



# NEWS & VIEWS

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## May is Child Labor Awareness Month

By: Trisa Mannion - President

The 2018 National Convention delegates designated the month of May as Child Labor Awareness month. The purpose is to focus on the needs of the children in the United States that are being forced into situations no child should endure. Education is the first step to finding a resolution.

As reported by Human Rights Watch on labor exploitation and trafficking of children on tobacco farms in Kentucky, Virginia, Tennessee, and North Carolina, the children forced to work on tobacco farms face several health and safety risks, including acute nicotine poisoning and chemical exposure.

Ohio is often in the top of the states prosecuting trafficking and sex crimes. It seems like an unlikely place to be in the top 5 places in the United States for crimes against children. They are the center of transportation for trucks, boats, and trains. They have an international port and do not draw attention like Las Vegas, Los Angeles, Atlantic City or New York.

Several states force children to work in the agriculture fields with their parents instead of attending school. Many industries have children in the workforce that are far below the age of 18 working too many hours, in hazardous conditions or as servants paying off a debt to a coyote or snakehead that smuggled them or a family member into the country.

According to Freedom Network USA “child trafficking survivors are among the most vulnerable and exploited people in the world. Startling numbers of children are forced to work each year. Children can be paid the least, exploited the most, and, because of their legal incapacity and invisibility as minors, often have little to no access to resources. Children’s vulnerability to human trafficking can also be magnified by their physical, emotional, and financial dependence on adults.”



There are so many stories of run-away children being coerced or forced into prostitution that it almost sounds like a cliché. The real tragedy is that they are often true. Children running from substance addicted or abusive parents are very easy prey for human predators.

So, what can we do to stop these abuses of the children that cannot protect themselves from slavery or being duped into prostitution?

Human Trafficking Hotline **Call 1-888-373-7888 ( TTY: 711)** is a place to start when you are suspicious of one of the above situations. **End Slavery Now** is another place that assists and educates victims.

We need to learn more so we can spot the signs of these things. We can fight against them by encouraging legislation similar to Ohio’s, prompted by the large numbers of trafficked children and adults in their state. We can donate to organizations that provide shelters or help in the fight to prevent these tragedies. We can buy slave free products. I wish this article was full of news that Nike no longer has children as young as 4 years of age working to make soccer balls, shoes and garments, but unfortunately, they have made little progress. Long term members will remember our fight to not buy or wear Nike products, no matter how tempting the colors and styles might be. We can also volunteer for one of the many organizations waging war on slavery, trafficking, or child slave labor. Remember, when you buy these products you are contributing to the damage done.

While we celebrate the huge progress made in the first part of the 1900’s to remove children from these deplorable conditions, let’s remember it is still happening in the United States. May is the month this organization has set aside to try to stop this horrible plague on our children.

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# A Real Threat

By Janice Gillespie Legislative-Aide-Editor

I was fortunate to attend the Senate Hearing on the President's Postal Task Force on March 12. The Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs was chaired by Ron Johnson (R-WI) with ranking member Gary Peters (D-MI).

Chairman Ron Johnson lead the proceedings and introduced the witnesses. He spoke about the financial crisis the Postal Service is facing and indicated that the hearing was to help identify the root causes of its financial problems and to gather information and ideas to help the USPS move forward.

Senator Carper (D-DE) sat in for Senator Peters and in his opening statement expressed concerns that the Task Force charged with overhauling the Postal Service's business model did not, in fact, collect and assess the hard data needed to perform this task. He went on to say that the report is nothing close to a real business plan. He also pointed out that the Postal Service has only two sitting governors on its board which oversees operations, approves major business decisions, and holds senior management accountable. The whole board agreed that this was a major obstacle.

The Honorable Robert G Taub chairman of the Postal Regulatory Commission and Gary Grippio, Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Treasury for Public Finance spoke about the Task Force. Some disturbing recommendations were to get rid of collective bargaining, licensing access to the mailbox, and redefining the Universal Service Obligation. They concurred with the Task Force that Postal Banking would not be advisable. They both stated that the Postal Service should stick with what it knows. Of course, they didn't mention that we actually do have a foot in that door with money orders and transfers. They capitalized on how much in debt the Postal Service is and that it is on an unsustainable path. They also suggested that the retiree health benefits liability, including the pre-funding payments that the USPS defaulted on be restructured. The Honorable David C.

Williams, vice chairman, US Postal Service Board of Governors was impressive. He believes that the role of a public infrastructure is not to maximize profit, but to maximize value to our American supply chains and to citizens, especially those in rural and underserved urban areas. Bravo. He pointed out that getting rid of collective bargaining would not in any way be advantageous and he challenged the numbers the Task Force used to calculate any savings. He did recommend that they look at the Postal Service's fund investment vehicle. Postal retirement funds were handed over to the Treasury to manage with no one to speak for Postal retiree interests. The Treasury immediately borrowed the entire \$335 billion, at rates that are killing the fund. Had these funds been invested, even with the government's conservative TSP blue chip retirement plan, the accounts would now be fully funded. Interesting.

Senator Peters portrayed a lot of admiration for the Post Office. He highlighted the Postal Service's mission to serve all Americans equally and that it employs more than 634,000 people with about one in six being veterans.

The Honorable Margaret Weichert is both Deputy Director of Management, Office of Management and Budget and Acting Director, Office of Personnel Management. She backed up the Task Force and its recommendations, but did not seem to have any true basis or correct figures to back up her findings. She repeatedly mentioned the financial crisis the post office is in and that the its growing liabilities threaten the viability of OPM services.

One common thread throughout the committee was that the Postal Service is vital to rural communities. Congress is listening to their constituents.

This President's Task Force report is a real threat to the Postal Service, its employees, and the American people.



# 'Building Bridges'



**Kathy Danek is awarded the Bridge Builders Award for Nebraska. Great Job!**



**Julio Carios is awarded the Colorado Bridge Builder award. Well deserved!**

CONGRATULATIONS



**Valerie Stone! You deserve the Oregon Bridge Builder Award! Well Done!**



# Education and Solidarity

Janice Gillespie Legislative-Aide-Editor

The definition of privatization is the transfer of a business or service from public to private ownership. One meaning of “public” is concerning the people or community. To me this is a no-brainer. Who would want to change the “people’s” postal office from their own hands to the fists of money grabbing CEOs? The problem is perception and mis-information. The solution is education and solidarity.

We need to be sure that everyone knows that the USPS is the “people’s post office”. We do not use one dime of tax payer money and we serve everyone everywhere. A common misperception among the public is that the postal service is government owned and controlled and that if it were privatized, they would get choices on who to use for their mailings. Perception and mis-information.

Many people have had a bad experience or two with the post office. Considering the volume of mail that it delivers it’s inevitable. We need to remind those and others that the postal service is a national treasure and rates as the most trusted government agency.

Let’s inform everyone who will listen that the USPS is the largest and most efficient postal service in the world. Even private companies rely on the USPS and its delivery and retail networks are vital to the e-commerce market. Educate!

Another general misconception is that private companies can do what the postal service does, maybe even better. That is not true. No private company has the same reach and infrastructure. No private company could serve 157 million addresses six to seven days a week at one standard low rate. Educate!

Many believe the notion that other countries have privatized their post offices and its working. That is not true. The U.K. has seen a 95% rate increase since the postal

service there has been privatized and many countries have seen an increasingly large number of post office closings due to privatization. Educate!

Many USPS jobs would be lost as would collective bargaining. This would, of course, effect private sector jobs and pay as well as postal jobs. Educate!

We are fortunate to have the opportunity to actually host a class on the APWU’s anti-privatization plan through a **special** training zip line meeting. If you have not joined us yet on one of these meetings this would be a good time to start. Zip line meetings are the first Tuesday of every even numbered month with our next scheduled one on June 4th at 8 pm EDT. Imagine learning about and discussing postal issues with auxiliary members from all over the US. We need to educate ourselves so we can educate the public. The special two hour zip line meeting on privatization will be May 14<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 pm EDT. My husband, Mike Gillespie, has volunteered to be our instructor. If you would like a book to follow along with during the class just send me an e-mail with your address and I’ll see that you get one. See page 5 on how to connect via computer or tablet. Also, no computer, no problem, you can listen in on your phone. Solidarity!

We must learn all we can so we can educate our communities and help the APWU save the “people’s” post office and keep the union strong.



## Remember to File Your 990n

The *e-postcard* is due every year by the 15th day of the 5th month after the close of your tax year. For example, if your tax year ended on December 31, the *e-postcard* is due May 15 of the following year. If the due date falls on a Saturday, Sunday, or legal holiday, the due date is the next business day. **You cannot file the *e-postcard* until**



In celebration of Auxiliary and APWU members and their families who have passed away since the previous convention the Auxiliary keeps a Book of Memories. If you would like to honor the memory of a loved one please submit their name with a minimum donation of \$10. We ask that you fill out the form below and send it to Bonnie Sevre at the address listed. A memorial service will be held at the National Convention celebrating the life of the deceased. This is a lasting and respectful way to honor your loved one.



## Auxiliary to the American Postal Workers Union

In Memory of: \_\_\_\_\_

Last known residence: City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_

List any titles held in APWU or Auxiliary:

\_\_\_\_\_

Please list name **EXACTLY** as you want it to appear in the Book of Memories

Submitted by: \_\_\_\_\_

Local/State APWU, Auxiliary: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Send Acknowledgement card to (if different):

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

\$10.00 Minimum Donation Suggested

Make checks payable to:

Mail checks to:

Amount Enclosed: \_\_\_\_\_

Auxiliary to the APWU

Bonnie Sevre

2836 Highway 88

Minneapolis, MN 55418-3243

All proceeds go to the Nilan Scholarship

*Please Print or Type*

# Two Open Seasons

**John Marcotte -National Health Plan Director**

## **APWU Auxiliary has agreed to help the APWU Health Plan with the APWUHP Dental Plan Summer Open Season!**

To comply with demand from our members the APWUHP Dental is having two open seasons in 2019, the first is June 1-July 15<sup>th</sup>. The second will be the same period of time as FEHB health plans open season. Check out this plan that was designed to work with APWU Health Plan medical insurance best. This Summer Open Season is for those looking to get great dental insurance or those with current FEVIP coverage looking to change this November's during FEDVIP Open Season.

A heartfelt thank you to the APWU Auxiliary for volunteering to help get this information out to our membership so they don't miss out on this special opportunity. Well Done!

### **HEALTH AWARENESS MONTHS**

-May is Mental Health Awareness Month. At the APWU Health Plan coverage is the same for mental health as any other condition, with no addition copays or other such impediments to care. If you need help locating a provider please go to [apwuhp.com](http://apwuhp.com) or contact us at 410-424-1500. Remember that active employees may have EAP benefits that can help. For more information on EAP please contact APWU's Human Relations Director Sue Carney at 202-842-4270.

-Women's Health Week is May 12-18 and Men's Health Week June 10-16 this is a good time to start up a walking program or to get your free health screenings if you have not done so already. Like with our union...Get Active -Stay Active!

### **APWU Health Plan Helps Those in Need**

This April the APWU Health Plan Employees performed our annual food drive that benefits the Maryland Food Bank. The 2018 drive employees donated 1,956 items the equivalent of 1,304 meals. At the time of publication totals will not be available for the 2019 drive. We are driven to meet or exceed 2018.

### **2019 APWUHP Open Season Seminar in Portland, Oregon!**

We are thrilled to be able to host the 2019 Seminar in beautiful Portland, Oregon. We look forward to in depth instruction on not only our plans, but current health care laws and issues that affect our membership. After hours we have 2 dinners at a couple of in the city locations to highlight all that makes Portland unique. The Seminar is October 26<sup>th</sup>-28<sup>th</sup> with breakfast provided on the 29<sup>th</sup> for those departing on Tuesday. We have adjusted the classes so that those that want to depart Tuesday morning can do so. We are thankful for our Auxiliary's help with this event and look forward to seeing everyone in Portland! Together Better Health.



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**APWU**

HEALTH PLAN

[www.apwuhp.com](http://www.apwuhp.com)



How would you like to zip line without leaving home?

Join Us for a **Special** Zip Line Meeting

WHEN: May 14 2019

TIME: 7:00 Eastern Standard Time

And our next scheduled Zip Line Meeting

WHEN: June 4 2019

TIME: 8:00 Eastern Standard Time

This is the perfect way to become more involved in your **APWU Auxiliary** and you get to cross zip lining off your bucket list.

(We won't tell anyone that you did it from your sofa)

Join from PC, Mac, Linux, iOS or Android: <https://zoom.us/j/368309307>

Or iPhone one-tap : US: [+16699006833](tel:+16699006833).,368309307# or [+16465588656](tel:+16465588656).,368309307#

Or Telephone: Dial (for higher quality, dial a number based on your current location):

US: [+1 669 900 6833](tel:+16699006833) or [+1 646 558 8656](tel:+16465588656)

Meeting ID: 368 309 307

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## With Heartfelt *Sympathy*

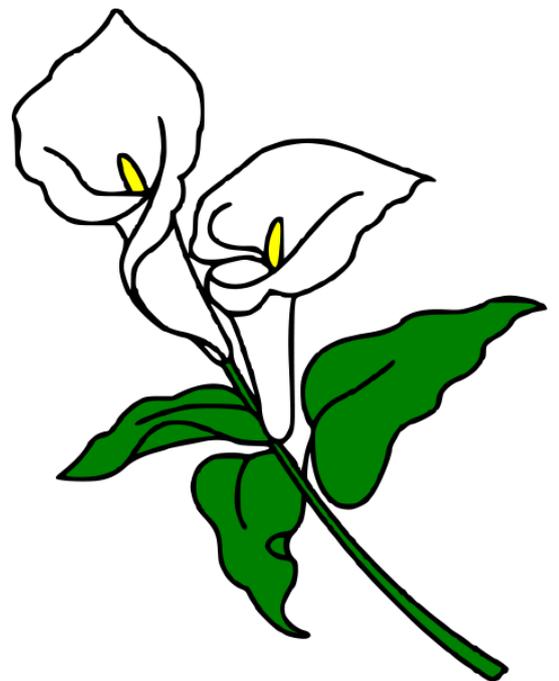
To the family of Mike Evans, President of California State APWU. Mike passed away Feb. 14, 2019

To the family of Ben Lyons past NBA of the APWU who passed away March 16.

To the family of David McElhaney of Oklahoma who passed away April 28.

To Debra Stewart in the passing of her nephew, Don Spriggs.

To Janice Gillespie in the passing of her sister, Sharon Kirch.



## 2018-2020 Human Relations Project

By: Karen Wolver - Human Relations Chair

We make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give.” ~ Winston Churchill

Do you ever wonder if your donation to Fisher House is making a difference? Well, I can promise you that it is. Below is an excerpt from just one family that has been greatly impacted by Fisher House.

Master Sergeant Blaine Scott, USMC was injured in Iraq on August 20, 2006. His vehicle was struck by an IED, severely burning his body. His wife, Lilly, received a phone call that Blaine had been injured.

“I didn’t know how bad it was. All I knew was Blaine was being evacuated from Iraq, stabilized in Germany, and then sent to San Antonio,” Lilly recalled. “I was still in California with our three-year-old daughter, and I left once Blaine was stable enough to arrive in San Antonio. Then I was on a plane, six months pregnant with our second child,” she continued.

“Immediately I felt the warmth,” she said. “I felt that even though I was crying, I felt comfortable and safe.”

She saw Blaine a few hours later in the ICU burn ward, happy her husband was alive. For nearly 18 months, Blaine concentrated on his recovery, taking comfort that his wife was safe and a short walk away.

“Knowing that my wife was at the Fisher House and having what she had there, and people to talk to, made me not worry about her when she left for the day,” Blaine recalled. “I could concentrate on my recovery and getting back to where I am today.”

This is just one family who has shared their story. There are thousands of other families out there who are thankful for Fisher House being there for them. You can read more heartwarming stories by visiting [www.fisherhouse.com](http://www.fisherhouse.com).

So far this year, we have collected over \$5,000.00 for Fisher House. Thank you so much for all you do to help us reach our goal. I feel blessed to be a part of such a caring, giving organization!



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