

Kevin Gallagher President's Report



State Convention

Delegates from across the state will be convening in Philadelphia, PA, from May 1st - 3rd for the 28th Biennial PPWU State Convention. There will also be a two day Tri-State Education Conference beginning on Thursday, April 30th which will lead into the convention.

We will be debating resolutions and contract proposal that, hopefully, will improve working conditions for the Locals and Members-at-Large (MALs) in Pennsylvania. We also work to perfect our Union by voting on amendments to the PPWU Constitution & Bylaws which governs how we operate and function in support of our members.

It will be a busy couple of days, but it's well worth it. Any time that we get to work on improving rights and working conditions for PPWU members it is time well spent. The Tri-State Conference will provide valuable training on ways to use the grievance process to fight for and defend PPWU members.

We recognize that the costs involved in attending the convention can put a strain on Local budgets, especially for smaller locals. To help defray costs and bring convention attendance within reach of more locals, the Executive Board has passed a motion to help PPWU member locals. If Locals submit itemized expenses, and receipts, the PPWU will remit, up to \$1,000, per local for attendance at the Convention / Tri-State Conference. Be sure to read Secretary/Treasurer Jim Snyder's article for more details.

March 2026 COLA Announced

Based on the January 2026 Consumer Pricing Index the March Cost-of-Living Adjustment (COLA) will be **\$250** per year (\$0.12 per hour). This COLA will be effective March 07, 2026 and will be seen in paychecks dated **March 27, 2026**.

The other postal unions, for whatever reason, negotiated a new COLA formula which results in newer employees receiving only a portion of the COLA. We call this "COLA Light" or "Diet COLA" and the numbers don't lie:

Postal Union	% of COLA received (avg.)
APWU <u>all</u> steps	100%
City Carriers	63.09%
Mailhandlers	60.00%
Rural Carriers	69.00% (approx)

Long Term Damage of Diet COLA

Because that "Diet COLA" follows you through your career, the long term effects are staggering. The September COLA for the NALC & NPMHU was \$0.38 per hour. Using their "Diet COLA" formula the result is:

Long Term Effects of "Diet COLA"

<u>Years of service</u>	<u>COLA Rate</u>	<u>Hourly Increase</u>	<u>Yearly increase</u>	<u>COLA not earned</u>
1 - 10	33%	\$ 0.13	\$ 270.40	\$ 519.60
10 - 20	66%	\$ 0.25	\$ 520.00	\$ 270.00
20+	100%	\$ 0.38	\$ 790.00	- - -

Those COLA shortfalls are just the first year! That reduced COLA will follow a new employee for the next 10 years. A new career carrier or mailhandler would "lose" \$4,676 over the next nine years, and that only includes this one COLA. Each subsequent result in further "lost" increases.

In their 10th year, they move up to and get two-thirds COLA. Only after working 20 years will they get full COLA. Sound unfair? Sure does to me! Calculated out over an entire career the losses become substantial. Not just in your biweekly pay, but it could impact your pension calculation as well. Worse yet, that is only based on one COLA. Postal employees get two COLAs per year. Imagine the impact of getting a reduced COLA twice a year, for twenty years! Compounding wage losses will add up to a sizeable amount!

The APWU refused to accept "Diet COLA". ALL career APWU members get full COLA which puts them in amuch better place than employees from other unions. The APWU is the only postal Union that ensures 100% full COLA for all career employees. The APWU's "full COLA" means no proration, no reduction, and no second class members. **Full COLA for all employees every time!**

Safety

District level management professes to be concerned about your well-being but the reality is that, in the eyes of the USPS, safety is simply a budget line item to be weighed against the cost of actually providing that safe work environment. I've seen post office dock plates, literally, demolished by Amazon drivers and it takes many months before remedial action is taken to fix the problem. In the meantime, employees are forced to work on and around these very unsafe dock plates on a daily basis.

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Check us out at ppwu.org



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Proud Members of the:



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Dir., Human Relations	Coleen Simon	570-961-2080
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Maintenance Craft	David Smith	215-671-7719
Motor Vehicle Craft	(Vacant)	267-726-5857
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Southwest Area	Tom Molanick	412-321-4700
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Central Area	Timothy Thompson	717-450-1191
	Zips 166, 168-172, 177-178	
Northeast Area	Chad Beer	610-882-3278
	Zips 180-188	
Southeast Area	Michael Crum	717-540-1191
	Zips 173-176, 179, 189-196	

President's Report

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Consolidation of offices also contributes to mounting safety concerns as carriers are being moved into post offices that are too small and unable to handle more employees. Cramming more people, more cases, more skids, hampers, and carts into already crowded facilities increases the risk of slip, trip, and fall injuries or Hazmat spills.

It is becoming more and more obvious that upper management doesn't care. All they seem interested in is saving money even if it's at the expense of worker safety. There are post offices with leaks, mold, no heat and other serious issues that take forever to be fixed. (*if they are fixed at all*) We have seen a sharp increase in the number of serious injuries and, sadly, the death of postal employees that could have been prevented. Employees *are* reporting safety hazards using PS Form 1767's, however, many are never returned, or acted upon by management. This forces the employee to *continue* to face daily safety issues.

In February, attended a district safety meeting hosted by the DE/PA2 District Manager. The meeting was supposed to be an opportunity to identify issues and concerns and to discuss the Union's concerns regarding safety. All of the issues mentioned above were raised and management stated they would attempt to address them. Additional meetings will be planned for the future to follow up on progress.

If you are dealing with:

- Office consolidations resulting in crowded, cramped, or unsafe conditions,

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- Broken, disabled, or obsolete equipment in your office,
- Electrical, sanitation, or snow removal issues,
- Failure, by management, to return, or act on, 1767s, or
- Other safety concerns,

Contact the PPWU. We will immediately notify management at the District Level. We will also be tracking these issues, as well as local management's action (*or inactions*), to raise at the next safety meeting.

I will admit that management *was* honest at one point during the meeting and admitted that, "yes," budget concerns do impact safety, but they pledged to seek higher level approval, when necessary, to ensure issues are corrected in a timely manner.

We have also begun communications with the PA-1

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PPWU MEMBER LOCALS

In addition to the 449 PPWU Members-At-Large (MALs) the following APWU Locals are PPWU affiliates

Altoona Local
Eastern Montgomery County Pa Area Local
Erie Area Local
Greensburg/Foothills Area Local
Hanover Local
Johnstown Area Local
Keystone Area Local
Lancaster Area Local

Lehigh Valley Area Local
Philadelphia BMC Local
Philadelphia BMC Retiree Chapter
Philadelphia PA Area Local
Pittsburgh Metro Area Local
Pittsburgh Metro Area Local Retiree Chapter
Saint Mary's Local

Scranton Local
Sharon Local
Tri-County Area Local
Wilkes Barre Area Local
Wilkes Barre PDC Local
Williamsport Local
York Area Local

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District regarding safety and the need to get timely resolution of problems. If you are not getting 1767's answered or forced into unsafe situations, contact us.

About that UPS Contract...

In 2023, United Parcel Service signed a new contract with the Teamsters Union. The large wage increases negotiated in that contract got a lot of attention among postal circles. When our 2024-2027 contract was announced many members asked, *"Why we didn't get bigger raises? The Teamsters got huge increases. Why didn't we?"*

Contract negotiations are always a give and take. To get gains in one area, you are often pressured to make concessions in another. Former APWU President Bill Burrus used to say that the USPS bargaining position was that the USPS was a pie and everybody gets a slice.

The APWU, NALC, NPMHU, NRLCA, NAPS, and UMPA all get a slice of the pie. The USPS will say to the APWU, *"Here is your slice of the pie. Divide it up any way you want, but the slice will not get bigger. If you want bigger raises, you have to pay more for health care or give up something else"*

One way, I believe, our contract is better than the UPS/

Teamsters deal involves COLAs. Teamsters working for UPS only get one COLA per year while career APWU members enjoy two COLAs per year. The 2021-2024 APWU contract gave us over \$5,000 in COLA increases. The 2025 COLAs added another \$1,206 to your paycheck compared to the Teamsters 2025 COLA which added zero dollars to their paychecks. That's right! The 2025 UPS/Teamsters COLA was a big fat zero.

Teamsters Facing Harsh Realities

Some APWU members feel slighted because we did not win bigger wage increases like what Teamsters got, but there are many Teamsters who would gladly trade places with APWU members. In 2025, UPS laid off more than 48,000 workers and another 40,000 will likely lose jobs this year. The reality is that every APWU member continues to receive a paycheck while 88,000 Teamsters will not. I don't mean to sound crass, but what good is a big raise when you lose your job? A 1.3% APWU wage increase is more than 30% of zero.

The APWU was able to negotiate a contract with moderate increases; two yearly COLAs; "no-layoff" protections; a 50-mile limit on excessing which has prevented/discouraged plant/office closures, and other job protections all of which ensure that we will continue to receive a steady paycheck.

What caused UPS layoffs?

There are several things that caused UPS to layoff more than 10% of its total workforce. First, Amazon is attempting to set up its own delivery network and has notified UPS that they will not be renewing contracts as they expire. UPS has also embarked on a restructuring strategy known as the *"Network of the Future."*

Under this plan, UPS will close 93 facilities, consolidate others, digitize logistics, and scale back delivery to focus on more profitable delivery segments. (*Sounds an awful like the USPS "Delivering for America" plan, doesn't it.*) Facing the loss of revenue and parcel volume, UPS has chosen to take the path of least resistance which is laying off workers.

Will We Be Affected?

The USPS contracts with Amazon to deliver "Last Mile" parcels will also be expiring soon. It is very possible that Amazon may not renew these contracts with the USPS. The loss of Amazon parcels will have an impact on the Postal Service but our we have negotiated protections into our contract to protect our members from mass layoffs like UPS.

No Layoff & Excessing

Article 6.A.3.a of the National Agreement provides that employees with six years of continuous service in the regular (*career*) workforce earn "protected status" and cannot be laid off. Additionally, career employees on the rolls as of September 20, 2024 with *less* than six years service also have no layoff protection.

Because we have no layoff protections, the USPS would have to consider other options. This could involve moving employees to other offices (*known as "excessing"*). Article 12 outlines under what circumstances management is permitted to excess (*reassign*) employees from one facility to another, what steps they must follow, and what limitations are in place. The APWU has also negotiated language to make excessing less painful, if it were to occur.

In 2011, the APWU and USPS agreed to a 50-mile limit for the involuntary reassignment of employees. Prior to 2011, there was no limit and employees were often permanently reassigned to offices as far as 500 miles away from their current office. Impacted employees were told, *"Take the reassignment, or quit. Your choice."* This 50-mile limit will keep relocated members in, or near, a metropolitan area which could allow them to keep their homes, family, and social lives intact.

The 50-mile limit on excessing can also be the reason that a facility stays open. Impacted employees can only be excessed into residual vacancies (*jobs that have been posted within a facility but received no bids*). If there are no residual vacancies in a facility, impacted employees cannot be excessed into that facility. Without "landing spots" for impacted employees, and no ability to layoff employees, management might have no choice but to keep that facility open. The 50-mile limit on excessing is one of the most important benefits negotiated by the APWU for the good of the members.

The Bottom Line...

Yes, the general wage increases in the APWU contract may, at first glance, seem meager compared to what the Teamsters got, but you have to look at the whole package. We got an increase and we still have our jobs. We also kept both COLAs, the no layoff protections, and the 50-mile limit all without making any concessions.

If we lose the Amazon parcels, or continue down the *"Delivering for America"* path, there's a good chance that we

Donna Welch Vice President's Report



Hello Members!

I would like to take an opportunity to re-introduce myself. My name is Donna Welch, and I have recently been appointed to my position as the Vice President of the Pennsylvania Postal Workers Union.

I've been a member of the PPWU Executive Board for many years. My former role was the

Human Relations Director. In that role, I handled the applications for the state PPWU scholarship. It was a role that I thoroughly enjoyed. Reading the scholarship essays gave me so much hope for our future as a union movement. Coleen Simon has taken over for me in that position, and I can say, with great confidence, that the scholarship program is in great hands.

My new role will be more general in manner. I will work hand in hand with our state President, Kevin Gallagher. I have known Kevin for many years, and I look forward to working more closely with him. Kevin has always been a strong union leader.

I'm looking forward to attending our state convention in a few months. Melanie Schultz and her team have been working tirelessly to prepare for this year's convention.

I've been a union member for as long as I have worked at the post office. It's a movement I truly believe in. I'd just like to encourage everyone to become active in this union. Given what is happening right now in our country unions have never been more important. All of your state officers are here to assist you if you have any questions.

Mike Crum Southeast Area Business Agent



A quick note from the Southeast PPWU region

There's been moderate activity in the region mostly due to harassment by management.

The first step in dealing with this issue is to immediately fill out a PS Form 1767. Despite what your postmaster, or supervisor, may tell you, the PS Form 1767 can be used to report harassment. This can seem difficult in a small office, but it is imperative for the grievance process. We must document every instance of harassment with a 1767. The Postal Service has a "zero tolerance" policy but we all know they don't always abide by it. The second step is to request to see a Union steward as soon as possible. The Union only has 14 days from the date of the incident to file a direct appeal to step 2 of the grievance process.

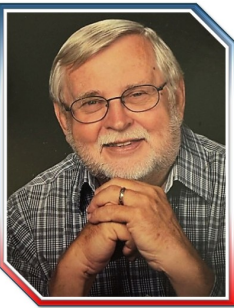
There are other options such as filing an EEO complaint against the supervisor/postmaster who is mistreating you. Keep in mind, to be successful in EEO just saying, "*I was harassed*," is often not enough. To initiate your case, you have to allege that you were harassed because of a specific reason, or "class". This could include: *race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex (including pregnancy, childbirth and related medical conditions, sexual orientation, gender identity, or transgender status), age, genetic information, uniformed (military) service, or in reprisal for an employee's complaint about or opposition to discrimination or participation in any process or proceeding designed to remedy discrimination, or marital status.*

The USPS is also on record as pledging that *consistent with the other provisions of this Agreement, there shall be no unlawful discrimination against individuals with mental or physical disabilities, as prohibited by the Rehabilitation Act.*

Management is notorious for attempting to intimidate their employees into working harder. To do more, and more, work with less time to do it. They often violate the above language in how they. If your Postmaster is the one mistreating employees, you can go over their head.

Remember, harassment thrives in silence. Once the proper channels are notified, the service has an obligation by law to address the issue. **Safety, dignity, and respect at work are not negotiable!**

Cliff Guffey 1949 - 2026



The PPWU is sad to report the departure of Former APWU President Clifford "Cliff" Guffey who passed away on Saturday, February 21, 2026 at the age of 76.

Guffey was elected APWU National President in 2010 and held the office until 2013. In addition, Cliff served as Assistant Clerk Director (1986-1999), Clerk Director (1999-2001) and Vice President (2001-2010).

Beginning his postal career as a letter carrier, Cliff transferred to the Clerk Craft in 1972. In 1979, he was elected President of the Oklahoma City Area Local, APWU.

Cliff was a Vietnam Veteran having served as a rifleman in the 2nd Battalion/3rd Division of the United States Marine Corps from 1968 to 1970. He fought tirelessly for veteran's rights.

The cornerstone of Guffey's vision was that workers should be able to provide for their families while being treated with dignity and respect.

The Pennsylvania Postal Workers Union offers our most sincere condolences to Cliff's beloved wife of 55 years Donna Guffey, two daughters Carrie and Cissie, four grandsons, his sister, and many special nephews and nieces.

PPWU State Convention

May 01 - 03, 2026

Philadelphia, PA

Hilton Hotel at Penn's Landing

Delegate Registration
\$ 175 per delegate
(\$200 after April 15th)

Room rate
\$235 per night

For more information, contact
Philadelphia BMC Local President Melanie Schultz
at phillybmc7048@aol.com

James Snyder Secretary / Treasurer's Report



Financial Report

I would like to start off by saying that the PPWU's annual financial report (LM-3) will be signed by President, Kevin Gallagher, and myself and will be filed with the Department of Labor before the March 31, 2026 deadline. All of the PPWU bills have been paid monthly, and your PPWU has no outstanding balances. I'd also like to let our 20 member locals and 400+ Members-at-Large (MAL) know about two exciting events coming up.

Tri-State Conference

APWU Eastern Region Coordinator Vince Tarducci will be hosting a Tri-State Education Conference in Philadelphia, PA. The two day event will begin on April 30th and run until 2pm on May 1st. The conference will be held at the Hilton Hotel at Penn's Landing and is open to APWU members from Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and Delaware.

There will be classes on many subjects including: legislative issues, safety, grievance handling, OWCP, and more. There will also be craft-specific breakouts for Clerks, Maintenance, and Motor Vehicle.

This is a very informative conference and a great learning experience full of important resources to take back to your locals. It is also a great opportunity to get questions answered as there will be several NBAs and National Officers present. The Tri-State conference leads into your PPWU state convention which will begin at 3:00pm on May 1st and conclude on Sunday May 3rd.

PPWU Convention

The ####th biennial convention of the Pennsylvania Postal Workers Union will be held May 1 - May 3 at the Hilton Hotel at Penn's Landing in Philadelphia, PA.

Member Locals throughout the state will elect/appointed delegates, as per their Local Constitutions, to represent their locals at the convention. Local delegates must be credentialed and certified by their Local President.

Members-at-Large (MALs) from offices that are not part of a local may attend the convention as delegates. MALs must complete the registration form and be certified by PPWU President Kevin Gallagher. As per the PPWU Constitution, no more than two MALs from an office can be delegates.

Delegates at the convention will hear reports from State and National Officers. Delegates will also debate and vote on: Contract resolutions to send to the National Convention as well as proposed amendments to the PPWU Constitution & Bylaws. Nominations for PPWU officers will take place and, if necessary, an election of officers will be held. PPWU Officers serve a two year term.

The convention is being hosted by the Philadelphia BMC Local 7048, and BMC President Melanie Schultz. I am Looking forward to seeing and talking to all of you at the Tri-State & Convention. If any MAL has a question, please contact me I will get back to you.

Financial Assistance to Attend Events

The PPWU Executive Board encourages members, and locals, to attend the conference and convention. We hope to get a very large turnout for this convention but, we recognize that money is tight these days and the costs to attend may put some of these events out of reach for MALs, or smaller locals. To that end, the PPWU Executive Board passed two motions, in January, to reimburse locals and MALs who attend these events.

Tri-State / PPWU Convention: The PPWU will reimburse locals, up to \$1,000, to help offset costs to attend. Locals would be reimbursed for travel, lodging, and mileage. Leave (*with or without pay*) to attend will not be reimbursed. Of course, itemized receipts would have to accompany any request for reimbursement.

PLUSS Steward Training: Locals, or MAL's, who attend the Postal Labor Union Summer School (PLUSS) in West Virginia will be reimbursed, up to \$2,000, to help defray travel, lodging and mileage costs. To be eligible for reimbursement, the attendee(s) must be an officer or steward.

PLUSS is an immersive one-week training event. There is a basic session for new, or less experienced, stewards and an advanced class for more knowledgeable stewards. PLUSS 2026 will take place from April 19-24, 2026 in Morgantown, WV.

PPWU Scholarship

The PPWU is now accepting applications for the 2026 John T. Boxler Scholarship. The winner will receive \$1,000 per year for, up to, four years of college. There have been some changes made to the scholarship eligibility so be sure to read the article by Human Relations Director Coleen Simon for details. The deadline to apply for the scholarship is May 01, 2026. You can log on to our website, ppwu.org, for more information. The website is a great resource for information and to keep up with current postal issues.

Wanted: New Members Reward Offered!!

The PPWU is continuing our organizing campaign to sign up new members. Any PPWU member who signs-up a non-member will receive a monetary award. Simply, have the non-member complete, and sign, PS Form 1187 and send it to me. I will process the 1187 and send you the award!

PS Form 1187 is available on the PPWU website. You can also get the form by contacting me, or any other PPWU officer, who will gladly get you a form.

If you are not sure if your co-worker is a Union member or has joined the PPWU, feel free to contact me and I will let you know. Remember we are only as strong as our weakest link and that we build a stronger Union by being Union members!

Charlie Kukulski Clerk Craft Director



I have not had to file any grievances at my level during past several months. All Clerk grievances have been handled, or resolved, by the Area Business Agents. I appreciate their efforts on behalf of Clerks throughout Pennsylvania and want to thank them for their diligent work.

I *have* received a emails involving minor questions about the contract, and one dealing with was a newly hired employee regarding uniforms.

I spoke with National Business Agent Kim Miller and we reviewed the log of active grievances for the PPWU. We have not completed the review but, in total, 56 cases in the open case log for the Clerk Craft. They include:

Region - Open Cases		Region - Open Cases	
Northeast	23	Southeast	05
Northwest	09	Southwest	03
Central	15	filed by PPWU Vice President	01

2024 - 2027 Retroactive Pay

One question I get a lot is, “*When am I getting my backpay?*” I get it; we’ve been waiting quite a while, but I can give you them most up to date information that I have.

According to the USPS updating the payroll systems, inputting the increased rates, and processing PS Form 50s for all APWU represented employees is a daunting task. We have been told that the retroactive payments are tentatively scheduled to be made on paychecks dated **April 10, 2026**.

The back pay will cover all hours worked from November 16, 2024 through August 22, 2025 and will include the Nov ‘24 general increase (1.3%), the March ‘25 COLA (19¢ per hr), and the additional 1% increase for PSEs who do not receive COLA. **I cannot tell you how much backpay you will receive. Since it is based on hours worked, the amount will be different for everyone.** We’ll all be surprised together.

Check Out Our Website

When was the last time you visited the PPWU website? You’ll find plenty of info along with a variety of forms including: Grievance witness statements, FMLA forms, PPWU scholarship information, pay info, officers contact info, and more. Don’t be afraid, it only takes a few minutes. Come visit us at PPWU.org.

David Smith Maintenance Craft Director



Safety First!

Over the last several months I have had the opportunity to attend safety meetings at both the local and the district level. It has become increasingly clear to me, that management just **does not care** about the safety of our members. Their singular concern seems to be moving the mail

without regard for anything else.

Many times employees report safety concerns only to be told that “management will “look into it.” In most cases nothing is done to address the employees concern. Even worse, is that they, sometimes, will try to bully employees into working unsafely.

Employees with a safety concern should fill out PS Form 1767 and give it to their supervisor. That supervisor is responsible for investigating the hazard and initiating immediate corrective action. The Supervisor should complete their portion of the 1767 and return a signed copy to you. This is not the end of the process.

The supervisors response, on the 1767, should then be reviewed by a higher level manager for concurrence, or correction. Your supervisor is also responsible for notifying you on the status of the reported hazard until it is resolved. If none of these things happen, please ask for a shop steward so we can file a grievance. If the safety concern is not corrected to your satisfaction, inform your shop steward.

Representation

When asking for a shop steward it very important that you follow proper procedures. If you feel that you would like to file a grievance, you should inform your supervisor that you wish to speak to a shop steward. The supervisor will contact the steward to ensure they are available and will then release you from your work area to meet with the steward. Do not just walk off your assignment or refuse to follow instructions. This puts you at risk for being issued discipline. It is managements responsibility to provide you a steward upon request.

When you believe your rights have been violated, notify your steward as **soon as possible!** We only have fourteen days to file the grievance starting on the date of the violation. The time you spend discussing your possible grievance with the steward should be on the clock. In most cases, due to the sheer size of their representational areas, your steward will consult with you over the phone.

If management wants to conduct a Pre-Disciplinary Interview (PDI) with you, you should always request a steward. It is your right to have representation but management does not have to get you a representative unless you exert your rights and ask for one. Sometimes, management will have already notified the steward, but that is not always the case. There have been occasions where management has told the employee it is their responsibility to contact the steward for a PDI. This is not true! Once you have made the request for representation, it is **management’s** job to contact the steward!

George Jendrey**Support Services Craft Director**

I keep hearing about how the younger generations do not get involved and other non-productive stereotypes. I cannot say that I have found this claim to be totally true or, in instances that it does occur, how to change the pattern. I do not see the point in identifying an issue without any attempt to change the status quo.

Merriam-Webster's defines a "Labor Union" as *"an organization of workers formed for the purpose of advancing its members' interests in respect to wages, benefits, and working conditions."*

After years of declining membership, Unions have an opportunity to garner support with a new generation of workers. A report from the Economic Policy Institute shows that U.S. front-line workers' attitudes toward labor Unions are softening, which could have a significant impact on worker advocacy among people under 30. If MIT is correct, then what am I missing? Because I don't see it happening in real life.

I have attended Union meetings that had to be cancelled because they did not achieve the required quorum. The local Constitution required that seven APWU members be present to have a quorum. Without seven members in attendance, there was no quorum which means no Union business could be conducted. The meetings were cancelled.

There also seems to be an increasing number of retirees in officer positions. Is this "graying" of sitting Union officers because they are entrenched? Or is it because younger people don't want to get involved?

Generational Divides Causing the Disconnect?

There are four distinct generations of men and women in the workforce today: Baby Boomers, Gen-X, Millennials, and Gen-Z. Each of these generation's historical events and values bleed into how they operate in the workplace, what they value in the workplace, and how they communicate in the workplace. The challenge is how do the various generations adapt to each others communication style, work/life goals, and how they prefer to be led. Simply saying, *"This is how we always did things..."* and trying to force others to conform to your generational norms doesn't work. We need to find ways to bridge the generational divides.

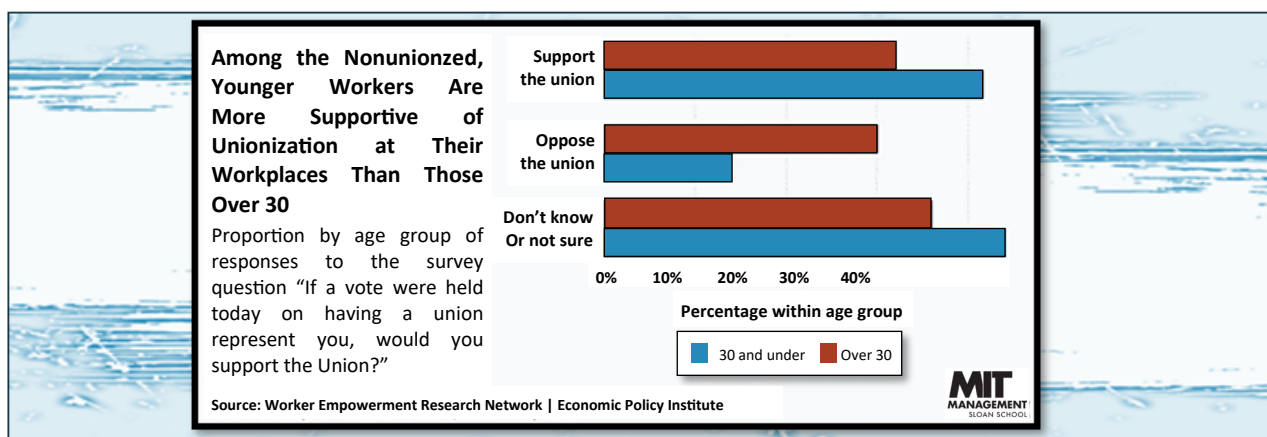
- **Baby Boomers (1946–1964):** Baby Boomers, more commonly known as Boomers, are known for their strong work ethic and dedication. They often view work as a lifelong commitment, typically being the first to arrive and the last to leave.
- **Generation X (1965–1980):** Gen X members live by a *"work smarter, not harder"* motto. They seek work and life balance, and see work as a means to enjoy life, but it's not the end goal.
- **Millennials (1981–1996):** Millennials now make up the largest part of the workforce. They want to be respected for who they are and mentored for who they want to become. Change is natural for them. They expect it and see it as vital to continuous process improvement.
- **Generation Z (1997–2012):** Authority earns their respect through emotional intelligence. Surprisingly, despite their digital habits, Gen Z prefers in-person conversations for meaningful communication, especially after the isolation of the COVID-19 pandemic.

These challenges are not limited to a just few industries or organizations. As noted in a recent *Harvard Business Review* article, only **7%** of U.S. workers feel strongly that their workplace's communication is accurate, timely and open. Generational diversity is one of the greatest assets of today's workplace but without communication alignment, it can become a liability. The future depends not only on what we say, but on our ability to understand how others hear it.

So back to the question at hand. Has anyone figured it out? After a great deal of research, I have yet to find an organization with a clear plan to motivate all its members. I think APWU Organization Director Anna Smith was right when she wrote, *"Hope has its place, but not when it comes to organizing our non-members."* True, however, this does not provide any insight into why attendance at in person meetings, or zoom meetings, is at all time lows.

Like most things these days it's somewhat easy to identify an issue, but solving the issue is another story. So maybe the answer is trial, error, and not giving up. Like Former APWU President Mark Dimondstein always said,

"The Struggle Continues!"



Timothy Thompson**Central Area Business Agent**

Greetings to all my sisters and brothers from the PPWU across the Commonwealth! If nothing else, 2025 was a year of change...

- Change in the Postal Service,
- Change in the Union, and
- Change in how we perform our jobs.

While change can be difficult, trying, and *(sometimes)* frightening, it can also be for the better. First, I want to congratulate Jonathan Smith, President of the New York Metro Local 10, in becoming the next National President of the American Postal Workers Union. My heartfelt thanks also go out to Mark Dimondstein, who fearlessly led this Union for 12 years.

Winning Back Stolen Work

One major change for the clerk craft is the reclamation of Time and Attendance Collection System (TACS) duties and TACS allied duties in all facilities, level 18 and above. On September 30, 2025, National Clerk Craft Director, Lamont Brooks, signed a settlement with the USPS that these duties solely belong to the clerk craft. TACS duties include:

- Data entry of all employees (clerks, custodians, carriers, and supervisors) timecard data into TACS,
- Entry of Enterprise Resource Management System (eRMS) data from PS Form 3971,
- Any data entries in the Overtime Administrator (OTAdmin) program is now clerk work. *These OTAdmin changes must be approved by a supervisor or postmaster before a clerk may enter them into the system.*

Supervisors, and Postmasters, will whine and say the APWU took their work *and their overtime (!)* away from them but, the reality is that we have reclaimed this work. In the past, timekeeping duties were Clerk work! There was actually a Clerk duty assignment called "Timekeeper". We did not take this work from management. **Management took it from us!** In September 2025, after a long, hard fought, battle we have taken back what is rightfully ours!

You may ask yourself, "*Tim, why is this a good thing?*" My answer is simple: More work is more work. More work can equate to more jobs. There is no need to sugarcoat it. The clerk craft has been losing jobs at an alarming rate. The USPS is attempting to eliminate Full-Time Regular positions. Part-Time Flexibles are having a harder time finding hours. We are the only craft in the APWU that is not expanding. I know the other PPWU Business Agents and I are fighting like hell to keep these jobs, but mechanization, automation, and technology changes have reduced the need for clerks.

As clerks, we need to capture as much work as possible. The APWU recognized that a clerk cannot do two jobs at once. If one clerk is entering the TACS, eRMS, and OTAdmin data, another clerk, one that would not be normally getting scheduled, will be needed to cover the duties of the clerk who is performing TACS work. More work leads to more hours and more job security for clerks.

TACS Settlement - More Than Meets The Eye

There are two "hidden gems" in the TACS settlement. First, the settlement provides that postmasters in a stand-alone Level 18 office (*one that has no attached RMPOs*) must allocate one of their 15 weekly hours of Bargaining Unit Work (BUW) as TACs work and they must document it on their 1260A report! This critical, and often overlooked, provision is a major victory for clerks in Level 18. It means the postmaster who has been doing 15 hours of distribution or window duties can, now, only do 14 hours!

The second overlooked part is that the settlement directly spells out that only window functions and **distribution tasks** can be applied for their 15 hours of BUW. This settlement, once and for, affirms that boxing tasks and custodial cleaning may not be performed by postmasters as part of their BUW hours. There's no room for interpretation. Any postmaster that is performing custodial duties or box mail work is violating the contract. Period!

Eagle Clean - A Change For The Better

Of course, I can't leave out my custodians. Change has found its way to the maintenance craft as well. In 2025, the Eagle Clean program was implemented which forced custodians to use those darn scanners. Many have expressed frustration with the scanners and the Eagle Clean program. I actually think it's a good thing and here's why...

For a very long time, postmasters have hidden behind falsified documents. They were able to hide, redistribute, and mis-report work hours with little to no repercussions. No more! This changes with the scanners. When a custodian completes a task, and enters it into the scanner, that time is applied toward the office's yearly Line H custodial work hours.

Every office completes a PS Form 4776 listing all custodial work in the office. This Form 4776 is used to determine the yearly custodial hours for the office known as "Line H". Any hours that spent on tasks not included on the PS Form 4776, (like lock changes) will not be credited toward the office's Line H total when the yearly review is done. My guess is that accurate tracking of custodial work, via the scanners, will show that some of our 'honest' postmasters have not been so honest.

Finally, keep yourselves safe! Please! It is my one request of you. If there a hazard exists, please notify someone and fill out a PS Form 1767: Report of Hazard, Unsafe Condition or Practice. It is important to document an unsafe work condition. It is for your safety and your co-worker's safety. The number of workplace accidents has decreased over the past few years, and that is a great thing, but please, stay ever vigilant.

35 Things All APWU Members Should Know*

1. You have the right to Union representation when, or if, you have a reasonable belief that Management's line of questioning can lead to disciplinary action. Once you request a steward you do not have to answer any questions until one is provided to you.
2. Management is not required to offer you Union representation. Employees must request a Union rep.
3. You have the right to refuse to sign anything, including management generated 3971s.
4. It is your right, and responsibility, to fill out your own 3971s requesting both scheduled and unscheduled leave. If you sign management's generated 3971 you are agreeing to whatever they have written it.
5. If you need to see a steward, always inform your supervisor. If they inquire as to why, let them know it is a contractual issue related to wages, hours, and working conditions. Example: Overtime issue, pay issue, etc...
6. You have the right to see your steward on the clock. You are not required to use your own time, breaks or lunches. Management may not deny your request for representation. Should there be a delay in representation, it is management's responsibility to inform you of the reason for the delay and when you will be able to meet with your representative.
7. If you are ever on vacation (annual leave) and you become ill, you may call your supervisor and ask that your leave be changed to Sick Leave.
8. When calling in for unscheduled leave, always call in before your scheduled start time. Management has been known to count time before your call off time as AWOL.
9. Always get a confirmation number when calling in (via 877-477-3273 or on liteblue). If you call the office make sure you get the name of who is recording your absence and have phone records to prove you called in.
10. Throughputs, letters and parcels thrown, are goals of management. Employees are required to give a "*fair day's work for a fair day's pay*" (Article 34) . Do not rush. Always work in a safe manner, going as quickly as you can without causing injury to yourself, putting co-workers in danger, damaging the mail, or damaging postal equipment or property.
11. Report all safety hazards including toxic work environment incidents on PS Form 1767.
12. When you work your non-scheduled day, you may not be guaranteed to work your normal hours, or to work in your bid job (LMOUs and sectional OT come into play)
13. When you work your holiday, you may not be guaranteed to work your normal hours, or to work in your bid job (LMOUs come into play)
14. If you have work restrictions it is advisable to always have a copy with you in case management asks you to do something outside of your restrictions.
15. Never work outside of your medical restrictions.
16. Report on the job injuries as soon as they happen, or as soon as you realize you have an injury,
17. Make sure to always be clocking into the correct operation. Keep track of your basic clock rings BT, OL, IL, ET.
18. Take your breaks and lunches on time. Never take your lunch after 6 hours, at the end of your shift, or not at all. Doing so could allow management to reduce and/or change bid jobs.
19. All APWU represented employees have the right to FMLA protections once they have worked 1 year and have 1250 work hours in the last 12 months worked.
20. It is harassment for management to question you about your FMLA. It is also harassment for management to constantly request documentation for using less than 4 days of leave if an employee is not on restricted sick leave. If you are deemed to bring in documentation for 3 days or less, request a Union steward.
21. Non-OTDL employees and PSEs cannot be required to work over 60 hours in a work week (excluding December)
22. Non-OTDL employees cannot be forced to work: over 10 hours on a normally scheduled day; over 8 hours on an N/S day; overtime on all 5 of their normally scheduled days; and cannot be forced to work 7 days in a service week.
23. PSEs cannot be forced to work over a 12-hour period in a day (including lunch). Note: PSEs are not required/guaranteed to be in a pay status during the whole 12-hour period if management chooses to work them.
24. PSEs are not guaranteed set scheduled or days off.
25. You are not required to sit by the phone or to answer phone calls or text messages from management.
26. It is an employees responsibility to have their phone number and address updated with the USPS.
27. PSEs and PTFs should check the schedule each day prior to leaving the building.
28. Except for the holiday schedule, FTRs are not required to check a schedule . FTRs have set hours and days off and it is management responsibility to inform them of any change or overtime
29. All employees are responsible to check the holiday schedule.
30. Employees and the Union have 14 days to file a grievance. Do not wait until day 14 to request a steward to file a grievance. Doing this will give your steward no time to fully investigate your issue. This could result in delay of adjudication of your grievance.
31. Always notify the Union when management, or other crafts, are observed doing APWU bargaining unit work.
32. All employees at every level have the right to a safe and amicable work environment. If you feel you are working in a toxic work environment inform management and your Union rep.
33. Always follow the last instruction that management gives you (unless it is an instruction what will put your safety at risk). Many times, you will have multiple supervisors instruct you to do different tasks during your workday. The best practice is to do what you were last instructed to do.
34. Management is not allowed to disallow an employee's time except in very limited circumstances. If you notice your time is being altered, deleted, or disallowed, without a proper explanation notify the Union.
35. USPS employees are prohibited from wearing political attire on postal property (Hatch Act of 1939)

*This article was originally printed in the Iowa Postal Workers Union newsletter (January/February edition) It has been adapted for clarity and due to space limitations.

Chad Beer Northeast Area Business Agent



Work Standards/Piece Rate

Article 34 of the National Agreement indicates that employees are expected to do a fair day's work for a fair day's pay. You should always work in a safe manner to the best of your ability.

Management may claim that their Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) requires you have

to process a certain amount of parcels or letters in an hour. This is a goal not a requirement. Management can set as many goals as they want, but they are not enforceable. They cannot set piece rate standards and the discipline employees who do not achieve those standards.

This is not about giving people a green light to slack off. There are legitimate reasons the APWU has never agreed to quantity based work standards. First of all is safety. Pushing employees to work harder and faster not only increases the chances of missorts, it also could lead to accident or injury. Also, there are so many variables in the types of mail we deal with it would be impossible to ensure that flat piece count standards are fair. Two clerks casing letters. One is casing thick envelopes (20 per tray). The other clerk is working postcards (1,000 per tray). Both clerks are told they must sort three trays per hour. With that standard, one clerk will work much harder than the other. Imagine too, the clerk casing the thick envelopes finishes their three trays in ten minutes. Since they've achieved the 3 trays per hour goal, can they sit there doing nothing for the rest of the hour? You think management would allow that?

You don't control what type of, or how much, mail your office gets. It is unfair to force standards upon you in light of so many variable you can't control. The USPS can establish goals, not required standards. We all have goals. Your goal might be to go home after a hard days work in the same healthy way you arrived at work that day. If this becomes an issue contact your PPWU State Representative.

Clerks Delivering Routes?

Due to chronic understaffing of offices, we have heard some reports of postmasters asking/telling clerks to deliver routes. Clerks should not be delivering routes, especially using their personal vehicles. Most of us do not have commercial auto insurance. If you get into an accident delivering a route in your personal vehicle, your insurance company will, most likely, not cover your damages, or the damages/injuries suffered by the other party. The USPS won't pay, so you will be responsible for that. It is also very likely that your insurance company will increase your rates (or drop you altogether). Do not deliver a route in your personal vehicle. According to our contract, the USPS cannot force you to use your personal vehicle to perform work.

"What if the postmaster gives me a LLV to use?" No. Still not good enough. I know what you're thinking, "Chad, you told me I must follow instructions and file grievances for violations after the fact. My postmaster told me to deliver a route and provided me a postal vehicle. I can't refuse an order." There are loopholes to that rule, especially when it

comes to safety. If you have not received formal USPS Driver Instructor Training it is unsafe for you to operate an LLV, Metris, or other postal vehicle and you should not do so.

"What if the postmaster drives the vehicle and just has me carry the route?" Again, this is a safety issue. Odds are you have not received any carrier safety training; Proper ways to carry a satchel to avoid shoulder/back injury; how to handle aggressive dogs; how to avoid slips, trips, or falls; what to do with irate customers, potential robbers, or hooligans. Without proper training, it would be unsafe to do this work. If the office is short carriers, let the postmaster deliver a route!

If your postmaster is trying to bully you into delivering a route, please, contact your PPWU steward immediately. You should also complete a PS-Form 1767 indicating that management was trying to force you to perform an unsafe act.

Hours in Your Home Office

PTFs should be scheduled for all available hours in their home office before a clerk (PTF or PSE) from another office is allowed to work in their office. Those are your hours! If there are PSEs in your office, you should get hours before they are scheduled. The only exceptions to this would be:

- Simultaneous scheduling - If you and the PSE, or loaned PTF, are working at the same time. You can't, obviously work two schedules at once. Or,
- If you will end the week with 40, or more, hours

This is not being mean, or greedy. As a PTF it is your right and you are entitled to those hours in your office and you should not feel guilty about asserting your rights.

If you are not receiving 40 hours a week and another clerk is being loaned into your office contact your steward. We can file a grievance for you to be paid for all hours the clerk loaned into the office worked.

Full-time clerks have a schedule for a reason. If management forces you to change your schedule let the Union know. A change of schedule is for personal convenience and must be signed by the Union prior to the change of schedule. The Union is not required to sign, and will not sign a change of schedule for an operational need of the office. There are PTFs and PSEs in offices as the flexible work force so a full-time clerks schedule should not be changed unless the fulltime employee wants the change of schedule for personal reasons.

Letters of Demand

If you receive a Letter of Demand contact the Union immediately! The Union only has 14 days to file a grievance disputing the demand. Do not accept responsibility, sign anything, or agree to payments without speaking to a steward.

If a grievance is filed, management cannot take any money until the grievance is resolved. If management does take any money, via involuntary payroll deduction, notify the Union. This is an additional violation. The deduction would appear as "P.O. Debt." on your paystub. If this happens, send the Union a copy of your paystub showing the deduction. We will argue that the money should be returned and the debt is expunged. To do that there must be a live grievance already in the system for the original Letter of Demand.

Continued on page 11...

Northeast Area Business Agent

. . . Continued from Page 10

In Search Of... Clerk Work Hours

I know we sound like a broken record, going on and on about stopping carriers from doing clerk work, but it is imperative that we protect, and secure, those hours. The time is coming, perhaps the time is here, when clerks will begin seeing their hours reduced, or being loaned out to find hours. In many cases there are hours available in your home office but they are being worked by carriers or supervisors.

A carrier's job is to deliver mail. Case their route and deliver the mail. That is it. All other duties are clerk work. Parcel distribution, spreading mail, marriage mail, box mail, working UBBM, throwbacks, accountables, TACS/eRMS/OT Admin, and everything else (that is not route casing or delivery) is clerk work. Supervisors should not be performing any work! The time to start fighting to stop these violations was yesterday. Every day that carriers do clerk work is one more day that they will feel entitled to that work and will try to permanently "steal" the work for their craft.

Do not feel pressured to share, or give up your work because "*the carriers need to get out*" or (worse, yet) because you like having help. You are only hurting yourself and your clerk brothers and sisters.

If carriers, or supervisors, are doing clerk work in your office, please (!), send your steward a statement so they can file a grievance. Without a statement we do not have the proof we need to prevail. The steward will need to know: Who was doing the work, what work they were doing, how long they did it for, and who witnessed it. Help me help you by reporting these violations.

Injured Carriers Taking Your Hours?

Protecting our work also includes injured carriers assigned to clerk work. There are many steps that the USPS must follow *before* assigning an injured carrier to perform clerk work. One step involves notifying PPWU President Kevin Gallagher *prior* to assigning the work. Postmasters almost always fail to provide this prior notification which makes the assignment improper.

Rural Carriers are **never** allowed to perform clerk work, even when injured. The APWU, mailhandler, and NALC agreed to cross-craft assignment of injured employees but the USPS must still follow all the required steps. The Rural Carrier Union (NRLCA) is not part of that agreement. It does not apply to them. The NRLCA contract does include language to follow when a rural carrier is injured. Nowhere in their contract does it say assigning injured rural carriers to another craft's work is an option.

If there is an injured carrier (NALC or NRLCA) doing clerk work in your office, notify the Union. We will investigate and file grievances where appropriate. What we need from you is: the name of the injured carrier(s) and what clerk work they are doing, and how many hours they are doing clerk work.

We must protect our work. Lack of staffing will continue if we allow the carriers and/or management to perform our work and not have a grievance to show we need the staffing. I understand the clerks like the help but management should hire more clerks to perform the work, not have carriers, or management, perform the work.

The Insidious Consequence of Crossing Crafts

The fallout of carriers and supervisors doing clerk work goes far beyond immediate impact on workhours and paychecks. There are long term effects caused by not reporting, or "hiding", all of the clerk work hours in an office.

Retail offices get budget reviews every year and the USPS usually cuts their budget every year. Postal HQ looks at window transactions, reported volumes, Function 4 reviews, and reported work hours to determine how many clerk hours an office is budgeted for the next year. Rarely is an office's work hour budget is increased. They are almost always decreased.

When carriers, or supervisors, perform clerk work, it is not reported. The hours are not transferred to the clerk craft. On paper, it appears the work got done using less work hours than were actually used. This results in the reported end-of-year clerk hours being much lower than what they really were. This often causes the next year's allotment of clerk hours to be reduced which only compounds the problem further.

For example: Take a retail office that is budgeted 4,000 clerk hours for 2026. That should be enough for two full-time regular positions (2,000 hrs each approx.), but the office has one FTR and two PTFs. Let's also assume that, in this office, there a 2 letter carriers who do an hour of clerk work every day. That's 642 hours of clerk work being done by carriers and **not** being reported as clerk work.

When the 2026 year end review takes place, USPS HQ says, "*Hey, postmaster! You were budgeted 4,000 clerk hours but you got all the work done using only 3,358 hours. I guess you don't need 4,000 clerk hours. We're cutting your budget for 2027 and you will only get 3,500 clerk hours.*"

The office still has the same amount of clerk work to do, but has 12.3% less hours to get it done but because the Clerk budget was cut, the PTF hours have been reduced. How will they get the work done? With a reduced 2027 budget the postmaster, not wanting to exceed the 3,500 clerk hours budget, uses even more carriers to do even more clerk work. Now we have four carriers doing an hour of clerk work per day. That's a total of 1,248 unreported hours of clerk work performed in 2027. The same 4,000 hours of clerk work were completed but with 1,248 hours worked by carriers. That means only 2,752 hours of clerk work were reported.

At the 2027 year end review, guess what happens? Yup! The USPS HQ says, "*Hey, postmaster! You were budgeted 3,500 clerk hours but you got the work done using only 2,752 hours. I guess you don't need 3,500 clerk hours. We're cutting your budget for 2027 and you will only get 3,000 clerk hours.*" And the cycle repeats...

The work is there. The hours are there, but the postmaster is fudging the data and the more he fudges, the deeper the hole gets. It's a downward spiral which leads to FTR positions being eliminated, PTF slots going unfilled, and no PSEs. The workload has not been reduced, but staffing has. This is part of the reason we have perpetual short-staffing in retail offices and if this cycle continues, the short-staffing will only get worse. You can help break the cycle by declining carrier "help", by reporting violations, and by submitting witness statements.

The job/hours you save may be your own!

Tom Molanik Southwest Area Business Agent



Vacation Planning & Incidental Leave *Attention Clerks in Small Offices (No LMOU)*

By now, the vacation schedule for choice vacation periods should have been posted and circulated throughout all offices, stations and branches within your APO cluster, including any RMPOs.

If it has not been made available, ask your Postmaster to provide a copy. If your request is denied, **immediately** ask to speak with a steward. It is the Postmaster's responsibility to make proper arrangements for you to contact your union representative. The vacation list should also be kept current and circulated throughout the year, so all clerks remain informed and are treated fairly under the same guidelines.

Remember - Clerks in small offices **have the right to request incidental leave!** You should be able to review who is already scheduled off before submitting your incidental leave request, to know of availability and avoid unjust denials.

For incidental annual leave requested during the course of a leave year, a **minimum** of one (1) APWU represented bargaining unit employee within the installation, by craft, or a minimum of 15% of all APWU bargaining unit. (*Excluding the month of December*). A PSE who is off on A/L in lieu of S/L does **not** count as a bargaining unit employee off on incidental annual leave in the above paragraph.

Any request for incidental annual leave **must** be acted upon and returned to the employee within 72 hours of receipt by management, or the leave will be considered approved.

Safety

The APWU is renewing its efforts in the fight for safe workplaces. The "Talk Is Cheap: Safety Matters" campaign and created Workplace Safety Quick Reference Checklists that you, and your local union, can use to evaluate conditions in your post office. There is a checklist for

- APWU Locals and leadership to system-check whether management is meeting its obligations under Article 14 of the National Agreement and existing USPS safety rules., and
- Individual workers that will help them know what to look for in terms of basic safety expectations (*emergency procedures, exits, equipment, hazardous materials, harassment that creates unsafe conditions, use of PS Forms 1767 and 4707, etc.*).

Both checklists are available on the PPWU website.

PS Form 1767

Also, on the PPWU website, on the "Forms" page, you can find **PS Form 1767, Report of Hazard, Unsafe Condition or Practice**. This form is designed to encourage employee participation in the Postal Service's safety and health program and can be used to report hazards, unsafe conditions, unsafe work practices, **and** hostile work environments. The form-fillable PDF makes corrections easy and keeps information legible, even for those with poor handwriting.

How to complete PS Form 1767

- **Fill out Section I (Employee's Action):** Clearly describe the hazard or condition, your work location, and your recommended corrective action. Print your name, sign, and date it.
- **Submit it to your immediate supervisor.** Per ELM Section 824.632, the supervisor must promptly — within your tour of duty — investigate the condition, initiate corrective action, or make recommendations, record those actions on the form, and return a signed copy to you as a receipt.

Be sure to insist on getting your copy back before the end of your shift. This is not optional for management — it is required by the ELM.

Additional Options when completing PS Form 1767

- **Request anonymity:** If you desire anonymity, you may file PS Form 1767 directly with your installation's safety personnel, who will forward it to your supervisor for action. Safety personnel **must not** disclose your identity.
- **Mail it to District Safety:** You can also send the form directly to your District Safety office.
- **Use the NCR form when possible:** The APWU recommends using the four-copy NCR form provided by the Postal Service in your workplace so you can track what abatement actions were completed — or ignored.

If management is giving you the runaround when you raise unsafe conditions in your office, contact your business agent for assistance. No employee is required to work in a decrepit, run-down, or unsafe building, and you have the right to insist that hazards be corrected. Every installation with fewer than 100 work years must receive an annual safety and health inspection by the Facility Safety Coordinator (FSC), who is often the Postmaster, in accordance with ELM Chapter 8 and Article 14. FSCs are required to maintain a level of safety expertise through formal safety training, including at least eight hours of safety training annually.

Many small landlord-owned offices lack trained or committed management to address unsafe conditions. Some Postmasters are unfamiliar with reporting hazards or using RADAR and the Safety Toolkit or SHMT to manage hazard abatement. When these obligations are not met, employees should document conditions, submit PS Form 1767 when appropriate, and work with the Union to ensure that management complies with its safety responsibilities under the ELM and the collective bargaining agreement.



Andy Kubat Publicity & Legislation Director



SCOTUS Strikes Down Tariffs

On Friday, February 20, 2026, The United States Supreme Court struck down President Trump's tariffs after finding that it is unconstitutional for a president to unilaterally set and change tariffs because taxation power clearly belongs to Congress. In a 6-3 majority ruling Justices Sotomayor, Kagan, Gorsuch, Brown, and Coney-Barrett voted to invalidate the tariffs while Roberts, Kavanaugh, and Thomas dissented.

In response, President Trump lashed out at the Supreme Court and criticized its ruling. Describing the decision as *"a disgrace to our nation"* President Trump called the majority justices as *"very unpatriotic and disloyal to the Constitution."* President Trump also announced that, not only, would the existing tariffs remain in place, but he was imposing an additional 15% Global Tariff on all countries. This announcement has been met with universal condemnation as experts feel this will only raise consumer prices further and put additional strain on already tenuous international relations.

Tariffs Are Hurting Americans

There has been a great deal of debate over the burden and efficacy of the tariffs unilaterally imposed by President Trump. President Trump says foreign countries like China, pay the tariff but that is simply not true. Tariff fees are paid by the importer and opposition opinion says the tariff is ultimately paid by the consumer. If folks set aside their partisan leanings and look at this objectively they would have to agree that:

- Foreign governments do **not** pay tariffs,
- The importer **pays the tariff** and any associated fees.
- Unwilling lose profits, the importer **raises prices** on their products to offset the tariff costs. This is known as a *"tariff pass-through"*
- The consumer is forced to **pay higher prices**, via tariff pass-through, for products which used to be cheaper.

So, while the consumer doesn't, technically, pay the actual tariff fee, they **reimburse** the importer via increased prices. That is not just my opinion. It is the conclusion reached by many including Forbes, Fortune, Kiplinger, Time magazines; Morningstar, Schwab, Vanguard, Merrill Lynch, and Liberty Street investment groups; and countless scholars, economists, and financial advisors. Even the uber-conservative Heritage Foundation published an article entitled *"Do No Harm: Tariffs and Quotas Hurt the Homeland"*. In their article, the Heritage Foundation concluded that:

- **Tariffs are taxes on Americans.**
- Imports are integral to the competitiveness of domestic producers—and **increasing their prices or limiting imports hurts Americans.**
- **Both tariffs and quotas decrease freedom, disrupt supply chains, and artificially change prices.**

When the Administration gloats about how much "tariff revenue" they took in, realize, **YOU** and **I** paid that money! Not China, India, Canada, Mexico or any other foreign country. The average American family paid \$1,745 last year in tariff pass-throughs.

2026 Midterm Elections

The midterm elections are upon us and there are ongoing efforts to discourage voting in the midterm elections. President Trump has called for passage of the SAVE act which many say will make it more difficult for some Americans to register and vote.

The SAVE Act was sold as a way to make it illegal for non-citizens to vote in US elections. Two problems with that explanation. First, it is *already* illegal for non-citizens to vote. Existing federal and state laws exist preventing it. "Election Fraud" by non-citizen voting is, practically, non-existent. The Heritage Foundation and Brennan Center found only 30-77 instances of non-citizens voting between 1999 and 2023. This accounts for about 0.0001% of all votes cast during that time.

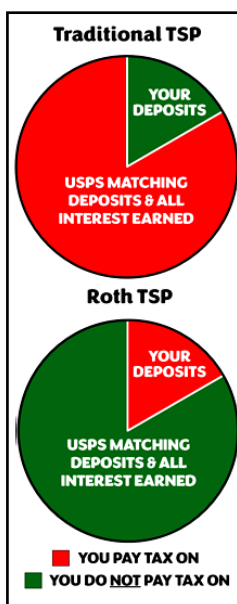
It is both a right, and a privilege, to vote in the elections. We must all do our duty and vote whether it is in person, or by mail. You have a voice! Do not be silenced!

	Primary	Mid-Term
Last day to register	May 04	Oct 19
Deadline to request mail-in ballot	May 12	Oct 27
Election Day	May 19	Nov 03

TSP Roth Conversion

Effective Jan 28, 2026, the Thrift Saving Plan made it possible for participants to move money from traditional TSP accounts into Roth TSP accounts.

With a Traditional TSP account, you pay no tax on deposits but all withdrawals *are* taxed as income. With a Roth TSP account you pay tax on deposits but withdrawals are not taxed. The graph (*left*) shows how your account will be taxed can lessen your tax burden overall.



You can convert your TSP deposits and any interest those deposits have earned. USPS matching deposits, or interest earned by the matching, can be converted only if those deposits are "vested" meaning you have worked for the USPS for at least three years.

There is no limit on how much you can convert however, you must leave at least \$500 in your Traditional account. Also important to remember that any money converted from Traditional to Roth will be considered "taxable income" and a large conversion could raise increase your overall tax bill that year. You must pay the income tax using personal funds from another source, such as a savings account. You cannot pay the "conversion taxes" using converted money.

There is much more to know about the Roth Conversion program at tsp.gov including a Roth In-plan

Conversions booklet and a calculator which can help you estimate how much you might have to pay.

Disclaimer: I am not a financial advisor. I have not received any training, education, or certification to act in such a capacity. Do not make any investing decisions based upon what I say. Do your homework. Do your own research. Read the information on the TSP website and talk with a financial advisor before making your own decisions.

UNION STRONG – ALL DAY LONG!



Sign-up a new member and get \$\$.
See page 5 for more!

Coleen Simon

Human Relations Director



Dear PPWU brothers and sisters,

I hope everyone had a wonderful holiday season. Warmer weather is just around the corner; and for many it's time to start planning for college. With that in mind, I wanted to share some exciting changes that have been made to the PPWU Scholarship program.

The PPWU Scholarship provides students with \$1,000 per year for, up to, four years. Over the past couple of years, the number of scholarship applications we received has dwindled. In fact, there were several years that we received no applications at all! At the January 2026 Executive Board meeting, PPWU Officers voted to make several key changes to the John T. Boxler Scholarship program that I would like everyone to be aware of:

Summary of Scholarship Program Changes

- We have made a permanent change to Rule #1, allowing member's **grandchildren** to apply for the scholarship. Done as a one-time rule change in 2024, it is now a permanent change. A student can apply for the scholarship if their parent, **grandparent**, is a member-in-good standing of the PPWU.
- Rule #3 has been updated to include students who are **currently** enrolled in an accredited college.
- Applications must now be sent via **PRIORITY MAIL** to:
Coleen Simon, Human Relations Director
Po Box 3331
Scranton, PA 18505

The submission period is now open and we are seeking applicants. Please, help spread the word to those members that have a child, or grandchild, that will be, or is already, attending college and would like to take advantage of the Scholarship.

Be sure to visit our "scholarships" page on the PPWU website at www.ppwu.org to learn about other scholarships that may be available to PPWU members.

The application deadline for the John T. Boxler Scholarship is

May 1, 2026

Application forms, including detailed rules and submission requirements, are available on the PPWU website