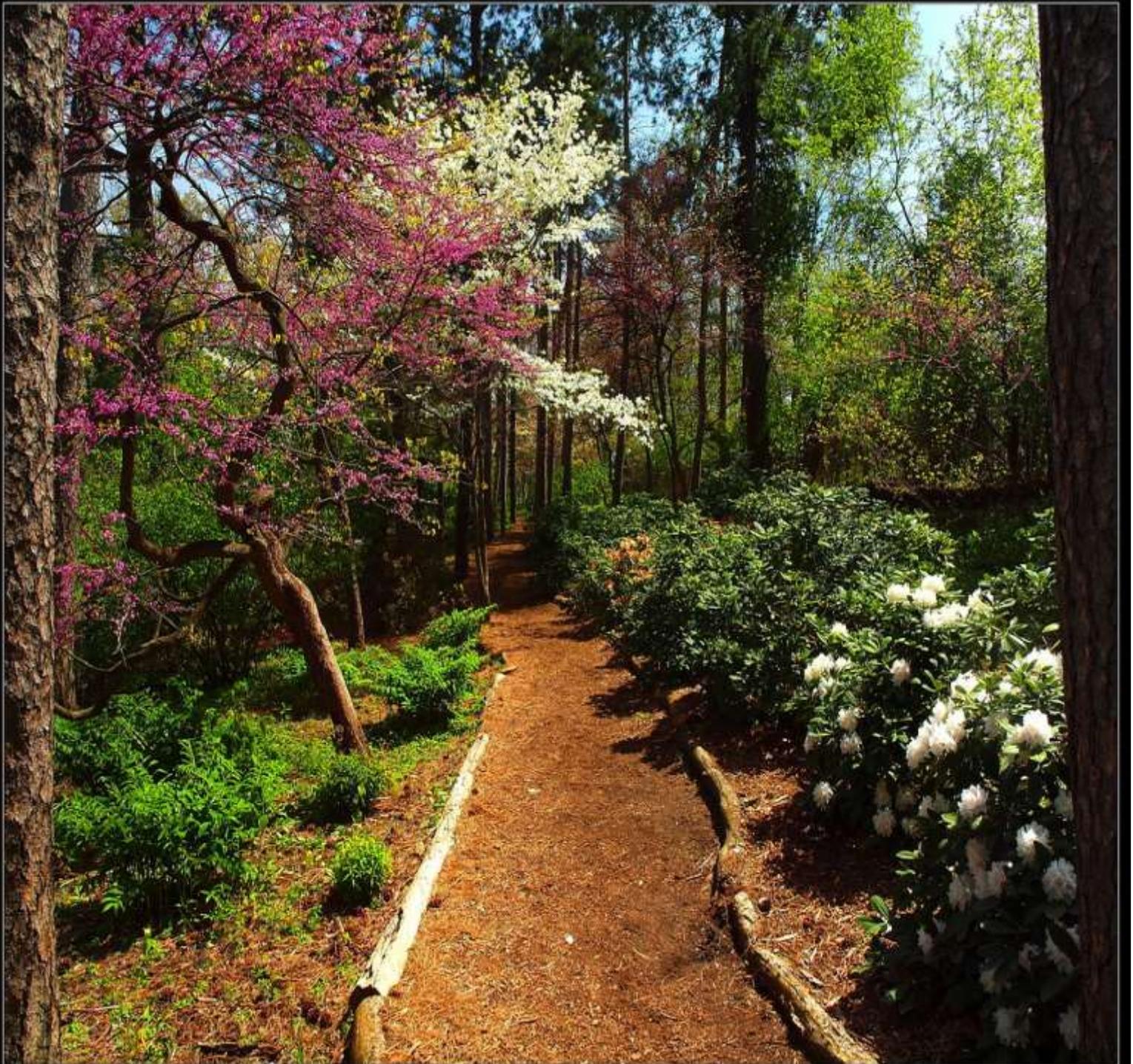


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March - April 2024

WMAL VOICE

**OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE
WESTERN MICHIGAN AREA LOCAL #281
AMERICAN POSTAL WORKERS UNION, AFL-CIO**



WMAL Voice

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P-CAMPUS OFFICE (616) 977-1050
 Fax: (616) 977-1020

OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT 888-767-6738
 retirement line

HR SHARED SERVICES CENTER—Shared Services Line 877-477-3273
 PostalEase option 1
 Job Bidding Line option 2
 Sick/Unscheduled Leave Request option 4
 Human Resources option 5

HARD OF HEARING - FEDERAL RELAY SERVICE 800-877-8339

REPRESENTING APWU BARGAINING EMPLOYEES IN:

Ada· Allendale· Alto· Baldwin· Belmont· Big Rapids· Bitely· Blanchard· Bradley· Branch· Burnips· Byron Center· Caledonia· Cannonsburg· Cedar Springs· Comstock Park· Conklin· Coopersville· Coral· Custer· Dorr· Douglas· Fennville· Ferrysburg· Fountain· Free Soil· Gowen· Grand Haven· Grand Rapids· Grandville· Grant· Hamilton· Hesperia· Holland· Hopkins· Howard City· Hudsonville· Jamestown· Jenison· Lamont· Lowell· Macatawa· Marne· Mecosta· Middleville· Moline· Morley· New Era· Newaygo· Nunica· Paris· Pierson· Pullman· Ravenna· Remus· Rockford· Rodney· Rothbury· Sand Lake· Scottville· Shelby· Shelbyville· Sparta· Spring Lake· Stanwood· Trufant· Walhalla· Wayland· West Olive· Zeeland



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 bi-monthly.

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

The President's Corner

By Michelle Mack, President

Safety First

Let's face it, things lately at the GR Installation have been crazy. Regardless of craft, repeatedly there is a lack of accountability where Management is concerned in providing safe working conditions as required per Article 14 of the CBA and numerous handbooks and manuals. It can feel as if this whirlwind we know as the Postal Service becomes less safety conscious and more chaotic daily. That's where we all play a role in making "Safety First" at the GR Installation or an Associate Office. If you see a safety issue, fill out a PS Form 1767. They are located near the announcement boards on the outer walls of the plant. Or if you see a Union Steward, ask where they are located. Fill out your portion at the top labeled "Employee Action" and sign, date it, and turn it in to your immediate supervisor and request an inspection of the alleged condition. Your immediate Supervisor must promptly within the tour of duty do the following per the ELM 824.632:

- a. Investigate the alleged condition.
- b. Initiate immediate corrective action or make appropriate recommendations.
- c. Record actions or recommendations on PS Form 1767.
- d. Forward the original PS Form 1767 and one copy to the next appropriate level of management (approving official).
- e. **Give the employee a copy signed by the Supervisor as a receipt.**
- f. Immediately forward the third copy to the facility safety coordinator.

The Approving Official must initiate action to eliminate or minimize the hazard to include:

- a. The submission of a work order with 1767 to the Manager of Maintenance if applicable.
- b. If there are no reasonable grounds to believe a hazard exists, the employee must be notified in writing within 15 calendar days.
- c. If the hazard was abated through actions of the approving official:
 1. The employee must be notified in writing, and
 2. The original PS Form 1767 with a statement of actions taken, must be forwarded to the safety office.

So, what is considered a hazard, unsafe condition, or practice? First and foremost, anything in which you believe you or a coworker could be injured. The only time you are allowed to refuse to follow a supervisor's instruction is when you feel it would be unsafe to do so. This would be the appropriate time to ask to see your Union Steward.



Fill out a PS Form 1767 when:

- a. **When a Supervisor/MDO/Postmaster is causing a toxic and stressful work environment** causing you to be anxious, feel targeted, and flat out uncomfortable.
- b. **You are running alone on a DBCS/DIOSS.** This is unsafe and there are numerous Local and National settlements instructing management to staff two clerks to machines at **all times**. Exceptions locally are bathroom break, residue, and a partner running a few minutes late. A 1767 should also be filled out when Management is running alone on a machine and violating the contract.
- c. **When Supervision is starting the DBCS/DIOSS** while the clerks assigned to that machine are present. Many statements have come in recently with this issue. If you are on a machine and taking out a jam, HIT THE E-STOP down by where you are removing the jam. Once you have removed the jam, release the e-stop. This protects you from Supervision or anyone else starting your machine until the jam is cleared.
- d. Anytime you see an unsafe condition or hazard.

Together we can bring safety back to forefront at the USPS.

In Solidarity,

Michelle

The Long And Short Of It

By Michael Long, Vice President



To begin, I would like to apologize for the lateness of this edition of the Voice. As the current pseudo-Editor of the WMAL Voice, I wanted to make sure those who attended the State Convention could get as much information in their articles to you as possible.

Because of this, and with issues currently happening at the Post Office, time slipped away from me and this paper seemed to be the result by being delayed. The next deadline is June 7, 2024. I will make every effort to have that out in a timely manner (or hopefully we will have someone step up and apply for the position by this time.).

As you can see by the two flyers in this edition, there is currently a Organizing Drive happening throughout the AP-WU. The membership at the April 2024 General Meeting authorized expenditures to assist in this endeavor. The biggest was the increase of the bounty from \$50 to \$100 when you sign-up a new member during this drive. What do you do with this? It is up to you. I know some people split the money with the new member and then some keep it or give it all back to the new member. Whatever you decide to do, it is your money. Just need to sign up a new member to get this.

Also, until we will be placing everyone who signs up a new member (along with the new member) into drawings for various merchandise that you can select.

Maintenance Employees or anyone that may require Safety Glasses (prescription lenses) in the performance of their duties. Are you aware that the Postal Service will purchase you a pair of Safety Glasses? If you wear prescription glasses normally and need Safety Glasses to do your job, make sure to get your manager to fill out the form (see a copy of the form on this page). This program is through SVS Vision and is at no cost to the employee. (NOTE: You don't get a choice in what type of glasses offered. These are for Safety Glasses to do your job and is NOT for you to make a fashion statement.) (Thanks to Derrick Farnsworth for bringing this to my attention for you to know)

Mike

svs VISION
 Phone: (800) 515-6300
 Fax: (877) 879-7803
 Email: safetyreport@svsvision.com
 HQ ADDRESS: 118 Cass Avenue, Mt. Clearing, MI 48043
 To schedule an appointment visit www.svsvision.com or call (800) 515-6300

COMPANY INFORMATION			FRAMES	Category	Employee
COMPANY NAME	COMPANY ADDRESS	CITY	1700	0	\$ 25.00
SAFETY	US POSTAL SERVICE		1012E	0	\$ 18.00
US POSTAL SERVICE	225 MICHIGAN ST, RW	GRAND RAPIDS, MI 49501	1012A	0	\$ 15.00
EMPLOYEE INFORMATION			1012B	0	\$ 15.00
EMPLOYEE NAME	EMPLOYEE #	EMPLOYEE TITLE	1012C	0	\$ 20.00
EMPLOYEE PHONE			1012D	0	\$ 20.00
EMPLOYEE EMAIL			1012E	0	\$ 20.00
SAFETY EYEWEAR ORDER INFORMATION			1012F	0	\$ 20.00
LENS STYLE	<input type="checkbox"/> Single Vision <input type="checkbox"/> Bifocal <input type="checkbox"/> Double Vision <input type="checkbox"/> Tri-Focal		1012G	0	\$ 20.00
	<input type="checkbox"/> Prescription Eyeglass <input type="checkbox"/> Clear <input type="checkbox"/> Safety <input type="checkbox"/> Prescription		1012H	0	\$ 20.00
LENS MATERIAL	<input type="checkbox"/> POLYCARBONATE <input type="checkbox"/> PLASTIC		1012I	0	\$ 20.00
LENS ENHANCEMENTS	Anti-Reflection <input type="checkbox"/> Standard AA		1012J	0	\$ 20.00
FRAME	Manufacturer / Model #	Color	1012K	0	\$ 20.00
BACK BARREL	PERMANENT MARKING ONLY		1012L	0	\$ 20.00
Package Program - Employee responsible for shipping, at time of order Lens Enhancements - Standard Anti-Reflection Allowed Only Frame Requirements - Adult (Standard Frame) Frames: H: 5, 20, 25, 30, 35, 40, 45, 50, 55, 60, 65, 70, 75, 80, 85, 90, 95, 100, 105, 110, 115, 120, 125, 130, 135, 140, 145, 150, 155, 160, 165, 170, 175, 180, 185, 190, 195, 200, 205, 210, 215, 220, 225, 230, 235, 240, 245, 250, 255, 260, 265, 270, 275, 280, 285, 290, 295, 300, 305, 310, 315, 320, 325, 330, 335, 340, 345, 350, 355, 360, 365, 370, 375, 380, 385, 390, 395, 400, 405, 410, 415, 420, 425, 430, 435, 440, 445, 450, 455, 460, 465, 470, 475, 480, 485, 490, 495, 500, 505, 510, 515, 520, 525, 530, 535, 540, 545, 550, 555, 560, 565, 570, 575, 580, 585, 590, 595, 600, 605, 610, 615, 620, 625, 630, 635, 640, 645, 650, 655, 660, 665, 670, 675, 680, 685, 690, 695, 700, 705, 710, 715, 720, 725, 730, 735, 740, 745, 750, 755, 760, 765, 770, 775, 780, 785, 790, 795, 800, 805, 810, 815, 820, 825, 830, 835, 840, 845, 850, 855, 860, 865, 870, 875, 880, 885, 890, 895, 900, 905, 910, 915, 920, 925, 930, 935, 940, 945, 950, 955, 960, 965, 970, 975, 980, 985, 990, 995, 1000 Frame - No extra charge			1012M	0	\$ 20.00
EMPLOYEE SIGNATURE	SUPERVISOR SIGNATURE		1012N	0	\$ 20.00
DATE	DATE		1012O	0	\$ 20.00
PHONE	PHONE		1012P	0	\$ 20.00
EMAIL	EMAIL		1012Q	0	\$ 20.00
FRAMES	FRAMES		1012R	0	\$ 20.00
EMPLOYEE SIGNATURE	EMPLOYEE SIGNATURE		1012S	0	\$ 20.00
DATE	DATE		1012T	0	\$ 20.00
PHONE	PHONE		1012U	0	\$ 20.00
EMAIL	EMAIL		1012V	0	\$ 20.00

Looking for answers?
Make sure to check out: WMAL.ORG
To review:
 *meeting minutes
 *steward contact information
 *job bids and awards
 *upcoming events
 and so much more!

Also join our Facebook Group!

WMAL Retiree Chapter Update

By Ray Novakoski, President



Greetings everyone. I hope you are all doing well and enjoying spring and looking forward to summer. It was great to see the turnout we had at our last meeting. I hope our attendance continues to increase. The chapter belongs to you, the members, and we need your help to move it forward and improve it.

Our next chapter meeting is Tuesday, April 9, 2024, at 11 AM. At the meeting we will discuss the upcoming MPWU Convention, the APWU Retiree Convention in Detroit July 13 and 14, 2024. We will be voting for delegates. We are allowed up to six delegates to the APWU National Retiree Convention and one delegate to the National Convention. We need to discuss expenses for the convention.

Recently I attended a Zoom meeting with the National Retiree Director, Nancy Olumekor. I will have some additional information on the Social Security Fairness Act, the Health Plan (PSHP) and a few other issues. We will also need to start our plans for a summer event this year. Any suggestions would be appreciated and discussed.

If you didn't know, the US Postal Service has a website for Retired Employees. KeepingPosted.org was established to provide retirees information on their benefits and changes and such.

At the February union meeting, the local changed their policy for retirees (see the insert below). They will no longer be sending the local newsletter to retirees that are not members of our local retiree chapter. They will also be ineligible to attend special events held by the local. As a member of the retiree chapter, you are eligible for all these things.

Proposed language "To send all retirees (who retired as craft employees) the newsletter when it is published and to invite retirees to all special events put on by the Local. This is predicated on they join the retiree's chapter/development."

I hope to see you at the upcoming meetings at the WMAL Union Hall @11am. The hall is located at 2554 Burlingame Ave SW, Wyoming MI. Come join us for the meeting and some socializing afterwards, light refreshments will be provided. (See Page 15 for dates of upcoming meetings)

If you have any questions or concerns, or would like a certain issue discussed, please contact me at 616 560 7747 or email me at raynova@sbcglobal.net

Yours in union solidarity,

Raymond Novakoski



WOULD YOU LIKE TO BECOME THE EDITOR OF THE “WMAL VOICE”?

Do you have an interest in writing, design, and informing others of what is happening in our local? Have you been trying to find a way to help within your union? Then this position may be the right fit for you.

We are soliciting/searching for a member to become the Editor for THE ‘WMAL VOICE’.

Please see the below language from our Constitution and By Laws that pertain to the Editor position. If you are interested, please submit a letter and any qualifications you may have to:

WMAL – Editor Solicitation; PO Box 2706; Grand Rapids, MI 49501

All applicants must send their interest in writing to the PO Box, and they must be received no later than May 31, 2024. The board will vote and present its recommendation to the membership, per Article 15 Section 3 at the June 2024 General Membership meeting if we receive a candidate. (If not application is received, this solicitation will remain open until filled)

ARTICLE 15 LOCAL PUBLICATION

Section 1: This Local may originate and publish a local newspaper.

Section 2: This publication shall belong to the entire membership; its pages shall be open to every member of this exclusive group within this Local. The Editor may delete or edit those portions of submitted articles that he/she considers libelous or not in the best interest of the Union as a whole. Any such action may be appealed to the Executive Board and decided by two-thirds (2/3) vote, and if the appeal is denied by the Executive Board, it may be further appealed at a regular meeting of this organization and decided by majority vote.

Section 3: The Executive Board shall appoint, with approval of the members present at a regular meeting, an Editor, who shall have the responsibility of publishing with an annual salary of \$1200.00. The paper will be published within the guidelines established by the Executive Board and the local shall bear the expense.

Section 4: It shall be stated in the publication that opinions expressed by contributors are not necessarily those of the Editor or of the Western Michigan Area Local.

Section 5: Mailing shall be at least bi-monthly, with expenses to be borne by the Union.

Section 6: Publication shall be affiliated with the Postal Press Association.

Section 7: The Editor shall keep a correct record of the names and addresses of the members of this Local.

You must be a member in good standing. If you have any questions, please feel free to call the local union office at 616-776-1489.



Veterans Roundtable highlights Postal Service Health Benefits Program

The Postal Service's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) team will host a veterans' roundtable discussion on Sunday, July 21.

The virtual event, to be held at 1 P.M. EDT, will feature a representative from Compensation and Benefits who will provide an informational briefing on the new Postal Service Health Benefits Program.

There will also be a question-and-answer session.

To attend by Zoom, scan the QR code.

To participate by telephone, call 1-503-381-1238, then enter the meeting ID (160 382 2316) and passcode (135678).



Holidays, birthdays and days of observance



APRIL

- April 5 — Gold Star Spouses Day
- April 14 — Air Force Reserve Birthday
- April 23 — U.S. Army Reserve Birthday

MAY

- May 8, 1945 — WWII Victory in Europe Day
- May 18 — U.S. Armed Forces Day
- May 27 — Memorial Day

JUNE

- June 6, 1944 — D-Day Invasion of Normandy
- June 14, 1775 — U.S. Army Birthday
- June 23 — Coast Guard Auxiliary Birthday
- June 27 — National PTSD Awareness Day

JULY

- July 4 — Independence Day
- July 27, 1953 — Korean War Armistice Day
- July 29 — Anniversary of U.S. Army Chaplain Corps

AUGUST

- Aug. 4 — Coast Guard Birthday
- Aug. 7 — Purple Heart Day
- Aug. 29 — USMC Reserves Birthday

SEPTEMBER

- Sept. 11 — Patriot Day
- Sept. 18 — U.S. Air Force Birthday
- Sept. 20 — POW/MIA Day

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.

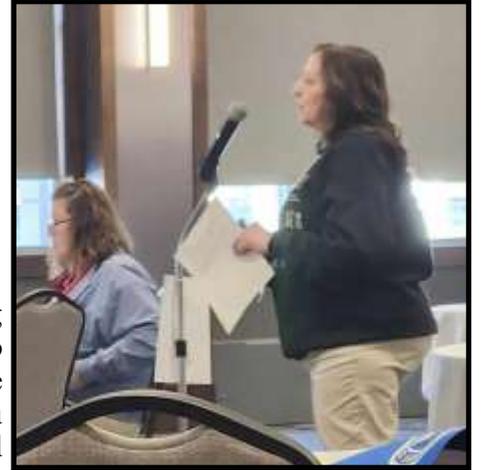


Associate Office Scuttle

By Dana McLean -
Steward @ Newygo & Grant & MPWU Clerk Craft Director

We have to fight for our hours

First off, I want to thank the members for sending me to the 2024 State training and Convention. The saying “You are never too old to learn” is so true. Its so informative and interesting when you have NBA’s giving the training. They are so knowledgeable. I appreciate the opportunity to learn from them. In case you are wondering what goes on at the State Convention, all the locals from around the state bring resolutions to the floor. The resolutions are discussed and then voted on whether we want them to move on to the National Convention. In July the National Convention will be held in Detroit and Michigan will bring some great resolutions to the floor.



PTF hours are on the chopping block. Management is looking to cut hours wherever they can. Just because management schedules wrong and creates short staffing issues DOES NOT mean you need to bust your butt to get everything done. Not only could you get hurt but you are essentially cutting your own throats. We need to look at the BIG picture. Think about clerk hours as a whole. Also another issue happening in smaller offices is when a clerk is scheduled for clerk work don’t let management also expect you to do cleaning during those hours. Those hours are separate. Often management tries to get clerks to clean in between customers and that’s not what is specified in the contract.

As we approach summertime don’t forget everyone is entitled to prime vacations if you have leave available. Check your LMOU to see the exact dates your office schedules them.

I hope everyone has a wonderful summer and take time for yourself.

In solidarity.

Dana

Clerk in the Know

By AmeKa Jones, Clerk Craft Director B

Stop Snitching on Fellow CoWorkers

The union is hearing that clerks are writing statements and providing those statements to management on other clerks. We as a union must not help/assist management in attacking other bargaining unit workers. Management has to show the burden of prof on the clerks they are trying to write up. It is not another clerk’s responsibility or job to give management the help they are looking for to get rid of our fellow coworkers.



Management can try to coerce you into writing statements, but you have the right to deny the offer. Please remember, management is not your friend; they are your worse enemy. The only time we talk to management is if you are under investigation other than that, we don’t rat out each other, we try to help one another.

AmeKa

Clerk Craft

By Suzi Boyd, Clerk Craft Director A

Greetings Brothers and Sisters, The first quarter of the year is behind us, and summer is right around the corner. Last week I had the opportunity to attend the Michigan Postal Workers Union Constitutional Convention. I would like to thank the membership for sending me. During the convention we discussed and voted on more than 35 resolutions for possible changes to the APWU constitution and policies as well as the CBA. The resolutions that passed will go to the National Constitutional Convention in July, to be discussed and voted on there. We heard from many of our National Officers as they spoke on many of the issues that the union is dealing with around the country. On June 25th contract negotiations begin for our next contract. We continue to fight as we negotiate towards improving working conditions, healthcare, wages, benefits and protecting our right to work in a toxic free environment. Yes, management has the right to manage, but they don't have the right to violate. Article 3 of the Collective Bargaining Agreement starts out with an opening paragraph which states: The employer shall have the exclusive right, subject to the provision of this agreement and consistent with applicable laws and regulations. The Employee and Labor Relations Manual section 666.17 prohibits management from retaliating against you for filing a grievance or an EEO. Don't let management perform bargaining unit work. Tell them that is our work and ask for a steward. They will keep doing it, if we don't stop them! Don't let management harass and bully you and your coworkers. Tell them you have a right to be treated with dignity and respect; ask for a steward. They will keep doing it, if we don't stop them!

Changes are coming to your Health Benefit Plan. As most of you have probably heard or read, in 2025 the Postal Service will no longer be part of the Federal

Employees Health Benefit Plan. The Postal Service Reform Act of 2022 required the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) to establish a new health care program. The new program will be the Postal Service Health Benefits (PSHB).

There will be several plans to choose from. Open Season for the PSHB will be November 11- December 9, 2024. The enrollment type for the new plans will be self, self plus one and self and family, the same as the FEHB 2024 plans. For additional information on PSHB visit APWU.org. The new PSHB plan will integrate with Medicare. Enrolling in Medicare (typically at age 65) has different variables and may or may not pertain to you at the time of enrollment into PSHB. Additional information on Medicare Integration for Retirees is available by scanning the QR code below (links to: keepingposted.org)

I wish you all a healthy and safe summer with family and friends.

In solidarity

Suzi



Postal Service Health Plan Integration Article

Thank you for sending me to the Michigan Postal Workers Union Constitutional Convention on April 16 – April 20, 2024. On April 16 I attended a class on Medicare Integration with Judy Beard – Legislative & Political Director & Sarah Jane Rodriguez – Director APWU Health Plan. The class started with a review of the postal service reform act of 2022; and the repeal of the prefunding mandate form 2006. The postal service reform act of 2022, will enacting prospective Medicare Integration.

Some questions that were covered are:

How does “Medicare Integration” work? With Medicare Integration future retirees, when Medicare eligible at age 65, will remain in the Federal Employee Health Benefit Program (FEHBP) in retirement. They will also be required to be enrolled in Medicare Parts A and B. Retiree health coverage will then become a combination of Medicare and FEHBP. The provisions of Medicare Integration will become effective on January 1, 2025.

Will current and retired employees remain in FEHBP? Yes. The pending legislation keeps all postal workers in the Federal Employee Benefit Health Program. All workers will be able to keep their current plan and avail themselves of the annual open season if workers wish to close other options within FEHBP.

Why does the Postal Reform Act established a “postal employee” program within FEHBP? The only way to capture the savings of the Medicare Integration for the individual employee and the Postal Service is to establish a postal group within FEHBP. The Postal Service will have no authority in administering the plans which will be run by FEHBP with the existing Office of Personnel Management (OPM) oversight.

If I am 65 or older (Medicare eligible age) and still an active postal employee will I be required to obtain Medicare Part B to maintain my FEHBP health insurance? No. the provision will apply only after a postal worker retires.

Under the proposed bill, if I am an active USPS Employee and currently under the age of 65, will I be required to have Medicare Parts A and B when I retire from USPS? YES. Medicare Integration means enrolling in Medicare parts A and B when you turn 65 in order to maintain your FEHBP coverage. However, if you are at least 64 as of January 1, 2025, this would not apply to you.

There will be a lot of information coming out in the months to come. But here is some contact information to keep handy. We are waiting on OPM to make final approval, some negations are still going on; but there are 32 health care plans conditionally approved.

The USPS Benefits and Wellness Team will hold lunch & learn seminars about the PSHB Program every other Thursday through December 2024. The seminars will take place from noon to 1pm Eastern, via zoom, using passcode 314858 (Webinar ID: 161 422 7062); and from 4 to 5 pm Eastern, via zoom, using passcode 366159 (Webinar ID: 160 320 9569)

Postal Service Medicare Integration 1-833-712-7742 (also PSHB Help Line); SSA.gov/medicare; Medicare.gov; Shiphelp.org; Keepingposted.org. (has many seminars, videos & resources); OPM.gov (see press releases, retirement center, support center, & resources).

Sign up for information & updates by texting “PSHBP” to 39369;

Go to APWU.Org – click under Our Union, Departments, then health plan. Click on load more, and you will see APWU Health Plan Medicare Advantage Enrollment Meetings.

Go to APWU.org – click under Our Union, Departments, then Legislative & Political; and you will see Medicare Integration information and a video.

Jennifer

An Injury to One is an Injury to All

By Jennifer Rizzon

HR/Injury Compensation Representative

I cannot stress it enough, if you get hurt at work – REPORT IT!

Report it before you punch out and leave for the day. Something minor can easily turn into a more serious condition in a day or week. Write a statement on what happened in detail and include any witnesses.

See form CA-10 that is posted on USPS bulletin boards. “What a Federal Employee Should Do When Injured at Work”.



When the supervisor is made aware of the injury, they will assist the employee in filing injury claim through the ECOMP Portal within (24 to 48 hours). If it is a traumatic injury, management will then issue a CA 16 to the employee. Notify the employee of their rights to see the doctor of their choice. Every injured employee that is filling a CA-1 should request COP, not their own leave. A 3-day waiting period does apply. OWCP is the sole authority to determine if an employee is entitled to COP. Submit medical evidence of injury within 10 calendar days.

See your union steward or contact me if you need assistance with ECOMP. ECOMP is a good tool to use. You can scan and submit additional information to your ECOMP. It can then be reviewed by OWCP/Dept of Labor. It will also have copies of any letters & forms sent to you. It is your responsibility to keep track of what OWCP/Dept of Labor may need for your injury case. So carefully read the letters & documents from Dept of Labor.

I recommend you keep a log of events and calls with date & time, and who you spoke to. And keep copies of all documents.

And reach out to me if you have any questions and need assistance. I can be reached at 616-443-3947. I do work on Tour 3 at P1. And my e mail is Goldengirl0624@gmail.com.

Jennifer



OWCP WORKERS' COMPENSATION

Spring Into Action

By Lisa Wilson -
Steward @ Spring Lake Michigan Post Office

What's Your Mindset?

Thank you to our local for sending me to the 2024 MPWU training and convention this in Traverse City. The best thing I got from this was that it's about our mindset. Let me explain:

At the convention, for the caucus part, they split us up into groups of 4-6 people. Each group received some proposed resolutions that one of our Michigan brothers and sisters had written.

One resolution my group received involved bringing back the importance and service standard of Express mail. My group felt defeated from the start on this one. One clerk told us how in her office Express mail comes in the late morning. She and the other clerks are instructed not to scan or touch them until the next day! Those are failures intentionally done by management. Another clerk said she had talked with someone at the APWU who said Express mail accounts for about 1-2% of the USPS revenue. Therefore, they weren't going to bring up trying to save that service. Article 4 in the Collective Bargaining Agreement does state that "Both parties recognize the need for improvement of mail service." But then it's about technological and mechanization changes.

So, we felt that management was going to do whatever they wanted (or were told to do) and it wasn't a big enough issue to fight for. We felt defeated, so we voted it down. Then when the resolution was brought before everyone, they spoke up and wanted it approved. It was approved. So, the resolution will go up to the national level.

Back to your mindset; my mindset. We all know our attitudes can make a big difference in our lives and in those around us. Be it good or bad: attitudes are contagious.

I feel that DeJoy is trying to change how we think. That we can't get mail delivered overnight. That we can't have a 1- or 2-day guarantee service. When we can! That's our number one service! And when we quit trying to improve, when we quit trying to get mail delivered the next day, our mindset changes. This is not good.

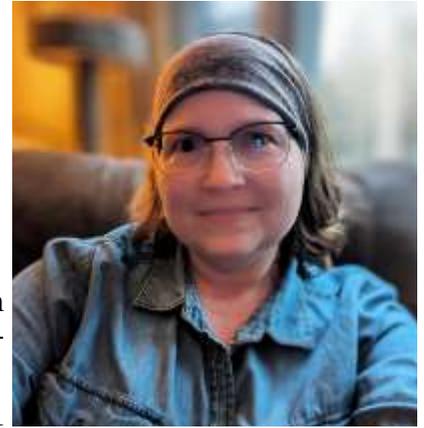


One of my favorite books is "Man's Search For Meaning" by Viktor Frankl. It is about what he went through, observed and learned from years as a prisoner in Nazi death camps. Obviously, they tried to control people by how they treated them. Frankl wrote that he could tell when someone had given up. And a few days later, they were dead. Frankl wrote that between stimulus and response we have a choice. We have a choice in how we respond.

How are we going to choose to respond to management and DeJoy trying to change how and what we think? I will not think or feel that we are defeated. These are our jobs. This is our union. We are strong. We are united. We are the APWU.

In Solidarity,

Lisa



WMAL / APWU Organizing Drive & Membership Appreciation Cookout



RSVP by May 17, 2024, by calling the union office if you will be attending the Membership Appreciation Cookout. Check Out the WMAL website or Facebook Page for More Information.

The Western Michigan Area Local, along with the APWU is currently conducting an Organizing Drive to sign-up non-members before contract negotiations begin/kick-off on June 25th. From April 1st through June 24, 2024, for every non-member signed-up, the organizer will receive...

Show our unity and support for a new contract by having more members standing together and fighting for a fair, decent, and progressive contract!

Highlights for Signing Up New Members

From National APWU, if you...

- Sign-Up 1-3 new members - Receive a T-Shirt.
- Sign-Up 3-4 new members, receive a T-shirt and Thermal Mug
- Sign-Up 5 or more new members and receive T-Shirt, Mug, and Lunch Tote.

From the Local Union, you will...

- Receive \$100.00 for each new member you sign up.
- Be entered into drawings & giveaways for both yourself and the new member.
- *Member Appreciation Cookout on June 1st (3:00 pm. - 6:00 p.m.) prior to the June Membership Meeting for the union member's immediate family (You will need to RSVP how many people for food and such.) *

Why should I sign-up for the Union? Don't I get the same benefits even if I am not a member?

No. Per the National Department of Labor, the union is required to represent a non-member in a grievance/related issue only; that is where "benefits" of a non-member stop. However, as a member, you receive these and more:

1. Access to trained officers and stewards to help you with FMLA, OWCP, Retirement, etc.
2. Access to National Officers if you have a question or concern or your local officers can't help or get the answer.
3. Accessibility to get coverage in Accident Benefit Association and Voluntary Benefits Plan products.
4. Huge Savings on Health Insurance through APWU Health Plan Consumer Driven Plan.
5. Discounts through Union Plus on Vacations, Rental Cars, and hundreds of more items
6. A voice and a vote in how your union is operated.
7. Use of a Union Hall for parties or events, at a savings of over \$800 compared to a public rental.
8. Keep Up-to-Date with Information from National, State, and the local union via the National tabloid and e-Mails, Michigan Messenger, WMAL Voice and WMAL Facebook page and website



Western Michigan Area Local #281 - APWU;
2554 Burlingame Ave SW; Wyoming, MI 49509

(616) 776-1489 (GR GMF)
(616) 977-1050 (P-Campus)

GSA Per Diem Rate Now Covers Daily Cost at NCED Eatery Effective March 15, 2024.

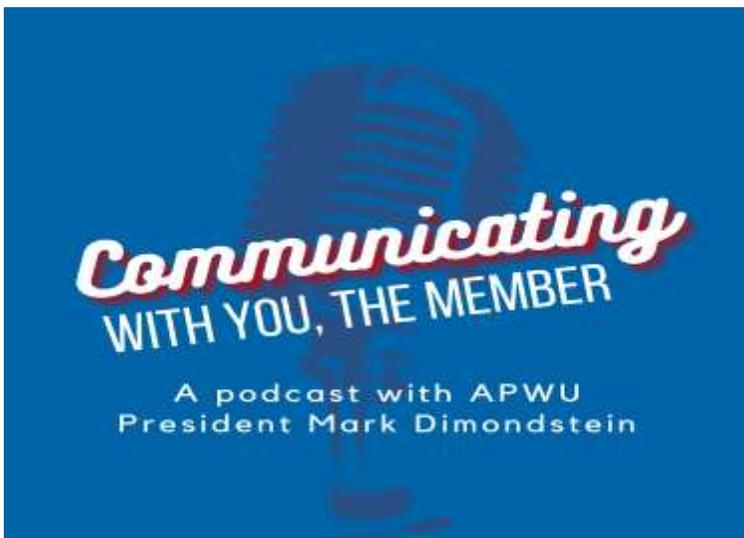
The General Services Administration Per Diem Rate of \$59 Now Covers Daily Cost of Meals at National Center for Employee Development's "3 Squares Eatery," Effective March 15, 2024.

It is with great pleasure that we bring you this information. Maintenance Division leadership has been in extensive communications with postal management to encourage the hotel at the National Center for Employee Development (NCED) to match the General Services Administration (GSA) per diem rate of \$59 to cover daily meals, including breakfast, lunch, and dinner at the "3 Squares Eatery." After many months of discourse, we were finally able to come to an agreement.

"It took two years of negotiation to get this accomplished," stated Maintenance Division Director Idowu Balogun. "It is about time for the NCED to stop driving our students away from the restaurant by their pricing."

Meals	Current 3 Squares	Discount	Discount %	Postal Learner Discount 3 Squares Price
Breakfast	\$16.00	\$ (1.00)	6%	\$15.00
Lunch	\$20.00	\$ (2.00)	10%	\$18.00
Dinner	\$26.00	\$ -	0%	\$26.00
Total	\$62.00	\$ (3.00)	4%	\$59.00

The per diem was negotiated and returned to the craft in the 2022 USPS/APWU Collective Bargaining Agreement. Sadly, the Postal Service and Aramark refused to adjust the total cost of daily meals to match the total daily per diem amount received by students. Representatives from APWU National Headquarters immediately began discussions to demand that the meal costs be reduced. This is a great step forward for students.



Check out the weekly podcasts from National President Mark Dimondstein. Go to the APWU.org website for more information.

The poster features the APWU logo at the top, followed by the text "BUILDING UNION POWER" in large, bold letters. Below this, it says "2024 Organizing Campaign" with stars on either side, and the dates "April 1 - June 25" in a cursive font. A central yellow box contains the text "Want to receive one or all of these items?" and shows images of a t-shirt, a mug, and a tote bag. Below the images, it says "Commit to Recruiting Non-Members:" and "Worker power is essential for a strong membership. Join the campaign to sign-up 5,000 new APWU members between April 1-June 25, when contract negotiations begin." At the bottom, there is a QR code and the text "Scan this QR code to commit to recruiting non-members today!" along with a "COMMIT" button.

Happy Retirement!!!!

Norma Silva-Maycroft
Carol Durbin
John Gregory
Larry Mercer
Jacqueline VanBelle
Brenda Trybe

(Congratulations & enjoy the next chapter in your life!) - Remember to sign up for the union's Retiree Chapter.

Welcome To Our New Members!!

Timothy Wingard Joseph Cho
Folashade Salako Carson DeVries
Seth Idema Bliss Hollie
Cyntrilia Jones

Union Meetings

Next General Membership:

May 4, 2024 @ 7:00 p.m.
June 1, 2024 @ 7:00 p.m.
September 7, 2024 @ 7:00 p.m.

WMAL Retiree Chapter Meetings
are on the second Tuesday in February, April, June, September and November - starting at 11:00 a.m.

Remaining 2024 Meetings are:
June 11th; September 10th; & November 12th

Deadline - Next Submission for WMAL Voice is: June 7, 2024

Condolences & Sympathy to:



The family of member Catherine Williams (TTO/MVS) on the notice of her passing in March.

The family of former Southwest MI Area Local President Margaret (Mickey) Elmore (retiree) with notice of her passing in April.

The family of Retired Member Glen Floyd on the notice of his passing.

The family of member Craig Brennan (Maintenance Mechanic at the GR - GMF) on the notice of his passing in April.

The family of former Central Region Coordinator Leo Persails on this notice of his passing in April.

The family of retiree Rusti Wiersma on the notice of her passing in March.

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

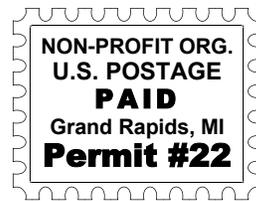
Union Hall Rentals

2554 Burlingame Ave SW
Wyoming MI 49509
616-822-3520 | Capacity 188

	Hall Rental	Security Agent	Agent Fee
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



APWU Membership Appreciation & Organizing Drive



June 1st

3pm to 6 pm

(prior to the General
Membership meeting)

Location: Union Hall

**2554 Burlingame Ave SW,
Wyoming, MI 49509**

Food Includes:

BBQ Ribs and

Chicken, Hot Dogs,

Potato Salad,

Baked Beans,

Dessert, and Drinks



**RSVP by May 17, 2024 to a Union Steward
with how many will be attending. NOTE:
Open to full dues-paying members, their immediate
family, and those who are joining that day.**