



Postal Newsletter

AMERICAN POSTAL WORKERS UNION NATIONAL POSTAL PRESS ASSOCIATION

Volume 47, Issue 4

© 2015

September-October, 2015

2015 PPA awards presented



— photo by Mona Durben

Proudly displaying 2015 PPA Awards after the Awards Banquet at the PPA Biennial Conference in Madison, Wisconsin are (seated left to right) Sarab Singh, editor, *Greater Seattle APWU News*; Karen Gordon, editor, *Southern Oregon Area Review*; Tonya Brooks, editor, *Fort Worth Outpost*; Diane North, editor, *Coastal Breeze*; Paul Felton, editor, *Michigan Messenger*, 480-481 *Communicator*; (standing from left to right) John Greathouse, editor, *The Pacer*; Robert Dyer, Jr., editor, *Evergreen State Postal Worker*; Mike Bates, associate editor, *DMI News & Views* (representing Mark Sarcone); APWU President Mark Dimondstein, PPA President Tony Carobine, Lance Coles, editor, *Iowa Postal Worker* (representing Bruce Clark); John Miceli, editor, *The Hi-Lites*; John Zamudio, associate editor, *The Auxiliary Spirit* (representing Mary Lee Brennan); John Durben, editor, *The Badger Bulletin*. See page 3 for a complete list of award recipients.

First place and honorable mention awards in 14 categories were presented on Saturday August 24 during an awards banquet at the PPA biennial conference in Madison, Wisconsin.

The Postal Press Association Awards Program was established 48 years ago at the 1967 PPA Conference in Cleveland. Originally called the Biennial Award of Merit Program, it was established for the purpose of recognizing

editors, and newsletter contributors for outstanding work in writing, editing, and publishing. The first awards were presented in 1968 in Minneapolis.

The judging procedure involved the chairperson of the awards committee organizing the entries according to the proper category and sending the entries to the other members of the Awards Committee. Committee members independently reviewed and rated each

entry using a point system. The results were tabulated by the chairperson to determine the top eight entries in each category. An outside judge then made the final selections from the finalists in each category.

Members of the Awards Committee included: Chairperson Jenny Gust, editor *Black Swamp Outrider* and *Ohio Postal Worker*, Toledo, Ohio; Loren Adams, editor *Razorback Scheme* and

Arkansas Postal Worker, Fayetteville, Arkansas; Phillip Breunig, editor *Tour's End*, Gainesville, Florida; Valerie Schropp, editor, *Redwood Empire Area Local News*, Santa Rosa, California and John Stevens, editor, *Nevada State APWU*, Reno, Nevada.

The outside judge was Howard Kling, staff member at the University of Minnesota Labor Education Service.

PPA's 25th Biennial Conference held

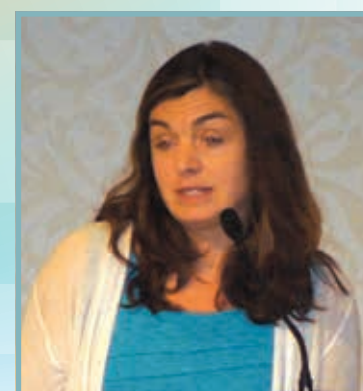
With a keen interest in sharpening their communication skills; editors, associate editors, local and state officers, all members of the American Postal Workers Union National Postal Press Association met in Madison, Wisconsin on August 19-22 for the PPA's 25th Biennial Conference.

Pictured at right during the opening session of the conference is Ruth Conniff, editor-in-chief of *The Progressive*, a monthly magazine of investigative reporting, political commentary, activism and interviews headquartered in Madison. Her talk focused on the parallels between the efforts aimed at dismantling public services; namely the postal service and education system. Conference photographs and videos including Ms. Conniff's remarks are available on

the PPA website www.apwupostalpress.org.

The intensive four-day gathering included eleven workshops that centered on ways to use and improve communication both internally and externally – a valuable activity that can influence not only the membership but also everyone the union needs to reach in order to promote and protect the interests of union members and their families. Also featured were four general sessions and four networking events.

Emphasized throughout the conference was the need to continue working to increase membership involvement and forming partnerships with groups and organizations that are interested in maintaining a universal postal service.



— photo by John Greathouse

Ruth Conniff

BEST FEATURE STORY (Honorable Mention)

We lost two working class heroes:
Dick Fallow and Hugo Chavez

By Bruce Clark, President
Iowa APWU
Iowa Postal Worker
Des Moines, Iowa

April 13 the working class of Iowa, indeed the working class of the world, lost a champion. Richard “Dick” Fallow of Davenport, Iowa, died taking from us one of the true heroes of the Iowa and Illinois labor movement. Dick’s long journey began in many ways on a bicycle trip through youth hostels in Europe in 1937. On this trip he witnessed the poverty and harsh conditions faced by working people in Europe and the effects of war. During World War II he worked with the American Field Service and drove an ambulance and worked with the 8th British Army in North Africa. Dick

saw firsthand the battle against fascism that united the working class across the globe. Upon his return home, he worked with the United Electrical and Radio Workers Union. The UE was one of the left-led unions that were the target of American based fascists like Joe McCarthy. The UE refused to expel communist members who fought hard for the rank and file and a democratic union. As a, result they were targeted both by the government and by the AFL-CIO unions who openly raided their shops to wipe them out, Dick ended up in Sioux City where he met Wilhelmina, the love of his life. They later moved to Davenport in 1952. By this time he joined the staff of the newly merged AFL-CIO and served for years as the area director for the Committee on Political Education (COPE).

Labor folks around the Quad Cities and beyond can regale you for hours with stories of Dick’s incredible role in the labor movement and other progressive causes. Dick was always there when there was a meeting, a picket line, folks to organize, some injustice to battle. My own contact was all too short. I met Dick when he was inducted into the Iowa Federation of Labor Hall of Fame. At the banquet he gave a speech and talked about battling for the “working class.” Those who know me know I am always struggling to get working folks to understand they are not “middle class” but proud members of the “working class.” If you don’t know who you are, you cannot understand the struggle you are in and you will never win.

I went up to Dick afterwards and said, “Where have they been hiding you . . . you and I are the two main people in this room who talk about the “working class.” That was it, we became buddies and met for lunch once half way between us in Maquoketa and talked whenever we could. Dick also came to Dubuque to address the graduates of our Dubuque Workers’ Academy. What an amazing guy, brother, friend, comrade in arms!

My huge regret was not to have met Dick earlier or taken more time when

I did to learn from this working class hero. What a wealth of experience as a warrior for the people. It is like the old song, “I always thought I’d see you one more time again.” That was not to be and it is a good reminder to us all. Take the time to be with those who matter in your life because you never know how long they will be with us. At his memorial celebration someone said it

naries for South American armies and para military units. In Columbia, for instance, under the umbrella of “fighting drugs” these groups have killed more labor leaders than in any country on earth. In Central America these U.S. trained terrorists were responsible for the murder of Archbishop Romero in El Salvador and the tragic murder of nuns who went

“If you don’t know who you are, you cannot understand the struggle you are in and you will never win.”

was easy to assume that Dick would be with us forever because he always was there. Dick, my dear brother and hero, it was a pleasure to know you and you will be missed. When Dick died, there truly was a “disturbance in the force.”

The other recent loss may seem more removed and less obvious for me to mention. That is the passing of Hugo Chavez, the president of Venezuela. Brother Chavez was much maligned and attacked by the capitalist press in the U.S. This man was the only head of an oil rich country in the world to be determined to take that wealth and use it for the people of his country. When he was elected, he began a long struggle to activate and mobilize the workers of Venezuela who produced that wealth, to fight for what was rightly theirs.

Hugo Chavez used the wealth of his country to help countless poor children and the downtrodden of Venezuela. Central and South America, of course, have a long history of being dominated by wealthy oligarchies who oppress most of the population with particular racist exploitation of native Indian populations. This area has also been a largely wholly owned subsidiary to often of American corporations.

To maintain that extraction of wealth, the U.S. Government has always been quick to invade these countries militarily to suppress rebellion from Nicaragua to the Dominican Republic. In more recent years, the U.S. has trained merce-

there to carry out their mission of witnessing for the poor. Perhaps the most outrageous case was the poor country of Chile where the U.S. engineered the ousting of the democratically elected Socialist Allende and replaced him with the true Fascist Pinochet who unleashed a reign of terror against progressives and working class of Chile (may she at last be free). Hugo Chavez was one very vocal voice of the increasing rebellion throughout South America which is rejecting American corporate imperialism and striking out with new independence to determine what benefits the working people of their countries rather than U.S. corporations. To his shame, President Obama failed to even send the normal condolences that would be sent with the death of a foreign leader. And now the U.S. is even trying to interfere in the elections in Venezuela because they don’t like it that a Chavez supporter was elected to take his place. Despite the fact that former President Carter, who monitors elections in many parts of the world, has declared that elections under Chavez were completely fair and above board.

So brother Chavez, I take the time in this short article to note and mourn your passing and to salute you and to send regrets and condolences to the people of Venezuela on the loss of their leader and hero.

BEST HEADLINE (Honorable Mention)

By John Durben, Editor
The Badger Bulletin
Cecil, Wisconsin

Kardashian watching public
buy it lock, stock and barrel

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Statement of purpose: Published by the American Postal Workers Union National Postal Press Association, the PPA Newsletter is an educational tool designed to assist PPA members with the performance of their duties as communicators and to help promote the goals and objectives of the APWU.

This publication is 100% union printer produced:
Union typeset, Union layout, Union printed.

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PPA



PPA award recipients

First place and honorable mention awards in 14 categories were presented on Saturday, August 22 during an awards banquet at the PPA biennial conference in Madison, Wisconsin.

JOURNALISM AWARDS

BEST EDITORIAL:

First Place: *“Racist Attacks on the working class accelerate,” Iowa Postal Worker*, Des Moines Iowa; Bruce Clark, President

Honorable Mention: *“Life is not a dress rehearsal” The Auxiliary Spirit*, Saint Charles, Missouri; Mary Lee Brennan, Editor

BEST NEWS STORY:

First Place: *“Taking it to the streets, postal workers show united front at Staples Rally,” Postmark*, Saint Paul, Minnesota; Mike Mazurkiewicz, APWU Retiree

Honorable Mention: *“Can’t spot a fake – you better it’s your job,” The Newsroom*, Mentor, Ohio; Louise Balog, Editor

BEST FEATURE STORY:

First Place: *“PSE’s and Goliath,” News & Views*, Greensboro, North Carolina; LaConte Campbell, Clerk Craft Director

Honorable Mention: *“We lost two working class heroes: Dick Fallow and Hugo Chavez” Iowa Postal Worker*, Des Moines, Iowa; Bruce Clark, President

BEST HEADLINE:

First Place: *“Must see Dimondstein TV,” The Hi-Lites*, Milwaukee, Wisconsin; John Miceli, Editor

Honorable Mention: *“Kardashian watching public buy it lock, stock and barrel,” Badger Bulletin*, Cecil, Wisconsin; John Durben, Editor

BEST CARTOON:

First Place: *The Pacer*, Lansing, Michigan; John Greathouse, Editor

Honorable Mention: *Evergreen State Postal Worker*, Mountlake Terrace, Washington; Robert Dyer, Jr., Editor

BEST PHOTOGRAPH:

First Place: *Southern Oregon Area Review*, Medford, Oregon; Karen Gordon, Editor

Honorable Mention: *Postmark*, Saint Paul, Minnesota; Mike Mazurkiewicz, APWU Retiree

BEST COMMUNITY SERVICE:

First Place: *“Two neighborhood professionals who deserve some positive recognition,” Unionizer*, Walnut Creek, California; Clayton Worsdell, USPS Customer

Honorable Mention: *“Auxiliary To DMI APWU News,” DMI News & Views*, Des Moines, Iowa; Mark Sarcone, Associate Editor

BEST CREATIVE WRITING:

First Place: *“Sailing aboard the USPS Concordia,” Evergreen State Postal Worker*, Mountlake Terrace, Washington; Robert Dyer Jr., Editor

Honorable Mention: *“Minimum wage poem,” 480-481 Communicator*, Ferndale, Michigan; Paul Felton, Editor

BEST NON-POSTAL LABOR STORY:

First Place: *“Fast-food strike goes global,” The Union Mail*, Florence Summergrad, Editor

Honorable Mention: *“Here’s the CLUW News,” Coastal Breeze*, Davie, Florida; Diane North, Editor

BEST WEBSITE

There were no entries in the Best Website Professional Category

BEST WEBSITE NON-PROFESSIONAL:

First Place: Michigan Postal Workers Union, Michael Long, Website Editor

Honorable Mention: Queens Area Local, Ozone Park, New York; William Matusiewicz, Website Editor

OVERALL EXCELLENCE AWARDS

Best Professional, defined as a publication printed by a commercial printer from camera-ready copy prepared by the printer;

Best Non-Professional (A), Publication printed by a commercial printer from camera-ready copy; prepared by the APWU editor;

Best Non-Professional (B), Publication printed in-house by the APWU editor from camera-ready copy; prepared by the APWU editor.

OVERALL EXCELLENCE BEST PROFESSIONAL:

First Place: *Michigan Messenger*, Paul Felton, Editor

Honorable Mention: *The Union Mail*, New York, New York; Florence Summergrad, Editor

OVERALL EXCELLENCE BEST NON-PROFESSIONAL (A):

First Place: *Fort Worth Outpost*, Fort Worth, Texas; Tonya Brooks, Editor

Honorable Mention: *The Hi-Lites*, Milwaukee, Wisconsin; John Miceli, Editor

OVERALL EXCELLENCE BEST NON-PROFESSIONAL (B):

First Place: *The Bay Breeze*, Green Bay, Wisconsin; Mary Davis, Editor

Honorable Mention: *The Spectrum*, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma; Jim Gabe, Editor

HANK GREENBERG AWARD – BEST NEW EDITOR

This award recognizes a new editor striving to produce a union publication that exemplifies dedication, sincerity and professionalism. Named in honor of past PPA President Hank Greenberg, this award signifies the type of spirit, determination and leadership that Brother Greenberg displayed as president for over 17 years.

First Place: Sarab Singh; *Greater Seattle APWU News*, Seattle, Washington

Honorable Mention: Mary Davis; *The Bay Breeze*, Green Bay, Wisconsin



BEST FEATURE STORY *(First Place)*

PSEs and Goliath

By LaConte Campbell,
Clerk Craft Director
News & Views
Greensboro, North Carolina

As Goliath moved closer to attack, David quickly ran out to meet him. Reaching into his shepherd’s bag and taking out a stone, he hurled it from his sling and hit the Philistine in the forehead. The stone sank in, and Goliath stumbled and fell face downward to the ground. So David triumphed over the Philistine giant with only a stone and sling. 1 Samuel 17:48-50.

One of the greatest stories in the Bible explains how a young, outmatched, seemingly ill prepared young man overcame fear, and defeated one of the biggest bullies in history. Goliath was known for his size and strength and completely intimidated a whole army. The Israeli army was very intimidated by Goliath’s size, his strength, his weapons, and the fact that he claimed to be undefeated.

It seemed as if there was no way to defeat this giant. Yet one lone young man with enough courage and determination proved that no matter how big, and well equipped this man was, he could be defeated. David’s courage and willingness not to be defeated proved to be just what was needed to win in a seemingly unwinnable situation. David’s victory encouraged the rest of the Israeli army to action who in turn scored a great victory against their enemies.

Postal management can seem to be very large, equipped with everything they need, and very intimidating. In the past, management has used this to their advantage to intimidate PSE employees, keep them under their thumbs, and give them the impression there is nothing they could do to protect their jobs. Management gave them the impression that “If I don’t like you, I will get rid of you at the end of your 360 day appointment, because I am Goliath, I am postal management, I have the strength, and the means to fire you, and I have never lost at it!”

Recently, at the Greensboro NDC management decided to “Let a PSE go at the end of their 360 day appointment.” Reason being, “Because we are management, and we can do that. We don’t have to bring you back if we don’t want to.”

One lone PSE decided they would not be intimidated and decided to take on management. Armed with only information from the national APWU website, determination to win, and faith they would triumph because right is right, this lone PSE decided not to give up, and took on MANAGEMENT. Just as David only had a stone and a good slingshot, this PSE only had information and a good steward. Mind you this PSE was treated with less than dignity and respect by management, refused a steward, and escorted out of the building.

The incident was very intimidating, disheartening and was definitely intend-

ed to make a statement. Management will often use fear and intimidation tactics to accomplish their goals. Management desires to have a subservient group of employees that are afraid to stand up for their rights. Just as Goliath attempted to plant in the minds of the Israeli army that they were defenseless and helpless, and there was no use in fighting for their freedom, management attempts to place the same mindset into the PSEs utilizing the same tactics as Goliath. Just as David refused to be intimidated and give up, this PSE refused to accept the mindset of defeat, decided to stand their ground and fought management.

The Bible says that David chose a simple stone, and a slingshot as his weapons of choice, and it worked! By simply choosing to utilize the information placed at their fingertips, this PSE

placed the information in the right spot by requesting a steward, and hurled it at management, and it worked! The PSE who was misused, intimidated, and made to feel as if there was no hope of defeating management emerged victorious and triumphed over management with only the right information, a good steward, faith, and the will not to give up.

After David’s victory the Bible says that “Then the Israelites gave a great shout of triumph and rushed after the Philistines....” The Israeli army was encouraged to see that Goliath was just a man and could be defeated, and ran after the rest of the Philistine army with renewed strength and courage. In the same way the PSEs should take heart and be encouraged by the steadfastness and willingness of one PSE who decided not to be intimidated, or defeated, or refused to allow management

to trample on and take their rights and livelihood from them.

This PSE proved that management can be defeated! As clerk craft director, I encourage all PSEs to learn your rights, and take a stand for what is right! Don’t be afraid to ask for your steward! Remember you may be the only PSE standing against a giant but YOU CAN BE VICTORIOUS AGAINST MANAGEMENT IF YOU STAND UP!

Here is some sound advice. (1) While on probation mind your Ps & Qs. Don’t be fooled management can fire you for almost anything while you are on probation. (2) Once off probation, management can only fire you for “Just Cause.” You are subject to Just Cause once off probation and if management tries to “discipline” you. ASK FOR A STEWARD! And here is the best information of all!

APWU,USPS Agreement Strengthens, Clarifies PSE Seniority APWU Web News Article 097-2013, Aug. 14, 2013

The American Postal Workers Union achieved a significant victory on Aug. 13, with the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that strengthens and clarifies the seniority rights of Postal Support Employees (PSEs), Industrial Relations Director Mike Morris has announced.

The Memorandum of Understanding on PSE Reappointment stipulates that after their break in service, PSE reappointments must be based solely on the PSEs’ relative standing – their seniority – on the installation’s PSE rolls.

In some parts of the country, the USPS had claimed that PSEs who have completed a 360-day appointment had no contractual right to be reappointed based on their seniority. The Postal Service asserted that management was free to retain more junior PSEs – or even hire new PSEs – rather than reappointing more senior PSEs who had completed a term of appointment.

“This Memorandum of Understanding makes clear that PSEs enjoy protection against favoritism and arbitrary decisions by management,” Morris said.

“PSEs may not be bypassed for reappointment as a substitute for discipline,” he added. “They must be reappointed upon completion of their 360-day term based on their seniority.” (The 2010-2015 Collective Bargaining Agreement says that PSEs enjoy “just cause” protection and a Feb. 27 Memorandum of Understanding on PSE Discipline elaborates on that protection.)

The MOU clarifies several points that had been in dispute as follows:

- PSE separations due to lack of work must be implemented installation-wide by juniority.
- PSEs who are separated due to lack of work must be reappointed ahead of more junior PSEs.
- PSEs who are separated due to lack of work must be reappointed before management hires new PSEs if the need for hiring arises within one year of the separation.
- When a PSE’s five-day break occurs and the USPS determines there is a need to reduce the number of PSEs, the PSE with the most seniority must be reappointed and the most junior PSE in the installation must be separated instead.

“This agreement clarifies and cements the fact there is indeed a path for PSEs who wish to become career employees,” Morris said. “Clearly, for PSEs as well as career employees, it pays to belong to APWU!”

BEST NEWS STORY (First Place)

Taking it to the streets: Postal workers show united front at Staples rally

By Mike Mazurkiewicz,
APWU Retiree
Postmark
Saint Paul, Minnesota

Cold and rainy weather didn't dampen the spirits of postal workers concerned about Staples threat to the sanctity of the mail service and security of postal jobs. Both the Saint Paul

and Minneapolis APWU met up at the Roseville Staples store on April 24, a "National Day of Action," to march in protests of the plan to open postal counters at 1,500 stores nationwide. Already, 82 Staples stores in Georgia, California, Pennsylvania and Massachusetts house USPS service counters, and postal administrators hope to expand to other locations – and, potentially, other retail

chains – if the pilot program is successful.

Marchers chanted and waved signs saying "Stop Staples" alongside Snelling Avenue's rush-hour traffic. They were joined in solidarity by members of the NALC, AFSCME, Saint Paul Regional Labor Federation, Nurses Union and Municipal Employees.

Guest speakers included Congressman Keith Ellison who voiced his support to union members. Ellison called the postal service "the great American melting pot" when it comes to providing middle-class employment, and he noted its commitment to hiring military veterans upon their reentry into the workforce. The strong turnout, Ellison added, was proof postal workers are not alone in the fight to stop Staples. "May America always stand with the post office," Ellison said. "You are not alone. We are with you. Do not put our mail up for sale."

APWU President Mark Dimondstein decried the Staples deal, which replaces good, living-wage jobs held by USPS employees with low-wage Staples jobs. "This is a fight against the Wall Street privatizers," he said. "This is a fight we intend to win."

Protests were held in 56 locations in 27 states.



Center: Congressman Keith Ellison.



From left: President Todd Elkerton and protesters.

Nationally, dozens of members of other unions participated in the protest and expressed support for the fight against privatization. John Hegarty, president of the National Postal Mail Handlers Union; Tim O'Malley, vice president of the National Association of Letter Carriers, and John Cox, president of the American Federation of Government Employees, addressed the crowds. A delegation from the American Federation of Teachers – who are key allies in this fight – also participated.

BEST NON-POSTAL LABOR STORY (Honorable Mention)

Here's the CLUW . . . news

By Diane North, Editor
Coastal Breeze
Davie, Florida

Coalition of Labor Union Women – message

True or False?

In 2014, getting pregnant can still cost you your job.

Unfortunately, it's true.

Pregnant women are still being forced to take unpaid leave or even fired – because of their pregnancies.

Sounds crazy, right? Well, that's exactly what happened to Natasha Jackson. Natasha was an account executive and the only female employee at a rent-to-own furniture store. After Natasha became pregnant, her doctor provided medical certification to her employer stating Natasha shouldn't lift more than 20-25 pounds. As a result, Natasha was placed on unpaid leave, even though she only very occasionally had to lift things in her job and even though her employer had given light duty to employees who needed to avoid lifting because of reasons like a sprained foot or shoulder. She ultimately was terminated.

Every year, many women who need

some temporary adjustments in their jobs because of pregnancy face the same impossible situation that Natasha did. And employers are refusing to accommodate restrictions arising out of pregnancy even while they make accommodations for employees with injuries or temporary disabilities unrelated to pregnancy.

If that makes you angry... good. Now it's time to do something about it.

Ask your Senators to support the Pregnant Workers Fairness Act (PWFA).

The PWFA is common sense. It would require employers to make the same types of accommodations for pregnancy, childbirth, and related medical conditions that they already are required to make for disabilities. We're talking about things like a temporary schedule change, permission to carry a water bottle, or being allowed to sit on a stool instead of standing all day at a cash register.

Senators Bob Casey and Jeanne Shaheen introduced PWFA, and so far there are a total of 20 United States Senators who have announced their support. But that's not enough. With more attention to this cause, we think we can build the

support we need to finally move this bill forward.

Please urge your senators to support the Pregnant Workers Fairness Act.

Thank you for taking action... and there's more you can do:

Visit CLUW's Facebook page and the CLUW website.

Veterans' Clips

Veterans to Receive 1.5 Percent Cost-of-Living Increase: Veterans, their families and survivors receiving disability compensation and pension benefits from the Department of Veterans Affairs will receive a 1.5 percent cost-of-living increase in their monthly payments beginning January 1, 2014.

Veterans' Advocate: "Budget Bill a 'Total Betrayal.'" The House's \$1.1 trillion spending bill, passed Wednesday, cuts most veterans' retirement benefits and is a "total betrayal" of those who served in the military, says the founder of Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America.

Women Veterans

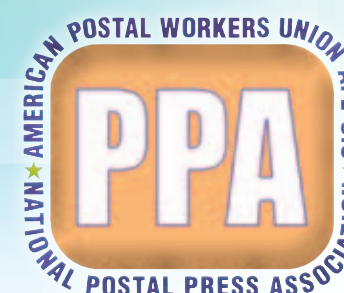
The Sunshine State is home to the third largest population of women veterans in the nation, with more than

160,000. Women veterans are one of the fastest growing segments of the veterans' population. Of the approximately 22 million living veterans nationwide, about 1.9 million are women. They comprise nearly 10 percent of the total veterans' population and nearly 5 percent of all veterans who use VA health care services.

Many women veterans don't know that they are eligible for the full range of federal and state benefits, to include special programs for them. Here are some resources for women veterans.

Florida's State Women Veterans' Coordinator is Cynthia T. Brown. She can be reached at brownc@fdva.state.fl.us

**A proud tradition
of service!**

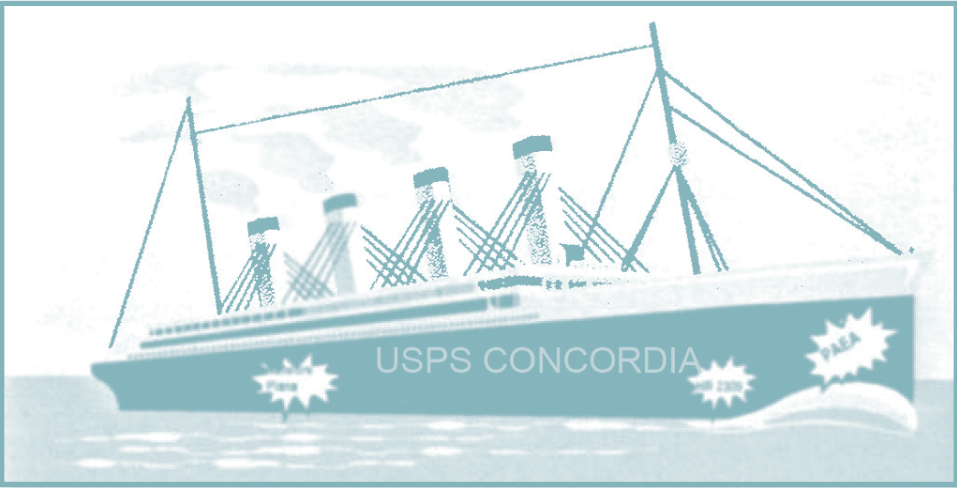


BEST CREATIVE WRITING (First Place)

Sailing aboard the USPS Concordia

By Robert Dyer Jr., Editor
Evergreen State Postal Worker
Mountlake Terrace, Washington

“Where is Captain Donahoe?”
“He is back on the Lido deck playing shuffleboard with the muckity-mucks,”



the first mate responded. “You know how he enjoys watching those ‘postal pucks’ – as he calls them – slide off the back deck into the ocean.”
“Well, we are way off course!” the purser sounded worried. “The crew is concerned, and even some of the customers have noticed. Where are we going?”
“The captain wanted to make a pass by Catalina Island to show off for his old buddy Daryl Issa, and the rest of the Oversight Committee . . . he thought it might make their day – seeing the USPS Concordia headed south from their condos on the beach.”¹
“Isn’t that a bit self-serving . . . and reckless? What about our mission to provide universal service to the American public?” the purser looked very concerned. “Aren’t we behind schedule already? I hear the lines are getting very long at every port of call.”
“Don’t worry about it. The captain says we are going to be closing many of them anyway. The lines will disappear soon enough. We can run this shipping line with half the crew, once we get rid of all those unnecessary stops. It’s nothing personal – just good business. The captain knows exactly what he is doing.” The first mate had a look of total admiration on his face as he spoke superlatively about the captain.
Meanwhile, out on the Lido deck the Postal Board of Governors was fully engaged in the game of shuffle board.²
“Great shot old boy!” The group of postal executives cheered as Captain Donahoe’s carefully aimed shot collided into another “postal puck” knocking it completely off the board. They whistled and hooted as a puck labeled “Saturday delivery” went careening off the ship deck into the sea.
“Here, here! Well done! Well done!” The crowd cheered the captain on, and watched with great anticipation as he lined up for his next shot.
But all was not well on the USPS Concordia . . . customers were gathering on the upper deck watching the goings on as well . . . and some of them did not look happy. Back on the bridge, the purser continued his questioning of

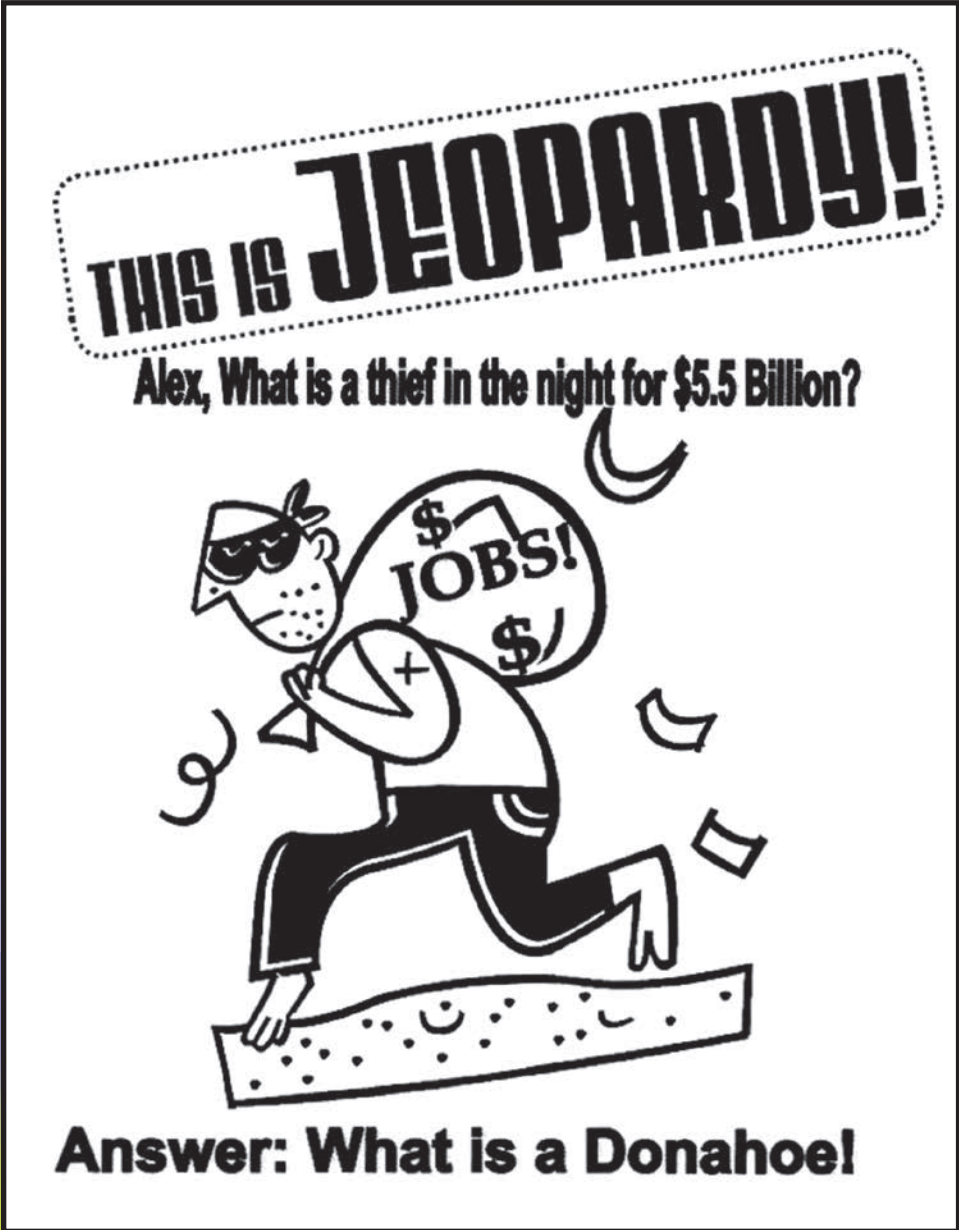
the first mate – who was now steering the USPS Concordia dangerously close to the shoreline, and blowing the ship’s horn repeatedly as the vessel passed within sight of Issa’s seaside island resort, where the Oversight Committee could be seen from the deck – cheering and hooting as the ship’s whistle echoed across the water.³
The purser objected earnestly to the first mate at the helm, “We are way too close to shore sir, and we are moving way too fast!”
“We will run out of fuel if you continue to stray from our official route of travel. We are responsible to the American public. How can we continue and still fulfill our mission?”
“The American public doesn’t know what is good for them!” sneered the first mate. “At least, that is what the captain says. He has a carefully calculated plan. After we ‘off load’ all of the unprofitable customers, and eliminate all those unnecessary stops, there will be plenty of fuel. Not to worry!”
The purser was shocked. The first mate was referring to customers – the American public – as if they were barnacles to be scraped off the hull of the ship – as if they were leaches that needed to be pulled off and disposed of like pests.
“What about our mission!” The purser was now openly upset. “What about our commitment to public service?”
“Oh paalease!” the first mate jeered, “You’re not going to rattle off some quaint nonsense about the weather now are you? Come rain nor sleet nor snow, and our appointed rounds, and of all that archaic rot!”
“But our mission is spelled out in the United States Constitution. Ben Franklin would never have agreed with this course of action! Has the captain lost his mind?” The purser was incredulous.
“You’re coming awfully close to insubordination there!” interjected the first mate accusingly. “Do you know what happens to sailors who are found guilty of mutiny?”
“Yea, but we are way off course!” the purser raised his voice.
“Just settle down and go with the flow. The captain will steer this ship home to a safe haven – one where the U.S. Constitution no longer has jurisdiction. As for Ben Franklin . . . this is the 21st century!” The first mate was now openly laughing. “You are way out of touch worrying about ancient

constitutional technicalities. In fact, it is precisely Ben Franklin – or at least the pursuit of Ben Franklins – that is guiding the captain in his so carefully planned change of colors for this vessel. It is time that the USPS Concordia sets out on a new course – we will be sailing under a new flag and a whole new set of rules very soon.”⁴
The purser looked on with disbelief at the first mate and responded, “Sir, these ‘technicalities’ you’re making light of are the Law of the land!” “Not for long, sailor, not for long! The captain’s friends over on the beach will take care of that. Soon we will be in international waters, and all these details you are so worried about will be a distant memory. The captain’s associates on Catalina Island will see to that.”
The first mate gave the ship’s whistle another long blast, and the crowd on the beach cheered in response.¹
“What you are talking about is treason . . . maybe even piracy!” retorted the purser.
“I wouldn’t repeat that again, sailor, if you know what’s good for you!” said the first mate threateningly.
Meanwhile, back on the Lido deck, Captain Donahoe lined up to launch his final blow – the coup de gras. He let fly his last shot, which sailed down the deck striking the sole remaining postal puck

on the board with a resounding smack! The jubilant observers broke into loud cheers as the postal puck labeled “collective bargaining rights” flew off the deck, and disappeared into the briny deep.
“That’s what I call the Wisconsin Shuffle!” boasted the captain.
At this point, the air was filled with the resounding report of fireworks, and the evening sky burst into bright colors above the ship, lighting up the shoreline beach resort. The first mate went berserk, blowing the ship’s horn in long resounding blasts. The crowd went crazy and a festive atmosphere pervaded the Lido deck.
The purser looked down in horror, as the hull of the USPS Concordia gave way to the rocky shoreline below. He knew there were only enough lifeboats for the Lido deck dignitaries, and postal executives. What about the fine crew of the ship, and the customers on deck who would soon be floundering in the sea, after the ship went down?
^{1.} This story is a fictional account created for the entertainment of postal workers. It is written within the traditional nature of hyperbole, and not to be taken as factual.
^{2.} This is an allegorical writing told within the tradition of troubadours from the old country.
^{3.} I told you, this story is intended to entertain postal workers, and is a comical rendition of satirical fiction.
^{4.} This character and his opinion is purely fictional; but very interesting . . . don’t you think?

BEST CARTOON (First Place)

By John Greathouse, Editor
The Pacer
Lansing, Michigan



BEST NON-POSTAL LABOR STORY (*First Place*)

Fast food strike goes global

By Florence Summergrad, Editor
The Union Mail
New York, New York

Within 18 months, a one-day walk-off in New York City by fast food workers has gone global. On May 15, 2014, an international strike hit McDonald's on 6 continents! Workers in 33 countries were inspired to strike by the courage of low paid workers organized into action across the U.S. by "Fast Food Forward" and the SEIU.

While the workers' wages are well below the \$23,000/year poverty level, fast food CEOs in 2013 made an average of \$23.8 million – exceeding workers' wages by a ratio of 1,200 to 1. This is the widest disparity in any American economic sector.

These are not just teens working after school for a few bucks. More than 70% of fast food employees are over 20. Many are raising children. They are serious about their jobs and are starting to feel empowered by an energetic movement to demand rights.

While the rallying cry of \$15 hour has been picked up by other workers in low-paid industries and has stimulated the movement for a higher minimum wage, the demands are far deeper.

Workers are standing up for the right to join a union without retaliation, for dignity and respect on the job. Companies like McDonald's have "zero hour" contracts. Employees have to be available but have no guaranteed hours. A higher hourly wage alone is not enough. Workers need a union contract that will set wages, hours, and benefits.

McDonald's reported profits of \$5.6 billion in 2013. Yet its workers can't earn enough to be self-sufficient. A study last October by the Universities of Illinois and California, "showed U.S. fast food workers rely on \$7 billion annually in taxpayer-funded federal aid in the form of food stamps, Medicare, and other social programs." (RT.com, "Not Lovin' It: Fast food workers bite back with worldwide May 15 strike"). This exposed the fact that the McDonald's business model is propped up by the taxpayers, while the corporation rakes in the profits.

The strength of the growing movement is that these workers are rooted in the public domain. The 1% don't eat at McDonald's!

Customers and communities see the fast food workers campaign as their own. The dynamic in the industry is changing. Instead of the race to the

bottom, where workers compete to be the cheapest labor, these workers at the bottom are pushing upward. They are building working class power by ally-

workers for their protests. After a strike, the worker is escorted back into his or her fast food restaurant by a prominent community leader, clergyman, or politician. This support carries the tacit threat of media embarrassment for a manager who tries to retaliate against the striker, and impresses those co-workers who were afraid to join the protest.

Adriana Alvarez, the McDonald's worker whose face has come to symbolize "Low Pay is Not Okay," wrote of her fellow strikers, "If you know anything about what it means to be a low-wage worker, then you know that this is incredibly brave. This is what changing the world looks like."

As union members with a contract we need to remember the pre-collective bargaining days in the post office. Full time postal workers were eligible for food stamps. Our great postal strike in 1971 inspired workers around the country. Today's fast food strikes are inspiring workers around the world. The global corporations are facing global resistance. "It's time for the fast-food giants to treat the people who make and serve their food with the same respect everywhere." Join the world-wide movement for fair wages and respect!



ing with other movements, like Increase the Minimum Wage in Seattle and Moral Mondays in North Carolina.

The Walkback Model

Use of the social media has spread the campaign across the country and the world. Email, blogs, Facebook, Twitter, have given the small walk-outs big publicity. People are paying attention.

The Walkback tactic has been successful in keeping employers from firing

BEST EDITORIAL (*Honorable Mention*)

Life is not a dress rehearsal

By Mary Lee Brennan, Editor
The Auxiliary Spirit
Saint Charles, Missouri

I had some friends remind me of that when I last saw them. It's amazing how we drift through our lives, day after day, going to work, doing our jobs to the best of our abilities, taking whatever the company decides to give us, as though we deserve to be treated like second class citizens. Now this is not always the case, but there are times when this is the way we feel. It is amazing how we complain to each other but never take advantage of the most fantastic benefit at our disposal – the UNION. You have someone to back you up when you are treated unfairly. You have someone who will explain the contract and help you file a grievance if necessary. Your UNION is worth its weight in gold.

But you have to do your part in this life. You should join the union as soon as you start work, go to union meetings and learn what is going on. Then have the guts to talk to your union representative when it is necessary. When a supervisor is treating you unfairly or not abiding by the contract you must ask for a shop steward. The conversation

should stop at that point. If it does not, keep working but speak to your shop steward as soon as possible. Do not be intimidated. Be respectful – not intimidated.

Then, along the way get active in your union. Have your family get active in the auxiliary so that you as a family unit are working together to improve all your lives. Take advantage of all the American Postal Workers Union and Auxiliary has to offer.

I have worked at jobs that were non-union and jobs where there was a union shop. When I told one company I was leaving to work at Dierbergs they offered to match Dierbergs' pay. That sounded good until you consider they could let me go at any time. No cause – just lead me to the door. I knew that Local 88 would have my back. I never regretted that decision.

Now you have a choice – to not do anything and let life happen or take on the world with your union's help and enjoy all the benefits to which you are entitled. The union got you benefits so that you could take that vacation, take time off, use your time as needed for your family. Remember, life is not a dress rehearsal.



The PPA Conference included eleven workshops covering a variety of subjects relating to internal/external communication and union building. Pictured here are participants in the workshop; "Influencing Public Support: Developing a Strategy for Getting your Message Out" led by APWU Communications Director Sally Davidow. All workshop leaders were unionists and communication experts from Organized Labor. Speaking at the conference and lending their support for postal worker issues were Ruth Conniff, editor of *The Progressive* magazine and John Nichols, Washington correspondent for *The Nation* magazine. APWU President Mark Dimondstein continued the tradition established in 1967 of the union's president holding a press conference for members of the PPA. In an unprecedented move, the press conference went well beyond its traditional one hour time frame as editors posed many questions on a variety of subjects. Additionally, conference attendees were provided with a legislative update by APWU Legislative & Political Director John Marcotte. In an evening session titled "Friday Night at the Movies," conference attendees viewed and then discussed the Robert Reich film "Inequality for All," a look at how the widening income gap has a devastating impact on the American economy. For an extensive look at conference activities, please visit the Photo and Video Galleries on the PPA website at www.apwupostalpress.org.

BEST EDITORIAL (First Place)

Racist attacks on the working class accelerate

By Bruce Clark,
President Iowa APWU
Iowa Postal Worker
Des Moines, Iowa

With the election of Barack Obama as president there was a lot of talk about the United States becoming a “post racial” society somehow. That race was somehow no longer much of a factor in this society. I will grant you that it was a wonderful thing to see the majority of Americans vote for the first African American to become president, but any notion of the end of racism is a fantasy and a lie.

In fact, racist attacks on the working class have greatly accelerated as part of a larger attack on the whole working class. From my perspective these are always one and the same. The nature of racism in the U.S. is far more than a matter of the collective bigotry of individual citizen’s. That personal “in your face bigotry” with its racial slurs may indeed have diminished especially as successive generations grow up with more exposure to others different than themselves.

However, the additional exploitation, over and above that faced by white workers, is still very much in place with no significant reduction and no real plans to change that put forward by our first black president. Across a range of indexes, there is no question that Black and Latin workers make much less money on average; have vastly higher rates of unemployment; on average attend schools that are the most underfunded; have an obscenely higher rate of incarceration in prisons, including the well-known fact that penalties for “crack” (more of a ghetto drug) are much more severe than for “cocaine” (the more suburban form) and the list goes on for any measure you want to examine.

This nonsense of a “post racial” society is peddled by those who want to cover up the continuing fact that American capitalism rests heavily as it always has on the racist super exploitation of the Black and Latin sections of the working class. Billions of dollars pour from the racist wage and societal differentials into the pockets of U.S. capitalists.

Let’s be clear. The whole American working class is exploited and their labor, which produces all the wealth of this society, is largely stolen from them. I reject the idea that others advance that white workers relatively better position in this economy based on wage slavery, gives them a vested interest in racism and keeping Black and Latin workers down. White workers also produce vastly more value than they take home with the excess wealth stolen from them. In addition, white workers suffer from racist divisions in the working class as these divisions weaken all workers and therefore weaken our collective struggle and drive down wages and standard of living for all workers. One has only to examine the long tragic

history of the Southern working class to see how this plays out.

New even more vicious racist attacks

When we are in periods of economic downturn, or stated more honestly when the capitalists wild greedy gam-

they control. These laws are little more than modern day approval of young black workers who “look threatening.” In past years in the South this took the form of lynching young black men who dared to “look at a white woman.” The difference between the murder of Tray-

talk about programs to “mentor” poor people (usually they mean Black and Latin poor people) with how to be ready to have a job. Now don’t get me wrong, there are certainly things that could help young people know how to navigate the world of job applications, etc. that they may never have been taught. But these programs go beyond that and ultimately, however well intentioned, tell us that folks are unemployed due to some failings of their own. I guess if we just had a “better class of poor people,” they would all be working and successful.

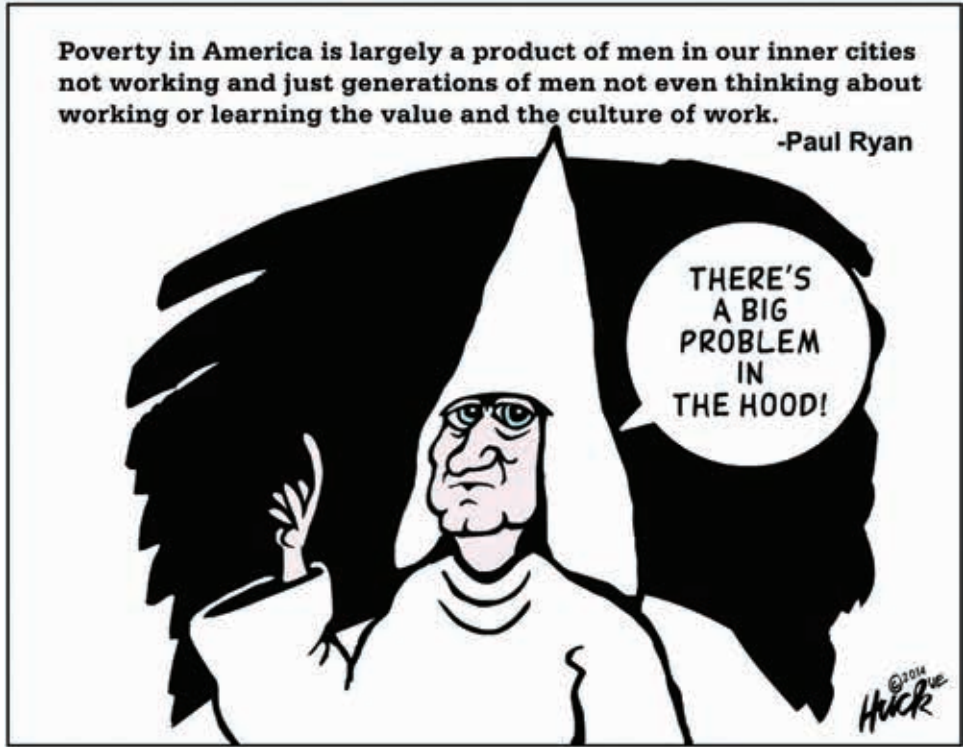
These ideas were being pushed on campuses when I was a student activist in the 60’s by a racist pseudo academic named Banfield. He said poor people, again mostly black workers, were not “future oriented” and couldn’t plan for their futures and a whole slew of phony babble that explained why these workers were unemployed and on public assistance. As students we battled and exposed this garbage as nothing but racism. This modern version of this idea is still nothing but thinly veiled racism.

When it comes down to it, if you look at the U. S. and you see gross racial disparities in every area, you can come to two conclusions. One, that we live in a racist society that in various ways disadvantages especially the Black and Latin working class, or you can conclude that this flows from some inherent weakness or inferiority of these people. These racist ideas from academia in the 60’s and the recent versions don’t immediately seem like racism to a lot of folks because it doesn’t typically involve the bigoted slurs and assertion of inferiority that we are used to seeing as racism. These newer forms of racism are simply thinly veiled and come down to saying these working people are not born inferior but apparently become inferior shortly after birth.

Racist divisions have been the biggest Achilles Heel of the American working class throughout the history of our country. Jay Gould, railroad titan of the late 1800’s famously asserted: “I can hire half the working class to kill the other half.”

If you, want to see a rebirth of the strength of the labor movement. If you want to see a bright future for your children and grandchildren and the rest of the next generation of the working class. If you want to hold on to a public unionized postal service and other public services such as health care, retirement, etc., then you must fight racism constantly, consistently, and with a great sense of the importance it deserves. TO WIN WE MUST SMASH RACISM!

This fight is a central part of our larger fights and we must become acutely aware of how this poison can slip into our thinking and see the lies that are spread to divide and confuse us. And we must remember the words of our great president emeritus Moe Biller, “the struggle continues” and remember as I tell you “don’t let the bastards get you down.”



bling again destroys the economy and throws millions out of work, racist lies are cranked up to get the white working class to blame black workers, those on public assistance, Latino immigrants, etc., rather than their real enemy the bankers and industrialists who created the mess.

As this racist propaganda ramps up it results in cuts to welfare programs like food stamps that is framed as benefiting “welfare queens” the vicious racist image of a young black woman in an urban city bearing more children to bring in more welfare. This lying racist

von Martin and the lynching of old is only the method of killing.

How does this affect postal workers?

Postal employees and APWU members are among the most diverse work forces in most parts of the country. Postal employment has long been one of the relatively few places minority workers could find a decent job. In addition with deaf workers and large numbers of veterans we stand as a shining example of a diverse workforce that is unionized and has secured a decent standard of living with virtually no racist or sexist

“And we must remember the words of our great President Emeritus Moe Biller, ‘the struggle continues’ and remember as I tell you, ‘don’t let the bastards get you down.’”

stereotype has been promoted to once again blame the victim. Also this is not the average face of those on public assistance. The average face is white and belongs to someone who may be disabled and mostly the face is the face of a child.

At the same time, right wing racist politicians pass laws essentially criminalizing being young and black in America. The culture, music and dress of young black men are painted as threatening and murderous. “Stand your ground laws” are passed to legalize the murder of young black workers. It has long been the case that in much of America, folks are routinely stopped for “driving while black” and countless other ways the “criminal justice” system fills prisons with young black workers, but this has escalated with this new round of “stand your ground laws” that republicans are passing in states

wage differentials that is standard in the country.

This is another reason we become a target of anti-working class forces that want to privatize all public work and also want to destroy this example of working class unity and diversity. I think it is important that we understand the importance of this fact and see that our struggle to protect a public unionized postal system is really objectively a part of the struggle against racism. To win our fights, our union must always ally with the fight against racism.

We postal workers must see that racism permeates every part of American culture in many different forms. Often this does not take the form of outright bigotry and racial slurs. There is today this idea being popularized as I have witnessed in our local community of Dubuque.

Liberal seeming antipoverty types

BEST PHOTOGRAPH (*Honorable Mention*)

"Rally Collage"

By Mike Mazurkiewicz, APWU Retiree
Postmark
Saint Paul, Minnesota



BEST COMMUNITY SERVICE (*Honorable Mention*)

Auxiliary to DMI APWU News

By Mark Sarcone, Associate Editor
DMI News & Views
Des Moines, Iowa

It has been a busy and eventful spring and summer for the local auxiliary highlighted by the successful completion of the national auxiliary to the APWU two-year fundraiser for the Wounded Warrior Amputee Softball Team and attendance at the National Auxiliary Convention in Chicago.

Led by project coordinator Robin Arnold, the local auxiliary sold 414 t-shirts and raised \$3,400 for the Wounded Warrior Amputee Softball Team. The Des Moines Auxiliary was one of the top contributing auxiliaries as, nationally, over \$35,000 was raised. Arnold and Deb Dickerson sold the lion's share of t-shirts at all union functions including the Iowa State Convention, the local APWU picnic and the national convention where there, the demand for t-shirts outpaced the supply.

The Des Moines Auxiliary sent one of their largest contingents ever to the national convention in Chicago July 21-25. The local was represented by Dickerson, Cindy Weems, Christine Sar-

cone and Mark Sarcone. Further, Viola Seger, the Iowa State Auxiliary to the APWU president, represented the state auxiliary at the national convention. The highlight of the national convention was the presentation by local auxiliary members of a check for \$1,400 to the national auxiliary for the Wounded Warrior Amputee Softball Team. The local had already raised and presented to the national auxiliary \$2,000 prior to the start of the national convention.

The auxiliary had a presence at the local APWU picnic sponsoring the face painter as part of the children's activities.

Donations for the annual human relations project for Hawthorn Hill began in early July and ran thru Labor Day. Donation boxes were located in the first and second floor break rooms at the plant and in the break room at the VMF. A big THANK YOU to all who were able to make a donation. As of this writing, the final inventory of donations was yet to be counted and presented to Hawthorn Hill but specific donation information will be provided in a future issue.

Over 60 APWU retirees attended the spring retiree meeting at the local hall where the auxiliary hosted a picnic-

themed lunch on May 20. The menu consisted of loose meat sandwiches, hot dogs, brats, side dishes and desserts. Thanks to Jon Arnold for providing his own grill to grill the hot dogs and brats and to Karen Tallman for preparing the meat for the loose meat sandwiches.

A special thank you goes out to Terry

and Sharon Glenn for a generous donation of \$50 to the local auxiliary.

Finally, welcome new auxiliary members Julie Kestel, Kathy Fuller, Morrie Ringlieb, Jennifer Race, Lee Gray, Donna Bates, Deborah Miligan and returning member, Bailey Schlegel.

Sign Up Today!

PPA Editors can gain valuable insight on many topics pertaining to their endeavors in the Members Section of the PPA website

Visit us at

www.apwupostalpress.org

BEST NEWS STORY (*Honorable Mention*)

Can't spot a fake? You better, it's your job

By Louise Balog, Editor
The Newsroom
Mentor, Ohio

Linn's Stamp News recently reported that the postal labels sold in the Automated Postal Center (APC) machines are being counterfeited. Some of them are the ones that have the Mr. Zip design and some come from Stamps.com. Counterfeiting of stamps has gone on from time immemorial but with the postal service crying a money crunch you think they would be making more of a concerted effort to see that all employees were trained to detect fakes and provide the proper equipment to do so.

Since it doesn't look like they plan on it, here are a couple of things to look for. First, on the APC postage label with the Mr. Zip, there is a color strip on the side. That strip is referred to as tagging. It should be red but on counterfeits it looks more pinkish.

Also, under ultraviolet light the real stamp has a glow from phosphorescence whereas the counterfeit would not have that glow. The counterfeit also has clipped corners, like it was cut with a pair of scissors.

The Forever Flag stamp has also been counterfeited. On that stamp the blue should be navy in color or have a purplish hue. The fakes are brighter blue. If you had a question about that stamp, look at the one you suspect alongside a real one. The difference should be obvious.

A stamp collector in Texas, Peter

Elias, has spotted a number of fakes, all of which he has reported to the USPS. He stated that some of the fakes are so good they are difficult to spot. Personally, he feels the Postal Inspection Service is not taking the matter seriously. A retired postal inspector, Howard Petschel, feels the USPS is being taken to the cleaners on this problem. Mr. Petschel is well versed on this topic – he wrote the manual on how to detect counterfeit stamps for the USPS Inspection Service. As a matter of fact, he has published three books on counterfeit stamps.

So what does this mean as a dollar and cents issue? Here are some facts and figures. In 2010 it was estimated that the counterfeiting of stamps cost the USPS \$134.4 million dollars. In one of Mr. Petschel's books, *Inked Print*, he cites the case of a New York man who was sentenced to 33 months in prison and had to pay the USPS \$345,000 for producing face Stamps.com stamps which he sold on the Internet.

A Rochester man was recently convicted of selling thousands of dollars in counterfeit stamps. Stamps that had a face value of \$4,400 he sold for \$2,500. An Internet bookseller, who copied stamps he purchased from Stamps.com, claims his forgeries cost the USPS \$365,827.

Is every counterfeit scamming the USPS to this extent? Highly unlikely, but it all adds up. When I interviewed Chuck Ross in the last issue, he mentioned how he was the only clerk to catch Click-N-Ship packages that had

no postage on them. This is a nationwide problem and the lost revenue is costing the USPS. Why? Because employees are not educated by postal management, what to look for nor are they given periodic updates and reminders on how stamps and package postage is

Here are some suggestions.

1. Every postal inspection office in the country should create a 15 to 30 minute program and then fan out to every office in their district and see that every employee sees their presentation. Don't overlook small offices as scam-

“An Internet bookseller, who copied stamps he purchased from Stamps.com, claims his forgeries cost the USPS \$365,827.”

being faked or totally lacking. Employees are also not provided the tools (UV lights) to check for possible fakes.

What is the Postal Inspection Service's answer to this problem? They claim they take the problem seriously and state that the penalty for counterfeiting (up to 5 years in prison, \$250,000 fine, or both) is proof they take the problem seriously. It's their belief that since counterfeiters can't recreate the phosphorus-treated paper, the cancelling machines should catch most of the fakes. The problem with that line of thought, in my opinion, is the machine misses many cancels. I frequently get mail with no postmark. How can you catch what you don't cancel?

When pressed on how newer personal computers and printers pose a threat to the postal service in regards to counterfeiting, they had no response. Perhaps the cost of investigating cases like this is expensive but at what long term cost?

mers go to these offices thinking they can get away with something.

2. Provide the tools to detect counterfeits, such as the use of UV light.
3. Every month enclose with an employee's paycheck stub a flyer on what to look for or provide a service talk to all employees.
4. Mr. Elias, the stamp collector, said that if nothing else, the Postal Inspection Service should send out "cease and desist letters" to the smaller time counterfeiters. That would make the scammer aware they are being watched.

If everyone would just make a concerted effort to get educated and be vigilant this problem could be radically reduced and save the USPS millions. Have your union steward approach management and tell them you want more information on the counterfeiting of stamps. We need take ownership of this problem. As union employees, we need to show these crooks we are smarter than they are. Get educated!

BEST CARTOON (*Honorable Mention*)

By Robert Dyer, Jr., Editor
Evergreen State Postal Worker
Mountlake Terrace, Washington



BEST HEADLINE (*First Place*)

By John Miceli, Editor
The Hi-Lites
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Must See Dimondstein TV !!!



APWU President Mark Dimondstein appeared on *The Ed Show* on MSNBC December 10, 2013, to discuss the campaign to protect the USPS as a public service. To watch the video, please go to:
www.apwu.org/news/webart/2013/13-141-dimondstein-ed_show-131218.htm

BEST CREATIVE WRITING (*Honorable Mention*)

By Paul Felton, Editor
480-481 Communicator
Ferndale, Michigan

Minimum Wage Poem

The fight to raise the minimum wage
Is in a very critical stage
We need signatures, yours and mine
And everyone you know should sign
And since some folks may not have heard
We all have got to spread the word
To make \$7.40 an hour
Doesn't give you much buying power
The proposal that's on the table
Means that these workers will be able
To spend some money at the store
To feed their families and what's more
It helps build a stronger tax base
In any town, in any place
It will be in a few years when
The wage will rise up to \$10.10
It'll reach that much a few years later
For your waitress and your waiter
And this proposal calls for giving
Adjustments for the cost of living
This proposal is quite modest
But it does represent some progress
These workers all deserve a raise
Those who object really amaze
Me, when there's so much corporate greed
We surely can help those in need
If we stand together in this fight
We can assert our collective might
If this passes it helps us all
The time is now, so heed the call
Let's turn a historical page
And let's increase the minimum wage

BEST PHOTOGRAPH (First Place)



“Looking ahead to the Christmas Season!”

By Karen Gordon, Editor
Southern Oregon Area Review
Medford, Oregon

BEST COMMUNITY SERVICE (First Place)

Two neighborhood professionals who deserve some recognition

By Clayton Worsdell,
USPS Customer
Unionizer
Walnut Creek, California

My name is Clayton Worsdell. I live in the neighborhood that is serviced by the Casa Correro Station of the U.S. Post Office. This postal station is located in the Treat Shopping Center 4494 Treat Blvd, Concord, CA 94521.

I am one of many lucky customers who have had the opportunity to experience the great customer service by Ramon Torres and Leo Harmano, who are

sonnel called floaters who assist in this office during the week and especially during the busy seasons and the holidays.

Ramon and Leo make it a pleasure to come into the post office. They are always very professional and cheerful, along with a great sense of humor and interaction with each customer. Whether you are purchasing stamps, mailing a letter or package, requiring assistance with any transaction, information, or just picking up your mail and saying “hello,” they can brighten your day.

Every transaction is different. Some are very quick and routine. Others can be very complicated and time consuming, but they remain patient and make it a comfortable and pleasant experience and always with a smile. This is why



Ramon Torres raises the flag every morning.

the postal professionals in this station. Ramon has been with the postal service for 30 Years, and has been at this station for the past 13 years. Ramon starts the day at the station by putting up the flag every morning, no matter what the weather, rain or shine.

Leo has been with the postal service for 26 years and has been at this station for the past 5 years. Together they have over 56 years of experience and expertise as postal professional employees. Also as part of their team they receive additional support from post office per-



Leo Harmano (left) and Ramon Torres.

the Casa Correo Station has received the 5 Star Customer Service Station Award. The next time you go to the post office stop and say “hi” to these dedicated professionals. It just may brighten your day.

Editor’s Note: A postal unit has been opened in the Staple’s store next door to this station.

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