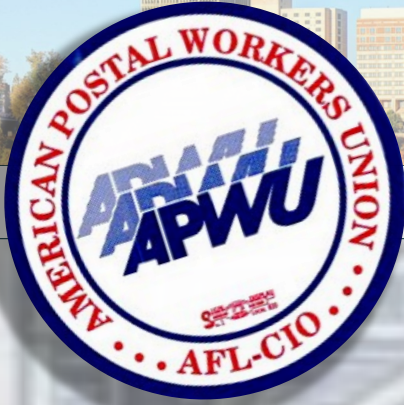


# THE SPRINGFIELD RIFLE

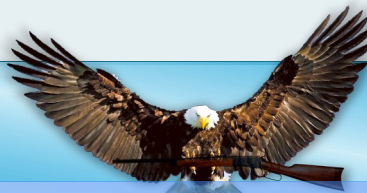
SPRINGFIELD, MA | AREA LOCAL 497



JUNE | 2021 | Issue 2



26th US President, Theodore Roosevelt (1858-1919) signed  
1938 Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) into law: 6/25/38

**APWU SPRINGFIELD LOCAL 497**

1124 Berkshire Ave  
Springfield, MA 01151  
Main Office: (413) 543-1146  
APWU497@gmail.com  
[apwusal.org](http://apwusal.org)

**EXECUTIVE BOARD**

<b>President</b> Russ Evans	<b>Vice President</b> Ed Rowell
<b>Recording Secretary</b> Stu Kibbe	<b>Treasurer</b> Manny Gonzalez
<b>Clerk Craft Director</b> Debbie Jacobs-Wheeler	<b>Maintenance Craft Director</b> Enid Rivera
<b>Motor Vehicle Craft Director</b> Charlie Morin	<b>Safety and Health Representative</b> Vacant
<b>Research and Education Director</b> Pete Mooradd	<b>Editor</b> Jennifer Brouillette
<b>Executive Board at Large</b> Dan Rosso	<b>Executive Board at Large AOs</b> Justin DesLauriers

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<b>Legislative Director</b> Vacant	<b>Trustee</b> Cynthia Clough
<b>Webmaster</b> Todd Griffen	<b>Trustee</b> Tara Lanzo
<b>Sgt. At Arms</b> Nick DeFeo	<b>Sgt. At Arms</b> Sean Hayes

**STEWARD DESIGNATIONS**

Designations are subject to change. Information is correct as of 06/26/2021. Contact our business office for further information.

**CLERKS | TOUR 1 | SPFLD NDC**

Russ Evans • Debbie Jacobs-Wheeler • Jermaine Norfleet

**CLERKS | TOUR 2 | SPFLD NDC**

Russ Evans • Debbie Jacobs Wheeler • Annie Chamberlain • Julie Page • Anthony Leroux • William Duggan • Jackie Ciak • Karina Williams

**CLERKS | TOUR 3 | SPFLD NDC**

Russ Evans • Debbie Jacobs-Wheeler • Nancy Kenyon • Dave Bogacz • Deb Roberts

**CLERKS | AOs**

Russ Evans (All) • Justin DesLauriers (Alt./All) • Amy Chamberlain MSS • Evelyn Scyocurka Chicopee • Abby Sherwood Athol • Justin DesLauriers Pittsfield & N. Adams • Anne Provost Wilbraham • Andy Mayo Agawam

**MVS | SPFLD NDC**

Ed Rowell T1 • Nick DeFeo T1 • Justin Lincoln T2 • Charlie Morin T2 • Dan Rosso T2 • James Davis T2 • Maureen Hickson T3 • LeRoy Kenyon T3

**MVS | AOs**

Charlie Morin (All)

**MAINTENANCE | SPFLD NDC**

Enid Rivera T1 • Joseph Sayles T1 • Ronda Wynn T1 • Jennifer Brouillette T2 • Pete Mooradd • T2 Dave Jones T2 • Gina Jones T2 • Doyle Maloni T2 • Stu Kibbe T3 • Michelle Sammataro T3 • Dave Lanzo T3

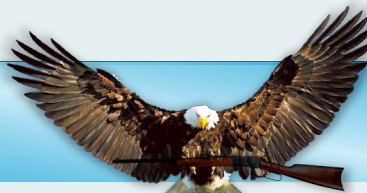
**MAINTENANCE | AOs**

Enid Rivera (All) • Jeff Laing MSS • Justin DesLauriers Pittsfield/N. Adams • Andy Mayo Agawam

**Editor's Note:** Opinions expressed in this publication are those of the individual author and do not necessarily reflect those of the editor or Union. Article and photograph submissions from all APWU members are welcome and encouraged! The Editor reserves the right to determine if material submitted to this publication shall be printed, and reserves the right to edit as needed for libel, space and clarity. Please send signed submissions to the editor at 497JBD@gmail.com or to our business address at 1124 Berkshire Ave, Springfield, MA 01151.







## LIVING WITH ASTHMA: HOW TO KEEP YOUR ASTHMA UNDER CONTROL

If you have asthma, exposure to certain triggers can cause a flare-up or an attack. Avoiding your triggers and making an asthma action plan can help you prevent an attack before it happens.

### What is asthma?

Asthma causes inflammation in the airways of the lungs. Exposure to certain triggers can cause the airways to swell and the muscles to tighten, resulting in a flare-up or an attack. Symptoms of an asthma attack include wheezing, coughing, shortness of breath, and tightness in the chest.

### How to avoid the ER if you have asthma.

A severe asthma attack can send you to the emergency room, especially if

your medicine isn't working properly or you're away from home without your inhaler. Getting your asthma under control—and making an asthma action plan—can help prevent visits to the ER.

Talk to your doctor about creating a plan for managing your asthma. Your plan may include medications to prevent symptoms and detailed instructions on what to do when you're having a flare-up.

**1. Follow your plan.** When you have an asthma action plan, you'll always know what to do in case of a flare-up. Include any daily requirements in your plan (such as taking medicine before you exercise), and work with your doctor to adjust your plan as needed.

**2. Take your medicine.** Maintenance medications can help prevent asthma flare-ups—and make them less severe—so be sure to take your medicine as prescribed.

**3. Don't leave home without your inhaler.** Always carry your quick-relief medicine, whether you're at work, at the grocery store, traveling, or just out for a walk.

**4. Learn the signs of a flare-up.** Early warning signs of a flare-up may include shortness of breath, sudden fatigue, irregular breathing, or trouble sleeping. Know what to do if you notice signs of a flare-up.

Learn more: <https://www.aaaai.org/conditions-and-treatments/library/asthma-library/asthma-triggers-and-management>

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[www.apwuhp.com](http://www.apwuhp.com)  
(800) 222-2798

## PREVENTING DIABETES: SMALL CHANGES, BIG REWARDS

### Are you at risk?

A number of factors can increase your risk of developing diabetes. If you have any of the following risk factors, talk to your doctor about getting your blood sugar tested:

- Being overweight
- Being 45 years or older
- Having a parent, brother, or sister with diabetes
- Having high blood pressure
- Having unhealthy cholesterol levels
- Being physically active less than three times a week
- Women who had gestational diabetes (diabetes during pregnancy) or gave birth to a baby weighing more than nine pounds are at risk

Race and ethnicity are also a factor. African Americans, Hispanic/Latino Americans, American Indians, Pacific Islanders, and some Asian Americans are at higher risk. The more risk factors you have, the greater your chance of developing diabetes.

Learn more: <https://www.apwuhp.com/preventing-diabetes-small-changes-big-rewards/>



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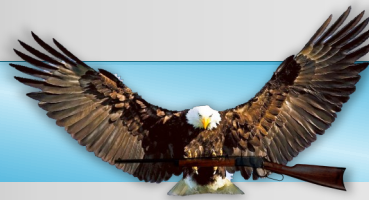
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7. Words of Wisdom
8. Maintenance Update
9. Maintenance Special Update
10. Inspiration, Funnies
11. Gratitude
12. Meeting Schedule





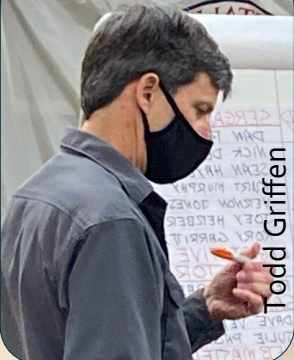
THE RIFLE

LOCAL 497



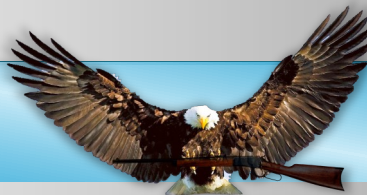
## *PUT A FACE TO THE NAME OF YOUR LOCAL OFFICERS!*

Officers not pictured: Enid Rivera, Manny Gonzales, Cynthia Clough, Tara Lanzo, (Vacancies)



**Swearing in of present elected officers** from left to right: Jesse Dane, Pete Mooradd, Nick DeFeo, Justin DesLauriers, Jenny Bogacz, Sean Hayes, Russ Evans, Charlie Morin, Ed Rowell, Dan Rosso, Jenn Brouillette, Deb Jacobs-Wheeler, Stu Kibbe





## RESEARCH AND EDUCATION UPDATE

I would like to start off this Article by thanking all of you for voting me back in as the Research & Education Director, it is something I deeply appreciate well beyond my ability to express.

This is truly a busy time for the American Postal Workers Union. I am sure that most of you are aware that contract negotiations are right around the corner. The APWU.org website will lead you to news updates and links to sign up for town hall meetings. We also locally conduct monthly membership meetings in order to keep us abreast of various subjects (see our local website at APWUSAL.org).

The **PRO Act** needs to be brought to your attention. The PRO Act is legislation that allows workers to form a union. You may have read about the workers attempting to form a union at Amazon, which failed. The workers were subject to quite a few things, that with the passage of this act would become illegal and have enough teeth to be enforced. The employees were subject to *mandatory* rallies to discourage them from voting yes to a union. There were posters all over the building, including inside bathroom stall doors, spouting anti-union rhetoric. While the employer is supposed to stay out of these types of votes, there is no penalty if they don't. How can you help? Call or write your representatives and thank them for signing onto the PRO Act, or sign on as a sponsor.



As I have reported at recent membership meetings, the nurses who work at St. Vincent's hospital in Worcester are still out on strike. They have been out for over one hundred days. The major issue is one that is a benefit to all those who use the hospital: *safe staffing mandates*. The nurses want to be able to give each patient the care they deserve. The hospital has done several things to the striking nurses, such as taking away their health care. Now they are trying to hire their replacements permanently. The Texan parent company

announced their millions-of-dollars annual profit when the strike began.

The issue of safe staffing is not isolated to St. Vincent's hospital; it is currently ongoing at our local hospitals. At both Baystate and Mercy (now Trinity) the nurses have had rallies for the same issues. The contract talks are ongoing.

Baystate is closing some of the area hospitals they bought out, and in one place they will leave only the critical care portion of the hospital open. The nurses reported they have been told since the building, beds and other areas will still be there, they can be opened if needed. Logically, while the area might still be there, who is going to be there to man it? The medical industry has become a for-profit business and they don't care about anything but the bottom line.

If you want to help the St. Vincent's nurses, they are on the picket line daily from 6 A.M. to Midnight. They would especially appreciate having people from 4 P.M. to 6 P.M., so they can have a presence on the line and attend their meeting for updates. You can also donate to their strike fund through virtual donation with [Venmo](#), addressed to the Massachusetts Nurses Association's dedicated strike fund, [@StVsStrikefund](#).

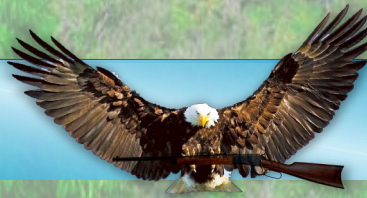
If you prefer, you can send a check payable to: MNA-St. Vincent Nurses Strike Fund. It can be mailed to: Massachusetts Nurses Association, Attn: St. Vincent Nurses Strike Fund, 340 Tumpike St, Canton, MA 02010.



*Pete Mooradd,*

*Research and Education Director*





## MOVING FORWARD...

*Our local election has come to a conclusion, **but our fight continues.*** Local management continues to try and chip away at our rights and working conditions. Our union rights and seniority are something they continue to attack. They are attacking our stewards with PDI's and fighting us on union time. This is a complete and total disregard to *your* representation. They are violating our day-to-day seniority. They are harassing and intimidating our members more than ever since the start of this Covid pandemic. We have protections under the law and agreed upon memos at the national level in regard to our leave. Their way of dealing with the law and memos are making things difficult. *If you feel your rights have been violated, ask for a steward and write a statement.*

Qualification clarity of **EFEL Leave** has been a disaster. The result is management making up the rules as they go. As a union we are doing everything we can to hold postal management to follow the guidelines set by the OPM. We have had plenty of meetings, and it's been a struggle. This local will keep fighting to uphold the OPM guidelines until it ends. This is *the Law* and was not negotiated by our union. If management does not comply with the guidelines of this law, ask for a steward and we will file to make sure the law is upheld.

Our **current contract will expire September 20<sup>th</sup>** and negotiations will continue again. We are in this fight together. We need members to get involved and active. This union is not a spectator sport. We need to get organized and get people involved. It's easy to sit back in the cheap seats, having no clue the fight we are dealing with behind the scenes and throw criticism. It's easy to throw blame and *not do a thing* behind the scenes. It's easy to ride the coat tails of all the hard work being done. We fight, we stress, we sacrifice around the clock not for our own interest, but because we believe in the labor movement and our contractual rights that have been fought for by our National and Local leadership. The **UNION** is fighting for wage increases, job security, good benefits, workplace safety and more leave.

**The Postmaster General's 10-year plan** for our service is another concern. Plant consolidations are part of this plan and will slow

down the mail. This union is actively fighting to get standards back to what they were in 2012. The consolidation will *not* help our service. If the mail continues to slow down, we will lose favor over the public, and this the agenda is to privatize more power. We must restore service standards to what they were. We don't want our mail to arrive slower. This plan also attacks reduction of hours. Yes, your overtime. They would rather delay the mail and reduce service standards to *cut hours*. This is not the US Postal **BUSINESS**, it's the US Postal **SERVICE**.

In closing, I would like to congratulate ALL the elected officers of this great Local. You have nothing but my complete respect and support for stepping up out of your comfort zone and *taking action*. I will honor and fight alongside you in every way I can, to the best of my ability.

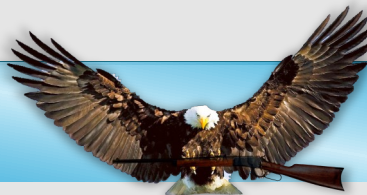
The fight for our future starts today; stay union strong!

In complete solidarity,

**Ed Rowell.**

Vice President





## WORDS OF WISDOM FROM OUR RECORDING SECRETARY

Dear Brothers and Sisters of Local 497,

I'd like to take this opportunity to welcome Jenn Brouillette as the Editor of *The Rifle*, our Locals' long-standing paper. She brings energy, ideas and the willpower to produce a paper you'll want to read. The success and interest of our paper, unique to our workplace issues, requires the participation of all the members. If submitting an article is not your forte, consider providing her issues or ideas you would like explored or discussed in these pages. No editor can fulfill this alone.

The position of Recording Secretary of Local 497 entails many duties and responsibilities. First and foremost is recording the minutes of the three meetings our Local conducts each month. These meetings are defined by either our *Local Memorandum of Understanding* (LMOU), or the Local's *Constitution and Bylaws*. They are the general Membership Meetings held on the third Thursday of each month, the Executive Board meeting held monthly on various dates, and the Labor/Management meeting held on the second Wednesday of each month.

Recording the minutes of Membership meetings serves two purposes. Firstly, it documents and preserves the spending of our Locals' treasury; no money can be spent without some form of authorization. When the authorization has been approved, I document the who, how and why that was done. This satisfies legal requirements for the Department of Labor and provides explanation if a member inquires why an expenditure was made. There are no secret spending sprees with our money. Regarding the different forms of authorization is subject for another article. Recording of the minutes also provides a historical record of the Locals' activities. The minutes from the first Membership meeting and Executive Board meeting to present are held at the Berkshire office for a member to review. This becomes a research tool when a member may want to amend our *Constitution and Bylaws*, learn why specific language was entered therein, and provide a record of the myriad of issues the Local addresses.

I am responsible for keeping the Locals' *Constitution and Bylaws* current. This document provides the structure of how the Local is operated and must be adhered to, to ensure consistent application and transparency for the membership. When an amendment is

proposed I ensure the process is completed properly, including any language changes. You may attain a copy online and at both offices.



Additional duties of mine include preparing the agenda for meetings, maintaining the bulletin boards at the BMC and providing the area offices our Local represents with the same information posted in the plant. Generally, this includes meeting notifications, informational material and any communication deemed necessary by the President or Executive Board. Each spring I update and provide information for the various scholarships available to our members and their children.

Upon ratification of our (national) Collective Bargaining Agreement, our Local leadership conducts meetings with management for negotiations on the LMOU. I am a member of the negotiating team and record activities of the meetings, develop proposals, counter proposals and draft final language for inclusion in the LMOU.

In closing, this Local is continually active for its members on many fronts, those seen *and* behind the scenes. As I near the end of my 36-year involvement with the Local I love, I have concerns for the complacency towards becoming involved with the Local. While being a member is admirable, its continued success relies upon deeper action.

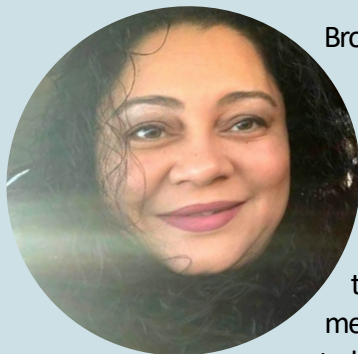
In continued solidarity,

*Stu Kibbe,*  
Recording Secretary





## AN UPDATE FROM OUR MAINTENANCE CRAFT DIRECTOR



Brothers and Sisters,

I would like to personally thank all the maintenance employees who voted for me. I am both honored and humbled by this experience.

Thank you, members, for making this election a monumental win. The members have spoken, and they wanted change. I have a job to do, and no one will deter me from doing that job. I will provide a listening ear as well as transparency.

I will start with what cases were transferred into my possession. The eWHEP, MS-1, and 2020/Line H were provided to me with additional work to be done. I will have to request the correct reports and items needed from management so that I can review and process these grievances. Staffing in maintenance has been a real problem. I will evaluate the MS-1 and eWHEP and request the proper reports to ensure that we have the correct staffing for all machines, tours, and principal assignment areas. For those members that are unfamiliar with the MS-1, it is the current staffing for Building and Equipment employees. It was agreed to nationally and it provides us with the current staffing for BEMs. The eWHEP is our staffing package. It details the hours needed to perform operational maintenance as well as preventative maintenance. Through that measure, it provides us with the number of employees we can have in each occupational group. This is a direct reflection of the work hours accounted for on each mechanics daily employee assignment worksheets. Therefore, it is imperative to make sure that all employees fill and sign their worksheets as well as account for every hour worked. Regardless of whether the hours are from preventative maintenance (PM) tasks, operational maintenance, or tasks that require a work order to be produced, it is vital to track every unit of time regarding eWHEP. For mechanics specifically, any job that may take you more than 30 minutes to complete, a work order is necessary. It may seem like an extra hassle among the larger picture of the machine you are servicing, but in the long run, it will continue to prove that we do in fact need more mechanics and electronic technicians in craft. The road will be long and will not correct itself overnight. However, if everyone does their

due diligence in filling their paperwork out correctly, this will be the first step in the right direction towards a properly staffed craft. While I cannot promise anything, I can say that I will put forth my best efforts to maintain the correct staffing in our department.

As for the line H, I will be closely working with our national business agent Dave Samacki. He has provided me with an open line of communication which I truly appreciate. He has the 2018/Line H and was just provided on March 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2021, with 2019/Line H. My predecessor has provided me with an extension form for Line H 2020. All reports, forms, and calculations still have to be done. Our 3 stewards have graciously taken on the task and will work diligently so that this case moves on in a timely manner. Hopefully soon, our custodial employees will see the fruits of their labor.

I would like to thank all stewards and alternates. The ones that have stayed and the ones that have joined me in the pursuit of a better working environment. I will forever be grateful for each one of you. I want to stress that the union is one sound team and without my stewards I would not be able to achieve this vision I am attempting to seek out on your behalf.

In Solidarity,

*Enid Rivera*

*Maintenance Craft Director*







## MAINTENANCE UPDATE FROM OUR NBA

Sisters and Brothers,

I would like to congratulate our newly elected and reelected officers. This is our democratic process at its best and allows the membership's voices to be heard. I want to extend a special congratulation to newly elected Maintenance Craft Director, Enid Rivera. I have had the pleasure of working many years with Enid when I was our MCD. I am confident Enid will treat members with the dignity and respect they deserve as well as enforce the four corners of the contract. Enid has been very proactive and has already reached out to me several times on important maintenance issues.

Contract negotiations kicked off on June 22<sup>nd</sup>. I have the humble honor and privilege of being one of only two NBAs on the National Article 38 Maintenance Craft negotiation team. These negotiations give us the opportunity to incorporate resolutions as adopted by the maintenance body during our last convention. It is also an opportunity to review outstanding step 4 disputes for possible resolve. Our collective teamwork started well before the June 22<sup>nd</sup> kick off date under the leadership of our National Maintenance Craft Director Idowu Balogun.

I received notification from Assistant Director B, Terry Martinez that The Service intends to remove FSS machinery from the NDC. The report does not specify how many and indicated the replacement(s) to be "manual operations." Whereas many impacted facilities have identified specific equipment to replace the FSS, I asked Brother Martinez to follow up as to what the Service considers "manual operations".

Brother Evans asked me if I would advocate a couple of maintenance cases in Arbitration to which I gladly agreed. I was asked to advocate two cases as identified by our former MCD. The request did not involve the NDC Line H FY 2018 nor the FY 2019 grievance which was not appealed until March 24, 2021. The two cases requested to be scheduled involved the relocation of two custodians from Main St Station to the NDC and the other was the Main St Station Line H. The cases were initially scheduled for August 20<sup>th</sup> and cancelled by management due to unavailability of their



witness. The case was rescheduled for January 7 and again cancelled by management over legitimate COVID concerns.

Despite Springfield being in a modified article 15 process (basically everything heard in house at local/district level) I was able to seek agreement from the Northeast Area to meet and discuss the Line H cases in toto for possible pre-arbitration resolve. Nationally, Labor relations is currently under a major restructuring/reorg. Once the dust settles the cases will be discussed and if resolution is not met then scheduled for arbitration as soon as possible.

I would like to thank our members for all that you do particularly during this pandemic which clearly illustrated that we are essential frontline workers. A special thanks to the members who attend and participate in our membership meetings so that our business can be conducted. I am proud to be a member of the Springfield MA Local 497!

In Solidarity,



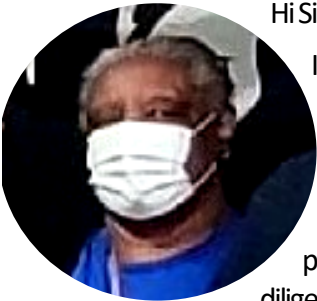
*Dave Sarnacki*

National Business Agent  
Maintenance Division

**APWU – Our Union, Our Contract, Our Future!**



## INSPIRATION FROM OUR CLERK CRAFT DIRECTOR



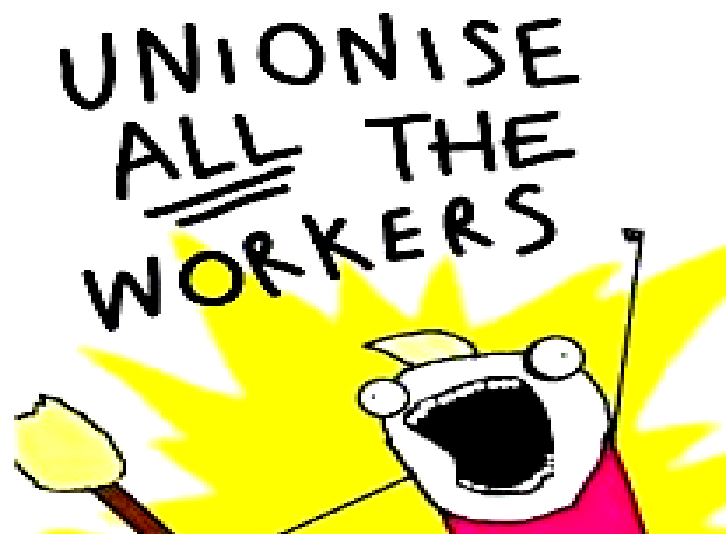
Hi Sisters and Brothers,

I would like to thank everyone that did their duty and exercised their right to vote in the election. Thank you for having the confidence in me to represent you as Clerk Craft Director. I promise to carry out my position with diligence and conviction to preserve your rights that the union has fought for over the years. Running for this office was a last-minute decision on my part. Everyone is probably thinking “why is she doing this when her postal career is winding down?”; that question also crossed my mind. A part of me said “this is your last chance to help make a difference” and really offer my service to the APWU. The APWU has been a very big part of my postal career from the very first day I started working here. I hear people say, “the union does nothing for me”. The union is working for me from the minute I step through the door of the Postal Service. I can exercise my right to pick my job by seniority. It enables me to pick annual leave by seniority. Some offices are not able to do this. The union fights for the benefits that I receive. So, I appreciate the union for having my back and keeping things fair across the board. These are trying times right now with the Covid-19 pandemic. Clerks are doing their very best to keep up with the workload. Instead of giving them a “Thank You!”, management is busy handing out discipline; the sign at the entrance of the NDC that says “Thank You for your Service” is a slap in the face.

I can't express enough the importance of becoming involved and understanding the contract as you are stating your journey as career employees. This will give you the know-how to continue the fight. **The future is up to you!**

In Solidarity,

*Debra Jacobs-Wheeler,*  
Clerk Craft Director







## GRATITUDE FROM OUR TREASURER

Greetings all APWU Local 497 members,

I am extremely grateful that the members of the union decided to vote for me in the election. Given that I am still relatively fresh in my career with the Postal Service, I was hoping that I would win, but was not expecting it. I was humbly shocked with the results, and I am truly thankful that the members gave me their vote. Even if you did not, I am hopeful that my term will see me make strides that will ensure your confidence.

This position to me means everything as I have stated previously, I went to school to eventually attain a career in a management field with special attention to a financial role. I unfortunately found it difficult upon graduating to seek out the career I intended to and was not successful in my endeavors early on when pursuing an EAS role of the same field in USPS. I personally feel this is the first time since graduating that I have been given the opportunity to pursue the role that would see me reprise the degree I worked towards. This is extremely gratifying for me to be able to get this experience and I am exceptionally grateful once again for everyone who exercised their right to vote.

Since being elected I have been introduced to the previous treasurer and could not be happier to receive direction from her, Jean Scalise. She accepted me into the role and welcomed me with open arms and has done her best with our schedules to train me to ensure I can do well. There is a much more extensive line of tasks for the treasurer than most may be aware of, and Jean has performed her duties as graciously as I have ever seen anyone be committed to their job. I will admit now becoming privy to

the duties she fulfilled, I have some big shoes to fill in her absence, but I will whole heartedly put my best foot forward to attempt to do right by her as well as the members. She has given me the right direction, and while I will still need to call on her for knowledge while I become a little more acclimated to the job, I am appreciative she has even offered to train me for the better future of the local. It cannot be understated the value she leaves with, and I do hope to be able to attain the same presence among the local moving forward.

With tasks such as balancing the books with the inflows and outflows of income and expenses for varying vendors and invoices, tax preparation, among others, I will admit I do have my work cut out for me. But in the same breath, I will keep in mind the effort put forth to earn the qualification to run for this position and utilize that to drive me to do my best job possible with integrity & passion towards my original craft, for this union.

Thanks once more to everyone who gave the young man a fair chance.



me

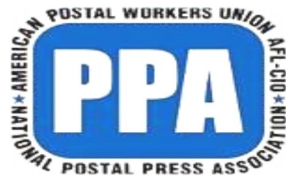
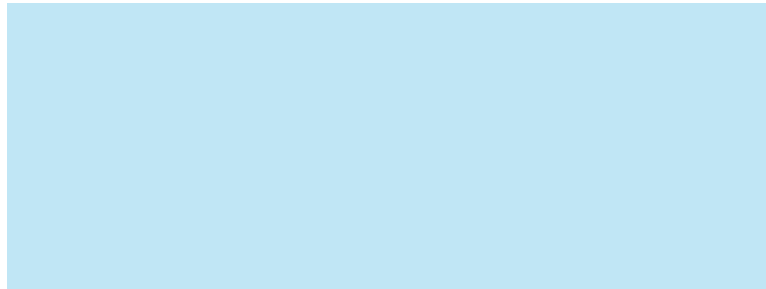


*Manuel Gonzalez*  
Treasurer



**APWU, Local 497**  
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*I have a dream... that members will get involved!  
Drop the Editor an email at [497JBD@comcast.com](mailto:497JBD@comcast.com) for  
your chance to be seen & heard!*



## Membership Meeting Schedule

Union meetings are held the third of every month *except* July, August, and December.  
Meetings are held at our business office at 1124 Berkshire Ave at 6:30 P.M.

**JANUARY 21**

**FEBRUARY 18**

**MARCH 18**

**APRIL 15**

**MAY 20**

**JUNE 17**

**SEPTEMBER 16**

**OCTOBER 21**

**NOVEMBER 18**

Yes, we do meetings online as well! Please visit our website at:  
[APWUSAL.org](http://APWUSAL.org) (under the 'HOME' tab) for details!