

Postal Newsletter

Press

AMERICAN POSTAL WORKERS UNION

NATIONAL POSTAL PRESS ASSOCIATION

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Tackling the challenge of effective messaging

By Tony Carobine, President

An office worker decided to take his young daughter to work with him one day. The little girl was especially interested in going because she had heard her father talk about the people at the office for years.

However, after they arrived and she was introduced to the office crew, she didn't seem particularly impressed or interested. Letting her play video games on an office computer, draw on the whiteboards, or go out to lunch with the gang had little affect either. On the way home, the father asked the girl why she was so disappointed. She said, "I never got to see all the clowns you said you worked with."

The young girl's literal interpretation of what her father said about his co-workers causes one to think about the power of words and the formidable task we have to communicate clearly and effectively with the members we serve.

Pulling words together and crafting them into an effective message is certainly a challenge, but albeit an important one. Often times the biggest hindrance to meeting our writing objectives is actually sitting down and beginning the process. Following are some suggestions to help you with your writing.

Procrastination

This condition affects many of us when

it comes to pursuing our writing tasks. In fact, some people spend more time and energy making excuses in their own minds about not writing than it would actually take to complete the assignment.

On occasion we've all invented excuses in our minds for delaying writing tasks.

"There are times, however, when the words just won't come no matter how hard we try."

"It's too late in the day to start, I'll wait until tomorrow." "It's Friday, the weekend is almost here. I'll start writing the first chance I get next week." "I feel a little tired. It would be better to start after a good night's sleep." "Just as soon as I read my mail, I'll start writing." Etc., etc., etc.

After all the excuses, after all the delay tactics, and after all the agonizing – one thing is clear, the writing assignment still needs to be completed. Ignoring those "inner voices" and proceeding directly to the work at hand is the best way to overcome procrastination.

As editor, it's best to complete your writing before reviewing material submitted by others, or working on the layout of the paper. After expending the energy necessary to work on other parts of the paper,

it's very difficult for an editor to be in the proper frame of mind to write. For peace of mind and sense of accomplishment, write first and perform other editorial duties later.

The position of editor demands more than "editing" – reviewing material submitted by others and making corrections

to spelling, grammar, etc. It should also include providing information in various ways; such as: news stories, editorials, feature stories, interviews, etc. The written word is powerful and if used properly can be instrumental in accomplishing positive results for the organization it serves.

Getting Started

Once you've decided to start writing, the next step is to sit yourself down in front of the writing tools of choice (keyboard or pen and paper) and get to work. There are various techniques writers employ to get started. It's best to experiment and find out which method is best for you.

First, you should avoid attempting to write the perfect piece on the first try. The result of this technique is usually complete frustration and a waste of valuable time. I've found that the easiest and most productive method is to just write as thoughts for the article come to mind. (Others find that drafting an outline listing key points before actually beginning to write are helpful. A combination of both methods also works well.)

Don't worry about complete sentences, grammar, whether it makes sense or if it's

Please see, Effective messaging, page 2

Attend the 2015 Biennial PPA Conference!
August 20-22, Madison, Wisconsin

(Pre-conference session August 19)

See pages 4-5 for more information
and on the PPA website: www.apwupostalpress.org

APWU National Postal Press Association

PO Box 888
Iron Mountain MI 49801
Phone/Fax: 906-774-9599

E-mail: ppa@apwupostalpress.org
Website: www.apwupostalpress.org

Advisory Council

Tony Carobine
President
PO Box 888
Iron Mountain MI 49801

Edward Brennan
Secretary-Treasurer
PO Box 451
St. Charles MO 63302

Jenny Gust
Editor-at-Large
30630 Drouillard Road #76
Walbridge OH 43465

Lance Coles
Editor-at-Large
PO Box 539
Des Moines IA 50302

Cathy Hanson
Editor-at-Large
1234 4th Street NE
Minneapolis MN 55413

Frank Antinone
Editor-at-Large
PO Box 443
Youngstown OH 44501

Hank Greenberg
Honorary Member
2800 Black Oak Drive
Rocklin CA 95765

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Effective messaging

Continued from page 1

in the proper order. The objective on the first draft is to get all your thoughts and ideas written. Oh, what an accomplishment this is! After letting it sit a while (preferably 24 hours), go back and rewrite the article. You'll be surprised at the fresh ideas that come to mind and how easily everything falls into place.

There are times, however, when the words just won't come no matter how hard



we try. There are a few things that can be attempted to overcome this problem, known as "writer's block."

One is to just keep on writing even if it's "Help I'm stuck and I don't know what to write next." This may eventually "jump-start" your creative juices and help you get going again. Some find that reviewing material similar to the subject they are writing about is helpful. Others find that taking a walk helps.

You should always have a pen and paper or pocket tape recorder with you so that ideas for an article can be recorded as they come to mind. Otherwise, it's likely they will be lost. Case in point. I can recall several times over the years waking up in the middle of the night (or day when working Tour One) and started thinking about an article I was working on. Like magic, all of these wonderful ideas would flow through my head at great speed. And oh, how many times I was mad at myself that I couldn't

remember any of them the next day. Like a dream, vividly clear one minute and gone the next. Eventually, I got into the habit of keeping a pad and paper or recorder nearby so that I could capture these ideas.

Finding a place to write that is free from distractions and temptations to pursue other tasks is helpful. By getting away from distractions that will interrupt your thoughts, you are free to totally concentrate on your work at hand – no excuses. It's also helpful to set goals and then reward yourself. When writing you may want to reward yourself by taking a break after reaching a certain point. This also gives your brain a rest and allows you to refocus your thoughts and start over refreshed.

Ever vigilant

We come in contact with subject matter for our publications on a regular basis. So it helps to always be on the lookout as writing is an ongoing endeavor. When you see something, immediately collect the details and develop them into an article for the paper. Employing this technique is especially helpful to the editor because substantial portions of the paper can already be completed when the paper's deadline arrives. This will allow the editor to concentrate on other work that needs to be done on the paper and make his or her life less stressful. Being on the lookout for subject matter can also be helpful to other officers. They may not know what to write about. With the editor keeping a watchful eye, he or she may be able to help these individuals select the subject matter for their articles.

Impact

Words and how they are put together to form messages have an impact on every one that reads them. How your readers perceive the union has a lot to do with your efforts to communicate – through the written word.

'If you should ask me'

Here's a very fine way to get more readers inside your publication. Ask a question of randomly selected members, get an answer, snap their photograph and put together your column. In each

issue ask a pointed question on a topic of interest, and then compile short answers along with the member's photo in a column entitled "If you should ask me."

The information highway

By Hank Greenberg, Honorary Member
PPA Advisory Council

The average person is exposed to an incredible amount of information every day. TV, radio, magazines, newspapers, the Internet – bringing news, entertainment, advertising – more information than the brain can absorb, distill and file away for future needs. The union member is on the receiving end of all this, and more.

Union members have management newsletters and management bulletins, union newsletters and union bulletins; an endless number of useful and not-so-useful bits of information the mind must filter through.

With all of this to contend with, the union newspaper is **extremely important** to each member – and their families. Look at all the competition out there. What can the editor do to make the union newspaper stand out in a society crowded with so much information? It's not an easy question to answer.

Should you “scare” people into reading your paper? Should you predict that awful things will happen to postal workers? Should you try to catch the member's attention with humor, graphics and eye-catching

leads to attract the reader's interest? Why not a combination of many things? Remember, your union newspaper has information the member cannot obtain anywhere else but it has no value if it isn't being read.

While we may not agree on the specific road to take, perhaps we can agree that the best way to reach the union member is by traveling several roads at the same time. For example, why does one subscribe to a commercial magazine? Because that magazine offers information the subscriber believes cannot be obtained from another source. At the very least, it is because the subscriber believes the information sought is covered more in-depth and in a more understandable way than can be obtained through other publications. Whether or not this is true, the person believes it's true – and that's what matters.

What happens when you apply this observation to your union newspaper? In terms of your postal employment a comparison can be made. For example, in the private sector a commercial magazine in the United States can succeed by serving a narrow audience because the total audience is close to three hundred million people. In

the postal service you can't serve a “narrow” audience because the total audience is not only smaller, all of the vehicles of communication deal with the same subject,

“The local union newspaper is written by your union brothers and sisters for your union brothers and sisters. It can be read anytime, anywhere, by you and everyone in your family.”

your employment. So what can you do?

Well for one, you can make every effort to provide your readers with an ‘attractive’ newspaper – if it attracts the eye it attracts the mind. Another suggestion would be to take the very same information that may be available elsewhere and explain it in a more understandable way – and tell them how that information will affect them and their families. This is what they need to know.

Even cartoons can be an effective reader-attracting device. If a member picks up your newspaper solely because of a cartoon, you have achieved your primary goal: to get the member to pick up your paper and look at it. Attention-getting headlines will encourage the member to go a step further and read at least some of the articles.

And then there's the Internet; some people believe the Internet can cure anything, including warts. In reality, the Internet is a wonderful resource; an instrument of information as far away as your fingertips. It is also a useful communications tool. The Internet can also be capable of feeding you a diet of fiction disguised as fact. The caution flag should go up if you believe it can replace the local union newspaper.

Think about it. The local union newspaper is written by your union brothers and sisters for your union brothers and sisters. It can be read anytime, anywhere, by you and everyone in your family. It is one of the most economical ways to keep your members informed. **It has credibility.** The people who bring you the union newspaper are the same people you work with every day. What affects you in the postal service affects them.

In case you haven't noticed, editors are incredibly dedicated people.

Take advantage of us – please!

By Jenny Gust, Editor-at-Large

If you are reading this it means you probably are a member of the APWU National Postal Press Association. Having said that, are you taking advantage of all the PPA offers?

The newsletter you are reading holds lots of information to assist you in publishing a great paper for your local or state. There are articles on writing, headlines, effective communication tools, everything to help make your paper reader-friendly. We want your members to read your publication and we want to make it easy for you to put the publication together. But there is so much more that you can get for the cost of your dues.

Every two years the PPA has a conference that is known far and wide. It appeals to editors because that is exactly what it deals with – editing – not grievances and the contract. The classes are many and varied and the cost is kept as low as possible.

Have you checked out the PPA website lately? This is a real no brainer – there is so much information on this site! Before each publication date you should be checking it out for all that it provides. Graphics, cartoons, labor history calendar, information on union elections, filler material. The list goes on and on. You will never have a blank spot in your paper again as long as you check this out.

On occasion editors may run into a problem with materials submitted for the paper or with the paper's administration. If you encounter a problem and need assistance – call the PPA. We can't solve every problem but hopefully we can offer some solutions to keep things on an even keel. We need to remember we should fight management not each other. Since 1964 the APWU National Postal Press Association has been there to educate and assist our members become the best communicators possible. That's 51 years of service – take advantage of us – please!

Make your plans now to attend

On August 20-22, the 2015 Biennial Conference of the APWU National Postal Press Association will be held in Madison, Wisconsin. Preceding the conference will be a full day of workshops on Wednesday, August 19. Established in 1967, this event is part of the PPA's mission; helping communicators fulfill their responsibilities of informing and energizing the membership of our great union.

This year's conference is expanded to include eleven workshops, all designed to help improve communication, both internally and externally and arm participants with the skills needed for confronting the many issues affecting the livelihood of APWU members and their families.

In addition to the workshops, also featured will be general sessions including: speakers Ruth Conniff, editor-in-chief of *The Progressive Magazine*; John Nichols, reporter, political writer and commentator; press conference with APWU President Mark Dimondstein; legislative update with APWU Legislative & Political Director John Marcotte; Friday Night at the Movies, featuring the film *Inequality for All*; opening reception/buffet dinner and awards banquet.

Friday Night at the Movies

Networking is an important part of every conference. For conference attendees who like to continue stimulating discussion into the evening hours this event is for you. At this session you will be invited to pull up a chair, grab a snack and watch the film *Inequality For All*, a documentary examining the massive consolidation of wealth by a precious few and how it threatens the viability of the American workforce and the foundation of democracy itself. The film will be followed by a discussion about the movie's subject matter.

Since the early days of the labor movement, labor songs have been an important component during rallies, strikes, demonstrations and parades. Performing at the opening reception of the conference will be the Solidarity Sing-A-Long Singers. This group of activists is an inspiration! Since the Wisconsin Uprising of 2011, they have continued to demonstrate at the capitol in Madison from noon to 1:00 p.m. each week day.

Also, special guest at the awards banquet will be singer, labor activist and all-around hell raiser Anne Feeney.

The conference will be held at The Madison Concourse Hotel in Madison, Wisconsin. A guestroom rate of \$134.00 per day single or double occupancy will be in effect throughout the conference, in addition to three days before and three days after the actual meeting dates. Current tax rate is 14.5%. For more information about The Madison Concourse Hotel or to make room reservations, please visit the PPA website, www.apwupostalpress.org or call hotel reservations at 1-800-356-8293.

This event has it all...from education, to inspiration to solidarity and will be a valuable learning experience not just for editors, but for all APWU officers and activists!

Pre-conference workshops Wednesday, August 19

(A) Communicating to Win: Case Studies of Effective Communication in Recent Struggles and Victories

How are workers still winning against the odds, sometimes in the face of daunting challenges? This workshop will introduce selected case studies of recent struggles in which unions used highly effective internal and external communication strategies to help achieve bargaining goals or key policy changes. We will analyze real examples from contract and issue campaigns and ask what lessons we can learn and apply to our own contexts.

(B) APWU – An Historical Perspective; Coping with Stress

How did the American Postal Workers Union come into existence? What was

achieved because of the postal strike of 1970? *APWU – a Historical Perspective* will address these questions and many more interesting events involving the history of the American Postal Workers Union and its predecessor unions. This session will conclude with a presentation on the subject of stress and how to successfully deal with it.

(C) Legal Issues, Your Responsibilities

Can you be sued if you don't name an individual? Is it illegal to reprint material from a commercial source without permission? Is it a violation of election law to advocate the election of candidates for union office? What is the value of establishing an Editorial Policy? *Legal Issues, Your Responsibilities* will address these questions and others with a presentation on the subjects of libel, copyright, union elections, and editorial policies.

Conference workshops Thursday, August 20 – Saturday, August 22

(D) Influencing Public Support: Developing a Strategy for Getting your Message Out (Thursday only)

This interactive session will examine the importance of establishing a working relationship with the mainstream media and techniques for generating public support as a means to protect and enhance a vibrant public postal service. Presented will be communication techniques for developing and executing a plan that will boost your media relations efforts and influence public support.

(E) Newsletter Production: Giving Your Paper a Makeover

The emphasis of this workshop will be to examine and evaluate overall design of your publication from nameplate to mailing block and everything in between. This unique design seminar will stimulate your creative skills and help you reinvent a publication that your members notice. Through

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and the August PPA Conference

lication review you'll be able to see discuss successful new designs for various types of publications. **(Note: Participants should bring a copy of their publication to this workshop.)**

Communications for Member Involvement and Union Building

In today's multi-media environment, editors have the opportunity to make publications the centerpiece of a strategic communications system that builds stronger union. This highly interactive workshop will walk through the steps of assessing your local's communications needs and capacity, analyzing what messages and how best motivate members, considering pros and cons of print, electronic, and face-to-face formats, developing a distribution/communications network that reaches all members, and integrating the newsletter into overall communications plan.

Illustrate Like a Pro: A Cartooning Workshop

In addition to the written word, cartoons are an important communications tool and another way to deliver a message. Join cartoonist Mike Konopacki in this interactive, hands-on session and explore the deep dark secrets of political cartooning. You will learn to transform ideas relevant to your work and learn how to use readily available material to transform those ideas into cartoons and collages that demand attention. Learn to think like a cartoonist without having to be like one.

Using Electronic Communication to Post Your Message

Should I tweet or not to tweet? That is the question – indeed one of many questions – that union communicators face today. This fast-paced workshop will examine when and how electronic communication can reach the reach of your print publication and reinforce important messages, as well as how to recognize situations where electronic communication might not be the best choice. Then we'll delve into "dos and don'ts" of member communication via email, mass text, and social media plat-

forms, and tips for establishing or improving your local union's on-line presence.

(I) Learning from the Past to Conquer the Challenges of Today

This workshop will explore the relevance of labor history to today's labor movement. By examining how our predecessors built and maintained effective unions, we can learn what strategies and tactics might be currently useful. As the labor movement increasingly becomes comprised of a new generation of members, it's important to pass on the lessons that the founders of our unions learned so well themselves. This session will help communicators educate their readers about the purpose of unions, inspire them to increase their involvement and encourage them to face up to the issues of today.

(J) News, Headline, and Feature Writing: Reaching Members with Messages that Matter

Give your readers news they can use, features about people they know and stories on issues they care about. This valuable hands-on workshop will examine why we put local news and features in our publications and how they build credibility, readership, and member engagement. Through a host of exercises you will learn how to write timely, relevant news stories, eye-catching headlines, and high-interest features that help members connect their experiences to union priorities.

(K) Photojournalism, Creating Irresistible Photos

Even more compelling than the adage, "People like to read about people, themselves first and others second" is the fact that people like to look at people and other visual images. The focus of this gathering will be the benefits of including the membership and activities of the union in your publication and website through the art of photojournalism. A portion of this session will include a "field trip" whereby participants will take photos for a classroom critique. Also discussed will be the rules of editing photographs with computer programs.

Registration Form 2015 PPA Conference

Name: _____

Title: _____

Publication: _____

Local or State organization: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

State: _____ Zip: _____

Registration Fee: (PPA Members): \$160.00

After July 20: \$200.00

Non-PPA Members: \$225.00

The registration fee includes workshops, dinner, refreshment breaks, and Awards Banquet. (Note: The registration fee is all-inclusive and must be paid in full prior to the close of registration.)

Pre-conference Session Wednesday, August 19

Please select two of the three half-day workshops (A-C). Walk-ins are not permitted.

____ (A) ____ (B) ____ (C)

Conference Workshops Thursday, August 20 – Saturday, August 22

You must register for these workshops in advance by selecting four of the workshops and your alternative choices by using the letter next to the workshop description (D-K). Assignments will be made on a first-registered-first-served basis. Class size is limited. Walk-ins are not permitted.

____ First Choice ____ Second Choice ____ Third Choice

____ Fourth Choice ____ Alternative Choice 1

____ Alternative Choice 2

Please make your check payable to **APWU National Postal Press Association** and mail it along with this registration form to:

APWU National Postal Press Association
PO Box 888
Iron Mountain MI 49801

Education of editors should be a top priority

By Edward J. Brennan
Secretary-Treasurer

In August, the American Postal Workers Union National Postal Press Association will hold its biennial conference in Madison, Wisconsin. This event will bring together many APWU communicators from around the country who have varying levels of experience with publishing union newsletters; from the seasoned editor to the new editor. However, some of our editors will remain at home for one reason or another and our entire union could suffer great harm because of it.

Our editors are a major link in the educational chain of our union. They are the lifeline between the union leadership and the rank and file members. They are the guardians of the written word. They are the protectors of good journalism and fair and honest reporting. They are the voice of local and state organizations. They are the voice of the members whom they represent. They are the protectors of proper grammar, freedom of the press and the legalities of journalism which relate to postal union publications. They should be the trained editors which our union needs so badly during these trying times. Every local or state organization should find some way to finance the education of

their editor through the Postal Press Association. Budgets should be set up which address the subject of editor training. Constitutions should include language that provides for the editor to attend the Postal Press Association Conference in order to be properly trained for the job of editing the local or state publication which has been placed in his/her hands. Editor training should be a top priority for every local or state organization that has a publication for its members.

As editors we should take pride in our positions and have the desire to put forth our best efforts in performing the duties of editing. We should learn the necessity of obtaining instruction in both the fundamental mechanics of editing a newsletter and also

the legal aspects of those things which go into that publication. We must relate the need for this knowledge to our members and our leaders so they will all understand the necessity of being trained in this important position.

The PPA conference is just like money in the bank for our union. Everything we need to know to become more knowledgeable editors is there for the taking. And, while we are considering everything we need to know, a PPA conference should be a must for every local and state president. After all, he or she is responsible for everything the local or state organization does or says. Do we have adequate coverage? Plan to attend the PPA conference. Protect yourselves!

The 'APWU History Players Puppet Theater' presents:

Racism in our Hometown: The Story of the Arthur and Edith Lee Family, Minneapolis (1931)

A segment of the Saturday afternoon session during the August PPA conference will include a participatory theater performance. Delegates attending the conference with their children or grandchildren are encouraged to contact the PPA about their child participating in what promises to be a wonderful learning experience for everyone.

The multi-media puppet show introduces the Lee Family in the years following WWI. Arthur Lee was an African American, WWI veteran who worked at the Minneapolis Post Office, and moved into an all-white neighborhood. His co-workers, a majority of whom were white, protected his family when police failed to defend the family against the racist mobs that numbered around 3,000 and tried to force him from his home.

The puppet show emphasizes the significance of the Lee family's courageous struggle and its enduring inspiration in the Minneapolis community. It expands on the puppet show that was originally performed by The American Postal Workers' *Solidarity Kids Theater* produced by former National Business Agent Greg Poferl.

Poferl has used the Lee Family theater project in his U.S. History classes at Cretin-Derham Hall High School in Saint Paul where he has been teaching for the past eight years. Last year, two of his students completed an exhibit about the Lee Family for their National History Day project, which took first place in the state competition at the University of Minnesota. Also, they were selected to represent Minnesota at the Smithsonian Museum of American History while they participated in the National competition at the University of Maryland last June.

Writing an exciting headline

People glance at the headlines to see what the articles are about. If headlines or pictures don't grab them, many will turn away, without reading another word.

Coming up with good, simple headlines is one of your biggest challenges. Don't just top each article with a label. Take the time to write headlines that lure people into eagerly reading one article after another.

Don't get your heart set on a particular headline right away. Let your imagination go, writing down all the possibilities you can think of, even if many turn out awful. Then pick the best and see if you can improve them further; or combine the better two so-so headlines to get one great headline.

Editor's toolbox: A look at helpful techniques

Organization's past helps point the way to its future

Most organizations have a rich history from which you can draw ideas to help define new goals and strength. The history will point to values on which an organization was built and how those same values can apply to the future.

Who can you rely upon to obtain such information? In every organization there are a few people who've been around for long enough to tell you how things used to be. If you draw out their stories, they'll open your eyes as to how the organization has progressed and came to embrace certain beliefs. Such stories reveal a past that can strengthen the organization today.

Names make news

People like to read about people they know. Has any local union member made community (or national) headlines? Been chosen for outstanding accomplishments? Or has been recognized by a civic group for special community contributions?

Do any members have unusual hobbies? Or has anyone faced an unpleasant or dramatic work situation that was resolved in a way that other members ought to hear about?

Are there any new volunteers in the organization who should be recognized in the local union newsletter? What about recognizing longtime members?

Has any local union member made an outstanding contribution by bringing more members into union activities?

These are just a few of the many ways to use members' names in the newsletter. In doing so, you will be on your way to increasing the readership level of the publication and bringing about a greater awareness of the union as an organization made up of real people!

Write killer copy for your website

If you write copy for your organization's website you need to take into account the reading habits of the typical Internet surfer. Most people don't actually read – they scan.

Research indicates that 79% of surfers scan the page instead of reading it word for word. If you don't adopt your copy to this

scanning style – you're just a mouse click away from cyber extinction. When you write for the web make sure the copy is:

Concise. Web content should have 50% fewer words than its paper equivalent, and no single chunk of text should run more than 75 words. To write concise text you must tighten your language and avoid overly detailed information.

Scannable. To write scannable text add tables of contents, section summaries, bullets, numbered lists, highlighted key words, headings and short paragraphs with well-developed topic sentences.

Back page: shining star or afterthought?

Be honest: Do you plan the last page of your publication, or do you let it happen?

Many editors concentrate on page one, do wonders with their second first page (usually page three), put effort into a center spread, and then dump their jumps and left-overs onto the back page of the newsletter. What a waste!

Just think about how you handle any newsletter or brochure. Chances are you read page one, glance through the rest of the publication, then refold it and put it away, back page up. And that's what the eye catches whenever you subsequently glance at the publication. So why not make your final page worthy of catching and holding the eye?

The point is this: Because your back page is not hidden from sight, you should take a little time to make it spectacular and definitely read.

Kling named awards judge

Howard Kling will serve as the outside (final) judge for the 2015 PPA Awards Program. He will be responsible for selecting the recipients of this year's awards from among the top eight entries in each of the 15 award categories as determined by the PPA Awards Committee. He will also judge all entries for the website awards.

Kling grew up in a working class home and became a labor activist as the beginnings of Neoliberal capitalism devastated his hometown of Buffalo, NY. He led a major coalition for jobs and economic planning that resulted in the 1981 Solidarity Day labor march in Washington, D.C. and organized unemployed councils throughout the city in the early 1980s.

Kling also earned an MA/A.B.D. in English from the State University of New York at Buffalo with a concentration in theater and American working class literature. Angered by the obvious bias against workers and workers' power in the

media, he eventually became a filmmaker, videographer and communications activist.

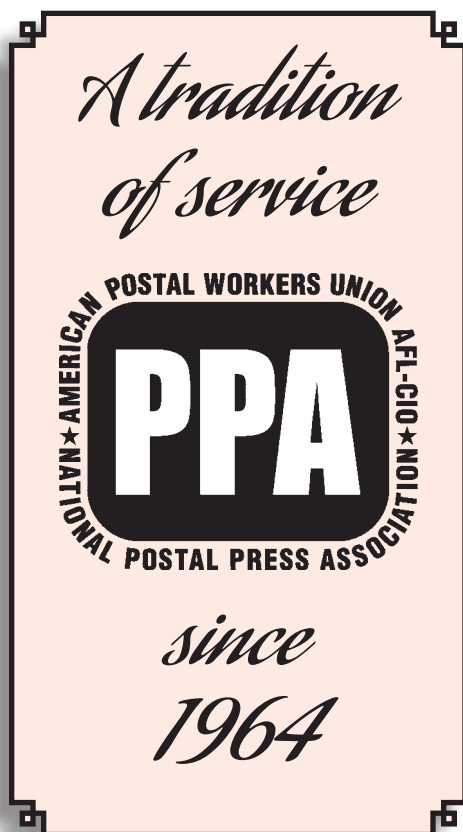
In 1988 he became a producer at a media production company in Washington, D.C. Kling joined the staff at the Labor Education Service in 1991 as the Director of the LES Telecommunications Project. In that position he helped guide LES toward more documentary video production and, by the mid-90s, into Internet communications, eventually spearheading creation of Workday Minnesota.

He is a member of IATSE Local 219 and serves on the executive council of the International Labor Communications Association. Kling is chair of the foundation board of Workers Independent News and a former board member of the Twin Cities Media Alliance, publisher of the *Twin Cities Daily Planet*. He is a playwright and served as writer/director of Solidarity Kids Theater from 1996 through 2002.



White space – an effective design element

Too many editors think of white space as something that needs to be filled with more copy or as a place to add a picture. White space is one of a good designer's most important tools. When working with white space, you need to ask yourself if white space is placed deliberately, or was it just space left over between other elements?



The addition of white space will almost always improve a design. White space can help you achieve the dominance of one element and balance within your layout that are so critical to making your layout effective. White space serves many useful objectives. It helps make elements stand out from an otherwise cluttered background. It gives the eye a quiet area to rest upon.

There are many ways to create white space.

- You can create white space by simply leaving a larger margin on one or more sides of the layout.
- You can add white space between paragraphs.
- You can add white space between stories.
- You can add white space around a graphic or headline to add impact.

White space needs to be a defined shape, an integral part of your design. It is always best to avoid white space that looks leftover or looks like something is missing.

Avoid trapping your white space between different elements of your layout. When white space is trapped, it is centered between other elements with no connection to any other white space. This type of white space makes a hole in your layout. It looks as though the printer forgot to place a photograph or something is missing from your layout. To make effective use of your white space, it is best to rework your layout and bring all of your white space together. Try

different placements to see which one helps your layout the most.

Many times the simple layout of type on a page makes an imposing obstacle to the reader. Adding white space can invite the reader into the text. Here are some suggestions to draw the reader into your text.

- Increase your margins. A good arrangement is for equal margins on the sides with the top a little larger and the bottom having the greatest amount of white space.
- Stagger your column depths. The reader's eye likes the tops to line up and let the bottoms end unevenly.
- Set your type flush left, ragged right. This is much easier for the eye to read than justified type. Justified type also adds the danger of adding space within the lines between words lining up and creating rivers of white, ruining the overall appearance.
- Increase the leading (space between each line of type). Instead of setting type solid, i.e., 10-point type set on 11 points of leading, set it 10 points on 12 points of leading. Also, longer line lengths need more leading than shorter ones.

White space doesn't always have to be positive to work. Black or dark-colored spaces can create a more imposing dramatic look. Both combat clutter effectively and help direct the reader's eye.

By making white space an element of your layouts rather than something that's left over, your designs can become more effective.