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WMAL VOICE



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



WMAL Voice

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GRAND RAPIDS MAIN OFFICE
Fax: 776-1536

776-1489

P-CAMPUS OFFICE
Fax: 977-1020

977-1050

OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT
retirement line

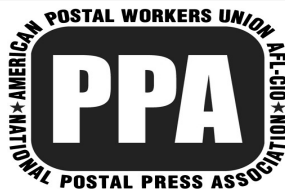
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HR SHARED SERVICES CENTER

877-477-3273
option 5

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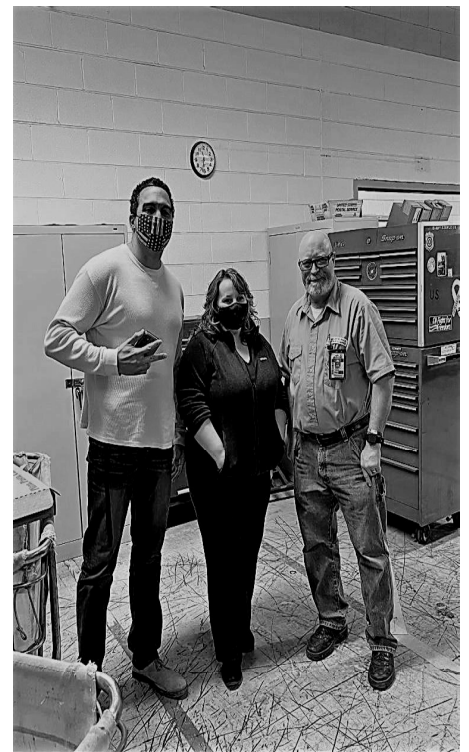
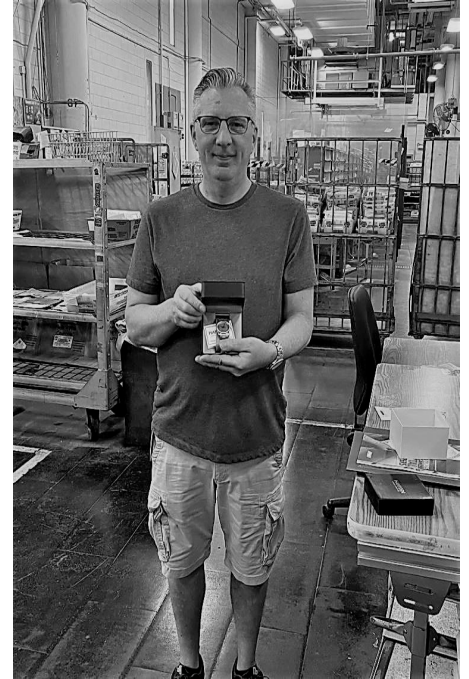
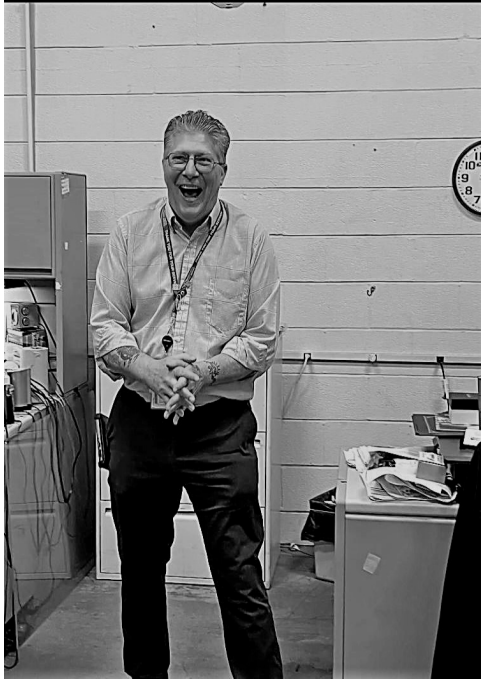
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Editorial Policy: Submissions are welcome from all APWU members, sent to the address or email listed above. In accordance with the local constitution, the editor reserves the right to determine if material submitted to this publication shall be printed, 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!

Congrats recent retirees!



Find Your Voice And Use It

by Michael Greene, Editor



Greetings all. I'd like to thank the union for sending me to the state convention that was held in Grand Rapids recently. It was a great experience and I'm excited to go to the national convention in August. When

you attend these events you realize there is a lot that goes into the union and the work being done. One of the things that stuck out to me (besides some of the interesting speakers that attended in person or via Zoom) was when the National President, Mark Diamondstein, had spoken. He had touched on what he considered to be very important, but it was also something that I have heard mentioned numerous times at our monthly union meetings. Filing grievances and EEO claims.

I remember when I worked on the windows and was told to always show that you are doing work on your monitor. You'd do this by selecting an option for any work you were doing aside from a retail transaction (ex. Grabbing hold mail, P.O. box assistance, etc.). Why is it important to do this? Because the postal service is fixated on numbers! They base things off numbers being reported. How does that tie in? Upper management is not going to pay attention to the local levels unless they see a steady number of grievances or claims being filed. If your work is being performed by management or people who aren't supposed to be doing it, file a grievance. If you feel as though you are being discriminated against or working in a hostile environment, file an EEO. We all have a right to perform our job without harassment or being treated differently by management. I know I've filed more than my share of grievances (catch me with a glass of wine, in a good mood and I've got plenty of stories to tell). Truth be told, I'll keep filing as many as I can if the situation warrants it. If you allow management to bully you, they will, as long as you allow it. It's not always easy and the grievance process can require patience, but you need to do it. And it's not necessarily doing it just for you, but you could be helping other union members. Fear of backlash or not wanting to create a negative work environment could be preventing people from speaking out or filing anything. Whatever the case, if you see something wrong, say and do something.

Going off topic a tad, I think it's a shame that we are where we are in this country with the overturning of Roe Vs.



With Mark Diamondstein, APWU President

Wade. Say what you want, and I'm not here to debate pro-choice/pro-life, but when you are forcing underage kids who were raped or women in their third trimester are notified that they will not be able to have their baby for health reasons, we can't do this to people. This isn't what the "freedom" we expect to have in this country is. I

personally don't understand how those with certain religious beliefs attained this superiority complex and what they believe is also what's best for most of us. We all won't see eye to eye on everything, but we also can't insert ourselves into the lives of others. Where do you draw the line? Are you willing to give up your doctor-patient confidentiality the same way a woman who wants an abortion would have to? Or are all men who aren't married ready to get a vasectomy until they are ready to be parents? Tread carefully with where we're headed....

Hopefully I've got a few people making changes with their lifestyle and prioritizing their health. Consistency is important. Eating correctly and every few hours (keep your metabolism working properly). Avoiding the bad food and excessive vices (I get it. Hard to quit cold turkey but try.). Keep doing what you have been. But add in a daily warm-up. Morning, first thing. This is a dynamic warm-up. Not a stretch (please don't stretch cold muscles). Check out online videos for some moves you can incorporate, and make sure it's for the entire body. Start working to improve your range of motion and flexibility. Be patient. It doesn't happen overnight, but it will happen if you keep pressing forward each day. Consistency. For a healthier you. At night, another dynamic stretch followed by a full body stretch (do it while you watch TV). Good luck!

Michael

Greetings Everybody!

by Ryan DeShaw, Maintenance Craft Director

Hello brothers and sisters, I hope your summer is going well. I would like to introduce myself. My name is Ryan DeShaw and I have been with the postal service for 7 years now. I started out as a PSE at the GMF in the clerk craft, I moved to P-1 and worked on the SPBS machine before taking the 955 test to enter maintenance. Currently I am MM7 working on tour 1 at the GMF. Before coming to the Postal Service, I served in the Army on active duty for 6 years as an 88M (truck driver) with 2 tours to Iraq. I am married, have a daughter, and many fur babies at home. I am the new Maintenance Craft Director, I have been in this position since Jan/Feb. I have been learning so much in this short amount of time. From understanding the language better to seeing how management tries to skirt the system. I look forward to continue fighting for our brothers and sisters in the Maintenance craft. Since being in this position I have filed several grievances and a few safety violations. I attended the State convention, where I became more versed in the contracts for both the national and local. Being able to interact with our fellow brothers and sisters of other area local union was both rewarding and insightful. Working together to make our Union stronger and more unified. We worked on resolutions to clarify and strengthen the contract language. We updated current contract language to include or make certain language more clear for the rest of us to better understand. The knowledge I have taken away from the State convention and earlier in the week with stewards training has been immeasurable.

Before I sign off, if you see anybody outside of maintenance doing maintenance work, let a steward know, or contact me. It is important to do so. We have our work for a reason, don't let others be able to take that away from us. I appreciate the chance to be able to serve the union and look forward to doing so in the future.

Yours in solidarity,

Ryan DeShaw



What's Going On

by Suzi Boyd, Recording Secretary

Hello Everyone,

Can you believe it is July already? Time has flown by since our local hosted the Michigan State Convention in May. As always, it is nice to catch up with our brothers and sisters from around the state, as well as educate ourselves in one of the training classes that are offered. Just when I think I've learned all there is to know about fighting discipline, NBA James Stevenson brings his A game and teaches us something new. I am looking forward to the National Convention in August, where we will take the resolutions submitted locally and bring them in front of the delegates nationwide. Some of the resolutions submitted deal with labor management, such as contract proposals; additions and/or changes in the language. These are resolutions that if passed at the national convention, could be negotiated to be part of our Collective Bargaining Agreement in the future. Want to be part of the process at the next convention? Being a union member and having the opportunity to represent the membership as a delegate is one of the ways to let your voice be heard. Are you a newer member of the Western Michigan Area Local? Welcome, we are glad to have you aboard! Another way to get involved is by showing up at the union meetings. They are generally held the first Saturday of the month. The flyer is posted on the union board that states the date and time the next meeting will be held. If you do not know where the union board is, ask a steward to show you. Do you work during the time the meeting is held? Ask for a schedule change to attend. Do you have questions or concerns about bid jobs or something you heard on the floor? You may find that your questions or concerns will be addressed by the local President, Vice President or Clerk Craft Directors at the meeting. If not, you can always ask questions. We also have committees that we need Volunteers for. Signing up for one of them is a good first step to take to get started. Yes, there is an I in union, but Union begins with YOU! I wish you all and safe and fun summer with family and friends. Hope to see you at the next meeting in September. When we stand together, that's when we all win.

Suzi





State Convention Report

by Lisa Borchardt, Clerk Craft Director A

Last month the MPWU had a district meeting and the state convention in Grand Rapids. Our local did a great job of hosting the event. To host an event,

someone must buy all the drinks for the hospitality room, set up the room each day and clean up each night. Someone must plan the food for the hospitality room. Someone must buy baskets for COPA and put them together, bring them out each day, set them up, take them down each night and safely put them away. That someone does this stuff off the clock to get ready for the event. That someone goes to the classes each day and then hosts the hospitality off the clock. That someone comes in early before classes each day to prepare for the day off the clock. I don't know many people who would do all this volunteering and not gripe about it! Amy, our president, did all of this. She tirelessly does this after working filing grievances and fighting for our rights. She did all the pre-planning and purchasing. We need more volunteers like Amy! She does more for this local than many of us even know!

We had many speakers at the event in GR. Some were on Zoom, but many attended in person, too! We had some political and benefit speakers and union leadership as well. Anna Smith talked about organizing. We will be having an organizing campaign this month. Sarah Rodriguez talked about the APWU health plan. Our local union has received 3 scholarships to attend the health plan seminar this fall because of how many of our members have the APWU health plan. We had the new Industrial Rela-

tions Director, Charlie Cash, talk about the new contract and give us updates about when the JCIM will be available and when we can expect our backpay (after we get our rate of pay correct this month, then backpay, will start to be worked on for the hundreds of thousands of workers in the clerk craft). This is the first time I met Charlie and I was impressed with his knowledge. He worked side by side with the previous IRD. Our 3 NBAs were also at the convention. They taught a couple of classes on discipline, harassment, and new steward training. It was great to finally get to see people after a few years. It was great to network and hear what other locals are going thru.

At the state convention, the locals submit resolutions that we want the national officers to negotiate for our next contract. We then take those passed resolutions to the national convention to be voted on for negotiation.

In Solidarity,

Lisa

How Things Work At Work.....

by Lisa Borchardt, Clerk Craft Director A

STEWARDS:

The union has assigned stewards to sections where our members work. There is usually a primary steward and an alternate steward. If you are in a certain section, you can see who your stewards are on the union boards. When you ask for a steward, you are given either the primary or the alternate, whoever happens to be here and available. You are not allowed to ask for a certain steward. If none of those are available, then any steward can take your statement. That steward will give it to your primary or alternate steward, and they will investigate and file the appropriate grievance.

There seems to be a trend called "steward shopping". Steward shopping is when a member does not like their primary steward or alternate steward for whatever reason and do not want to go to them with their issue. The only valid grievances that can be filed are by the steward assigned to your section. If I am a steward for the APBS and I file a grievance for the manual section. That grievance could be voided because I am not a steward for that section.

The union understands that sometimes you may not like your steward. But there are some members who do not like their steward, the alternate or anyone else in the craft they work. That is the members issue then. I can understand not getting along with a certain person, but 2 or 3 different stewards?! The stewards put aside their differences and file on the contract violations. We do not care who the members are that have an issue. We look at contract violations and file on contract violations.

SCHEDULE CHANGES:

Schedule changes are for an employee's own personal convenience. The union has to sign off on them so we can be assured no "harm" will come to other employees because of the schedule change. That is the reason we do not sign schedule changes during holiday weekends. We do not know who management will be forcing. If the union signs a schedule change to give Joe days 1 and 2 off during a holiday weekend and then management forces employees with more seniority than Joe to work on day 1 and 2, that is a problem. And that is why we do not sign schedule changes during the holiday weekends.

Another issue with schedule changes is you need your steward from your section to sign them. The steward for your section will know more about that section than another

steward who does not take care of that section. That is why your steward is the one who should sign your schedule change.

Also, just because you and the union sign the schedule change, does not mean management will approve the schedule change. You could be asking off for a weekend schedule change and there are already 5 people off on AL on that weekend. Granted this does not happen often because we have PSE's, but it could happen. So you need to make sure your 3189(schedule change) is signed by your supervisor prior to you doing the schedule change. I would get a copy of that just like with any 3971(request for notification of absence) that you turn in.

Have a great summer and enjoy the beautiful sun shine!

In Solidarity,

Lisa



EVERY THURSDAY

WEAR YOUR UNION GEAR!

Shirts, hats, pins

SHOW YOUR UNION PRIDE!

SHOW OUR SOLIDARITY!



Photo courtesy of Rodnae Productions via pexels.com



Happy Father's Day to all the great dads out there! Never forget the responsibilities you have and how important they are! Protector of the home. Teaching sons how to become a responsible and respectable men. To show your daughters how they deserve to be treated by the men in their life: as equals and with respect and love. Enjoy your day!

Photo courtesy of Rodnae Productions via pexels.com


BREAST & CERVICAL CANCER

You may already know that breast cancer and cervical cancer are most prevalent among women but did you know that both can be treated if detected early or even prevented? With regular screenings, breast cancer can be detected early and treated, achieving survival probabilities of 90% or higher. And regular Pap tests can detect precancerous conditions of the cervix so they can be monitored or treated in order to prevent cervical cancer.

WHAT IS CANCER?

Cancer is a disease in which some of the body's cells grow uncontrollably and spread to other parts of the body. Cancer can start almost anywhere in the human body, which is made up of trillions of cells. Normally, human cells grow and multiply (through a process called cell division) to form new cells as the body needs them. When cells grow old or become damaged, they die, and new cells take their place. Sometimes this orderly process breaks down, and abnormal or damaged cells grow and multiply when they shouldn't. These cells may form tumors, which are lumps of tissue. Tumors can be cancerous or not cancerous (benign).

Breast cancer is always caused by a genetic abnormality (a "mistake" in the genetic material). However, only 5-10% of cancers are due to an abnormality inherited from your mother or father. Instead, 85-90% of breast cancers are due to genetic abnormalities that happen as a result of the aging process and the "wear and tear" of life in general.

 Various strains of the human papillomavirus (HPV), a sexually transmitted infection, play a role in causing most **cervical cancer**. When exposed to HPV, the body's immune system typically prevents the virus from doing harm. In a small percentage of people, however, the virus survives for years, contributing to the process that causes some cervical cells to become cancer cells.

HOW CAN THE APWU HEALTH PLAN HELP?

Whether you're enrolled in the High Option Plan or the Consumer Driven Option Plan, as long as you stay in-network, all preventive care is covered at 100% including:

Cancer screenings approved by the U.S. Preventative Service Task Force

Well woman care such as Pap smears and annual counseling for sexually transmitted infections

Routine mammograms – as follows:

- From age 35 through 39, one during this 5-year period
- From age 40, one every calendar year

So don't hesitate and do your part to help detect cancer before it's too late. Get screened today!



TOGETHER.
BETTER HEALTH.

www.apwuhp.com
(800) 222-2798

CONSUMER DRIVEN OPTION & YOUR PCA

Every member who enrolls in the APWU Health Plan Consumer Driven Option (CDHP) receives a Personal Care Account (PCA). Each January, the APWU Health Plan funds your account:

\$1,200 per year for Self Only or \$2,400 per year for Self Plus One and Self and Family

Your PCA covers all eligible expenses at 100%. For example, if you are ill and go to a network doctor for a \$60 visit, the doctor will submit your claim and the cost of the visit will be deducted automatically from your PCA. You pay nothing.

And the best news? In-network preventive and maternity care are covered at 100% and does not count against your PCA (see CDHP Section 5 of our Federal Brochure).

Example

Balance in PCA (Self Only)	\$1,200
Minus the cost of your visit	- 60
Balance remaining in PCA	\$1,140

Roll over unused funds in your PCA.

If you have money in your PCA at the end of the year, you can roll over the balance to the next year, as long as you stay enrolled in this plan. The maximum amount allowed in your PCA balance in any given year is **\$5,000** Self Only enrollment and **\$10,000** Self Plus One and Self and Family enrollment.

How your PCA works:

1

Your full PCA balance is available in January. Use your PCA for any eligible expenses.

2

If you use up your PCA funds, you need to satisfy your annual net deductible.

3

After you satisfy the annual plan deductible, you pay coinsurance—a percentage of the cost of covered healthcare—and the plan pays the rest.

4

If you reach the out-of-pocket maximum, the plan pays 100% of your covered healthcare costs for the rest of the year.

If you want more information on the PCA, go to www.apwuhp.com and click on **Become a Member**. Under **Consumer Driven Option** you will find a link to the **Personal Care Account**.

APWU
HEALTH PLAN

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BETTER HEALTH.

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(800) 222-2798



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OUTDOOR POSITIONS

City Carrier Assistants	\$18.92
Rural Carrier Associate	\$19.06
Assistant Rural Carrier	\$19.06

Tractor Trailer Operators	\$24.80
Motor Vehicle Operator	\$24.41

INDOOR POSITIONS

Mail Handler Assistant	\$17.32
PSE Mail Processing Clerk	\$18.69
PSE Sales/Srv, Dist. Associate	\$18.69
Postmaster Relief	\$14.16

Photo courtesy of usps.com

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
- 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 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?

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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 Policy¹
Specified Health Event Insurance Policy²

To Apply or Inquire:
Please contact your rep below
Paul Kilduff
(857) 303-2029
paul_kilduffjr@us.aflac.com

¹ 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
² 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

Happy Retirement!!!!

John Niswonger
Robert Meadows
Ione Dembowske
Cindy Delafuente

(Congratulations & enjoy your next chapter in life!)

Welcome To Our New Members!!

Tong Wa
Donald McNabb
Patrick Hocking
Martin Lofquist
Kai Czarnopys
Kadijah Smith
D’Vantea Stewart
Chrissy Tyson
Micah Jennings
Alexxes Bieschke
Jennifer Salinas
Ashley Game
Jason Stanton
Theresa Dupont

condolences to:



None to report.

Stay healthy everyone!



Cover photo courtesy of Anthony Acosta via pexels.com

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

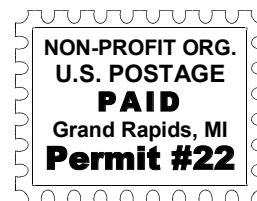
Union Hall Rentals
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MI 49509
616-822-3520 | Capacity 188

	<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



Next Union Meeting:
Saturday, September 10 @ 7 p.m.

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

www.wmal.org

**meeting minutes*

**steward contact information*

**job bids and awards*

August 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	31			