

News and Views



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November-December 2023

Our Thanks to You

By: Trisa Mannion-President



Thanksgiving is a perfect time to reflect on the past year and begin to look forward to a new year. We have so many things to be thankful for that it seems impossible to list them all.

We are thankful for the volunteers who recently helped us during the All-Craft Conference. Despite a few early morning starts, they made the task more pleasant and

easier. Please see the thank you to the volunteers later in this issue.

We are thankful for the new 100% Auxiliaries that have joined in supporting us this year. Missouri, you are the shining star for new 100% Auxiliaries. We extend a welcome to Cape Girardeau, Kirksville, Missouri State MALs, Saint Louis Gateway, and Saint Louis NDC.

We appreciate the APWU (National, State, and Local) for supporting us and allowing us to achieve our missions.

Donations to Sleep in Heavenly Peace helped build the beds 100,000 children received. If you helped by actually building or delivering the beds, donated money, or bedding, you deserve our thanks for making a difference in so many children's lives.

We are thankful for good-paying jobs and benefits that help each of our families have better lives because we are part of a union.

We are thankful for the friendships and connections made by volunteering in the Auxiliary to the American Postal Workers Union.

We thank the 19,000+ members who paid dues and participated this year. The leaders who were elected as officers and chose to further give of their time by coming to classes and leading their state or local are in a group that we extend a special thanks.



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What we Legislate, we don't have to Negotiate

By: Janice Gillespie-Legislative Aide-Editor

The APWU legislative department went "all in" when planning the 2023 conference held at the Horseshoe Casino in Las Vegas. The all-day event consisted of classes, regional breakouts, a general session, and closed with a panel of human rights advocates.

My first class was The Building Blocks of COPA, taught by Vincent Russo. He did a great job explaining COPA, who contributes, and where the money goes.

COPA is a non-partisan committee on political action. COPA contributions are voluntarily made by APWU members, retirees, immediate family members, and Auxiliary members. These contributions give us a voice in Congress by supporting congressional members who support vital causes for APWU members and their families.

Sadly, only 4% of APWU members donate to COPA and 17% of retirees. Just \$1 a paycheck from each member could help pass measures to benefit us all. 71% of donors use COPAMATIC, which is the easiest way to contribute. COPAMATIC contributions can be taken from a USPS paycheck, a retiree's annuity check, or a bank account.

Competing on the hill against big pharmaceutical companies and other giant corporations is difficult due to the influence of finances. COPA contributions can help close the gap.



I "hit the jackpot" when I signed up for the Legislative Advocacy and Lobbying class. Brian Young, the Senior Government Affairs Representative, led the attendees through the bills that the APWU supports in the 118th Congress and why. Having a clear view of the issues backed by the APWU is important for Auxiliary members to know and understand. One of our missions is to support the APWU in legislative concerns. There will be more information on the various bills in this and future issues.

"What we legislate, we don't have to negotiate."

The regional breakout room I was in discussed the need to reach across the aisle when advocating for support in Congress. We discussed being prepared before speaking to or visiting a member of Congress. Do your homework and know where the legislator stands on your issue. Find a connection and practice your pitch.

The panel of advocates was the "ace in the hole."

Les Leopold, instructor for Economics Justice and author of "Wall Street's War on Workers," attended via Zoom. He stressed that, "Movements move Congress."

Paul Catha, Political Director of the Culinary Workers Union Local 226, said 95% of their members voted to strike. Their strike was to begin the following week.

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Zipline Celebration!

Join us as we celebrate another great year in the Auxiliary
Drawing for a \$50 gift card
(names were entered for each attendee on the Zipline meetings)

Share a toast with your favorite holiday beverage
Dress in your ugliest sweater
Wear a festive hat or head band

December 5 at 8:00 EST



BRIDGE BUILDERS AWARD NOMINATION FORM

Please send (via U.S. Mail or email) completed form of nomination to Lisa Beer, 3006 N 5th Ave, Whitehall, Pennsylvania 18052 or email lbeer@apwuauxiliary.org

PLEASE USE BLACK INK TO FILL OUT FORM

THIS FORM MUST ACCOMPANY YOUR NOMINATION

LETTER OF NOMINATION IS OPTIONAL BUT IT MUST BE DATED AND SIGNED!

If more space is needed, please attach a separate sheet of paper

1 Name of person being nominated: _____

2 City and State that nominee is from: _____

3 Which of the following areas has the nominee been active in? (Check one or more that apply)

a. Assisting the Union/Auxiliary__ b. Human Relations _____

c. Legislation _____ d. Political Action _____

e. Public Relations _____ f. Organizing/Recruiting _____

g. Other Please Specify: _____

Please give details of what they have done in the above areas: _____

Please tell us about any Community Service or activity they are or have been involved in: _____

Has nominee been or is an Officer in the APWU or Auxiliary to the APWU? _____

Offices held and at what level? _____ State _____ Local _____

How many years has this person been a member? _____

Is their family involved? (brief description) _____

Did they chair any committees for their local or state? (Please give details) _____

Did they implement any new programs at the state or local level? (please give details)

Name, address, and local of person submitting this form _____

Date submitted: _____

Submitted by (name and Local) _____

Bridge Builders Nomination Form (revised) 10/8/2022 Bridge Builders Nomination Form (revised 10/8/2022

****FORMS MUST BE RECEIVED BY January 1, 2024****

Auxiliary in Action

All-Craft Conference



Donny and Tonya Brooks-Texas State



Najya Clark-Denver BMC, Anna Braun-Fox Valley, Illinois, Sherley Colard-South Shore, Massachusetts, Marion Collins-Gulfport, Mississippi
Donnie Brooks-Texas State in background



Auxiliary booth-Roseanna Conlin-Central Florida, Bonnie Sevre, Debra Stewart, and Arlene Holmes



Janeil Payne
helping with registration



Meghan Zabloski-\$100
“visit the booth” winner



Rebecca Kingsley and Angela Hackworth-\$100 scholarship raffle winner

We Could Not Have Done it Without You!

The classes led by the Auxiliary were well received. The two days consisted of directions and advice from President Trisa Mannion on how to start a local or state Auxiliary, Secretary Training by National Secretary Karen Wolver, and discussions on legislative issues by myself, Janice Gillespie, Legislative Aide-Editor. The members in attendance asked questions and contributed their experiences and knowledge, leading to a great dialogue.

We had several visitors come to our meeting from Missouri. Leaders from the St. Charles local, Greater Kansas City local, Missouri State, and St Louis Gateway District Area

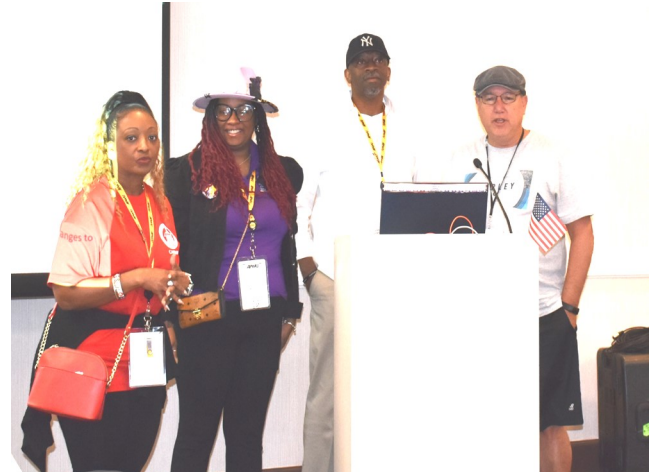
local spoke about their plans for their Auxiliaries. Missouri is leading the way for 100% locals and Auxiliary involvement. Thanks to John and Beth Zamudio for setting things in motion. They are great supporters of the Auxiliary.

We were also visited by many of the executives of the APWU and were praised by all of them for our advocacy and assistance whenever they needed us.

Thanks to our volunteers and attendees; you helped make this a great conference. We couldn't have done it without you.



Kirk Schroeder-St Charles, Missouri, Sharon Curtis-Greater Kansas City Metro, Trisa Mannion, John Zamudio-St Charles, Missouri



Mia Smith, Robin Robertson, William "Bill" Brady St Louis Gateway District, John Zamudio-St Charles, Missouri

WE L♥VE
OUR VOLUNTEERS

**Donnie Brooks
Tonya Brooks
Sandy Wheeler
Marion Collins
Sherley Colard**

**Najya Clark
Anna Braun
Roseanna Conlin
James Cornelius**

**George Collins
Becky Jones Longdon
Ron Perez
Herbert Days
Martin Linn**

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Barbara Smith Warner, Executive Director of the National Vote at Home Institute, advocates for voting at home because being able to vote at home increases turnouts.

Dr. Sondra Cosgrove, Executive Director and Chair of the Board for Vote Nevada, urges everyone to, "Know how to Communicate." "See it, say it, do it." and reminded us to focus on the specific issues, not the party line. "The political parties have got to be servants of the people, not the other way."

Augusta Wood, Assistant Professor at the School of Labor and Employment Relations, University of Illinois Urbana-

Champagne and historian, reminds us that history matters, we need to create the narrative.

Quentin-Michael Savvoir, Branch President of the NAACP Las Vegas, stressed to speak out against misinformation and say nice things about our democracy.

The panel answered questions about gerrymandering and all agreed that voters should pick their politicians; politicians should not pick their voters.

The questions directed at the panel members and the discussions developed were informative and inspiring.

Bills Supported by the APWU

The Social Security Fairness Act (H.R. 82, S.597)

This bill would repeal the Windfall Elimination Provision and the Government Pension Offset. The current Social Security law unfairly reduces or eliminates Social Security benefits for federal annuitants. This includes postal retirees under Civil Service retirement.

The Vote at Home Act (H.R. 1439, S.700)

This bill, introduced in the House and Senate on March 8, 2023, will allow every registered voter to receive a ballot via USPS. More specifically, it will:

- Require that all registered voters automatically receive their ballot in the mail prior to Election Day
- Voters can return these using pre-paid postage or drop boxes.

The USPS Shipping Equity Act (H.R. 3721)

This bill would fully remove the current prohibition on the Postal Service shipping beer, alcohol, and wine direct to consumers. If passed, this bill would generate much needed revenue for the USPS.

The Richard L. Trumka Protecting the Right to Organize (PRO) Act (H.R. 20, S. 567)

This bill would vastly improve workers' rights across the country, make it easier to join unions, and increase penalties on employers who knowingly violate workers' rights.

The Freedom to Vote Act (H.R. 11, S. 2344)

This bill would establish new federal requirements in three key sectors: election administration, election integrity, and voter empowerment.

The Equal COLA Act (H.R. 866)

The Equal COLA Act will give both FERS and CSRS retirees COLAs based on the CPI. It is time we stop penalizing our seniors for their retirement system and give fair Cost-of-Living Adjustments to our retired federal employees!

The Social Security Expansion Act (H.R. 1046, S.393)

This bill would strengthen and enhance Social Security. More specifically, the bill would:

- Raise Social Security benefits by \$200/month or \$2400/year
- Lift the cap on Social Security taxes for all income above \$250,000
- Increase COLAs by using the Consumer Price Index for the Elderly (CPI-E)
- Reinstitute student benefits for children of deceased or disabled workers
- Make the Special Minimum Benefit 125% of the poverty line

APWU Health Plan Open Season 2023!

It's that time of the year again! This year, Open Season will begin on **November 13th** and end on **December 11th**. Which means now is the time to do your research on the different plans in FEHB and choose the best one for you and your family. With our 2 comprehensive plans – **High Option and Consumer Driven Option** – we are certain you'll find the APWU Health Plan the right choice this year.

Go to our website – www.apwuhp.com and click on [Open Season](#) for more information!



**ENROLL DURING
OPEN SEASON**

November 13 - December 11, 2023

ACCESS CARE FROM AN EXTENSIVE NATIONWIDE NETWORK OF PROVIDERS AND FACILITIES

After careful consideration, the APWU Health Plan has switched our High Option Preferred Provider Network (PPO) to UnitedHealthcare's network of over 1.7 million providers! To find doctors in the UnitedHealthcare network, visit apwuhp.com and select **Are my doctors in the network?**

2024 Premiums

	Enrollment Code	Biweekly	Monthly	APWU Career Special Rate*
High Option Self Only	471	\$124.52	\$269.79	\$124.52
High Option Self Plus One	473	\$244.95	\$530.73	\$244.95
High Option Self and Family	472	\$304.05	\$658.77	\$304.05
Consumer Driven Option Self Only	474	\$76.78	\$166.36	\$15.36
Consumer Driven Option Self Plus One	476	\$166.88	\$361.58	\$33.38
Consumer Driven Option Self and Family	475	\$182.05	\$394.45	\$36.41

*APWU rate applies to APWU Career Bargaining Unit Employees enrolled in FEHB more than 1 year



Human Relations Project

Sleep in Heavenly Peace

By: Janeil Payne-Committee Chair

Sleep in Heavenly Peace, “No Kid Sleeps on the Floor in Our Town”



Hello everyone, and happy fall! We ended September and started October while attending the All-Craft Convention in Las Vegas, Nevada. It was a great time for the Auxiliary.

In honor of our Human Relations Project, Sleep in Heavenly Peace (SHP), we held two raffles for \$100 each, one on Saturday afternoon and one on Sunday.

Thank you to everyone who stopped by the Auxiliary booth and purchased tickets. We have raised \$4710 for SHP just from the sale of Virtual Reality tickets which will help supply many kids with beds. Carrie Wolff and MJ Robbins were the happy recipients of \$100, respectively, and Julie Bates from Des Moines, Iowa, won the Virtual Reality System. Congratulations to all the winners! The biggest winners are the children who receive a new bed. It may seem very small to each of us lucky enough to have good beds, but it can be a life changer for someone without a bed. We appreciate your support.

Sleep in Heavenly Peace is 100% volunteer and donation-driven. All donations go towards purchasing materials for beds and bed assembly and delivery.

We will continue to collect donations and bedding up through the National Convention.



Julie Bates, Des Moines, Iowa winner of the VR game system and Karen Wolver



Mary Robbins-Fox Valley, Illinois-winner of the SHP raffle and Anna Braun-Fox Valley, Illinois

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