwide Headquarters • 1932 Wynnton Road • Columbus, GA 31999  
[aflac.com](http://aflac.com)



## Happy Retirement!!!!

Tim Pepper

(Congratulations & enjoy your next chapter in life!)



condolences to:



Amy Puhalski on the passing of her father

***\*\*Make sure to get your nominations in at the October meeting for the executive board for the term of January 1, 2023—December 31, 2025!!\*\****

Welcome To Our New Members!!

None to report.

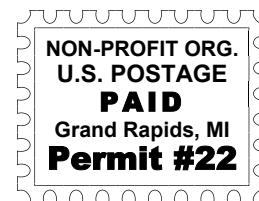
Thank you to our union members!  
We are strong because we are united!

*Looking for a location to hold an event? Check out our Union Hall! Great rates for members!*

**Union Hall Rentals**  
**2554 Burlingame Ave SW, Wyoming**  
**MI 49509**  
**616-822-3520 | Capacity 188**

	<u>Hall Rental</u>	<u>Security Deposit</u>	<u>Security Agent Fee</u>
Members:	\$250.00	\$200.00	\$0
Non-Profit (meetings only)	\$125.00	\$0	\$0
Public	\$650.00	\$300.00	\$100.00

Western Michigan Area Local  
American Postal Workers Union  
PO Box 2706  
Grand Rapids, MI 49501-2706



*Address Service Requested*

***\*\*Make sure to get your nominations in at the October meeting for the executive board for the term of January 1, 2023—December 31, 2025!!\*\****

*Looking for answers? Make sure to check out:*

**Next Union Meeting:**  
**Saturday, September 10 @**  
**7pm**

*[www.wmal.org](http://www.wmal.org)  
\*meeting minutes  
\*steward contact information*

## *September 2022*

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	