

APWU

St. Paul, MN Area
Local APWU AFL-CIO

POSTMARK

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Greetings! It's hard to believe summer is on its way out and fall is in the air. It's been a busy summer and it went by quickly. There has been a large number of PSE's converted to Full-Time Career due to our success in the grievance process to bring back improperly reverted full-time duty assignments in combination with a couple National MOU's which expanded the Function 1 compli-ments. There have been some PSE's who have been converted within two weeks of being hired. This is the quickest since PSE's were created 10 years ago. Congratulations to all the newly converted career members.

COVID-19 continues to have its impact on us. The numbers are on the rise again. I know we all are fatigued with this pandemic. I want to say just because you are vaccinated does not mean you can't be infected by the virus. I personally was diagnosed with positive test in August and I was 90 days out from being fully vaccinated. I was lucky and had very little issue with it, I only had one symptom present itself which was a dry infrequent cough which went away within 2 days. Normally, what I felt would not have kept me away from work. However, out of an abundance of caution when the cough showed up, I isolated myself and contacted my doctor who ordered the test. I'm glad I paid attention and sought help immediately so I did not expose others to the virus. In the week leading up to my diagnosis, I had become aware of a couple of vaccinated people I knew becoming positive and ending up very sick. I continue to get messages from people who are upset about mask mandates and vaccinations. Some are downright nasty and personal. As the Local President, I represent all APWU employees and will continue to stand up for the safety of our employees. Please be safe.

The reason I bring this up is to keep your guard up and protect yourself. You should have cleaning supplies in your work area. Make sure you sanitize

your work area to the best of your ability at the start of each shift. Also, if you are unable to maintain 6 feet separation with you co-workers, mask up. Help protect yourself the best you can. If we don't, we will be back under a mask mandate sooner than later. Please keep yourself healthy and if any of the symptoms develop, please stay home and seek medical advice on how to proceed.

Lastly, this month at the General Membership Meeting we will be voting on Constitutional Changes. We will offer a Zoom link so you don't have to be at the meeting at our office you can attend anywhere you can stream the Zoom meeting.

We are heading into the peak season and before we know it Christmas rush will be upon us. The expectations is this Christmas will be similar to last years. The USPS is presently setting up a NDC package Annex in St. Paul. This Annex was negotiated at the National Level and determined to be part of the NDC jurisdiction. Which means while the Annex is located in St. Paul the St. Paul Area Local will not have jurisdiction in representing the workers in this facility. Which means we will not be staffing the Christmas Annex this year from the St. Paul Installation.

Todd Elkerton

President



June General Membership Meeting Drawings

\$50

Terri Griner

\$300

Carla Schroeder

(not present, you must be present to win)

Welcome New Members!

Enoch Htoo – PSE Clerk

Keshrie Lallbehari – PSE Clerk

Craig Lee – PSE Clerk

Nebiyu Mekonnen – PSE Clerk

Willy Oster – Maintenance

Hassan Outtaleb – PSE Clerk

Connie Anne Standiford – PSE Clerk

Michelle Thompson – PSE Clerk

Jason Winsor – PSE Clerk

PREVENTING DIABETES: SMALL CHANGES, BIG REWARDS

Are you at risk?

A number of factors can increase your risk of developing diabetes. If you have any of the following risk factors, talk to your doctor about getting your blood sugar tested:

- Being overweight
- Being 45 years or older
- Having a parent, brother, or sister with diabetes
- Having high blood pressure
- Having unhealthy cholesterol levels
- Being physically active less than three times a week
- Women who had gestational diabetes (diabetes during pregnancy) or gave birth to a baby weighing more than nine pounds are at risk

Race and ethnicity are also a factor. African Americans, Hispanic/Latino Americans, American Indians, Pacific Islanders, and some Asian Americans are at higher risk. The more risk factors you have, the greater your chance of developing diabetes.

Learn more: <https://www.apwuhp.com/preventing-diabetes-small-changes-big-rewards/>

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www.apwuhp.com
(800) 222-2798

Coping with COVID-19 stress and anxiety

The COVID-19 pandemic has taken its toll on our emotional wellbeing. Social distancing can make us feel isolated, while surges in new cases cause stress and anxiety.

Learning how to manage stress can help you face challenges head on and become more resilient.

If you're feeling worried or stressed about COVID-19, call the Optum toll-free help line at 1-866-342-6892. A caring professional will connect you to resources to help you cope with stress in healthier ways.

Find emotional support resources online

Visit the Live and Work Well COVID-19 Support Center (<https://www.liveandworkwell.com/en/public/custom/covid19.html>) to learn how to be mindful and keep your stress in check. You'll find COVID-19 FAQs, resources, articles, coping strategies, tips, and more.

Live and Work Well also provides emotional support resources and information related to relationships, mental health, crisis support, and legal issues.

To access the resources, follow these steps:

1. Select Browse as a Guest with a company access code
2. Enter Guest in the access code field and select Enter

Behavioral health resources for APWU Health Plan members

As an APWU Health Plan member, you have access to mental health and substance use services that can help you feel better and more in control of your emotional wellbeing.

- Cigna Behavioral Health provides services for High Option members
- UHC Behavioral Health Solutions provides services for Consumer Driven Option members

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OUR UNION, OUR CONTRACT, OUR FUTURE

Greetings to all members, I hope you all enjoyed your summer and were able to make up for lost vacations in the summer of 2020 (covid).

For those of you that are unaware, our Contract is set to expire on September 20, 2021. Our National negotiation team has been hard at work for several months now and has submitted over 90 proposals to the Postal Service. These proposals included items to protect job security, work opportunities, work rules and working conditions, increase career opportunities. Additionally, the APWU is pushing for wage increases, retaining the Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) and other economic provisions.

Beginning September 7th, the National Negotiations Committee (NNC) will lock down with postal management for a week of intense contract negotiations as the September 20th expiration date approaches. Every effort will be made to achieve a fair and just contract. If the parties reach a tentative agreement, it will be brought to the Rank and File Bargaining Advisory Committee. If the Advisory Committee believes it is a fair contract, it would

then be sent to the membership for ratification. If an agreement is not reached the parties would move towards mediation and binding Arbitration.

Throughout this process, the National Leadership has committed to keeping the membership updated on the progress of negotiations. To help in this effort the APWU has created a Hotline members can call into and hear updates on the negotiations from President Dimondstein. 1-866-412-8061

Solidarity,

Dave Cook
Vice President

Clerk Craft Report

Hello Brothers and Sisters,

Employees, remember if you are requesting FMLA, ask to talk to a steward first and also remember you need to fill out your 3971 for 2 weeks at a time not for 440 hours all at once. FMLA is used only for medical issues only. You will be required to have your Doctor fill out the forms for you. Do not change anything on the form your doctor put on there because you could get removed from the postal service for that. If you feel that the doctor made a mistake, have them fill out a new one. Also you need to update your FMLA every year..

Employees who are out more than 3 days are required to bring medical Documentation upon returning to work. If you are gone for more than 30 days or more you are required to update your medi-

cal every 30 days. If you are gone for a long period of time make sure you watch your mail management has been sending out day in court notices and employees are not responding and then management is issuing discipline. If you are out for a long period of time or just one day you need to call in everyday so you don't get charged AWOL.

If you leave a note under the Union door make sure you put your phone # on it so we can call if we have questions on your statement.

Station or AO's - make sure you give a detailed statement and names of carriers or management who are doing clerk work. Also at the AO's if someone retires please let the Union know as soon as possible.

Over the summer it has been great to

see so many PSE's getting converted to regular.

I hope everyone had a great summer. Hope to see you at the next Union meeting in person or by zoom.

Bruce Gutzke
Clerk Craft Director

Hello Maintenance

I hope everyone had a great summer and you and yours are doing well. We recently lost one of our Union brothers Laborer Custodian Charles Whitaker. He was a jovial character who for most employees he brought a smile, and for others he did not. He will be remembered for good and sometimes bad things, but he will be remembered.

Currently there are only three (3) Union representatives covering the Saint Paul P&DC, Twin Cities L&DC, Stations and Branches to include the Associate offices. The three (3) of us are doing the very best we can to provide you all the best representation possible. We cannot catch every violation but we are trying.

I want to praise the two Union Stewards that represent you, they are Laborer Custodial (LC) Matt Garcia (Tour 2) and Building Equipment Mechanic (BEM) John Turnberg (Tour 2) are doing a fantastic job fighting for your contractual rights on a daily basis. When you see them during your work day make sure to thank each of them for their hard work and dedication.

We are looking for other Maintenance Craft Union members, that are interested in becoming a Union steward. Step forward and contact me or the Local President in writing, that you want to become a Union steward to help us fight against the inept Maintenance Management who blatantly violate the contract on an ongoing and continuous basis.

The Maintenance Management team here is running this facility into the ground. We are short staffed where in most cases there is only one MPE-9 and ET-10 assigned to cover 5 machines on a daily basis. Additionally, Management has resorted to assigning MM-7 employees on tour 3 to provided Operational Coverage on the SPSS because we lack adequate staffing levels. The Saint Paul P&DC used to be Number 1 in the country because of Maintenance, now we are at the bottom.

Recently we settled the FY 2019 MS-47 Line H case where the shares distributed to employees ranged from \$384.31 for two shares up to the employees who worked the total 52 shares who received \$9,991.99 each. If you have not received your settlement payment within the next couple Pay Checks contact the Union.

COVID is still a MAJOR issue we are dealing with and COVID cases are spiking once again. We will be conducting compliance checks at the Postal facilities within the 540, 550 & 551 areas. We are conducting compliance checks regarding the implemen-

tation of MMO-031-20 Influenza and Coronavirus Cleaning Contingency at all facilities.

I want to call on the Laborer Custodial employees that hold a Maintenance bid at the Stations and Branches to include the Associate Offices within the 540, 550 & 551 Areas, to contact the Union if you are experiencing issues getting the required cleaning supplies at your office. We have been receiving calls from employees that are informing the Union that they are not being provided cleaning products and equipment at the smaller offices. If you are experiencing shortages on cleaning products and equipment ask to speak to a Union steward and we can address this issue where needed.

We recently settled four (4) step 2 settlements for all Maintenance Craft employees regarding the issue of **Use of Privately Owned Vehicle (POV)** with the following language:

The parties agree that Management will comply with the MOU Re: Use of Privately Owned Vehicles, by providing necessary postal transportation from one postal facility to another and back to their assigned work location. Maintenance Craft employees that have expressed to Management that they do not wish to use their privately owned vehicles will not be coerced to do so.

The parties agree that it is the responsibility of Management to ensure compliance with MOU Re: Use of Privately Owned Vehicles, by ensuring that Transportation is available to the Maintenance Craft employees who have expressed that they choose not to use their POV in the line of duty.

It is your choice on a daily basis if you to use your POV or not, Management SHALL not coerce or intimidate you into using your POV during working hours. If you feel pressured to use you POV request to speak to the Union.

If you are interested in becoming a Union Steward please let me know.

I want to thank Matt Garcia and John Turnberg for the awesome job they are doing representing the Maintenance Craft everyday.

Jim Pierce
Maintenance Craft Director

Industrial Relations Report

Summer has ended and fall has arrived, I personally did not like the weather this summer but I'm sure most of you did. It was just a little too hot for my liking, I prefer it to be below 90 degrees. So, let's talk about what is coming up in the St Paul Plant. Again, we have a new Senior Plant Manager, Mike Dornbusch, he has bounced around from plant to plant, most recently the NDC.

He did schedule a couple town halls with the employees and explained his plans to lift us out of last place and get up to number 1. It sounds like he will be having several instructors, mentors, and number crunchers coming in from all around the country to help fix our problems. In my opinion, I think anyone can criticize and point out someone short comings. The USPS has reports for everything and yes some of them we will be in last place or close to the bottom. Some we will be at the top or maybe even in first place. So, to start out by saying you suck and I'm going to fix it just seems like the list of all the other Plant Managers that past through.

Like Mary Alt, he does have a lot of ideas and as the Senior Plant Manager he has the authority to actually make changes. And like Mary he does listen to what the employees have to say.

I guess we will see if his changes help or if we are just another drop in the bucket as he moves on to bigger and better places.

Moving on to Union issues, we are still without Union stewards on tour 1 (Clerk and Maintenance). We only have 1 clerk steward on tour 3 and no Maintenance. We do need people to step up and help the cause. If you are

thinking about it, you can talk to a steward or an officer and we can answer your questions and maybe help you to the next step.

Next, I would like to discuss 204b's. As you can see management has decided to have several 204b's on the floor. There seems to be more 204b's then there are supervisors. In the clerk craft there are a lot of limitations to when and how they use 204b's. They are only to be used in an absence / vacancy of two weeks or more and limited to a 90-day detail. These limitations started with the creation of lead clerks. We believe if they need more help, than they should just create more lead clerk duty assignments.

To be clear, 204b's are acting in a supervisory position and should not be performing clerk duties. The Union has filed several grievances for improper detail assignments and if you see a 204b doing clerk duties you should notify the Union to get it to stop.

I will end this article with two things, One I would like to congratulate all the Postal Support Employees (PSE) that have gotten converted to a full time regular (FTR). This is the first time in our history that clerk employees are getting converted while they are still in their 90-day probationary period. Two, if you are a PSE that is getting converted please fill out your benefits booklet as soon as possible and if you have questions or if they have not scheduled your benefits class, let us know.

Jason Stevens

IRD

Recent Grievance Settlements

The Union settled grievances for a total of \$76,111 for June, \$31,775 in July, and August \$21,924.

The Union is working hard for you, both in the grievance procedure and in the fight to Save America's Postal Service. We need you to step up to the plate! If you know a non-member, please ask them to consider joining, we all need to pull together to protect the Postal Service. The Local is approximately 90% organized.



The Local has learned of the death of the following members:

Our deepest sympathies to their family and friends.

Cheryl Olsen

Charles Whitaker

NEWS AND VIEWS FROM THE ST. PAUL AREA LOCAL APWU RETIREES CHAPTER

The next meeting of the St Paul Area Local Retiree chapter will be held on 9/15/20 at 11 a.m. at the Union Office, 2261 Waters Dr, Mendota Heights. It's likely this issue will arrive after the meeting however, as always, the meetings are listed on the Local's website, and are held every other month on the 3rd Wednesday.

Thanks again to President Todd Elkerton for stepping in for me at the July Retiree's meeting, I was ill and unable to attend. Due to complications of the covid virus that my husband and I have been dealing with since last November, I have missed some meetings. As always, President Elkerton stepped in and did an outstanding job.

We finally had a quorum at the meeting and the Constitution was changed to provide for a vice president, which should take some of the pressure off the Local President. In accordance with our Constitution, I will appoint a temporary Vice President who will serve until our next election of officers in May of 2022.

According to all reports, the picnic was a success. Thanks to Nancy Haberman and Ray Moore for keeping things on track, getting and cooking the food, etc. as always, we could hardly be in business without our volunteers, including Sheila and Jane at the office.

After 49 years in the office, Sheila has retired. To say that she will be missed is an understatement. She has been there through good times and bad. She made new officers able to pick up the work easily and keep things running smoothly. What a gift she has been to our members. Happy Trails Sheila!

A motion was made and passed that there should be 2 \$50 door prize drawings at the meeting. The door prizes were won by Julie Alstad and Fran Knothe. The door prize drawing is held at each meeting. You must be present to win. Even if there is no quorum, we will have the drawing if anyone shows up.

Summer is almost over. I hope you and your family had a safe and happy time.

As always, you may contact me via email at lreed6112@aol.com. You can also call the union office at 651-778-1637 or visit the Local's website at stpaulapwu.org. The union office can give out my home number. I welcome your contacts.

I look forward to seeing you at the next meeting.

Lola Reed Langford, Chapter President.

Dues Increase!

Starting January 1, 2022

Retiree dues will increase to \$20 per year.

(\$14 for dues, \$6 for death benefit!)

Proposed Constitution Changes

Proposed Constitutional Change Article 11

*Increase Officer Salaries

Rationale - Officer salaries were set approximately 20 + years ago. Salaries have only increased during this time with the contractual raises and did not include COLA's. As such the salaries have slowly become outdated and the responsibilities of officers has increased. Officers also took a 2 year pay freeze in 2013 to help the financials of the Local. Furthermore, the Local is in a sound financial footing. The below change will result in an annual cost of \$4200 to the Local.

Proposal:

The below listed officer positions will each receive a \$50/month salary increase from the current amount in Article 11. This change will be reflected in Article 11 Section 1 of the Local Constitution.

This will be effective upon approval of the membership.

Vice President
Industrial Relations Director
Secretary
Treasurer
Clerk Craft Director
Maintenance Craft Director
Motor Vehicle Craft Director

Proposed Constitutional Change Article 11 Section 1

*Increase President Salary

Rationale - The Local Presidents salary has lagged behind similarly sized Locals for at least 15 years (others \$80,000 plus). As a result, the position is becoming less appealing each year and eventually may affect the candidates willing to run for office. While serving as President there are no wages paid by the USPS. Some bargaining unit employees we represent make more per year at the straight time rate than the Local President. The Local is financially on sound footing. The below proposed change will result in a cost of \$100/pay period to the Local (\$2600/year), which is still below similarly situated Locals.

Proposal:

The Presidents Salary in Article 11 Section 1 of the Constitution will be increased by \$100/pay period.

Appropriate changes will be made to Article 11 Section 1 to update the Presidents salary.

This change will be effective immediately upon approval of the membership.

Proposed Constitution Changes

Proposed Constitutional Change Article 11

*Increase Trustee Chairperson Salary

Rationale - The Trustee Chairperson oversees the auditing of the Local's financials, inventorying of the Locals property and the Craft Trustees. The Trustee Chairpersons salary (\$76.09) is now less than that of the Craft Trustees (\$77.38) due to the way the pay structure was created. The below proposed change will result in an initial cost of \$26.29/month to the Local.

Proposal:

-Strike Trustee Chairperson and salary amount from current location in Article 11 and place right after Trustee Motor Vehicle Craft. Include the following language:

The Trustee Chairpersons monthly salary will be \$25/month more than the Craft Trustees. Salary increases will follow those of the Craft Trustees.

Appropriate changes will be made to Article 11 Section 1 of the Local Constitution to update the Trustee Chairpersons salary structure.

This change will be effective immediately upon approval of the membership.

Proposed Constitutional Change Article 12 #2

*Increase off day pay for official union business

Rationale- The day off pay for employees/retirees on official Union business has been at \$150/day for at least 20 years. Postal employees' hourly wages have increased every new CBA yet the day off pay for Union business has remained the same. \$150 does not even cover the average daily wage @ straight-time rate of the employees we represent. An employee working on behalf of their Union on an off day deserves to be fairly paid. The below proposed change will result in an additional cost of \$70/day for a full off day worked on behalf of the Union. The Locals finances are on good footing and would not be affected. The language as to how the off day is administered also needs to be made clear to avoid different interpretations.

Proposal:

Strike \$150 out of Article 12 Section 4 and replace it with the below language.

The new paragraph would read as follows:

"When it becomes necessary for the United States Postal Service retirees and employees not being paid for lost annual leave or leave without pay to be on official union business representing this Local, those persons shall receive the same expense allowances as those provided for Delegates to conventions, except the daily compensation will be no more than \$220/day. The employee on official union business will be paid for hours worked at their hourly straight time rate up to the \$220 maximum.

This change will be effective immediately upon approval of the membership. Appropriate changes will be made to Article 12 Section 4 to update the Constitution.

**ST. PAUL, MN AREA LOCAL
APWU AFL-CIO
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St. Paul, MN 55121
2261 Waters Dr
Mendota Heights, MN 55120**

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Jason StevensIRD
Camille TuckerSecretary
Tim Strong..... Treasurer
Bruce Gutzke.....Clerk Craft Director
Jim Pierce.....MNT Director
Adam Godes MVS Director
Shelley Fleming.....Trustee Chair
Sue RodriguezTrustee Clerk
Matt GarciaTrustee MNT
Ray KoserMVS Trustee**

**General Membership Meeting
Schedule**

| | |
|------------|------------|
| January 26 | 11:00 a.m. |
| February | 6:15 p.m. |
| March 23 | 6:15 p.m. |
| April 27 | 6:15 p.m. |
| May 25 | 11:00 a.m. |
| June 22 | 6:15 p.m. |

No meetings in July or August

| | |
|---------------|------------|
| Sept 28 | 6:15 p.m. |
| October 26 | 11:00 a.m. |
| November 23rd | 6:15 p.m. |

No meeting in December

**General Membership Meeting
Sept 28
6:15 p.m.**

**Attend in person, or via Zoom!
Call the union office and give us your email address to re-
ceive a zoom link.
Or attend in person at 2261 Waters Dr!**

**Retiree Meeting
September 15th
11:00**

**At the Union Office
2261 Waters Dr**

**Meetings are posted on the Local's website
WWW.stpaulapwu.org**