

San Antonio Alamo Area Local #195



Celebrating 103 Years of
Representing Postal Workers

DISPATCH

VOLUME 66 NO. 4

SAN ANTONIO ALAMO AREA LOCAL



JULY / AUGUST 2020

PRESIDENT

CHRIS RINCON

Uncharted Waters!!!!



Good day Brothers and Sisters,

I would like to thank the officers and Stewards for keeping the members informed of the many issues associated with COVID-19.

The number infected with the COVID-19 virus is start-

ing to rise. Many people are relaxing on the social distancing and wearing of the mask. Many establishments have closed due to employee becoming infected with the virus.

Here in the Rio Grande District the postal service did not have many cases of employees with the virus during March, April, and May. Within the last two weeks that number has surged and is now close to 60 postal employees infected with this virus. We have weekly teleconferences with the district manager concerning the postal employees and their personal protective equipment, the virus, and the stand-up talks that are being conducted by management.

Proper Protective Equipment

When these teleconferences first started the biggest complaint from the unions was the lack of personal protective equipment (PPE) for the employees. The masks, gloves, and hand sanitizers. During one of the videos I had posted on our website I informed the members that if they were told by their supervisors that there were no PPE available that the employees was to notify their Steward or to call the office. When we were notified of these issues, I would relay these incidents to postal management to get the issue resolved. Many times the issues were resolved within the hour. If a member is being told there is no (PPE) available, please call the office and let us know.

I need to know the station/section you work in, the supervisor's name who told you there is no (PPE) so we can get you the equipment you need to be safe at work.

The postal service was entrusted to provide Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) to each and every member. Some stations/section this process was done immediately, others it took some time. Most of these issues of members not being provided their PPE were resolved during the daily teleconference. Now the main issue is getting the members PS Form 3971 and supporting documents up to the nurse and ensuring the members is paid accordingly.

Covid-19 Information

There is lots of misinformation circling around the workroom floor concerning this virus. The local has added a tab on our

website (www.saaal0195-apwu.org) with important information concerning the COVID-19 pandemic. Don't rely on the rumors from the workroom floor for the latest information.

Union Meetings

The local had not had any membership meetings at the Union hall since February. I am not sure when the local will have another meeting. WE have an obligation to ensure that each and every member is safe when they come to our meetings. At present we can not do that. The number of confirmed cases here in the Alamo city continues to rise on a daily basis. There is no union business so important that we would risk a member's life just to come to a meeting.

Please remember to keep each and every one safe. Members should wear the masks whenever they are out and about. Let's do our part in trying to prevent the spread of the virus.

Semper Fi!!!

"...concerning the COVID-19 pandemic. Don't rely on the rumors from the workroom floor..."

ALAMO AREA LOCAL DISPATCH

Carlos BarriosEditor
Chris Rincon Associate Editor

This is the Official Publication of the
San Antonio Alamo Area Local,
American Postal Workers Union, AFL-CIO

AFFILIATIONS

American Postal Workers Union, AFL-CIO
Texas Postal Workers Union, AFL-CIO
San Antonio AFL-CIO Council
Public Employees Council, AFL-CIO
APWU Postal Press Association
Texas Postal Press Association
Post Office Women for Equal Rights

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Asst. Clerk Craft Dir. "B"..... Ruben Hernandez
MVS Craft Director..... Faron Hierholzer
Asst. MVS Craft Director..... Dennis Barbosa
Maintenance Craft Director..... Robert Proo
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Editor..... Carlos Barrios
Network/IT Administrator Nick DiPasquale
Trustee Chairperson..... Ron Odom
Trustee (Clerk)..... Monique Kyles
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APWU Health Plan Rep..... David Estrada
Legislative Director..... Paul Martin

Opinions expressed in this publication are those of the individual writer and not necessarily those of the Editor or the Executive Board. Articles submitted for publication must not contain negative or derogatory comments about members or the union in articles or letters to the editor. Deadline for articles to appear in the upcoming issue of the Dispatch will be advertised in the Dispatch. All articles should be presented in MS Word format and email :

plantcraftdirector0195@yahoo.com

PHONE NUMBERS

UNION OFFICE (210) 271-0853

FAX (210) 224- 6221

STEWARDS OFFICE GMF (210) 967-4729

Web Site: www.saaal0195-apwu.org

CORONAVIRUS RESOURCES

AFL-CIO

What COVID-19 protective measures can you take?

Be **SUPPORTIVE**
Be **CAREFUL**
Be **ALERT**
Be **KIND**

Be **READY** to fight
#COVID19

Be **INFORMED**
Be **PREPARED**
Be **SMART**
Be **SAFE**

Be **READY** to fight
#COVID19

COVID 19 CORONAVIRUS DISEASE **What you need to know about coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19)**

What is coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19)?

Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) is a respiratory illness that can spread from person to person. The virus that causes COVID-19 is a novel coronavirus that was first identified during an investigation into an outbreak in Wuhan, China.

Can people in the U.S. get COVID-19?

COVID-19 is spreading from person to person in China, and limited spread among close contacts has been detected in some countries outside China, including the United States. At this time, however, this virus is NOT currently spreading in communities in the United States. Right now, the greatest risk of infection is for people in China or people who have traveled to China. Risk of infection is dependent on exposure. Close contacts of people who are infected are at greater risk of exposure, for example health care workers and close contacts of people who are infected with the virus that causes COVID-19. CDC continues to closely monitor the situation.

Have there been cases of COVID-19 in the U.S.?

Yes. The first case of COVID-19 in the United States was reported on January 21, 2020. The current count of cases of COVID-19 in the United States is available on CDC's webpage at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/cases-in-us.html>.

How does COVID-19 spread?

The virus that causes COVID-19 probably emerged from an animal source, but now it seems to be spreading from person to person. It's important to note that person-to-person spread can happen on a continuum. Some diseases are highly contagious (like measles), while other diseases are less so. At this time, it's unclear how easily or sustainably the virus that causes COVID-19 is spreading between people. Learn what is known about the spread of newly emerged coronaviruses at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/about/transmission.html>.

What are the symptoms of COVID-19?

Patients with COVID-19 have had mild to severe respiratory illness with symptoms of

- fever
- cough
- shortness of breath

What are severe complications from this virus?

Many patients have pneumonia in both lungs.

How can I help protect myself?

The best way to prevent infection is to avoid being exposed to the virus that causes COVID-19.

There are simple everyday preventive actions to help prevent the spread of respiratory viruses. These include

- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol if soap and water are not available.

If you are sick, to keep from spreading respiratory illness to others, you should

- Stay home when you are sick.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.

What should I do if I recently traveled to China and got sick?

If you were in China within the past 14 days and feel sick with fever, cough, or difficulty breathing, you should seek medical care. Call the office of your health care provider before you go, and tell them about your travel and your symptoms. They will give you instructions on how to get care without exposing other people to your illness. While sick, avoid contact with people, don't go out and delay any travel to reduce the possibility of spreading illness to others.

Is there a vaccine?

There is currently no vaccine to protect against COVID-19. The best way to prevent infection is to avoid being exposed to the virus that causes COVID-19.

Is there a treatment?

There is no specific antiviral treatment for COVID-19. People with COVID-19 can seek medical care to help relieve symptoms.



CS 314937-A 02/21/2020

For more information: www.cdc.gov/COVID19

VICE PRESIDENT

FRED W. DUNCAN

On the Job Injury (IOD)



Hello Brothers & Sisters!

I hope you are staying safe and healthy during this time of great change. I would like to speak to you today about on-the-job injuries. Particularly, what you must do and/or provide when you have an on the job injury (IOD) and are unable to report

for work because of the injury.

Type of Injuries

First what is an on the job injury? There are two types a traumatic injury and an occupational disease. The simple difference between the two is that a traumatic injury usually occurs within a single shift, and an occupational disease occurs over an extended period.

For reference these definitions and provisions are spelled out in the Federal Employees Compensation Act or F.E.C.A. for short, Title 20 of the Code of Federal Regulations.

Regardless of the type of on the job injury the medical requirement for payment/claim acceptance is the same. The employee must either submit or plan to have a medical report submitted on their behalf. It must be clearly understood that a medical report is not a simple return to work note.

Medical Reports

The medical report should contain the following:

- Dates of the examination and treatment
- History given by the employee
- Physical findings
- Results of diagnostic tests
- Diagnosis
- Course of treatment
- A description of any other conditions found but not due to the claimed injury.
- The treatment given or recommended for the claimed injury.
- The physician's opinion, with medical reasons, as to causal relationship between the diagnosed conditions and the factors or conditions of the employment.
- The extent of disability affecting the employee's

ability to work due to the injury.

- The prognosis for recovery' and
- All other material findings.

As you can see brothers and sisters a medical report is far from a return to work note. If absence from work is necessary due to your injury on duty you must give management notice. This is done by calling your supervisor or office in which you work, *not the call-in system (IVR)*. In fact, when you call the IVR or the 800 number you will notice there is no choice for IOD leave, therefore the IVR says "*for all other requests call your supervisor*". In the event you cannot reach your supervisor or office then use the IVR, but you must correct your request upon your return to work.

"If absence from work is necessary due to your injury on duty you must give management notice"

Leave Options

Finally, you have two leave options when you must be absent due to your IOD.

The options are to use your annual leave, sick leave, or

leave without pay (LWOP) as FMLA; or use LWOP IOD. Yes, IOD absences can be covered as FMLA and you must submit the same FMLA paperwork to cover absences. The second choice is LWOP IOD which means you are electing to be paid for the absence from the Department of Labor (D.O.L.).

In this case you **MUST** be seen by a physician, and provide the medical report explained earlier that covers you for the initial absence and any dates associated with it. This documentation must be sent to D.O.L. with form CA-7. This absence will count as an unscheduled absence until you are paid by D.O.L. at which point **YOU MUST** show your supervisor proof that you were paid by D.O.L. and ensure that the absence's are changed in time keeping and reflected on your 3972 to **unscheduled approved IOD** which does not count against you. This process must be followed for every *absence* from work due to your IOD.

In the event you need guidance regarding what information is needed in a medical report you can either download form CA-20 from D.O.L.'s website or get the form from your case manager if you are with a workers compensation clinic. Form CA-20 has all the information D.O.L. requires for payment, if more info is needed D.O.L. will contact you and specify what is needed. I hope this information proves useful to those brothers & sisters in the unfortunate situation of an IOD, as well as those who are not, but will benefit from the knowledge anyway.

It is with great pride I say until next time and it is a great honor serving as your vice-president.

SECRETARY TREASURER**JEFF GREENLEE**

Local's Finances – Doom & Gloom – NO!



First and foremost, I hope and wish that you, and your families, are well during these trying times. Please be safe, protect yourselves and your families and remember that we are stronger together than apart... and that soon, this too shall pass.

I also want to assure you that

YOUR Union is working hard to protect you in these difficult times and your health and welfare are utmost in our thoughts and prayers.

Doom and Gloom

I was recently told that members say that my reports are all doom and gloom, that I am a “Debby Downer” when it comes to my financial reports. First of all 95% of my reports are numbers! Numbers do not lie, 2+2 does not equal 5, no matter how many times you say it!! I put the numbers out there as accurately as I can without embellishment and without comment, except in reporting the status of an expense and whether it was expected, unexpected or out of the ordinary. The financial records of your local are open and transparent. Also remember that I do not authorize expenditures, they come from the members or the President. Some may not like what those numbers represent or how I represent them but the reports I give are factual and to the point. Good business decisions are supported by ACCURATE financial reports!

We have seen in the not so recent past how the finances of the Local can be a fragile thing. We must all remain vigilant on where your hard-earned dues money is spent and whether it benefits the members of the Local. If you know of a way to cheerfully express to the members when the Union funds went from a \$29,500 surplus income one year to a negative \$73,700 the next year (a turnaround of \$103,000), and how the Local went into negative spending, then I would gladly do so, but that would not be an accurate portrayal of your Union's finances. There was no way to put a smiley face on those figures or on why my warnings at the time were not taken seriously. Some even accusing me of lying or exaggerating, but numbers do not lie!

I cannot imagine many members, as they sit at the kitchen table writing out checks for bills (if you still write checks) that you are doing so with a smile on your face, and then gleefully telling your spouse and kids the happy news about paying those bills.

As we sit now the financial health of the Local is solid, should I be doing somersaults or walk around with a smile on my face.... I don't think so.... because I know what can happen to our funds in a very short time. So, I shall remain cautiously optimistic about our finances because I know how one or two events can have a devastating impact on our finances.

So, if you want to say that my reports are all doom and gloom then so be it. The numbers are there, interpret them as you will, but remember that they do not lie!!!

“Right now the main reasons for the high cash assets is that we have not had to expend monies for any conventions or seminars this year due to the Covid-19...”

Union Finances.....

As I reported in the last issue of the Dispatch the Local's finances, and outlook, are positive and promising. The finances of the Local are subject to many things

that affect the viability of your Union. Unexpected costs, that would include expenditures that were not planned or foreseen, can have devastating impact on the Union's bottom line.

The Local has made attempts to predict expenditures and costs with our Special Funds, where we have put money aside for specific purposes, and while it is easy to look at the bottom line for all cash assets I would be remiss if I didn't point out that while our cash assets are at a all time high, our General Fund, which is the day-to-day operating expense of the Local, is at a level lower than it was in the not too distant past.

Please realize that all financial reports should be looked at with a grain of salt. We must remember that in our special funds, over \$150,000 of our total cash assets are committed amounts. These funds are not part of the day-to-day operating monies and should not be looked at as a reservoir of ready cash.

Right now the main reasons for the high cash assets is that we have not had to expend monies for any conventions or seminars this year due to the Covid-19 restrictions, the reduction to one Union paid Full-time Officer and his benefits, and the dues increase that the members approved. We have increased funding to the Building Maintenance and Training Fund, while maintaining the Convention Fund and Legal Fund, and started the Local Negotiations Fund, while ensuring that the other funds are fully funded.

But, to maintain that financial health it takes discipline and common sense which will allow this Local to continue to be financially strong. A financially sound Union enables

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your leaders to be strong advocates for your contractual rights. We as members and officers have a responsibility to maintain fiscal responsibility in the allocating of Union funds and ensure that such allocations are proper, essential, and in the best interest of ALL members.

During this Covid-19 Pandemic the Local has been paying their bills, making deposits to bank accounts as required and ensuring that the Local meets all its financial responsibilities.

At this time we are in good financial shape but we must remain vigilant and control spending if we are to remain solvent. Please remember that ALL members have a responsibility to ensure that our hard earned dues monies are used wisely, in accordance with law, Local Constitution, and the will of the members!

SAAAL Constitution

I am sure that some of you are aware that there are a couple of Constitutional Amendments being passed around for signatures. While I will not discuss the issues at this time, there will be plenty of time for that later, I do want to pass along to you the reasons the Constitution should be amended from time to time.

The Constitution is not a static document. It must evolve, much as our Union has evolved. It is one that needs to be amended periodically to bring it up to date on specific issues that affects the structure of your Union and how to govern the Local. Times change and with it comes new challenges. Different interpretations arise so language needs to be corrected. Some of these challenges were not foreseen when the original Constitution was created, some language has been interpreted in different ways and some language is just plain out of date.

It is not an easy task, nor should it be, to amend the Constitution as it takes a 2/3 majority at the meeting to carry the motion to amend. The Constitution should not be amended to promote one's agenda or vendetta, that is why it is in every members interest to get involved, come to the meetings, participate, and get involved in the operation of your Union and in the debate over the amending of the Constitution, let your opinions be known.

May Financial Report

First I would like to thank President Rincon for his assistance during this Covid 19 pandemic. Without his assistance, maintaining the Union's accounts would have been much more difficult.

General Fund *****

May was an uneventful month except for a few items:

The beginning balance for May was \$87,393.05

The beginning balance was different from the April end of month balance because of the voiding of the \$800 check to Washington APWU due to the unexpected cancellation of the Stewards College.

The TPWU per capita was a bit higher because I paid the per capita for three PPs instead of the customary two PPs as expected due to the publication of the Dues Check-Off Lists (DCO) sometimes just works out that way.

The \$1,688.70 for the Dispatch publication was expected, normal and customary.

I did make some deposits to the General Fund, the biggest was for sales of the Essential Workers T-Shirts at \$1,056.00 and I also transferred \$1,347.99 from the Building Maintenance Fund for the first quarter maintenance expenses (Jan-March).

There was an unexpected expense for \$920.66 to VP Fred Duncan for 32 hours of Union Sick Leave.

We did pay out almost \$3,000 for the Stewards Rebate, this was expected and budgeted.

Monthly General Fund Totals

Checking Ending Balance	\$95,966.11
Total Deposits	\$39,721.01
Total Expenses	\$31,147.95

SSFCU Funds *****

Many of the funds are at their cap and I did not make deposits to those funds unless there is an expense, expected or not, out of that fund.

I did transfer \$1,347.99 from the Building Maintenance Fund to the General Fund to cover the expected Building Maintenance costs for the first quarter (Jan-March).

Final Numbers *****

BOA Gen. Fund at the end of May	\$ 95,966.11
SSFCU Fund Balance	<u>\$ 156,173.96</u>
Total Cash Assets	\$ 252,140.07

Upcoming Expenses and Expenditures *****

Jonell MacKay Scholarships will be awarded and we are looking at bids to repair our parking lot and for building a fence. Nothing else projected at this time.

Note: PP10 reflected a dues increase due to the new contract we just received. After reviewing the Dues Check-Off (DCO) List I discovered that there were close to 100 members who were not paying the right amount of dues and that almost 50 PSEs were dropped off the rolls. I then sent an e-mail to the National APWU identifying those members involved and the result is that the Local will now receive approximately \$1,200 per PP in additional dues or \$31,000 per year.

Lastly, be safe and wear a mask, maintain social distancing to protect yourself, your family, and your friends.



EDITOR/ CLERK CRAFT DIRECTOR "A"

CARLOS BARRIOS

All Clerks Matter



Greetings to all Members,

The COVID-19 pandemic is not the first time that our nation's postal system has stepped up due to national health crisis.

The 1918-19 flu outbreak was the deadliest pandemic in modern history. An estimated 50 million people died

worldwide, including approximately 650,000 in the United States. It was known as the "Spanish Flu". Called the "Spanish Flu" because newspapers in Spain printed uncensored coverage of the pandemic, the virus is believed to have originated at an Army training camp in Kansas before traveling with American troops

to Europe in spring 1918. In crowded military camps and

trenches in war-torn Europe, the virus is thought to have mutated into a deadlier form



trenches in war-torn Europe, the virus is thought to have mutated into a deadlier form

Plant Changes

There have been some changes with the starting times for some sections and management is still in the process of making more moves. Some new positions have been created to help complement the increase of the heavy parcel volume a trend which will continue. Some employees will echo that the union allowed these changes to occur. Many members do NOT understand how this works. Contractually the moves that management are proposing are correct. The union's position is to make certain that only one movement can be allowed per contract which has occurred. Also, per the contract the moves can be no more than 1 ½ hours which they have done.

Out of Schedule \$\$\$\$\$

I just want to bring some closure to the Out of Schedule settlement with a huge financial payouts has finally been settled. Unfortunately, the figures that were calculated previously were **NOT** correct so Labor and I had to revisit this grievance and review hundreds of clock rings to calculate the correct figures to settle the grievance. I just want to notify the employees who worked in Auto Letters (DBCS) on Tour 3 in early 2019 that you will be seeing your payment. Please DONT rely on rumors from the

work floor that I allowed this grievance to be ignored or given to management. Those rumors only establish a negative work environment and makes everyone second guess what the union is doing. If you have any questions, please seek out the advice of your current stewards and do not hesitate to notify the Clerk Craft Director for information on this or any other grievance!!

Working Alone

When you find yourself in a situation that you are working alone do not hesitate to ask for a steward and file. I am currently working with the stewards to have many grievances that have been settled put into the Grievance and

Arbitration Tracking System (GATS) so you can get paid. The union will be pursuing a labor charge if management continues to prolong the inputting of grievances into the GATS

system. The proper procedure for management to do is when the steward and management reach a mutual agreement at Step 1 then at that time management is required to key in the settlement into GATS this was verified by Labor Manager Wilma Huertas.

Life of a Grievance

Article 15 of the Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) governs the grievance procedure between the American Postal Workers Union (APWU) and the Postal Service. A grievance is defined in Article 15 as a "dispute, difference, disagreement or complaint between the parties related to wages, hours, and conditions of employment." The definition is very broad which allows a lot of leverage to work with.

Do not allow any supervisor or manager tell you that you do not have a grievance. The union is the only one that can do that. In the past many stewards would just echo that you do not have a grievance or would tell you that on the work room floor. That type of steward is not present in this local anymore. If you believe that you have a grievance, then you need to request to see a steward and management then has 2 hours from the time you requested one to provide you an answer.

A common mistake that management does is inform the employee that they cannot see a steward because the steward has already been on their requested steward time. If there is a steward on the clock or the Craft Director present in the building, then you should be allowed to see a steward.

"...the Out of Schedule settlement with a huge financial payouts has finally been settled".

MVS CRAFT DIRECTOR**FARON HIERHOLZER**

Time to Hold Management Accountable



Greetings

I hope you and your loved ones are well and staying safe. I encourage you to continue to wear your mask, maintain social distancing, and to maintain good personal hygiene. As we continue to go through our daily routines you should also sanitize your vehicle. Everyone was pro-

vided a sanitation kit that included five white cloth masks, hand sanitizer, and sanitizer to wipe your vehicle down.

Stay Safe

The number of Covid-19 cases continues to rise daily. We should be working together as a team and make sure we all treat each other with dignity and respect. Make sure you are sanitizing your vehicle before you start your task. Over the last couple of months Motor Vehicle Service (MVS) has experienced many "at fault" accidents. Most of these accidents have occurred at the North and South Dock gates as well as at the Dock areas. The union met with management to discuss the increase of vehicle accidents. The union referenced many issues with the gates that may be the common denominator for these accidents. The union addressed the concerns that our drivers were experiencing on the operation of the gates that was leading to the increase. Also, another safety concerns included how the concrete barriers were placed at these gates that reduced the safe access for the drivers.

Safety Concerns

Is management concerned about your safety? Why is management making our jobs so difficult? These are questions you might be asking yourself? Over the last couple of months, we had to maneuver around these obstacles along with the potholes in the facility. Notify management as soon as you become aware of a safety issue. After you notify management with PS Form 1767 make certain to notify your steward so we can do a follow up and hold management accountable. A big shout goes out to Steward Ron Maner for his commitment to safety. He has been doing an excellent job keeping management informed of safety violations and staying on top of MVS safety issues.

Happy Retirement to Mr. JJ Rodriguez, Mr. Moreno, and Mr. Castillo as they embark on the new journey. We all hope for a long healthy retirement and best wishes to them as they celebrate everyday with their families.

In-House Bidding

MVS will be conducting in-house bidding July 1, 2020. You must submit a bid request in writing if you would like to bid on a vacant run.

If you elect to be contacted, then an effort will be made per your request. Management and the union have mutually agreed to conduct the annual bid on October 6 & 7, 2020.

At this time, I encourage you to plan and start looking for the run that you may want to bid on. The Annual Bid in

MVS is performed by seniority. Be looking at SDO's, Tours, and times that would be best for you and your loved ones.

"Why is management making our jobs so difficult?"

The union has filed and won for managements failure to pay employees for Sunday premium, or double Sunday premium.

Collective Bargaining Agreement Section 6 Sunday Premium Payment

Each employee whose regular work schedule includes a period of service, any part of which is within the period commencing at midnight Saturday and ending at midnight Sunday, shall be paid extra compensation at the rate of 25 percent of the employee's base hourly rate of compensation for each hour of work performed during that period of service. You should look at your paycheck stubs, and make sure you are getting your Sunday premium payment. Take the opportunity to be pro-active and review your daily clock rings by reviewing your virtual timecard online and address any deficiency you notice with management immediately. Always request to see your steward for any questions or concerns.

VMF NEWS:

The union would also like to Congratulate VMF Lead Automotive Technician Brett Balzen for his 20 years of hard work and dedication. This long-time union member has been an asset to the Postal Service and especially the VMF. He has passed along his knowledge and experience for other technicians. The union would like to wish Mr. Balzen a long happy and healthy retirement. You will be missed. Management tries to deceive the union every day, but this union will always be ten steps ahead of management. We will only be stronger! Will you hold management accountable? Will you speak up?

Congratulations to Mr. Villaloboz on his conversion to Full Time Flexible. MVS Craft stewards are doing an outstanding job.

MAINTENANCE CRAFT DIRECTOR**ROBERT PROO**

False Positive Management

**Hello Brothers and Sisters**

I hope everyone is doing well during these trying times. I want to thank our Maintenance Asst Craft Director Max Trevino, Chief Steward at the Stations Maria Carden and Jarrett Williams at the Plant and stewards Mike May, Albert Red Cardenas, Nora Alvarado, and Nick DiPasquale

for all their hard work.

Shout Out

Thanks goes out to Maria Carden for obtaining a grievance settlement on a staffing grievance to increase the amount of cleaning that will be done at nine different Stations. The addition of another tour of cleaning or policing routes at these stations resulted in additional custodial positions in the near future.

Covid 19 update in the Custodial Workgroup

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE AND THE AMERICAN POSTAL WORKERS UNION, AFL-CIO

Re: Temporary Resources for COVID-19 Related Cleaning Requirements In order to accommodate those installations staffed by Maintenance Craft Custodians where supplemental cleaning resources are needed due to COVID-19 related absenteeism, or where postal custodians decline to do COVID-19 related required cleaning, the parties agree to the following provisions:

1. Available postal career custodians, either Full-Time Regular, or Part-Time Regular, within the facility shall be utilized up to the maximum hours allowed by Article 8. Postal custodians may volunteer to be utilized outside the facility after completing their regularly assigned duties.
2. Due to COVID-19 related absences, the Postal Service may utilize temporary contract cleaning services where postal custodial staffing within the facility is not sufficient to provide the necessary cleaning as required by MMO-031-20, Influenza and Corona virus Cleaning Contingency, and/or MS-47, Housekeeping Postal Facilities, up to the identified frequencies.
3. When there is a confirmed positive COVID-19 case, and the postal custodians assigned to that facility decline to do the necessary cleaning out of personal concern, the Postal Service may utilize contract cleaners to ensure that the facility has been properly cleaned in accordance with the Center for Disease Control (CDC) guidelines and re-

lated Maintenance Management Orders (MMOs). Following such cleaning, postal custodians will be utilized in the facility for normal cleaning (MMO-031-20 and MS-47).

4. This temporary contract cleaning will not impact postal custodial staffing or reduce work hours of Maintenance Craft custodial employees that are available for work at the facility. Available postal custodians will be scheduled in accordance with item 1 above. Postal custodians, who decline to do the positive COVID-19 cleaning as stated in item 3 above, will not be considered available for the duration of such cleaning.

5. Where temporary contract cleaning services are used, the following will be provided to the local APWU president: copy of the contract (including the statement of work), duration of the services, name(s) of the contract custodians, and

weekly schedule (subject to change based on local need).

6. This temporary agreement does not modify or alter in anyway the provisions of the current Collective Bargaining Agreement between the Postal Service and the American Postal Workers Union (APWU), including the MOU Re: Subcontracting Cleaning Services.

7. Any modifications to this agreement must be between the parties at the USPS Headquarters, and APWU National offices. These provisions are applicable beginning March 3, 2020. This MOU will expire May 17, 2020. The parties will revisit this issue immediately prior to this MOU's expiration to determine if extension is appropriate. This agreement does not establish precedent in any future negotiations regarding contract cleaning.

This agreement along with other Covid 19 MOU have been extended till July 17, 2020

If you are in the custodial workgroup at the plant, station or associate office (AO) doing custodial work you should be clocked into operation code 747.

If Management wants to assign you to do something other than custodial work, you need to clock over to that operation. If the station manager, postmaster wants to assign you to deliver mail to the carriers, inventory and stack shipping boxes or stack tubs and trays on pallets to ship them back to the plant that's fine do the work, but before you start doing this work go to the time clock and clock over to the proper operation number.

If you are told to drive a Postal Vehicle to deliver mail pick up mail or whatever management wants you to do if it requires you to drive a Postal Vehicle it is Higher Level work and you need to ask for a Steward and file for your higher Level.

“If Management wants to assign you to do something other than custodial work, you need to clock over to that operation.”

continued on page 19

ASSISTANT CLERK CRAFT DIRECTOR**RUBEN MARTINEZ**

Living in Today's World!



Dear Sisters and Brothers,

I hope these few words find you and your family in good health. I hope we will get through this pandemic quickly and safely. I know there is tremendous fear about the COVID-19 especially now that San Antonio is referred to a national hot stop.

I urge you fellow members to follow the protocols set for the pandemic when going to work, going to the store, taking care of your family, and doing all the everyday daily tasks. Recently the Rio Grande District made a mandate that everyone must wear a mask. It appears that any type of face covering would be suffice. Some employees need to use a face covering like a face shield instead of a mask to assist the employee who is already having breathing issues. If you are considering not wearing one, then please consider doing it for your family as you are the bread winner and they are concerned with your health.

Dealing with Covid-19 is difficult enough for all of us, to include the single parent and those who are caring for elderly parents. Parents and caretakers all play an important role in teaching our family members to wash their hands. Encourage your children to continue playing outside to keep up their physical and mental health. Take walks with your family and be safe. Walking and other activities like stretching is very important to maintaining a sound mind set.

For those of us that have aging parents and family members please check on them and make certain that they are eating properly and getting groceries. You can go online and do grocery shopping by using curb side services. Keep a record of all of your parent's prescriptions and do weekly visits to see how they are physically. Look-out for their financial assistance, legal aid, transportation, and join them for any virtual doctor visits to ask questions and get the follow ups by the doctor.

Make everyday preventative actions

- Wash your hands frequently.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Stay at least 6 feet (about 2 arms' length) from other people.
- Stay home when you are sick.

- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.
- **Cleaning** refers to the removal of germs, dirt, and impurities from surfaces. It does not kill germs, but by removing them, it lowers their numbers and the risk of spreading infection.
- **Disinfecting** refers to using chemicals, for example, EPA-registered disinfectants, to kill germs on surfaces. This process does not necessarily clean dirty surfaces or remove germs, but by killing germs on a surface *after* cleaning, it can further lower the risk of spreading infection.
- Wear a cloth face cover when you go out in public.

“Dealing with Covid-19 is difficult enough for all of us, to include the single parent and those who are caring for elderly”

Cloth face coverings should not be placed on young children under age 2, anyone who has trouble breathing, or is unconscious, incapacitated or otherwise unable to remove the mask without assistance

This is the reason I retired abruptly cause of fear for my family and how they would manage without me. I was in the position to retire for my family and myself. I also wanted to relieve my Assistant Clerk Craft Director position at that time. When I talked to the other officers of the Union, they convince me to change my decision and stay to the end of my elected term in April 2021. They allowed me a grace period to think about it.

In accordance with the local constitution I can remain an officer of this Union even if I am retired. I agreed and I am still an officer of this Union. Although I will not be at the Plant facility, I will be at the Union Hall for the remainder of the term. My official retirement date was June 1, 2020. Recently, my paperwork was returned incomplete and although it was finally corrected it delayed my retirement date for just a few weeks. I visited the Union Hall a couple of times for several hours, and then I suffered a setback when I suffered an injury at home. I severely sprained my ankle and though it has slowed me down it has not stopped me from my commitment to my Union, my Family and Friends. The doctor has suggested for me to stay off my feet and elevate my right leg so with the painkillers it prevents me from driving. The duration of my prognosis is 3 to 4 weeks. Please, be patient with me and I will be back to serve you members for the remaining of my term.

In Solidarity,
Ruben "COOL" Martinez

ASSISTANT CLERK CRAFT DIRECTOR "B"**ROBERT BUTKE**

Stay Vigilant Against Postal Law Enforcement



Greetings fellow Union brothers and sisters.

There has been a recent increase of members being taken in for questioning and interrogation by the Office of Inspector General (OIG). Provided is some basic helpful information when dealing with the OIG or

Postal Inspectors. Unfortunately, OIG will not offer or ask you if you would like steward representation. Therefore, it is up to you to request a union representative. Article 17.3 of our Collective Bargaining Agreement states that if an employee requests a steward or Union representative during the course of an interrogation by the Inspection Service, such request will be granted.

In a Step 4 settlement, the right to a steward or union representative under Article 17.3 also "applies to questioning of an employee who has or may have witnessed an occurrence when such questioning becomes an interrogation." It is imperative that employees be warned to remain silent and not to give any oral or written statements to OIG agents or inspectors until they first have consulted and sought advice from their stewards and/or attorneys. In addition to our contractual rights and protections, another important right at our disposal is our Weingarten Rights.

Weingarten Rights allow employees to have union representation at investigatory interviews. This applies to OIG agents or inspectors' interrogations as well. Weingarten Rights specifically provides that an employer must choose among three options once an employee requests union representation: (1) Grant the request and delay questioning until the union representative arrives; (2) Deny the request and end the interview immediately; or (3) Give the employee a choice of: (a) having the interview without representation or (b) ending the interview. The OIG agent (s) or inspector(s) must grant the request and immediately stop the questioning until the representative arrives. If the agent or inspector denies the request for union representation and continues the questioning, employees can refuse to answer questions. It is important to remember that Inspectors and OIG agents are members of law enforcement. They may employ the "friendly" treatment, but they are not your friends. Their sole objective is their investigation. They will try to have you believe otherwise and claim they are there to help you. Do not fall into the trap; once again, refuse to answer questions unless a

union representative or an attorney is present. What you say, can and will be used against you.

The following excerpt was taken from an article that first appeared in the September-October 2016 issue of The American Postal Worker magazine: If you are questioned by one or more OIG agents or Postal Inspectors, even if you believe you are not guilty of any wrongdoing, you should:

- **Remain calm**
- **Correctly identify yourself**
- **Request a union representative or an attorney, as appropriate**
 - **Remain silent until you have consulted with a steward or an attorney**
 - **Don't physically resist arrest or search of your person or property**
- **Request to see a search warrant. If a search warrant is not available, inform the OIG agents or postal inspectors that you do not consent to a search**
- **Ask, "Am I a suspect in a criminal matter?" If the answer is, "Yes," exercise your rights to remain silent until you consult with an attorney**
- **Do not deny or admit to any allegations without consulting with a union representative, or an attorney**
- **Do not sign any form waiving your rights, and**
- **Do not write or sign any statements or make oral remarks without consulting with a union representative or an attorney**

All members need to be aware of their rights in these situations. Tenured members should try and inform newer employees of these rights. Too many times members are taken into questioning with inspectors or OIG agents and are unaware of their rights because they are intimidated. We can all help each other by educating one another.

Rise of Covid-19 Cases

With the recent rise of Covid-19 cases in the state, city and, the Rio Grande District will start enforcing the wearing of masks while at work. The use of face coverings is mandatory for ALL employees. It is the responsibility of all members to make sure this directive is being followed. Please make sure if any members requesting the use of PPE are promptly provided what is needed. If any member of management is denying any PPE items, let a steward know immediately. We will take the appropriate steps necessary so members can get the PPE that is needed for your protection. The district also has ordered some grey masks for all employees. When they arrive all employees will be provided with one. Management **should not** make any employee sign for any PPE equipment.

"It is important to remember that Inspectors and OIG agents are members of law enforcement. They may employ the "friendly" treatment, but they are not your friends"

WEBMASTER/ I.T. ADMINISTRATOR

NICK DI PASQUALE

Management's Compass is Broken



Hello brothers and sisters of the SAAAL

I hope you all have been staying safe and practicing the social distancing as suggested by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC). Most businesses, such as restaurants, bars, shopping, and even theme parks have been opening

slowly and just like that they are closing again. Which means that you should not let your guard down though. If you don't feel safe, wear your mask and even gloves. It has become the new norm now. If you would like a colorful mask, contact the Union office at **210-271-0853**

One of our retired member sister, Debbie Wiechecki has been sewing some cool masks to be donated to the SAAAL membership. After you receive one have a picture taken and submit to the Union Office so we can display them online.

As the webmaster for the local, I am asking everyone to go to the website and examine through the many pages of information that are there for you, the member. A lot of work has gone into creating and keeping it up to date for each craft. If some information needs to be placed in your craft, please contact your craft director or assistant craft director. If neither is available, please contact the Union office at **(210) 271-0853** to address your ideas, comments, and concerns. There is even a COVID 19 page to keep you up to date with the latest information from our National APWU officers, CDC, and the World-wide Health Organization (WHO).

If we have a July meeting then I hope to see more members at this coming July 18th meeting, however, if we don't then the leadership is trying to make alternative means like a Zoom meeting to provide updated information. If the meeting occurs then Maintenance Steward Mike May and I are going to be serving up BBQ and sides for you all. As you may have heard, the Clerk Assistant Clerk Craft Director Ruben Martinez and I spend a few hours painting the front gate to include the APWU letters and the BBQ pit a month ago.

As of this writing, there are a couple of Constitutional Amendments being passed around to address an issue with language for Article IV Duties of Officers. Our last meeting was in February and an earlier meeting time was scheduled to occur for our March meeting. Unfortunately, it was cancelled due to COVID 19. Since that time, I have

had more time to go over and refine the amendment that was going to be presented in March. Many hours of thought went into this version and numerous people from officers, officials, and members were approached and asked what thoughts they had concerning this issue of 2 full time officers. The bottom line, we no longer can afford funding two full time officers whether they actively are employed through the USPS or retired. The cost of maintaining two full time paying officers with full fringe benefits would eventually bankrupt the local. Any questions you have I would happily answer for any dues paying member.

At the Plant, more changes are occurring and many more changes coming soon. Postal Management is in the process of removing some automation letter machines due to the drop in volume. The auto flats machines have also been in discussion to moving them across the parking lot and relocating them to the main building.

“Accessible parking spaces must be located on the shortest accessible route of travel to an accessible facility entrance”

Handicap Parking

Parking at the plant has also become a annoyance. The gates are operational but handicapped employees are **NOT** allowed to park inside the inner gates that is the closest to the entrance per the requirement of the American Disability Act (ADA).

Many of our disabled veterans have knee and joint problems and really should be allowed to park closer to the building. According to the U.S. Department of Justice, Civil Rights Division, Disability Rights Section under re-striping Parking Lots page 2 under Location it states the following: Accessible parking spaces must be located on the shortest accessible route of travel to an accessible facility entrance. With that stated, the question is, how is a parking spot all the way out where they have been relocated closest to the building? Postal management misunderstand accessible parking regulations. They are bound by law to provide accessible parking to eligible employees. Employees that are not provided closer parking accommodations then the agency is in violation even when they believe they are operating well within the law. Postal management misunderstand accessible parking when they treat every disability issue the same and look for a direct connection between accommodations and essential job function. The Union has filed a grievance and we hope to get some results from this safety complaint. Once results are provide I will keep the membership up to date on the progress of this issue.

MAINTENANCE CRAFT DELEGATE/ TRUSTEE ALBERT "RED" CARDENAS

Is Safety Really Everyone's Job?



Hello brothers and sisters,

I hope that everyone has been able to stay safe and healthy during this pandemic. It has been very different trying to conduct business without having meetings.

Constitutional Amendments

There are different constitutional amendments that are waiting to be submitted. There are issues that have to wait till we have a meeting. It appears that because the state is scaling back the Texas opening and so is the city of San Antonio, our union leadership may have to cancel the July meeting.

“When a safety concern has been identified on the rack it is supposed to be red tagged and the bins that are unsafe should be annotated”

Maintenance Craft Information

I was approached by our VP Fred Duncan with concerns over the maintenance of the Pie carts (racks) that are on the automation equipment at the San Antonio P&DC/ GMF. I will start with the issue of the racks has been ongoing since I was a mail processor in 1996. The Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for rack repairs is rarely followed by operations or maintenance. There have been attempts of maintaining the racks. Maintenance management had moved a mechanic from tour 3 to tour 2 because all rack repair was going to be done on tour 2, which did not last long. Our Maintenance Director Robert Proo has made many suggestions, for example he suggested that a whole set of racks be removed and worked on and all deficiencies be corrected and then they would be swapped out with another set and continue through all the machines, however, maintenance management turned down the idea.

Repairing Equipment

At another point, maintenance management was considering doing quarterly checks on the racks and deficiencies would be corrected. That never went past the consideration. So my recommendation both as a former mail processor and as a maintenance employee is for the operator to document. It is tedious and frustrating to do the paperwork but, you have the right to work in a safe and healthy environment. When a safety concern has been identified on the rack it is supposed to be red tagged and the bins that are unsafe should be annotated. If you have a second rack then that one should be used; the information

should be given to your immediate supervisor and they will turn it in to maintenance; from there, maintenance has 48 hours to correct the safety issue. If it is not corrected I recommend submitting a PS Form 1767 Report of Hazard, Unsafe Condition, or Practice and attach a copy of the tag you submitted.

The exception to this procedure is when the tray is completely off the rail which is considered an immediate safety abatement. When an emergency abatement needs to be accomplished either the machine needs to stop and be clear of mail processors or the rack needs to be removed from service to a safe location so that it can be safely worked on by maintenance.

Mechanic Positions

I plead to the mail processors not to purposely destroy the rails on the racks because you could face discipline for destroying postal property. On a side note, there are times that mail processors get frustrated because they think that all maintenance personnel do the same job but, there are different jobs and different assignments.

Racks are usually repaired by Maintenance Mechanic (MM) level 7's. There are Mail Processing Equipment mechanics (MPE) level 9's and Electronic Technicians (ETs) that are usually assigned routes or reactive maintenance to fix machines that break down. In the absence of a maintenance mechanic the maintenance supervisor can have an MPE or ET work down and correct the deficiency, the only downside to that is that now you have less people available to answer break down calls.

In my opinion, I have always felt that the racks should be worked on while the machine itself is down for maintenance.

Maintenance Trustee information

We had a trustees meeting in June and one of the discussions was rumors that our VP Fred Duncan is double dipping and charging us for sick leave. I would like to start with the fact that according to our local's constitution he is entitled to this leave and is also entitled to more benefits and compensation. VP Fred Duncan helped our local when we could not maintain the funds for our obligations and two full time officers. So even though he was elected to the position of Vice President and all the fringe benefits that came with this, VP Fred Duncan went back to work at

continued on page 16

CLERK DELEGATE / TRUSTEE

DAVID HERNANDEZ

Changes to the American Dream



Hello Brothers & Sisters,

Well here we are and half of the year is gone, and it seems like time froze for 2020 for some reason. A lot of bad things are happening here and around the world it seems like a dream, but yet we know it's surreal. I'm sure we are

all feeling the pain and seeing the chaos and the destruction of our cities and even loss of life. It's unthinkable

never in a million years you would have believed its happening here. We are seeing our country fall apart. We need to wake up, and take our country back!

If our politicians are allowing this to happen and they are not condoning it, then they are part of the problem and they need to be voted out no matter what party affiliate they belong to. When we lose all respect to law and order then we no longer have a country. Politicians that are in charge to serve and protect the American people are abusing their power and hide when things go south, this cannot go on and it needs to stop and need to be held accountable. The **"Black Lives Matter"** movement has good intention but it has been hijack by a far left radical organization just following the money, which is my opinion and all lives matter. Yet if you say it, they call you a racist. We are one country and if you are born here then you are an American period. Let's get back to loving and respecting each other, United we stand divided we fall! And it's going on now!

Covid-19

Hopefully by the time you are reading this, the worst has passed and we are over the hump and on a downhill trend. With the COVID-19 pandemic hitting us hard here and worldwide, we should pray for healing, protection and safety for all. Everyone has seen how bad it's been for the economy, workers losing their jobs, businesses closing but as always American's know how to work together and put aside party affiliation, we are Americans first when it comes to disaster. I'm glad that even Mgmt. worked with the APWU in providing some kind of MOU relieve to protect the employees. I'm proud that we are an essential company and bless to be working. Thanks to everyone that is making sacrifices and showing up to work we are all in this together. And to Company's out there that are part of the essential work force Thanks! So many of us are always too busy to acknowledge our own families, neighbors, and co-workers a little smile or hello

goes along way. No one knows why or how this happen maybe it was a higher up power to give us a wakeup call, never know when you time is up! Stay in touch with each other. The blame game or the pointing fingers will always be there. Hopefully, we as Americans can learn from it, so that we will never have to deal with something this bad. Everyone's life is precious and important to each of us. I pray for everyone and for the lives that were loss, I pray for healing, strength, protection and goodness. Also I would like to thank our union President Chris Rincon and his Administration for doing an awesome job in keeping us

"...like to thank our union President Chris Rincon and his Administration for doing an awesome job in keeping us inform on everything"

inform on everything. I'm sure there were plenty of ongoing meetings with Mgmt in keeping us safe. I'm sure a lot of us miss our Union meetings hopefully its sooner than later to see everyone and to get back to normal.

A big thanks also our stewards for a good job; I know what it takes to be one. To our new or younger brothers and sisters that want to be part of it, the union is always looking for stewards ask your directors, you are the future!

Trustee report

Our trustee's meeting was also cancel, but Treasurer Jeff Greenlee kept us in touch from home via emails, and provided financial reports up to April for us to review. Everything was looking good and positive, we will be sitting pretty well financially and our future looks great for the remainder or the year and beyond. Thanks again Jeff for an awesome job! I'm sure some of you have seen or heard about Constitution Amendments that are being passed around, please read them and ask questions. Don't just take anyone's word. Remember it's your Union so lets vote on what is best for the Union members and the not individual's. If you have any question or concerns, or hear of any alleged unauthorized expenditures please feel free to contact anyone of the (trustees). My email addresses is dhern79@yahoo.com

Delegate:

I also serve as your delegate representative, any questions feel free to email me or any other delegate on issues that need attention. And yes our National Convention was also cancelled. No mention if it's going to be rescheduled anytime soon. Our contract was finally passed and everyone by now has seen your paychecks to include our back pay coming soon, thanks our National Administration for doing a great job. I encourage our non members to join us, together we are stronger don't ever say I don't need them but yet you are enjoying the benefits from it. Image if we all said that, who would protect you and your job!



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Waco
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(254) 294-9600

San Antonio N.E.
10311 Perrin Beitel Rd.
(726) 666-7545

National Day of Action!!!!

The San Antonio Alamo Area Local 195 and the National Postal Mail Handlers showed support to the public that we are standing together to help send a message to save the USPS. Pictured below are just a few of the members Top row left to right. David Hernandez, Nick Dipasquale, Mike May. Bottom row. Vice President Fred Duncan and President Chris Rincon and Albert "Red" Cardenas.



Albert "Red" Cardenas continued from page 12

the USPS so that our local would not have to pay his health benefits, retirements benefits, etc. It is my understanding that he has saved our local over **\$150,000**. We are however coming across issues that were unforeseen in having a part time Vice President and your trustees are trying to make recommendations to the membership that do not penalize our Vice President Fred Duncan for his selfless act while still performing our fiduciary duties to our local taking account the current issue of either leave or sick leave submitted by our Vice President.

Your trustees are recommending the following compromise on this issue, that he earns time for the hours that he works for our local and has nothing to do with the annual leave or sick leave he earns from the hours that he works at the USPS, it is my opinion that this time should be carried as compensation time or annual leave to be used at the VP's discretion.

The Recreation committee information

SIX FLAGS June 28, 2020 Family Fun Day was cancelled due to the pandemic.

No other events are planned at this time for 2020 due to the COVID 19 Pandemic, we will make announcements of any changes. The Recreation committee usually contributes towards a holiday meal but due to the cancellation of our social events the committee may not have the funds to help this year.

We will keep you posted of any changes.

I ask that employees continue to help us police the contract as we are in this together.

As always, I thank you, the member, for your support and for allowing me the opportunity to serve you. Please, don't get discouraged everyone has a voice and the right to be heard, so come out and be part of the solution. To the non-member I ask you to claim your voice, exercise your right to vote on issues that are important to you. I hope to see you at the local union meeting (once these COVID 19 restrictions are lifted).

SPECIAL TO THE DISPATCH



A letter from Xochil:

It is my Honor to lend my support to the American Postal Workers Unions of the San Antonio Alamo Area Local and the Texas Postal Workers Union, the Grand Alliance, and the National Association of Mail Handlers. These organizations have represented the men and women serving in our postal system for over 100 years,

which speaks to their work and successes. Now more than ever all of us play a critical role in defending our postal system and the essential workers who keep it running.

Our postal system is unique to our country. It ties us together from coast to coast via cities, big and small, expressways and dirt roads and our postal workers know

Like you, I believe our vote is sacred. There is no private company who can provide this service with integrity and trust or who can ensure that qualified voters across the 17 counties of Senate District 19 can vote by mail.

Our Democracy remains strong because of Patriots like you who are willing to fight for it. I firmly stand with you in this fight to ensure our postal system remains another 100 years and the American people can safely exercise their right to vote.

In solidarity,
Xochil

Xochil Peña Rodríguez Campaign

Office Phone: (210) 902-4140

Personal Phone: (210) 843-0797

Mailing Address: PO Box 14503, San Antonio, TX, 78214

Campaign Address: 9585 S. Presa, San Antonio, TX, 78223

Carlos Barrios continued from page 6

The union steward will take the employees grievance statement and types up a Step 1 grievance form and meets with the employee's immediate supervisor to handle the complaint at the lowest level possible

If Step 1 is not settled, then the steward types up a Step 2 grievance form and takes it to the District Office and has the Step 2 stamped in within 10 days of the step 1 denial.

At Step 2 the Union official and the Labor Specialist meets and tries to resolve the grievance. If no settlement is reached the Union, then waits within 8 days to get Labors typed denial and proceeds to either do a Step 3 grievance appeal form or Appeal to Arbitration from Step 2 form.

In order for a grievance to be considered "timely" it must be first discussed ("filed") at Step 1 within 14 days of when the employee or the union learned, of may reasonably been expected to have learned, of the issue.

If you believe you may have a grievance or if you are unsure whether you have a grievance, please contact your local union representatives.

Feel confident and safe that no steward will inform you that you are being greedy for filing grievances. Remember the mutual agreement between management and the union within the contract placed monetary settlements when violations occurred. However, it has become the norm rather than the exception due to negligence of the supervisors that are leading us into the pit of despair.

Our lives at the Postal Service would be less chaotic if postal management would only follow the contract. The only problem is that would require postal management to be professional, honest and have some integrity to follow the contract. The problem that many have see is that they are far from knowing how to manage since they have little or no management skills to treat people with dignity and respect. Supervisors who go around saying that they have the right to mismanage are only informing you as to how ignorant they are. Laws require that the USPS be run efficiently, including managing the workforce. If you witness supervisors performing craft work or a different craft doing clerk work then you have the right to file a grievance. You may have seen management bringing up 204b's like it's the newest thing. The problem is that the Union needs to be notified with a PS Form 1723 in advance, however, again that would require them to know how to read and follow the contract. The supervisor in the section where management is using a 204b has to be absent for 14 days before they can use one to supplement their absence. Management continues to violate this aspect of the contract and when we have stand ups about the USPS losing millions of dollars one doesn't have far to look to see the pathetic managing of our supervisors in the use of 204b's. As to date in the arbitration process thousands of dollars have been awarded to include new level 7 positions.

ARTICLES SUBMITTED DURING ELECTION PROCESS!!

The following explanation addresses the question of publishing articles in a local publication just prior to an election authored by members who are not regular contributors or have not previously submitted articles. Section 401(g) of the Labor Management Reporting and Disclosure Act (LMRDA) states: "No moneys received by any labor organization by way of dues, assessment, or similar levy, and no moneys 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 moneys of a labor organization may be utilized for notices, factual statements of issues not involving candidates, and other expenses necessary for the holding of an election."

Under this provision, union newspapers that are funded by the union cannot be used to promote the candidacy of any person in a union election. The purpose of this regulation is to ensure fair and impartial elections for all candidates. It has been argued that the appearance of articles in a union publication during the election period from a candidate who has never or rarely before submitted articles in that union publication is a promotion of that individual's candidacy through the union publication in violation of the LMRDA.

According to the U.S. Department of Labor Office of Labor-Management Standards which is responsible for administering provisions of the LMRDA: "Generally, a six month period prior to an election can be considered as time when the newsletter may be construed as a campaign tool. Placement of articles, changes in format, blunt campaigning and letters from members or candidates to the editor could be considered as campaigning."

Therefore, in an effort to avoid the appearance of impropriety and to thwart efforts to overturn elections, the Postal Press Association recommends that local editors do not permit members to publish articles in the union's publication six months prior to an election, unless the member is a regular contributor. This policy will protect the local from an allegation that the local unfairly allowed particular candidates to use the union-paid for newsletter in support of his or her candidacy.

The determination of a regular contributor must be made on a case-by-case basis taking into consideration the number of times that the union publication is published every year.

Anyone who is deemed a regular contributor should therefore be allowed to continue to contribute articles to the paper throughout the election period. Because some members may have already announced their candidacy while others have not, the safest course for the local to take is to adopt a policy prohibiting all non-regular contributors from submitting articles to the union publication during the election period.

There are no hard and fast rules with respect to when the election period begins. The six month rule is a general guideline that seeks to avoid the appearance of impropriety as the election nears. Certainly, once members announce their candidacy for office the election period should be deemed to have begun. (A candidate is announced when it is common knowledge that he or she is going to be running for office, either as an incumbent or challenger. Under election regulations, an individual does not have to be formally nominated to be considered a candidate for office.

An expressed intention to run is sufficient for the individual to be considered a candidate.) Finally, no one who writes for a union publication, whether a regular contributor or not, can advocate for the election or defeat of a particular candidate for union office, him or herself or others.

The exception is a local sponsored forum to allow all candidates to make a statement in the union publication in support of their candidacy.

Produced by APWU National Postal Press Association
 PO Box 888 Iron Mountain MI 49801
 (906) 774-9599
 ppa@apwupostalpress.org
 Tony Carobine, President



Robert Proo continued from page 8

Maintenance: 2020 National Interest Arbitration Summary

The Maintenance Tentative Agreements listed below from the Craft Table are incorporated the Award and 2018-2021 contract:

Article 38.6. A.2: The local APWU President will be provided a copy of the training allocations before solicitation of volunteers.

Article 38.5.B.6: Waiving of 30-day limitation currently placed time frame to request to be placed on Promotion Eligibility Registers (PERs) for new employees.

Article 38.B.7: Elimination of the three-year Open Season. Now, Maintenance employees may request to be placed on PERs at any time and the results will be generated no later than 60 days, instead of the previously existing 150 days.

Article 38.5.B.4.B: Electronic Technician ET-11 will be filled from Electronic Technician ET-10 with at least two years of experience.

Article 38.6.A.1: Involuntary selections for training will be made by inverse seniority on a rotating basis.

This means we do not have to wait for open Season which comes once every three years. If you are in the Maintenance craft and you wish to take the Maintenance test to get on the Promotion Eligibility Register all you have to do is see Yolanda Deleon and fill out the Test form. Once you fill it out provide it back to her so that she can provide you a copy with the round date.

Subcontracting of Maintenance work

Maintenance Brothers and Sisters, we must protect our work from Management's cronies who Subcontract our work the first chance they get. We need to contact our Union Maintenance Representatives any time you see contractors in your facility doing bargaining unit work. This work belongs to the Maintenance Craft Bargaining Unit Employees and we need to protect our work for our future Maintenance Craft Brother and Sisters.

APWU National Day of Action Tell the Senate: Save Our Postal Service Now!

On June 23, postal workers and our supporters joined collective actions across the country to demand Congress to save the Postal Service. Together with our allies in the labor movement and other community organizations, an APWU caravan in Washington, DC will deliver over petition signatures of postal customers demanding Congress pass the emergency relief the Postal Service needs.

The San Antonio Alamo Area Local and Texas Postal Workers Union Had hosted an Informational Picket at the

San Antonio Plant and Distribution Center in support of the petition's demands. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, mail volume has dropped dramatically, and the Postal Service could run out of money this year, threatening our jobs and the vital service we provide the country. The House of Representatives recently passed \$25 billion in emergency COVID-related funding for the Postal Service in its latest stimulus bill (the HEROES Act), a bill which also included hazard pay for postal workers and removed conditions on a \$10 billion line of credit in a previous stimulus bill. We must continue making our voices heard as the Senate deliberates on their own stimulus legislation.

Senators need to keep hearing from the people they represent about the role the Postal Service is playing during this crisis and its ongoing value to the American people. While the people are firmly on our side we must continue to build support in the Senate to ensure postal funding is included in the next stimulus Support our demands in Congress, Tell your Senators that any stimulus legislation must at least include an emergency \$25 billion appropriation for lost revenue due to COVID-19

Privatizing the Postal Service and eliminating its Universal Service mandate will have a very real and very negative impact on those who depend on affordable, reliable mail delivery. It means cuts to service for millions of Americans, particularly those in rural areas and inner cities. As the White House Report highlights, privatization can mean hiked postage rates and the end of timely service and door delivery. This White House plan is a wake-up call to every postal worker and APWU member. The threats of postal privatization, the threats to decent union jobs, the threats to good services, are real.

Call Your Senator, Congressman and let them know that U.S. Mail Not for Sale

In Solidarity

Robert Proo



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NO GENERAL
MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS
UNTIL FURTHER
NOTICE!!!!**

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Wash your
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