

QUARTERLY NEWS DIGEST

Vol. 32, No. 1

Postal Workers Serving Postal Workers Since 1891

January-March, 2017

National Director

Wayne Maurer

Spring Is In The Air

Hello everyone and welcome to the spring edition of the APW-ABA *Quarterly News Digest*. Since the election of Donald Trump as President of the United States, it seems a day does not go by without a laundry list of changes being contemplated or implemented. As members of the American Postal Workers Union, we must protect our rights, not just our rights with the USPS in our collective bargaining agreement, but our everyday rights as part of the organized labor movement and as citizens of this country.

Our Union did an outstanding job in the last contract negotiations and we should not lose sight of that. I've heard some people complain about our latest COLA increase, saying that 16 cents is hardly a "significant" increase, as the APWU news bulletin announced. Whether it is significant or not is up for debate but look around the country and try to find workers who still receive a cost of living increase. Better yet, access to a savings plan where the employer matches a percentage of your contribution, dollar for dollar. How about the no layoff clause. Postal workers may never be rich but without our Union we would be in much, much worse shape than we are now.

It is so important for every postal worker to belong to their labor organization. Unfortunately, under current law the non-members get to enjoy the same benefits as the dues paying members receive. It is unfair

but it is the way it is. This will not change anytime soon. There are, however, some benefits that can be

for everyone and I would advise any APWU member who is not enrolled in the APWU Health Plan to take a

popular 40% discount rate or we have plans for individuals to join starting at just \$1.25 per pay period.

The Value Plan carries a daily accident benefit payment of \$12.00 per day for each day of disability due to an accident, lump sum dismemberment benefits and a \$6,000 accidental death policy, all for that one low price.

With the additional revenue generated for APWU locals through the first two contractual pay raises, joining the APW-ABA is more affordable than ever. Currently some 260 locals and 22 states participate in our discounted plans and I would love for you to consider joining us.

Last but not least, another benefit of belonging to the APWU is the satisfaction of knowing that you are partially responsible for the success of our Union as a dues paying member. Those who reap the benefits of our Union's hard work and daily contract enforcement without paying their share simply weakens our entire workforce. There really is no reason to not belong to the APWU or one of our sister labor organizations within the USPS.

I hope you enjoy this edition of our *News Digest*. We are here for all your accident benefit needs. Accidents can happen anytime or anywhere – our plans do likewise. We cover accidents 24/7, 365 days a year, on or off the clock.

Thank you for all your continued support.



enjoyed by members that non-members cannot gain access to.

One of those benefits is to join the APWU Health Plan. They offer two outstanding plans, the consumer driven plan, which I have belonged to since its inception, and the high option plan. Both plans offer something

good look at what is offered this next open season.

Second is our own APW Accident Benefit Association. Like the Health Plan, if you are not an APWU member you cannot take advantage of this series of benefits. We have plans for entire locals and states to join at our

NON-PROFIT ORG
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
PRESORT INC

American Postal Workers
Accident Benefit Association
P.O. Box 120
Rochester, NH 03866-0120



Find out all the

APW ABA

has to offer...

Contact us today!

Call 1-800-526-2890

or visit our website

apw-aba.org



IN THE KNOW . . . Your ABA Breakdown

Ever wonder if being in a 100% Local is more cost efficient than not, or if remaining a full dues paying member of your local after retirement is worth it? SEE FOR YOURSELF!!!

Here is a complete breakdown of the cost of ABA benefits for 100% and Non-100% Locals and Full-Dues Cash Pay and Standard Member Cash Pay rates.

100% Local Member Rates

(Local provides ABA benefit to member)

Value Plan	\$0.75 (per pay period)
Advantage Plan	\$3.00 (per pay period)

NON-100% Local Member Rates

(Member pays for ABA on their own)

Value Plan	\$1.25 (per pay period)
Advantage Plan	\$3.50 (per pay period)

ABA Plus Rates

20K	\$0.35 (per pay period)
30K	\$0.45 (per pay period)
40K	\$0.60 (per pay period)
50K	\$0.75 (per pay period)
75K	\$1.13 (per pay period)
100K	\$1.50 (per pay period)
125K	\$1.90 (per pay period)
150K	\$2.25 (per pay period)

100% Full-Dues Cash Pay Rates

(Retired member still paying Full Dues)

Value Plan	\$19.50 (annually)
Advantage Plan	\$78.00 (annually)

Standard Member Cash Pay Rates

(Retired member paying for ABA on their own)

Value Plan	\$2.75 (monthly)
	\$33.00 (annually)
Advantage Plan	\$7.75 (monthly)
	\$93.00 (annually)

ABA Plus Cash Pay Rates

20K	\$9.10 (annually)
30K	\$11.70 (annually)
40K	\$15.60 (annually)
50k	\$19.50 (annually)

AMERICAN
POSTAL
WORKERS



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The editors of the *APW-ABA Quarterly News Digest* reserve the exclusive right to edit, amend or delete any article considered to be destructive to its goals of unity and union spirit.



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National Director
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100% ABA Membership For Locals Adds Up To Good Cents



The ABA has encouraged APWU locals to become 100% ABA for their members by offering discount rates since the mid-80’s. At the present time the general rate for the ABA Value Plan is \$1.25 per member/per pay period, with members of 100% ABA locals receiving a 40% reduction, paying \$.75 per member/per pay period. As we’ve written before, ABA benefits are only available for APWU members and other specified associate members as outlined in the ABA constitution & bylaws. The bottom line is that non-members in APWU-represented crafts cannot join the ABA, and with this in mind, automatic ABA membership is a great organizing tool for APWU locals.

However, even with this 40% reduction in ABA dues ,we are hearing that some locals are financially strapped as the result of reduced membership numbers caused by retirements, postal reorganization, and failure of management to hire new employees. The concern then is how to direct dues to pay for 100% ABA affiliation. The answer is as simple as presenting a common sense motion to the membership at a regular union meeting to increase the local’s union dues by \$.75, AND direct this increase to be for the purpose of 100% ABA participation. Taking such action couldn’t be better at this time.

Effective March 4, 2017, career employees represented by the APWU received a **16 cent per hour** cost-of-living adjustment (COLA), in accordance with the 2015-2018 Collective Bargaining Agreement (Postal Support Employees are not eligible for cost-of-living increases, but they receive five general wage increases under the 2015-2018 contract). This COLA increase appears in paychecks dated March 24th (Pay Period 06-2017), and will total **\$333.00 per year** (or \$12.80 per pay period, based on 40 hours per week).

This COLA increase will not result in general dues increases for locals, as the APWU constitution establishes that scheduled dues increases to the national organization and locals alike are based on general wage increases, not COLAs. Cost of Living Adjustments were negotiated into the 2015-2018 contract as the result of an increase in the Consumer Price Index (CPI-W), and are in addition to general wage increases.

INTERESTING, VERY INTERESTING

There’s a statement attributed to an ancient Chinese curse that goes, “*May you live in interesting times*”. And, just looking at the daily headlines in my local newspaper for the past month, boy are we ever living in interesting times! As one British observer noted over a century ago, “*I think that you will all agree that we are living in most interesting times. I never remember myself a time in which our history was so full, in which day by day brought us new objects of interest, and, let me say also, new objects for anxiety.*”

So, what’s this have to do with working for the USPS and the benefits we enjoy from the ABA? Well, we know that the ABA covers accidents that occur either on-the-job or after working hours. However, whether an accident happens while at work or otherwise, we’ve seen how the USPS takes harsh measures toward resulting absences from work. Although absences caused by on-the-job accidents may be covered by OWCP, and therefore should be exempt from management’s focus, it’s not uncommon for members to be called in for an Investigative Interview that is conducted by either supervisors or the postal inspectors regarding absences in general.

Several years ago, as president of my local I developed a cover sheet for our stewards to use when representing our members at Investigative Interviews, and place in the resulting grievance files. I’ve reprinted an updated version of it below in the hopes that it will assist other local officers, and eventually our arbitration advocates. I’m not saying that it covers everything, and I’m sure that some locals have developed their own forms, but I believe it’s a good start for our representatives that might otherwise need it.

Here are some of the concerns that I’ve found should be raised **PRIOR** to the Investigative Interview commencing:

- Identify the Date and Time of the interview, as well as the Location (including Room #) where the interview took place. This might assist our arbitration advocate point out that the interview did not occur when or where management says it did. It might also demonstrate that, as an example, a hastily conducted interview held in a small dimly-lit room was not conducive to assisting the employee to review and provide a full response to their questions.
- Identify everyone who is in attendance during the interview, and list their titles. Ask who will be conducting the interview and what the role of everyone else will be during the interview. Observers are ok, but they should not be asking questions themselves. Also, if someone enters the room late or leaves early, write it

down as it happens. That individual might try to provide a statement of what was said when they were not in the room.

- Submit a Request for Information for the personal notes taken by all of management’s attendees. This is particularly important when postal inspectors are involved, as experience has shown that they destroy their notes after generating their Investigative Memorandum (IM). If you don’t submit the IR until after the interview is over expect a response that the notes do not exist.
- Request a copy of the questions to be asked, and state what the response is. If management refuses to provide a copy be sure to inform them that you are there to witness what was asked as well as to assist the employee in developing an answer. Therefore, you are going to write each question and response, and you are a slow writer. And remember, you have the right to participate in the interview by talking to the employee and assisting

them with their answers, as well as asking your own follow-up questions for clarification; you are not a “potted plant” that must remain silent and only take notes (a role that management’s witnesses are if they are in the room).

- Ask what the FOCUS of the interview will be and write it down. If the stated focus is, say, attendance then ask for the relevance of any questions that are not on point.
- Ask what CHARGES are being raised against the employee, and write it down. The purpose of an interview should be to develop the facts to support any proposed discipline. As such, no charges should exist prior to the interview. Otherwise, management will try to apply the following logic, from *Alice in Wonderland*:
Queen: Now then, are you ready for your sentence?
Alice: But there has to be a verdict first.
Queen: Sentence first! Verdict afterwards.

INVESTIGATIVE INTERVIEW NOTES

Date of Interview:_____ Time Interview Began:___ Time Interview Ended:___
Location of Interview:_____ Room #_____
Attendees: Employee:_____ Work Schedule:_____
APWU Representative:_____
Management’s Representative:_____ Title:_____
Other:_____

PRIOR TO THE INTERVIEW COMMENCING:

1. The APWU representative provided the following to _____
☐ Information Request for the personal notes taken by all management attendees, including Field Notes taken by postal inspectors and/or OIG. (Write: “Such notes are not to be destroyed if not provided at the conclusion of the interview”)
☐ September 11, 2003 Memorandum regarding union Information Requests for supervisor’s personal notes
☐ MOU on page 315 of the 2015-2018 CBR, Re: Role of Inspection Service in Labor Relations Matters
2. The APWU representative requested copies of the questions to be asked during the interview.
Management’s response was: _____
3. The APWU representative read the following statement to management:
Both _____ and I are here to cooperate with the Investigative Interview. (Check the one that applies):
☐ Since management did not provide copies of the questions, in order to cooperate I will write each question down before the employee answers it. Please go slowly so I can correctly record each question and response.
☐ Even though management did provide copies of the questions, in order to cooperate I will write any additional question(s) down before the employee answers it. Please go slowly so I can correctly record each question and response.
Management’s response to the above statement was: _____
4. The APWU representative asked what the FOCUS of the Investigative Interview was.
_____ responded: _____
5. The APWU representative asked what CHARGES were being raised against the employee.
_____ responded: _____

Notes prepared by _____	Print	Signature	Date
(Copy to File)			

Vice President

Jenny Gust

Spring Can't Come Soon Enough!

The first day of spring is March 20th this year. By the time you are reading this it should be just about Spring! I am looking forward to warmer weather even though our winter has not been bad. Just to see the trees, grass and flowers back in bloom is something to look forward to.

So do you do a spring cleaning at your house? It is a great time to get ready to enjoy more time outdoors but leave the indoors looking good. Each year it is good to look around and check what needs to be done. Cleaning curtains, carpets, and blinds isn't fun but it has to get done sooner or later. Wiping down walls, cupboards and cleaning windows inside and out is a lot of work. Changing linens from winter to summer by putting away the heavy winter items and bringing out the lightweight things that make your home comfortable.

Once the inside is looking good I



head to the shed and begin to get the deck ready for summer. My deck is my outside living room and I enjoy making it inviting. And once the shed is somewhat empty I clean it up! Then soon it

will be time for potting soil, fertilizer, and lots of plants and flowers.

So what does this have to do with you? You probably have much of the same work to do at your home. While

you are busy working away, take the time to work in a safe manner. Be sure to take care of yourself while lifting and moving things. Don't hurt your back or make yourself so sore you want to give up on it all. Also watch where you are walking so there are no trips or falls. Working safely, even if a little slower, means it will all get done and you will be able to enjoy it more!

If you are a 100% local of the ABA I hope you are putting ABA info in your local paper. If you don't have a paper put in on a bulletin board. Also be sure to mention it at your local meetings. Make sure your members are aware that they have ABA coverage. Remember the ABA is owned by YOU the members and is 100% UNION. Please feel free to call our office (603) 330-0282 or check out our web site, <http://www.apw-aba.org>. We are here to serve you. If you have an accident and need assistance please contact us!

Northeastern Region Director

Scott Hoffman

Put Your Safety First

Dear Sisters and Brothers.

I hope you all had a safe winter. As of this writing, we really only had one bad storm this winter in the Boston area. Thank God! I would like to make comment on a few aspects of this storm. First thing I would like to point out is that, once again, if you thought that management would ulti-

mately take your safety into consideration, you once again have misplaced your trust and faith in an entity that does not care about you first. You are an afterthought, a consideration way down in the pecking order. You come after every customer, even the idiot who doesn't have enough sense to listen to the Governor, State Police,

DPW or news reports, and stay off the road as implored.

You come after the economic concern of paying a portion of your shift to keep you safe from traveling, by granting Administrative Leave. You subsidize the fear of every supervisor, manager or postmaster who worries about being second-guessed by their black hearted superior. When they "play it safe" for them, they are in reality "playing it unsafe for you"! They do it every time – without fail.

They will abdicate their moral and contractual obligation to keep your safety as a first priority, every time. Now, most people will learn not to touch a hot stove after the first time they burn their hand. Why then do we wait for them to make the right call when it comes to our safety? Learn from the lessons of the past, and make the call yourself. If you report to work and become aware that the situation has deteriorated to the point being on the road is unsafe, then leave, stating so. If your report is in the height of the storm, then don't jeopardize a trip in. If you have to wait for the storm to subside, and then dig out, then do so safely and report at the earliest possibility. But don't put yourself in harm's way, and don't leave the call to them. You will be disappointed every time. Look at your burnt hands!

involves your safety. You receive lip service, plain and simple! To them, safety is a buzz word to be preached; an opportunity to pounce if they believe one of us has acted unsafely, and a flimsy self-serving excuse for them to act outside the rules when conve-



nient. Their actions, or inactions, tell the real tale when it comes to safety and you. Look at your burnt hands!

It is up to us to police safety on the floor. File 1767s, file grievances, and make sure you follow up; requiring updates and abatement actions to be in writing. If they are talking, then they aren't doing. If they don't have the proof of action in writing, then there was no action. This is how it is. If you are the type who thinks management can be trusted to recognize a hazard, spring into action to fix the problem in a reasonable time frame, and report their actions unsolicited back to you, then I guess I would be looking at someone whose hands have spent a considerable amount of time at the Shriners Burn Institute. Let's teach them that we take safety seriously. Aren't we tired of getting burnt?

In Unity.

IMPORTANT



**Claim For Disability Benefits
Application For Benefits**
(Claim Form)

We no longer require that our Application for Benefits (Claim Form) be signed by the local/state president or designated ABA representative. The next time the forms go to print we will be removing the signature block. This signature was required at a time when a person's APWU membership had to be verified; however this information is provided to us by National each pay period. We have received many complaints regarding confidentiality of protected health information. We want to ensure our claims are handled in compliance with HIPAA and we respect our claimant's privacy.



PLEASE NOTE

Eastern Region Director

David Dunkle

I Love The APW-ABA

Hello Brothers and Sisters. I love the ABA because it has helped so many across our great land since 1891. I would rather obtain coverage from an organization run by retired and current APWU postal workers who I know understand my needs better than other benefit company. I also believe in helping my own before helping others.

The American Postal Workers-Accident Benefit Association comes from very humble beginnings in 1891. It was incorporated on December 12th 1898 and originally named the “National Association of Railway Postal Clerks.”

It was started by several Railway Mail Clerks who had very dangerous jobs hanging out of trains attaching mail sack to hooks as the train moved. As a result of the immense danger, no company wanted to cover them, so they started the “National Association of Railway Postal Clerks.”

On September 5th, 1972 the organization’s name was changed to the APW-ABA which has paid out millions in claims and remains solvent today even after the great recession we went through with former National Director Dave Daniel steering it’s path through those uncertain times.

My local is a 100% APW-ABA local with Advantage Plan coverage. The Advantage plan pays out \$24.00 per day, 7 days a week when injured accidentally, either on or off the job. This benefit also helps us sign up new members with greater frequency when they find this out. If you have ABA coverage and your local does not, you can get the reduced rates that 100% APWU Organizations enjoy by simply going to your local APWU meeting and making a motion to join the ABA. If it passes, your President will only need to call our great staff at the APW-ABA headquarters in New Hampshire and soon you and all your local brothers and sisters will enjoy the feeling knowing that you are covered for an accident.

Brothers and Sisters, if you’re tired of your local spending money on parties or other things that some, but not all can enjoy, then you should consider what I believe is a wiser use of your funds that helps all local members rather than some. If you put your thinking cap on, you can probably figure out where money can be diverted from one local activity to pay for APW-ABA benefits.

PLEASE JOIN THE ABA!

MILLION DOLLAR MAN
I’m proud to announce that I finally after 30 plus years of being a Union officer of the KYOWVA Area Local have been successful in grievances that exceeds one million dollars. My largest wins involve disabled employees removed from their jobs worth well over 600,000.00 dollars. I realize for those Union Reps in Large Locals with over 500 members this may seem trivial, but when you come from a smaller local it is quite an accomplishment. Years ago when I seen how my

father was treated by the USPS as a carrier I made it my sole mission in life to get a postal job, join the union and make the wrong doers pay. I made it my mission to become familiar with many federal laws, especially those associated with the disabled like my father, who was a 100% disabled Veteran who was almost fired for his-on-the-job injury which resulted in him being forced to hire a VA attorney because his union didn’t know much about Federal Employees Compensation Act.

In 1973, I went to work for the USPS as a casual carrier and worked off and on until 1975 when I joined the Navy and became an Account-



able Postal Clerk (APC). I made very high marks as an APC and later got disabled myself while on a covert mission to Russia. I was offered the prestigious job of running the Embassy Post Office in England if I had reenlisted, but I elected to return home and get a postal job, so I could fulfill my life’s mission of retaliating against the wrong doers of the Postal Service.

With all the immense postal knowledge I had gained in command of post offices in the Navy I returned home, I got a job with the USPS and immediately joined the Union. My initial plan was to infiltrate management ranks and learn more. Every day I went to work well dressed and I carried my lunch to work in a brief case. It wasn’t long before management took notice and decided I was good supervisor material. They put me in accounting to teach me all the time card codes and things I would need to know as a underling supervisor. I sucked it all in with my photographic memory. As soon as I completed the training I became as steward in 1985. From there I became the Ashland KY Area Local President/Steward. After a merger with the Huntington Area Local in 1987 to form the KYOWVA Area Local I became Executive VP/Steward and finally the President of the local in 2011. It’s been a long road while I’ve nickeled and dimed the USPS, but it’s been so much fun.

ACT OF GOD SITUATIONS
All USPS Career employees that include, Fulltime, Part-time and Part-time Flexible employees have a right to Administrative Leave due to an “ACT OF GOD” situation. *Acts of God involve community disasters such as fire, flood, or storms. The disaster situation must be general rather than personal in scope and impact. It must prevent groups of employees from working or reporting to work.*

An employee has a right to administrative leave if they or their steward can prove the above underlined element.

Groups can be defined as: At least 2 employees in 2 post offices in an district area or at least 2 employees in 2 different sections, categories or crafts in one office.

Further, the snow or flooding or fire, etc. has to be a community disaster. The disaster must be general rather than personal in scope and impact.

Meaning, if you call into work and claim you couldn’t get there because of county, state, or interstate roads closed and there are groups of employees off work you will have a good claim for admin leave, but if you say you couldn’t get there because your driveway is too steep to drive on due to snow, this is a personal problem created when you decided to buy property on a hill.

Admin Leave provisions are found in chapter 380 of the F-22 or F-21 USPS handbooks or chapter 519 of the ELM.

Further, this section in the F-21 or F-22 tells us, that if, the employee requests on a PS form 3971 another form of leave prior to administrative leave, that employee loses their right to admin leave. So, make sure you don’t let your supervisor talk you into filling out a 3971 for annual or sick or LWOP prior to your request for admin on a PS form 3971 that USPS signs for received in the far right box toward the bottom of the PS form 3971.

It is also very important for all employees claiming admin leave to try to get confirmation that the roads were closed in your area. You can usually get proof of road closings at your local courthouse or 911 Office. Your steward will need this information to make a successful case for you. Normally, after admin leave is denied an employee can only use annual leave for the Act of God absence to get paid, until they win a grievance filed for Admin Leave, except in a scenario described below where I used **sick leave** while waiting on a settlement or decision on an Act of God grievance.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT
How to get sick leave while waiting on an Act of God grievance decision

A few years ago I called into work during a huge snow storm. I told my supervisor I was calling in on Administrative leave due to the storm. I also told my supervisor I would make every effort to get to work.

Thereafter, I picked up a shovel and began cleaning my driveway trying to get to the USPS that I loved so well. I got so exhausted shoveling snow I later had to call in sick. When I got to work a few days later after roads were cleared I made sure I completed a PS Form 3971 showing the time and date I first called in on admin leave. After this was immediately disapproved I filled out another 3971 for sick leave indicating a later time and date since the sick leave oc-

curred after the Admin leave was requested.

My Admin Leave as stated previously was denied along with others at the Post Office, but my sick leave was approved. I filed a grievance within 14 days of the incident and had all the necessary proof mentioned above and/or in the F-21 handbook to prove my absence was due to an Act of God situation. At the arbitration Dunkle won as usual and got his sick leave reimbursed and was paid admin leave for the Act of God absence at issue.

THE TRICK TO COMPLETING PS FORM 3971 FOR ADMIN LEAVE (ACT OF GOD) PURPOSES

USPS almost always denies Admin Leave for Acts of God. This means you have to prove your case which will probably end up in arbitration. The less paperwork in arbitration the better, so the number 1 scenario is better than number 2 below if you can accomplish it.

Scenario 1: Ask your supervisor if he will approve your Admin Leave. If supervisor says no, then fill out your PS Form 3971 first going to the Remarks section and write, for example, **“Requesting Annual Leave due to Administrative Leave previously denied”**. This puts all info on one page for arbitration and it shows you requested Admin Leave prior to other form of leave.

Scenario 2: You attempt scenario one above and your supervisor refuses to sign it. Then complete one PS form 3971 for the Admin Leave indicating it was requested first by dates and time on the form and get your supervisor to sign for it received and the date. Then complete another PS form 3971 for some other form of leave making sure the dates and time are later than the dates and time for the Admin Leave requested.

The 2017 Employee and Labor Relations Manual – issue 41 regarding Administrative Leave for Acts of God states in part:

- 519.21 Acts of God
- 519.211 General

Acts of God involve community disasters such as fire, flood, or storms. The disaster situation must be general rather than personal in scope and impact. It must prevent groups of employees from working or reporting to work.

519.212 Authorizing Administrative Leave for Acts of God

The following provisions concern administrative leave for acts of God:

- a. Postmasters and other installation heads have authority to approve administrative leave for up to 1 day.
- b. District managers and Postal Career Executive Service (PCES) plant managers may authorize administrative leave beyond 1 day, but not to exceed a total of 3 days, for their installation and those reporting to it.
- c. District managers and senior or lead plant managers may approve administrative leave for periods up to and in excess of 3 days for their installation and those reporting to it.

2017 APW-ABA Scholarship Program

Honoring Thomas Hartos, Michael Tosches & Eugene Johnson

2017 APW-ABA SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

honoring

THOMAS HARTOS, MICHAEL TOSCHES & EUGENE JOHNSON

APPLICATION

APPLICATION DEADLINE: MAY 15, 2017

INCOMPLETE APPLICATIONS WILL BE RETURNED

NAME ADDRESS:

CITY: STATE: ZIP: PHONE#:()

I will graduate from High School, which is located
in , in .
(City – State) (Month – Year)

I will be enrolled for the term of at .
(Year) (School)

in . My father, mother or legal guardian is a member
(City – State)

in good standing in the ABA and the Local APWU.
(Local name)

ABA Member's email address: @

(Student - printed name & signature)

(Parent/Guardian - printed name & signature)

(This section to be completed by Local or State President or ABA National Director)

This will certify that ,
(APW-ABA member's name) (SSN or EID# of member)

is a member in good standing of the Accident Benefit Association.

Date: Signature:
(ABA Local or State President or ABA Nat'l Director)

All Applications Must Be Sent To:

ABA Scholarship Program
PO Box 120
Rochester, NH 03866-0120

THE BELOW IS FOR ABA USE ONLY

Local Name Local # Date Recv'd 100% Local Yes No

This application has been reviewed and certified, - ABA Nat'l Director

APPLICATION DEADLINE:
MAY 15, 2017

Dear Sisters and Brothers,
Below are the guidelines and application form for the APW-ABA Scholarship Program which is named in honor of long time union activists, Thomas Hartos, Michael Tosches and Eugene Johnson.

Feel free to make copies as well as insert into your local publication or on your local website.

We ask that you insure all applications are filled out completely, paying special attention to the member's postal employee identification number (EID) or social security number, so that we may verify ABA membership. Incomplete applications will be returned.

Please contact our office if you have any questions. Our normal business hours are, Monday thru Friday, 8:00am – 4:00pm EST.

Web Page: <http://www.apw-aba.org>
Telephone: 603-330-0282
Facsimile: 603-330-0285
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In Union Solidarity,
Wayne Maurer
National Director
nationaldirector@apw-aba.org

2017 APW-ABA SCHOLARSHIP
GUIDELINES

1). The scholarship announcement, application and guidelines will be mailed each year to all Local and State Presidents and ABA Board of Directors, no later than March of each year. The announcement and application will also be printed in the *ABA Quarterly News Digest* as well as posted on the official ABA website. The deadline for returning the scholarship application will be set forth by the ABA.

2). All entrants must submit a completed application which will be verified by their local or state president or by the ABA home office. Properly completed applications will be entered into a drawing for a one thousand dollar (\$1,000) scholarship. Entrants must be a graduating high school senior who is the son, daughter or legal ward of a member of the ABA.

3). The scholarship award is limited to a one time amount of one thousand dollars, (\$1,000). Two scholarships will be awarded per calendar year.

4). The scholarship drawings will be held at the ABA home office no later than June of each year. These drawings will be strict "luck of the draw", meaning the entrants pulled are the winners. No preferential treatment will be given to any entrant. All applicants will be assigned a random number for drawing. The winners will be drawn from amongst all applicants and notified by certified mail.

5). Scholarships will be paid directly to the school that has been designated on each winner's application. Each winner will also be required to submit an acceptance letter and photograph accompanied by a biography which will appear in an issue of the *ABA Quarterly News Digest*.

6). The National Director will coordinate the scholarship program with the authority to settle any or all eligibility requirements or disputes that may arise.

Northeastern Region Director

David E. Daniel

Now More Than Ever

Sisters and Brothers.

In light of the current political realities in America, You and your family need the benefits provided by the APW-ABA and our partners, NOW, more than ever. I have always tried to be encouraging and positive about the future of Unionism, our people and the American Postal Workers Accident Benefit Association. However, this article is a call to action. The government who many thought would always provide for Postal, Federal and Military members and retirees has been deposed. I recall, Just after I became WVPWU State President in 1982, I had a long conversation with (then) Senior WV Senator Jennings Randolph about the future of Postal Workers without his Senate Post Office Committee. He feared that one day the conservative agenda would be realized and all government employees would be at risk. APWU Legislative Director, Pat Nilan was with me that day and stated that “while we would never get everything we wanted for labor, the

conservative radical agenda could never be achieved. Senator Randolph was right and Pat was sadly wrong. There is a new Reich in Washington and its number one target is public employees, starting with Federal and Postal workers, and driving toward the reverse Robin Hood Principle.

Those failing to vote and those who forgot who they were and what they stood for have brought forth the most dreaded reality imaginable for working people. We have a majority conservative (regressive) Congress and Senate and a President who is off the scale to the right: I daresay to the point of seeking to be a dictator. Union members, working people in general, minorities and the poor had better wake up fast and become a part of the solution. We are in a social crisis like no other in American history. Trump, McConnell and their rightest allies in the House, Senate and the cabinet are looking to destroy your livelihood, benefits and retirement. And it is going to be done quickly.

Those of you who have “just ridden along” or decided to let other people lead the way, need to stand up and scream. Scream in the streets, in newspaper and online forums: Scream to your Congress members and Senators. Scream at town meetings and political gatherings. The Conservatives took over America with picnics and local meetings designed to organize and take over statehouses and the state legislatures which, in turn, redrew the Congressional districts to enable Republican takeovers. They have succeeded. And, reversing the trend will take very long hard work. In the meantime, your livelihood, benefits and retirement are on the chopping block along with Obamacare, gun safety, child protection, the environment and civil rights. You no longer have the luxury of letting others act.

You need also to take a look at the benefits you have and to be sure that they are right for you and your family. Ask yourself, “if my health, and life insurance from the USPS or OPM

are reduced, made cost prohibitive or taken away, what do I have to fall back on”? Most of us wont like the realities of our answers. In the hustle and bustle of work, raising a family and making ends meet, we too often let things like extra benefits and insurance go lacking. Those benefits, previously thought of as “extra” may loom huge in your future. The ABA stands ready to help.

For more than 125 years the APW-ABA has been providing those benefits at rock bottom prices and without the profit motive. The ABA is not only the best new member recruiting tool available to APWU locals, it is also the best place for you, your family and your APWU local to look for answers and help. Call the home office today for information on scheduling an organization and benefit drive in your local area and/or how to get ABA coverage including helping your local to become a 100% ABA local; if it is not one yet.

In Union Spirit.

Southern Region Director

Larry Sorrells

United We Stand, Divided We Fall

Hope this article finds all of my APWU Brothers and Sisters healthy and well after the holidays. Lots of things are going on in our country due to a change in the White House. I will not dwell on this too long other than to state that I do not know what the future of Unions, in particular Unions representing government workers, will be like. I will have to admit that I am very apprehensive as to what is “coming down the pike” for all of us. Why am I even mentioning this? Many people thought that they could always have a secure job, health benefits, a good retirement, and therefore a good standard of living. Many thought they could always house, feed, educate, and in other ways provide for their families.

Things like this very accident benefit program could vanish along with the other things I mentioned with a stroke of a pen. Congress and the President giveth and can taketh away.

What do we need to do? Do we sit, whine, and complain or go we fight for us and other working families? To me there is no choice. This country and its Unions were not built by do-nothing whiners and complainers. It was built by men and women who worked hard and stood up to the oppressors. Many of them were imprisoned, beaten, and even killed because they had the audacity to picket, demonstrate, vote, and stand up for the wellbeing of themselves and others. The struggles for workers and minorities have never

been easy and never will be easy, but their efforts have brought about change for the good. So what do we do? We need to ORGANIZE, ORGANIZE, ORGANIZE. Organize and participate within your Union. Participate in your Central Labor Councils and your State AFL-CIO. Meet and participate with constituency groups such as retiree groups, churches, and political parties and organizations that are pro-worker. Unite and support those who support you. Volunteer and make your voice heard. Sometimes it seems like all of hard work in the past is for naught and we get complacent. We CANNOT rest on our laurels or our behinds. If we do we will continue to lose. Think about how hard it was for

those that came before us and how they sacrificed greatly. Think about those women and men that served and fought in wars to help people like us. They fought to preserve freedoms and a way of life that working families in this country have thrived under. Have you heard it said, “somebody needs to do something”? All of us are “somebodies ” and all of can do something . You may think I can’t do this but you can. If you can’t be a leader, be a follower. Be a volunteer, and organizer, and an activist.IT IS UP TO ALL OF US! The alternative will not be good. UNITED WE STAND, DIVIDED WE FALL. Enough, I am gone. I have to get ready for a NC State AFL-CIO Meeting.

Central Region Director

Edward J. Brennan

A Friendly Reminder

Several years ago I wrote an article explaining the fact that I AM NOT A VENDOR. The APW Accident Benefit Association is an organization started in 1891 by postal workers for postal workers. All of our Regional Directors and Officers are members of the American Postal Workers Union. When we come to your local meetings or conventions, we speak to you about the benefits available to postal workers currently employed by the Postal Service or eligible Retirees and their families.

The organization is owned and operated by members of the American

Postal Workers Union. Costs and benefits of the organization are controlled and established by members of the American Postal Workers Union.

Upon attending local meetings or conventions, I normally accomplish my mission of educating and helping the delegates at these events by speaking to the Officers prior and requesting time to address the assembly in the opening session as an Officer of the ABA and member of the American Postal Workers Union. I also request the use of a table adjacent to or near the meeting room where I can remain during the meetings so I am able to

hand out material, answer questions, explain programs or give assistance to current members should they need forms or have problems understanding how the ABA functions. My card will also be available at the table in case they have any questions or problems after the meeting ends.

I will also be available to explain how a Local or State Organization can save their members money by providing ABA benefits through 100% membership. This is a great organizing tool for non-members once they find out that union sponsored help is available if they become in-

jured from an accident. This benefit by the way covers members on or off the job, 24 hours per day, seven days a week, 365 days per year. Spouses are also eligible for ABA coverage at the same rate as the member.

Always remember, ABA Directors that attend your meetings are not vendors and do not receive commission based on new member signing. We are here to inform you about the Accident Benefit program and assist you with your needs. We are all fellow members of the American Postal Workers Union and dedicated brothers and sisters.

Central Region Director

Keith M. Richardson

10 Tips For Work Safety

Everyone should practice good common sense safety approaches at



work to avoid accidents. The following are some easy ways to avoid unnecessary accidents. Staying healthy and safe at work is important. No

matter what your job, it is important to reduce your risks of injury and illness at work. Here are some tips to help make your workplace safe.

- 1. Understand the risks.** Once you know the particular hazards of your job or workplace, you can take steps to reduce your risk of work-related injury or illness.
- 2. Reduce workplace stress.** Common causes include long hours, heavy workload, job insecurity and conflicts with coworkers or bosses. Stress can lead to depression, sleeping difficulties and problems with concentration.
- 3. Take regular breaks.** Staying fresh and alert will help you avoid injury or burnout. Schedule the most difficult tasks of each day for times when your concentration is best, such

- as first thing in the morning.
- 4. Avoid stooping or twisting.** Use ergonomically designed furniture and equipment, and rearrange your work area so that everything you need is within easy reach.
- 5. Use mechanical aids whenever possible.** Instead of trying to lift or carry a heavy object, use a wheelbarrow, conveyor belt, crane or forklift.
- 6. Protect your back.** If you do need to pick up and carry heavy loads, keep the load close to your body and lift with your thigh muscles.
- 7. Wear protective equipment to suit the task.** If worn correctly, gear such as earplugs, earmuffs, hard hat, safety goggles, gloves or full-face mask can dramatically reduce your risk of injury.

- 8. Stay sober.** Alcohol and drugs are a contributing factor in around three percent of workplace fatalities.
- 9. Talk over any concerns.** Your union representative and management need to be informed about hazards and risks. Your employer is legally obliged to ensure a safe working environment.
- 10. KNOW YOUR RIGHTS!!!**

I'd be remised if I didn't give kudos to National Director Wayne Maurer and the exceptional staff that runs the day to day operations of the ABA. We all can rest assure of the amazing job that they perform for us on a daily basis. Also I'd like to extend a great big Get Well Soon to my counterpart in the Central Region, my friend Edward Brennan.
Enjoy your Spring Everyone!

West Region Director

Marty Schneider

Two-Wheeled Motoring Safety

We all know the number one safety rule for two wheeled motorized vehicles is TAKE A RIDER'S COURSE. However there are some other safety rules to share that bear repeating. Of course a huge priority is a full face helmet. The Department of Transportation (D.O.T.) ratings on helmets are lower and less desirable but adequate. The SNELL rating on helmets is preferable because it is higher and gives more protection to your precious head.
Next up on the safety roster is a jacket. A jacket with TPU polyurethane padding in the back, shoulders, and elbows is highly recommended. A zip out liner is helpful for weather changes. Jackets with total spine armors as well as the shoulder and elbow are available for the seriously safety conscious rider. And to com-

plete the upper body accoutrement is a good pair of gloves. Gloves should have additional leather strips at the knuckles, palms and heels of the hands.
Lower body protection begins with boots that are well above ankle high. This protects from both burns and crash injuries. There is no substitute for a good pair of boots. Heels should have a base at least two inches wide. That's "wide" ladies not "high." Stiletto heel boots are NEVER recommended for motorcycle or scooter riding. Glove leather is also a bad idea when choosing boots.
Trousers with a belt are a necessity. No dress pants with a crease and

cuffs for this outfit! Heavy blue jeans or twill pants are de rigueur. If you land on your tushy you don't want to end up with road rash! A used pair of jeans has been proven to avert road rash better than a brand new pair of

jeans. Pants with additional armor in the knees and buttocks area are available. Studies have been done that indicate after 2 seconds your pants are worn through during an unexpected contact with the highway.
Something which you may not have been aware of is that use of a back support belt offers extra support and protection on a long ride. The theory being the straighter upright one remains the less fatigue. Food for thought.
Needless to say this sums up the clothing and footwear aspect of safety on a cycle or scooter. Stay tuned for future information in this periodical by this author.



West Region Director

Jim Alexander

Safety At Work, Home & Play

Accidents do happen and not always are they preventable. Having worked at the Post Office for two-thirds of my life and active in the APWU for that period of time, I have witnessed a plethora of safety programs management wants to implement. As a member of my Local's Joint Labor-Management Safety & Health Committee, I have always believed that the safety program agreed upon by the Union and management in Article 14 of the Collective Bargaining Agreement is the most comprehensive and effective safety program on paper. Unfortunately, the USPS really isn't committed to employee safety. If it was, management would resource the program rather than keep trying to repeal and replace it with other safety initiatives designed to target employees for extra

special attention. If management really wants to change the safety culture at work, it would lead by example; it would lead by insuring all employees receive required job training; it would lead by insuring that all employees received required weekly safety talks; it would lead by insuring that safety hazards reported by workers are inves-



tigated and acted on promptly; it would lead by insuring that Safety Committee meetings are represented by all Unions. Instead, our safety at work is left to the individual notions of what constitutes working safely. We are largely left to our own devices to make sure we don't get hurt on the job. As such, we must call on our common sense and work defensively. During my entire postal career, I know of no one that has intentionally injured himself or herself. Why would anyone intentionally get hurt? They wouldn't. With all that goes along with an injury – impairment, either temporary or permanent, loss of work, loss of income, insurance fights, doctor appointments, extra special attention by management – it all comes into play when we get hurt.
Whether at work, home or play,

common sense safety is a must. Push don't pull; lift properly; be aware of the potential hazards that surround you including coworkers, family or others that don't have the safety awareness you do. Take the time to perform tasks safely – don't be in such a rush that you or someone else gets hurt. Get involved in your local Union to enhance your safety awareness and knowledge, not to mention to help enforce safety rules and regulations.
Of course, the Accident Benefit Association is here for you if you do have the misfortune of having an accident. It is our purpose to help alleviate the stress that an accident produces, but I would guess that you would really rather not be hurt in the first place if it was up to you.
Onward!