



THE SPRINGFIELD RIFLE

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APWUSAL.ORG DECEMBER 2018

BREAKING NEWS

On December 21, 2018 an important message from our national President Mark Dimondstein announced that our upcoming contract will be going to impasse arbitration. As you all know this is a contract year and our contract expired on September 20, 2018. There were multiple extensions granted in an effort to reach a voluntary agreement.

The National Negotiating committee came to a tentative agreement with management on December 6, 2018. It was believed to be fair and a positive one for our members.

The APWU Constitution has a democratic process where any tentative agreement goes to the rank and file bargaining advisory committee for acceptance and their decision whether to send it to the membership for ratification vote.

The rank and file bargaining advisory committee had some serious concerns with the tentative agreement and sent it back to the APWU National leadership to reopen negotiations with management and attempt to address these concerns.

Our National leaders did that in two meetings on December 19, 2018 and December 20, 2018. However, they were unable to agree to any changes or new agreements with the Postal Service. The APWU and USPS are now at "impasse"

Interest arbitration is the next step of the process. This means our future wages, benefits, and working conditions will be

determined by an outside arbitrator. During this process both parties can continue discussions and try to reach a tentative agreement. The APWU National leadership is committed to the goal of reaching a voluntary agreement that addresses the rank and file bargaining advisory committee's concerns and can be put before the membership for a ratification vote.

The national APWU leadership is well prepared to present a solid case at interest arbitration to back up our demands and protect the many gains of the past. The APWU is also considering invoking the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service (FMCS) process prior to interest arbitration. Interest arbitration is a slow process and can take many months of preparation, hearings and adjudication.

It is important to remember that almost all the provisions, rights and benefits contained in the current Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) remain in full force until a new contract is obtained.

Hang on to your hats brothers and sisters and let's unite with the national leaders and get our message across. Remember we are "FIGHTING TODAY FOR A BETTER TOMORROW."

Yours in solidarity

Russ

An Important Message from the Editor

Please note that all articles submitted for publication were done so in a timely manner. Due to a series of unfortunate mishaps related solely to myself, I was unable to get this edition out on time. This in no way should reflect on the authors of the following articles if the information reaches you in an untimely manner. I have taken any and all steps to hopefully prevent this from happening in future Rifle Editions. Thank you for your patience, and I hope you find the December Edition to be a good read.

Respectfully,
Diana Kirkland



A MESSAGE FROM THE VICE PRESIDENT

Hello Brothers and Sisters,

I'm going to get right into it as I have tried explaining this to many members in person – as a member of the APWU, YOU HAVE RIGHTS, YOU HAVE LAWS. And YOU HAVE THE UNION TO PROTECT YOU! So, WHY KISS MANAGEMENT'S ASS??? Why blame The Union for not being able to fix what management has broken, when they are the ones that broke it to begin with? Management's strategy is blatant Union busting! They threaten or coerce you not to get the union involved, and you fall for it every time! They silence you! Well Silence NO MORE! STAND UP AND FIGHT BACK! It is YOUR UNION and it is only AS STRONG AS YOU ARE! So, next time you see a violation of the contract, such as work place harassment, etc., don't text or call your Union Steward. Instead tell your supervisor you are requesting a Union Steward. Make them take the Steward away from their job to meet with you and take you away from your duties, so you can write a statement and address any issues of concern with your Steward. Make them realize that each violation they make against the contract is going to take away from their operations. At the Springfield BMC, MSS and all other A.O. offices. The Union Office at the plant is on the way to the cafeteria and this is by design- and it worked, because what do you do? You stop by the Union Office with your complaints and grievance issues ON YOUR BREAKS AND LUNCHES!! This results in ZERO cost or consequences for the USPS!!! Back when I first started and prior to that, if management violated the contract, several people requested a Steward, and all of us got to see a Steward- on managements time not our lunches and breaks! Think about that –we all stood up and said "OH HELL NO!" We were UNITED! We must be UNITED again; otherwise we will be stripped of our rights, stripped of our jobs as we know them, and stripped of our union and all the benefits that come with being in a Union. Management laughs at us; they call us weak and say we're divided. They pit worker against worker – they call your co-worker lazy and then behind your back, they call you lazy. Management lies and tells you, "THE UNION SAID..." and in most cases this is completely false! So, whenever you hear this, contact your Steward to confirm the truth. Management is not your friend! They promise you and will continue to promise you things in exchange for not involving The Union – until there is NO UNION – and

then we are all screwed! So, from now on REQUEST A STEWARD- on postal time not your own time! Management MUST provide you a Steward within 2 hours of the request but no later than the end of your tour. If management fails to provide you a Steward, request a Steward and file a grievance for Denial of Steward! Under the Law, management is obligated to provide you a Steward!!!! So, defend your rights!

In Solidarity

Hector Torres

It's the U and I in
UNION
that makes us
STRONG



Maintenance Craft Report

I would like to wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

We are working on a new Bid Box for Maintenance. There will be (2) bid boxes in place (1) at SNDC in BMC supervisor's office and (2) at Main Street Station, located outside Maintenance office. Management will be giving all Maintenance employees Custodians, MM-7, MPE-9, ET-10 & BEM's a free bid. WE are asking that all Maintenance Employees fill out a new PAR (Dream Sheet) and a new Rejection form. The reason for this is so that we are sure that your current wishes are up to date. With the New bid box, the only change is that after the Supervisor signs your PAR,

YOU must place it in the bid box. No longer are you to just turn in to your supervisor. When bid closes Management will notify the Union that the bids close at this time are to be collected. Union will be present when bids are collected. When the bid box is opened at the close of the process, this is the end of the process and the box will not be opened again until the next process date. NO late bids will be accepted. All bids must be signed and you must place in the bid box.

Arbitration award on the dock locks, Management did not want to comply with the arbitration award. We had a hearing with the arbitrator this was held it went very well and we should have a ruling on this by December 19th.

It's that time of the year again and as a reminder the employee's parking lot is to be policed and plowed by our maintenance Custodians. Contractors are not supposed working in that lot.

In January the low-cost universal sorter (LCUS) is going to be moved to the Wal-Mart area. This work is expected to start January 21, 2019 and the project should take approximately three weeks to complete. Here again the APWU has negotiated that this work to be done by our Maintenance department and not by an outside contractor.

In Unity,
Richard Peabody
Craft Director

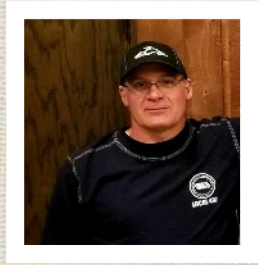
LABOR UNIONS:

**THE FOLKS WHO BROUGHT YOU THE WEEKEND.
CHILD LABOR LAWS, OVERTIME,
MINIMUM WAGE, INJURY PROTECTION,
WORKMENS COMPENSATION INSURANCE,
PENSION SECURITY, RIGHT TO ORGANIZE . ETC.**

The Inheritance

Stu Kibbe-Recording Secretary
Inheritance -definition:

- 1)to receive money or property as an heir at the death of the previous owner.
- 2) derive a quality or characteristic genetically from one's parents or ancestors.
- 3) to receive or be left with a situation or object from a predecessor or former owner.



I recently endured the difficult passing of my mother and father within 6 months of each other. I was fortunate to have parents from an era that were savvy, embraced fortitude, hard work, and had saving-itis. Depression era hardened. Enough so my 4 sisters and I each received an inheritance. Something tangible in addition to the incredible love they bestowed upon us to. And did they work hard for that tangible sum. I know now the struggles they must have endured, the sacrifice, the longevity, the quietness of it all. We could all hope for such commitment. But I had to suffer a huge hole in my heart to gain that damn inheritance.

Not too long ago I came upon a customer of mine back when I had a paper route as a kid in the seventies. My little 27 customer paper route on a dead-end street in Agawam. I had a well-worn white canvas paperbag with a reflective orange strap so I wouldn't be run over by a half-blind granny in the dark. I made about 3 to 5 bucks a week, which back in the seventies was significant, at least I thought so.

I didn't recognize Carol as she approached me afterwards, and she had had the advantage of hearing me identify myself and speak at a town council meeting in objection to a proposed zone change they were considering, and I didn't agree with. Carol surprised me, and said "you've grown up, your father's' shoulders, your mother's eyes", and then introduced herself. Weird after 40 years, but it happened. Inheritance of body, and the fight for what is right- thanks mom and dad.

I was 21 years old when I began working for the Service. June 22, 1985. I had taken the outside MPE mechanic test earlier on a whim, the advice of my drunk-loser-ex- brother-in-law, and passed. I remember my interview, and the first day of work in the BMC plant. I was overwhelmed at its enormity, and it had a unique smell. I knew enough about mechanical things, welding, keeping my mouth shut, and electrical knowledge to be accepted into the craft by the "old guys". I was number 78 in seniority, a "junior puke", whatever that meant. And was told I had one guy under me in seniority, which eventually grew to 112 total. Which I was informed was good, but never gave much thought to how we got to 112 mechanics.

Thru my early years I watched the "old guys" apply their mastery of maintenance skills, and stories of life. While not a vet myself, I certainly came to respect that most of them were. Vietnam. I think it was a war, right? I knew nothing, grew up fast, and learned a lot just by listening to them. Sacrifice on a scale I didn't understand. Bombs, Viet Cong, Hanoi, tunnel rats, and death of buddies in their arms by horrible means, trauma. Little ole' Agawam was paradise, and far far from reality.

I remember hearing the guys when they gathered around and talked about contract language- nearly every day. Holidays, seniority, prime time vacation, staffing, tons of stuff from that little book. Grievances, strategy, arbitration, and how to make things better at work. On and on it went. And they didn't take shit from management. Many had been here since before the plant opened in '74. Some got here by the closing of Uniroyal Tire, Tapley Street Annex, the merger with Main Street Station-downtown, wherever that was – I didn't know. But I listened, and respected them more each day. Clearly something happened before I arrived here and there was always something in motion.

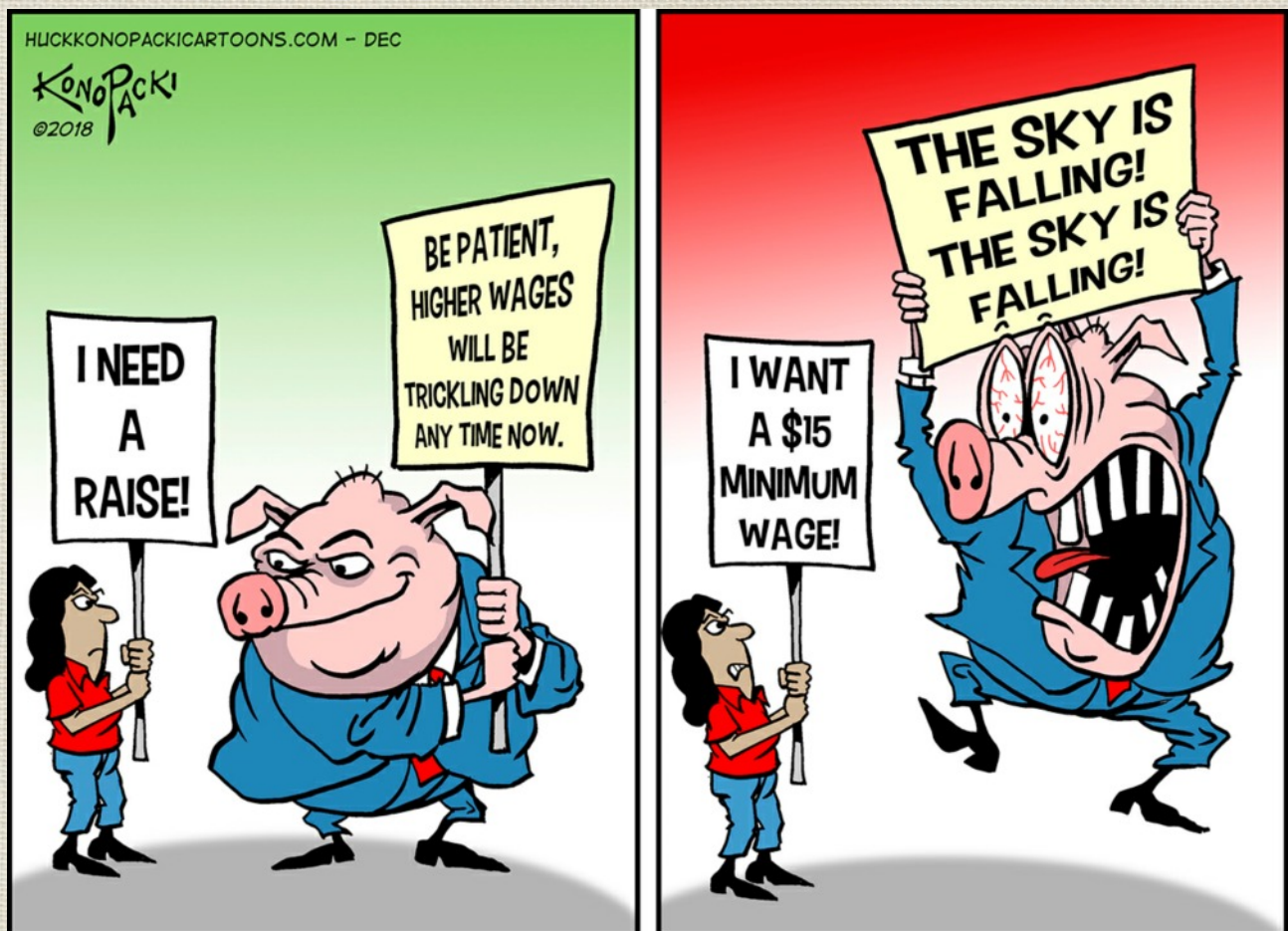
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During my first few years some of the “old guys” retired. A couple died unexpectedly. Some got sick, real skinny, left, and never came back. And somewhere along the way I began to think about the endless conversations about this contract thing and protecting our rights. I became interested in the power contained within the pages of that contract and made the decision to become a union steward while I was on tour 1. It wasn’t long before I recognized that I did make a difference in the lives of my co-workers.

Nearly thirty-four years into this “whim”, I still embrace the inheritance I was left with by the brothers in my craft, and the union overall. Contrary to most inheritances that require a death, or genetic traits, they subtly imparted the inheritance of a concept to be embraced while still here. They knew the knowledge, experience, understanding, and perseverance into defending our contract needed to happen contemporaneously. Us junior pukers had to learn.

Which brings me to my most concern. Many, many individuals have come together to represent and apply the most precious gift we have as labor employees, the contract. We have inherited it. Embrace that gift and all it represents. We cannot ignore the sacrifice, effort, time, energy, protection of our rights as workers and people go to waste. Step up and out of your comfort zone, find yourself, challenge yourself, damn it-STOP relying on somebody else to speak for you- because someday that somebody may be gone. In the end all we got is each other. The job we hold didn’t “just happen “by the good grace of management. Respect that fact, and work to ensure the next ‘you’ has that same opportunity.

Stu Kibbe has been member of APWU Local 497 for over 33 years, a Steward for over 28 and an officer for 12.



CLERK STEWARDS

JIM LONG T1
DEB KOSCIELSKI T1
JERMAINE NORFLEET T1
BRANDON JOHNSON T1
TARA LANZO T2
RUSS EVANS T2
JULIE PAGE T2
NANCY KENYON T3
TAMMY DEMARS T3
DON BRIN T3
DAVE BOGACZ T3
DEB ROBERTS T3
MAYA PAYNE T3
JACKIE CIAK T3
DIANA KIRKLAND T3

EVELYN SCYOCURKA
CHICOPEE

MARIA JIMINEZ
ATHOL

ANN PROVOST
WILBRAHAM

NEIL THOMAS
PITTSFIELD

MVS STEWARDS

ED ROWELL T1
HECTOR TORRES T1
DAVID SIMS T1
DENNIS REYES T1
TOM BROWN T1
GEORGE SCOTT T2-T3
MAUREEN HICKSON T2
JUSTIN LINCOLN T2

ROBERT BURNUP T3

GERSON CARASQUILLO T3

DAN ROSSO T3

ROBERT HYDE T3

ADRIAN PIRIS T3

MAINTENANCE STEWARDS

ENID RIVERA T1
SHAUN HEADY T1
JEFF ZAWALSKI T1-T2
RICH PEABODY T2
DAVID JONES T2
JENNIFER DOYLE T2
STU KIBBE T3

JEFF LAING
MSS

NEIL THOMAS
PITTSFIELD

ANDY MAYO
AGAWAM



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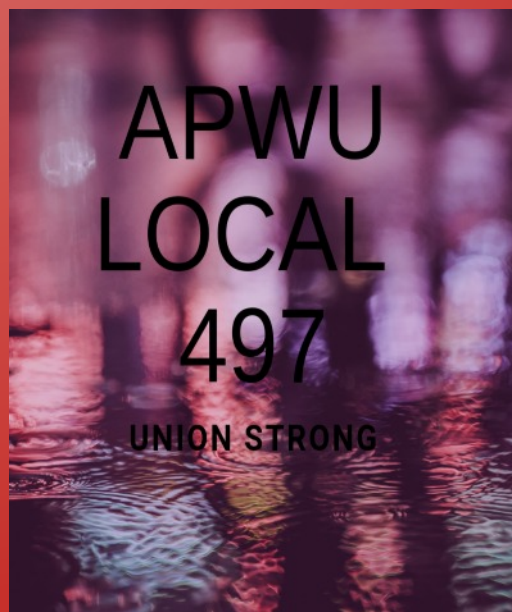
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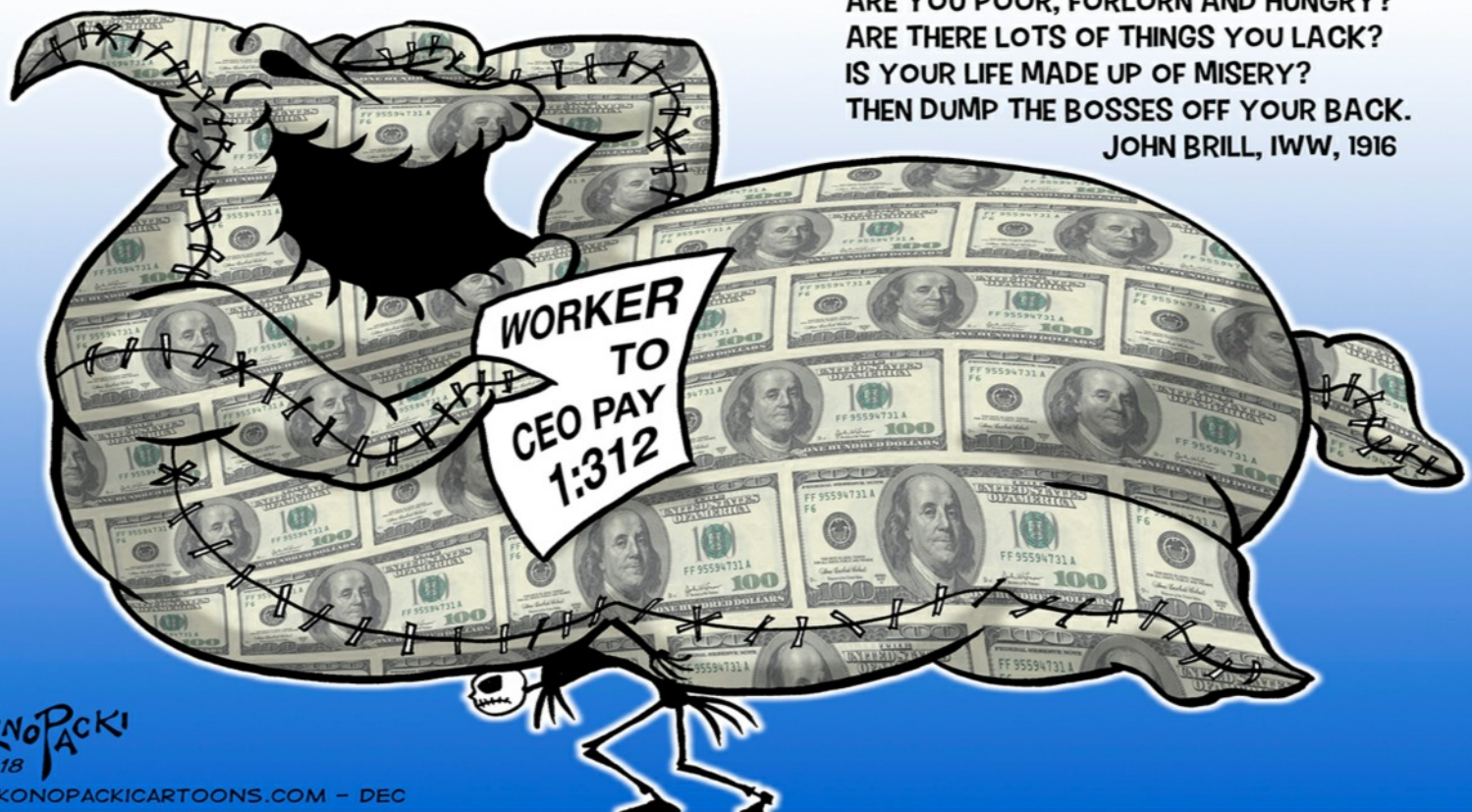
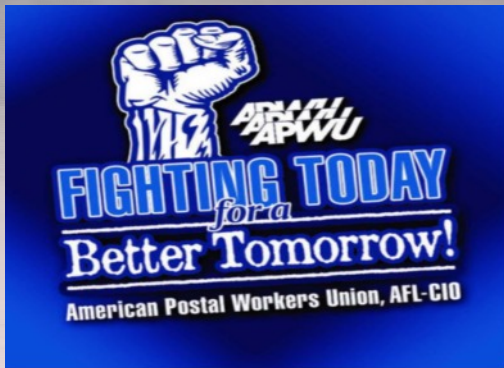
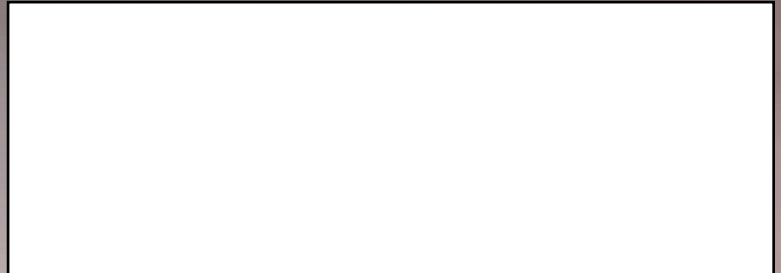
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ARE YOU POOR, FORLORN AND HUNGRY?
ARE THERE LOTS OF THINGS YOU LACK?
IS YOUR LIFE MADE UP OF MISERY?
THEN DUMP THE BOSSES OFF YOUR BACK.
JOHN BRILL, IWW, 1916