

# Postal Newsletter

## Press

AMERICAN POSTAL WORKERS UNION

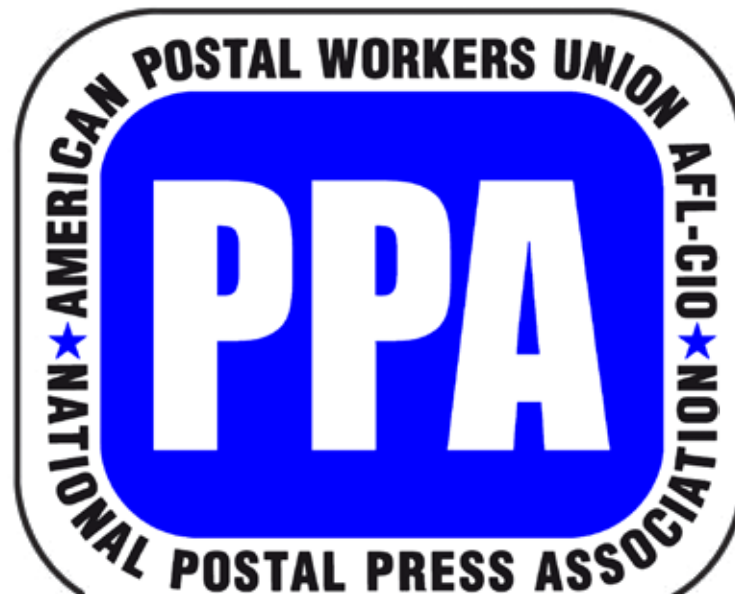
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## Delegates to consider PPA Resolution of financial support

Among the resolutions to be considered by delegates to the 20th Biennial Convention of the American Postal Workers Union on August 23-27 in Detroit, Michigan will be a Resolution of Financial Support for the APWU National Postal Press Association. This measure has gained wide support and has been adopted in various forms by **23 state conventions and a number of locals throughout the APWU.** (For more information, please see pages 2-4).

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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.**



# Resolution of Financial Support APWU National Postal Press Association

**Whereas:** The APWU National Postal Press Association has effectively served the membership of our great union for forty-six years, and

**Whereas:** The APWU National Postal Press Association has evolved into one of the largest and most respected labor media organizations in the country and has been recognized by other labor organizations and groups for its many outstanding accomplishments, and

**Whereas:** The APWU National Postal Press Association provides important and necessary services to our union with its ongoing program of education, assistance and information in the field of communication; including libel, copyright, internal and federal election regulations and many other important subjects which are vital to the interests of our union, along with continually working to advance the goals and objectives of the APWU, and

**Whereas:** The APWU National Postal Press Association has demonstrated integrity in encouraging member publications and websites to be objective, honest and accurate in reporting information to the membership, and has established a record of nonpartisan achievement setting a standard that is without equal, and

**Whereas:** The APWU National Postal Press Association has continually provided these many services to our membership and our union at a cost that is far below the level of service it provides, especially in the area of assisting its members with avoiding potential libel suits which could be costly to our union, and

**Whereas:** The APWU National Postal Press Association has been honored to receive the recognition and support of the APWU national organization and local and state organizations throughout the APWU both in membership affiliation and via resolutions at past state and national conventions of this union, and

**Whereas:** The APWU National Postal Press Association has operated for fourteen years without an increase in the APWU National Constitution per capita structure that was established at the 1996 APWU National Convention, and

**Whereas:** The APWU National Postal Press Association has worked diligently over the past fourteen years to operate within its budget and reduce operating costs wherever possible but no organization can continue to properly function and render necessary services without adjustments in financial support;

**Therefore Be It Resolved:** That the delegates in attendance at the 2010 APWU National Convention amend Article 16, Section 2(e) of the APWU Constitution to read: "The APWU shall remit **eight (8¢) cents** of the national per capita tax, per month, per member to the Postal Press Association."

## *A matter of cents (sense)*

# Resolution seeks three cent PPA funding adjustment

by Tony Carobine, President

For the first time in **14 years**, the APWU National Postal Press Association is asking national convention delegates to support an adjustment in its funding. Currently, Article 16, Section 2(e) of the APWU Constitution provides that "The APWU shall remit five (5¢) cents of the national per capita tax, per month, per member to the Postal Press Association." The resolution calls for adjusting this amount to eight cents per month per member. This measure has gained wide support and has been adopted in various forms by **23 state conventions and a number of locals throughout the APWU.**

Following are answers to questions concerning this resolution:

**What is the reason for this request?**

The main reason for the request from 5 cents to 8 cents per month per member is that since the last adjustment took place in 1996 APWU membership has decreased by over 100,000 members. As a result, the PPA's constitutional funding has decreased by \$62,245.20 per year.

**How much revenue would the three cent adjustment generate?**

Based on a 175,000 membership figure, \$5,250.00 per month, \$63,000.00 per year.

**What is the PPA's current monthly and annual constitutional funding as compared to 14 years ago?**

When the last adjustment took place in 1996 the PPA's monthly constitutional funding was \$13,978.90 or \$167,746.80 annually. Current constitutional funding is \$8,791.80 per

month, \$105,501.60 annually. The three cents per month per member would only restore the PPA's funding to the 1996 level but is an amount that will allow the PPA to continue programs and services to the membership.

**What other factors have necessitated the need for this adjustment?**

Coupled by the decrease of income due to the loss of members and natu-

**What will these funds be used for?**

The funds will be used to pay for existing operating costs. Operating costs for all organizations rise over time. Despite constant efforts by the PPA to be frugal and reduce expenses wherever possible, there comes a point where an adjustment in funding is needed to cover expenses, espe-



rally occurring increases in operating costs, the request for the 3 cent increase is also fueled by the fact there is no provision for the PPA to receive periodic incremental increases, as is the case per the national constitution for the national APWU and locals. Over the past 14 years there have been approximately 16 automatic dues adjustments to help locals and the national union with increased operating costs and the decrease in membership numbers.

cially since income has continued to decline over the past 14 years. In fact, current APWU constitutional funding for the PPA is at the amount it was in 1986, 24 years ago. Please remember, the modest three cent request would only restore funding to the 1996 level which demonstrates the PPA's continuing commitment to fiscal responsibility. **The PPA has always operated at the lowest possible cost while maintaining the highest level of programs and services.**

# PPA: a proud tradition of service

The PPA was established as an educational organization dedicated to assisting postal union editors with their duties and responsibilities as labor communicators. Over the past 46 years the PPA has proudly fulfilled this mission by providing its members with a variety of programs and services to meet their needs. Following is an overview of programs and services:

- **A nationwide communications network.** The PPA has a well-established network consisting of nearly 300 local, state, national, retiree, auxiliary publications and websites. Via an exchange of newsletters, PPA members are kept up-to-date on news from around the country. This service has proven to be a valuable resource to editors and other union officers for dealing with a wide range of postal worker issues.

- **PPA Newsletter.** This publication provides assistance to PPA members with the performance of their duties as communicators and promotes the goals and objectives of the American Postal Workers Union. All aspects of newsletter publishing from writing and layout to legal issues and suggestions for content are addressed along with other forms of communication.

- **Reference material.** In-depth material especially prepared for APWU communicators that explains and offers guidance on the subjects of responsible journalism, editorial policies, editorial policy committees, internal union elections, libel, invasion of privacy, copyright reprints, writing and publication layout/design.

- **Federal Elections, Union Publications and Websites.** Updated and published each federal election cycle and available in booklet form and the Members Only section of the PPA website. Covered are federal regulations regarding the inclusion of material in a union publication or union website pertaining to elections for federal office, plus the proper procedure for publishing APWU COPA solicitations. Also included are suggestions for educating members and their families about the candidates and issues in the campaign and techniques for increasing member/family turnout at the polls on Election Day.

- **Advertising for the Union Publication.** Recognizing that some APWU affiliates need to consider advertising to help offset the cost of producing a paper, especially in this time of tight budgets; the PPA booklet *Advertising for the Union Publication* is a step-by-step guide; from techniques for selling ads, to rates, to ethics.

- **PPA Graphics and Resource Book.** Featuring 17 individual sections, this 223-page book (also available on CD-ROM) is designed to help editors enhance their efforts to deliver the message of unionism and promote the goals and objectives of the union through the use of graphic images and labor historical information.

- **Confidential review of articles.** When an editor receives material for the paper that he or she feels may be inappropriate or

could be libelous, the PPA president (upon request and before the material is published) will provide a confidential review and offer possible solutions. This service has successfully helped avoid a number of costly law suits.

- **Assistance with establishing a communications program.** Information and individual assistance is available to APWU affiliates that desire to establish a publication or other form of communications link with their members.

- **Publication critique.** Upon request, the PPA provides an editor with a critique of his or her publication. The findings are prepared in a detailed written report with constructive suggestions for possible improvement of the publication.

- **Individual assistance.** A widely used service that helps PPA members resolve problems or answer questions that arise regarding their responsibilities as communicators.

- **Workshops.** As part of a continuing educational program, workshops are conducted to help members improve the quality of their publications and keep current on the latest changes and trends in the world of communication, labor journalism and legal responsibilities involved with publishing.

- **Biennial PPA Conference.** This three-day event instituted in 1966 features a variety of labor journalism workshops to help APWU communicators improve communication with the membership.

- **Awards program.** Established in 1967, the awards program recognizes outstanding work in newsletter production, writing, editing and website content and design.

- **Building the Local Union.** Co-developed by the PPA and Ohio Postal Workers Union, this workshop program provides information needed to build a stronger and more vibrant local union through the use of various communication methods.

- **PPA website.** With general information about the PPA and the many services it provides, the site features a Member Resources section that includes downloadable information for use in publications, resource material, links and a variety of other items of help to APWU communicators.

- **Periodic mailings/PPA email network.** PPA members are kept informed about PPA activities and information of relevance to their duties as communicators.

- **Huck/Konopacki Labor Cartoons.** Monthly cartoons dealing with worker and social issues for use in PPA member publications.

# Internal union elections and the LMRDA

**Editor's Note:** *The following information is being provided as a guide to ensure fair and equal treatment of all candidates during this national APWU election year and to help APWU affiliates avoid election law violations.*

Title IV of the Labor Management Reporting and Disclosure Act of 1959, as amended (LMRDA or the Act) establishes election procedures to be followed by all unions covered by this Act, regardless of whether their constitution and bylaws so provide. The Act does not spell out detailed procedures; rather, it sets minimum requirements. Beyond this, elections are to be conducted according to the constitution and bylaws of each union, as long as the union's rules do not conflict with the provisions of the Act.

Under Section 1209 of the Postal Reorganization Act, unions of U.S. Postal Service employees are subject to the LMRDA.

Therefore, the LMRDA administered by the United States Department of Labor must be followed concerning internal union elections. In addition, sections of the Act contain provisions affecting the use of a labor union publication in internal union elections.

Section 401(g) of the LMRDA provides that: "No monies received by any labor organization by way of dues, assessment, or similar levy, and no monies of an employer shall be contributed or applied to promote the candidacy of any person in any election subject to the provisions of this title. Such monies of a labor organization may be utilized for notices, factual statements of issues not involving candidates, and other expenses necessary for holding an election."

This means that since a union publication is funded by the union, it cannot be used for the purpose of promoting the candidacy of any individual running for union office. Also, a union website that involves the use of union resources to operate cannot be used to promote (or attack) anyone's candidacy. The same is true regarding the use of any union facilities and equipment. Such activity is an indirect expenditure of union funds which is prohibited under Section 401(g) of the LMRDA.

To avoid promoting the candidacy of any person, union publications should afford fair and equal treatment or publicity to candidates for union office and be fair and impartial in reporting the activities of candidates.

If it chooses, a union newspaper can make equal space available to each bona fide candidate running for any particular office, as long as the candidates are notified on an equal basis of the availability of the publication for this purpose. The law is specific in this regard. A union newspaper has the choice of all candidates for a particular office - or none. Once the publication decides to open the newspaper to candidates, it must offer space to all candidates for that particular office on an equal basis.

Paid political advertising is legal provided that all candidates for a particular office or offices are given an equal opportunity to purchase space for an ad. And, provided that all candidates are charged

the same consistent with space used.

Also, a union may neither attack a candidate in a union-financed publication nor urge the nomination or election of a candidate in a union-financed letter to the members.

A "Letters to the Editor" column should not be used for the purpose of advancing the candidacy of an individual or individuals nor should it be used to attack a candidate or candidates. Letters to the Editor should either be eliminated or closely monitored during the election period in order to avoid conflict with the intent of the law.

These laws are not intended to restrict anyone's rights but rather to protect the rights of the membership and to ensure equal treatment for all candidates.

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## Union election review

Following are three of the most common questions that have arisen during past APWU national elections affecting union publications. Please contact the PPA for assistance with questions not covered here.

**I receive an informational article during the election period from a candidate (either incumbent or non-incumbent) which I believe would be of interest to my membership. This person is not a regular contributor or has never submitted an article before. Can I publish the article if no mention is made of the fact that the writer is a candidate?**

No. Even though the article makes no mention of the fact that the writer is a candidate, the writer is not a **regular contributor** and therefore would in effect be receiving exposure (during the election period) to the detriment of other candidates.

**Would it be appropriate to accept campaign statements from candidates running for specific national offices for publication in a local or state paper as long as each candidate for that specific office is given an equal opportunity to submit a campaign statement?**

Yes. This would not be an election law violation as long as all candidates are treated equally. For example, each candidate must be permitted the same amount of words or space and the same amount of time to submit the statement. The affected candidates

should be sent a notice about this opportunity on the same day, preferably by certified mail, return receipt. That way, if there is any question later about equal notification, there will be proof that each candidate was afforded the same opportunity.

**If the executive board endorses candidates for national APWU office, can I print this information in the paper?**

No. The only kind of endorsements that can be reported in your publication are endorsements made by the **general membership** at a regular or specially called membership meeting. **You cannot in any fashion report endorsements made only by the executive board.**

When an endorsement of candidates is made by the general membership and published, it must be written and presented as a straight news story. The news story must not drift over the line into propaganda for (or against) those candidates who are endorsed - or who failed to gain the endorsement.

Moreover, the printing of such endorsement in a news story should be distributed to the publication's normal mailing list. To increase the circulation in an effort to reach a larger audience only for the purpose of publicizing such endorsements could be construed as employing union funds and/or equipment to advance the candidacy of a candidate or candidates.

# Sounds good, until reality bites

by Cathy Hanson, Editor-at-Large

Here in Minnesota, Republican Governor Tim Pawlenty dumped 35,000 people into the medical care plan Minnesota offers low income people by not funding the General Assistance Medical Care program. Having had a son enrolled in MinnesotaCare, I can tell you first hand that it is a confusing system at best, not all clinics and doctors participate in it and the services they offer seem scant compared to what I get with my insurance plan.

Looking at the website for The Minnesota Department of Human Services, I have

services are provided through health plans. People can choose which health plan they want from those offering MinnesotaCare coverage in their county.”

**The reality bite:** 9 of the 12 Dental Providers in Wright County are not accepting new MinnesotaCare patients. The one that does is 20 miles away from my house. There is one medical clinic with one doctor within walking distance for my son to use if he could afford MinnesotaCare now.

**A “sound good” bite:** “MinnesotaCare is funded by a state tax on Minnesota hospitals and health care providers, federal

His mother lives in Albert Lea. They have to coordinate her days off with his medical appointments. She has to drive to Duluth to get him, take him to Brooklyn Park, back to Duluth and then drive home herself. 802 mile round trip. Seventeen hospitals around the state could have applied to become CCDSs. Four hospitals did. And only after they capped the number of patients they were required to see. And they are all here in Minneapolis/St. Paul – no hospitals out in the state signed on.

How can Tim Pawlenty look this man in the eye and tell him this system is a better thing for him? The man’s mother was indirectly affected, and said it’s not a burden to help him, bless her soul – but anyone who has to drive 802 miles a couple times a month or more on their own dime is going to be stressed financially with the price of gas, not to mention the wear and tear on the vehicle. Our conservative leaders say they care about people – when they’re in the womb – but after that they ignore the true needs of our citizens. Forget about education and health care – you’re on your own – “personal responsibility” – that is, until you’re needed for the next war.

And for the people who choose not to enroll – their options are to get outpatient prescription drugs from any pharmacy that takes Minnesota Health Care Programs coverage. That’s kind of a “sound good” bite and a reality bite in the same sentence. They MAY have to pay for other medical services, including the doctor visit to get the prescription. They MAY be able to get alcohol or drug treatment services through the Consolidated Chemical Dependency Treatment fund. They should call their county worker to find out. They MAY be able to get free or low cost care from a local community clinic or hospital. In my experience, when bureaucracy says it “may” cover something, well, it “may not” too and usually doesn’t. Now the man in the article hears and sees things when he is not taking his medication. What is going to happen to him if for whatever reason, he cannot make that trip to the cities, or his mother can’t make the trip to Duluth to get him? Do you think the local hospital or clinic is going to say, “Aw, come on in, we’ll fix you up. We’ll talk money and insurance later.”

*Please see “Reality Bites”, page 7*

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*“A single payer system; universal health care for all – hospitals, doctors, nurses, custodians, and technicians all getting paid a decent living wage, nobody will have to go without health care.”*

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to just laugh. It sounds so good and in reality is so terrible – I should be crying.

**Here’s a “sound good” bite:** “The program serves an average of more than 100,000 people each month. It has been critical to Minnesota’s welfare reform strategy, helping people leave welfare and go to work without losing health care coverage.”

**The reality bite:** The person leaves welfare and goes to work for (let’s be optimistic) \$15 an hour. They start the paperwork to enroll in MinnesotaCare. They start working. They get a paycheck, hopefully more than they were getting on welfare. MinnesotaCare sends them a letter telling them they are not eligible for MinnesotaCare because their employer offers health insurance and pays half the premium. Which leaves them the other half to pay, roughly \$250 a month. Deduct \$125 per paycheck per month now and did they bring home more money than they did on welfare? If their employer does not offer health insurance, then they enroll in MinnesotaCare and pay on a sliding scale according to income. So right when they start making enough money to leave welfare, they also have to pay out more in order to be covered medically. Critical to Minnesota’s welfare reform strategy? Yes, I’d say so – in a bait-and-switch kind of way.

**A “sound good” bite:** “All health care

Medicaid matching funds and enrollee premiums.”

**The reality bite:** Minnesota hospitals and health care providers turn around and tack that cost right onto your bill. The state taxes them, we pay more for health care so they can recoup that cost. The dentist I go to has a poster in every room stating just that – he is charging more to recoup the 2% Minnesota taxes him to provide care to patients who use MinnesotaCare. A *Minneapolis Star Tribune* article dated June 1, 2010, explained the new GAMC plan and chronicled the changes one man was going to make because of this legislation.

**The “sound good” bite:** “Beginning June 1, 2010, most GAMC services will be provided through new coordinated care delivery systems. (CCDS) A CCDS is run by a hospital. The hospital may include area clinics and other providers as part of its coordinated care delivery system. It doesn’t matter where you live in Minnesota, you may enroll in any CCDS. Or choose not to enroll.”

**The reality bite:** For the man in the article, his trip to see his doctor was no longer a 10 minute bus ride downtown in Duluth. He suffers from mental illness and several chronic conditions, does not drive or work and lives on a truly scant amount of money from State Aid. The nearest CCDS to him is North Memorial, here in Brooklyn Park.

# Preserving history

by **Lance Coles , Editor-at-Large**

Digital photography has expanded the number of photographers in the world, unfortunately most of them will never be professional or make much money in the profession – but it is a good thing there are more photos out there!

Even though digital photography has made taking good pictures easier, and made it easier to upload on a computer, share via emails, and upload on programs – it has made it easier for those photos to disappear forever.

If you are not familiar with digital photography – you will be. Film has been replaced with memory cards. These cards come in various sizes and storage availability. The issue I see with these memory cards is that their memory is only as long as you say it is, or until they are full.

You can fill up a card, and then put a new one in the camera, and keep shooting, then replace that one when full – not a recommended process. This is expensive and not necessary.

What is recommended is that you have at least two (and probably more) memory cards. While you are out shooting, and you fill up one card, you can continue to keep shooting with out having to download and delete – just replace the card.

These cards are very sensitive and care needs to be taken when using and storing them. They also do wear out.

This leads me to the main point of my article.

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## Reality bites

*continued from page 6*

Things like this literally make me sick. A single payer system; universal health care for all – hospitals, doctors, nurses, custodians, and technicians all getting paid a decent living wage, nobody will have to go without health care. This seems like such a simple, good idea for America and there are so many rich people against it. I don't understand it. It boils down to the dollar and nothing else. Greedy, rich people who want to make more money. I simply don't understand why anyone would be against universal health care. Bureaucratic insanity? I just don't know.

First off, take your pictures, then download them to another storage unit like an external hard drive, or computer, and do this often. Don't assume that those pictures will stay there. You may lose the card, it may become damaged and you lose those pictures.

Second once you have moved the images from your card to another hard drive, make copies on CD's right away. Again your external hard drive or computer may crash and you could lose all those pictures.

Once you have saved these pictures off your cards, burn at least 2 CD's of these and store each one in a different place. One at home, one in safety deposit box or office. I recommend that you also make copies of these pictures. You can go to Kiosks at many stores where you can get them made for around 20 cents each.

You have to think of these CD's as your negatives, and they may be your only option to seeing these pictures again. Blank CD's are pretty cheap.

Burn the CD's and mark them so you know what is on them. This will make it easier to find the pictures you want when you are looking for specific ones.

If most of you are like me, I have boxes of old pictures and their negatives at the union hall or home. At least you have these to look back on and share with future members and the world.

If you do not make these CD's and prints, you are setting things in motion where your visual history or your local or state union may be lost with no chance to share with those that will follow us.

Keep taking pictures – lots of them. We need those that follow to be able to see what we have done and when it was done. The history of the labor movement and our union's are too important to be lost to the assumption that we will always have those images on a card or in our computers.

Back up these images, make copies and prints and keep taking pictures.

*Make plans to attend  
an educational event!*

**The 2011 National  
PPA Editors' Conference**

**August 10-13, 2011**

**Doubletree Hotel at the  
Entrance to Universal Orlando**

**Guestroom rate: \$79.00**

**APWU National Postal Press Association**

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# Is your union bug legitimate?

If your paper is commercially printed, is the “union printer” you are using in fact a union printer and is the printer licensed to use the union label also called “union bug” on your publication? The following infor-

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*“Each shop with union members must be able to produce a ‘Union Label License Agreement’ upon request.”*

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mation is intended to help you select a legitimate union printer.

One large printer’s union is the Graphic Communications Conference of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters (GCC/IBT). To obtain this label, the printing facility must unionize all aspects of its business. (This includes typesetting, camera preparation, press and mailing departments.) Each shop with union members must be able to produce a “Union Label License Agreement” upon request. If the printer you use claims to be a member of the GCC/IBT, but cannot produce this document – be very concerned and make some inquiries.

Also, the union bug of a legitimate GCC print shop will have a number and either a “C” or “M” next to it. There is cause for concern if there aren’t any letters or numbers beside it.

Before being issued a license, an applicant must have a storefront (retail of-

vice space), a business telephone line and at least three full-time employees. Since the inception of desktop publishing, many people have tried to obtain a union license while having their “business” at home as a part-time job. The above requirements help ensure the legitimacy of union printers. If someone claims to be a union printer and wants to meet at their home and not an established office, or if everything just does not seem right, ask to see their Union Label License Agreement. Also, check their references and/or with the international union they claim to be associated with.

Another printer union label is the International Typographical Union (part of the Communications Workers of America). Members of this union should also be able to produce a Union Label License Agree-

ment. For a listing of union shops under CWA log on to [www.alliedlabel.org/cwa-typo-shops.html](http://www.alliedlabel.org/cwa-typo-shops.html)

The Allied Printing Trades Council (APTC) is not a union. It is similar to a Central Labor Council located in your community. GCC and other union print shops must belong to the APTC (if there is one located in the immediate area). The city in which they are members will appear in the bottom portion of their logo and the number to the right of their logo identifies the facility in which the union printing has been performed. If there is no number next to the APTC logo, there is cause for concern.

Unionized print shops that are licensed to use the labels of the APTC or GCC can be found on the Internet by logging on to [www.gciu.org/ext/shop\\_search.asp](http://www.gciu.org/ext/shop_search.asp)

## In Michigan, Allied sues firm over bogus label

Unauthorized use of a union bug can get expensive. Two printing companies in Michigan learned that lesson the hard way recently when they settled out of court with the Michigan Allied Printing Trades Council. The Michigan Allied had sued A-I Business Products and Accelerated Press Inc. after discovering the two firms had conspired to produce a printing job using the bug belonging to a third firm. Tom Grenfell, who serves as Secretary-Treasurer of the Michigan Allied, explained that the organization maintains a legal fund specifically set up to prosecute bug violations. The \$5,000 collected in this case will become part of that fund. “We can’t let these firms get away with illegitimate use of our bug. That’s why we’re always aggressive about policing its use,” Grenfell said.

– *Label Letter*, Union Label & Service Trades Department, AFL-CIO