



# The Badger Bulletin

The American Postal Workers Union of Wisconsin

Volume 45 No. 5

2011 PPA Award Winner

November-December, 2012

## THE PRESIDENT'S REPORT . . . BY STEVE LORD

# Hurrah!

It was a pretty good election night for working people in this country. I woke up the Wednesday morning after the election with a huge weight lifted off of me. During the weeks and months leading up to the elections I was truly stressed out about the future of my job and my financial security. I was not just spouting election time rhetoric about what was going to happen to us if the extreme right wing took over this country. We would have been in serious trouble.

Our work isn't done by any means but, our jobs are much safer with the White House and the Senate in the hands of Democrats. The question is will the Congress finally work together to solve the problems of this country or will there still be gridlock? It is up to us to hold our representatives accountable if they don't do anything to solve the economic crisis of this country and of the USPS. We cannot afford four more years of inaction.

It is time for President Obama to take off the kid gloves and call out the members of Congress who are holding up economic progress for political purposes. The people of this country need to know why things aren't getting done and who is responsible. I believe that the outcome of the election hinged on the fact that people felt that the Republican Party is not in tune with the needs of working people.

Mitt Romney said if kids want to go to college they should just ask their parents for the money. How much more out of touch can you get? He stated that we were all looking for a handout. The middle class of this country are not looking for

a handout. We just want jobs with decent wages that we can raise a family on. Once again it is up to us to make sure this happens.

a debt of gratitude to the national officers of this union for all of the help they have given us not only in this election cycle but for all of the help we have received since

went to them needing funds for election purposes. Believe when I tell you that I had my hand out a lot. They recognize that our biggest fights are political and their actions show it.

For whatever reason, the people of Wisconsin voted for Barack Obama for President and Tammy Baldwin for Senator but also voted to keep the Wisconsin legislature in Republican hands. Maybe redistricting has had that big of an effect. Expect to see environmental regulations relaxed, union busting Right to Work laws passed, and voter ID laws passed.

Hopefully, more republicans will break from the extreme right to make this session a little more moderate. I don't expect that but, it won't take long to find out. I expect the republicans to act very quickly. Once again it will be up to us to fight the good fight and try to convince lawmakers of the virtues of compromise.

Very soon I will be making plans for the two seminars that will be held in 2013. Wausau will be the sight of the first seminar in late winter. Madison will host the John Akey Seminar this summer. Please let me know if there are any subjects you would like included in these seminars.

The holidays are fast approaching. Have you thought of what you or your local can do to help those less fortunate than yourselves? Consider calling the Salvation Army to volunteer to adopt a family or to ring bells. I guarantee you will get much more out of it than you put into it. With the economy as it is the need is great. Please consider it.



President Barack Obama made a visit to Austin Straubel International Airport in Green Bay during his campaign for a second term. The President pledged to create more jobs and make sure the one percent pays their fair share. The Labor backed candidate was significantly outspent by his opponent however the people demonstrated that their votes were not for sale. — Photo by: John E. Durben

A huge thank you goes out to those APWU of Wisconsin members who volunteered or went on release staff during the 2012 election cycle. You made a big difference. We here in Wisconsin also owe

Scott Walker began his attack on unions. President Cliff Guffey, Secretary Treasurer Liz Powell, Political Director Myke Reid and the rest of the National Executive Board never turned me down when I

## ~ It Doesn't Matter ~

by Mark Raymond

The U.S. Postal Service has never really had a motto. Oh, some people think it's the old "Neither snow nor rain nor heat nor gloom of night stays these couriers from the swift completion of their appointed rounds" thing, but that was never our motto. It was something that the Greek philosopher Herodotus wrote about Persian messengers, who would stop at nothing to deliver their masters' words. Someone thought it would be a good idea to inscribe it over the entrance of New York City's post office, and the assuming began.

But no, never an official motto, though we have had several catchphrases. The one many will remember is "We Deliver For You." Lately we're using a very pop-

ular one in support of our Priority Mail service, "If It Fits, It Ships."

But Brothers and Sisters, as I move daily from one post office to another, surveying the various mailstreams in the course of my job, I would like to suggest the USPS adopt a new catchphrase: "It Doesn't Matter."

I now routinely see Parcel Post mixed into Priority Mail containers. I see Media Mail from the other side of the country arrive within two days. I see First Class and Priority Mail take up to a week to reach its destination. It has become abundantly clear to me that Management no longer gives a rip about Classes of Mail.

As a former Window Clerk, we were constantly told to upsell, upsell, upsell.

Push Priority Mail. Push Overnight Express Mail. I imagine that is still true, based on what I'm asked when I conduct a retail transaction. Why do we continue to foist this sham on an unsuspecting public? How they ship their mail NO LONGER MATTERS.

It doesn't matter what class of mail it is — in other words, how much the customer paid — because it's all being tossed into one big "jackpot" container. If I were a window clerk now, I'd advise my customers to use the cheapest method of shipping possible, because IT DOESN'T MATTER. That \$4 piece of Parcel Post now gets the exact same processing treatment as that \$12 piece of Priority Mail!

Why? Two reasons. 1) We've consoli-

dated so many operations that the large processing facilities simply haven't got the TIME, to comb through the huge volumes of mail they now receive and separate out the cheaper classes of mail, and in Management's drive to become a part-time employee operation, we no longer have the manpower to do it right, anyway.

And when you confront Management with this rip-off of the American public? They Shrug their shoulders; throw up their hands and all but say, "It doesn't matter."

I think that perhaps the U.S. Postal Service should adopt an official motto. And I think it should be, "The U.S. Postal Service: We Just Don't Care Anymore."

— Source: PPA — Flint Facts

THE UNION NEWSPAPER IS THE MOST VISIBLE SIGN OF LIFE IN THE LABOR MOVEMENT



APWU OF WISCONSIN GENERAL OFFICERS

**PRESIDENT**  
 STEVE LORD  
 PO Box 2371  
 Oshkosh, WI 54903  
 Home: 920/426-5285  
 Cell 920/279-6308  
 lordsa@charter.net

**SECRETARY/TREASURER**  
 STEVE KENDALL  
 N85 W15650 Ridge Rd. #207  
 Menominee Falls, WI 53051  
 Cell 414-322-4860  
 kendallapwumke@hotmail.com

**LEGISLATIVE DIRECTOR**  
 JEFF WORDEN  
 4984 S. 24th Street  
 Milwaukee, WI 53221  
 Phone: 414/270-2019  
 jjworden@sbcglobal.net

**DIRECTOR HUMAN RELATIONS,  
 ORGANIZATION & EDUCATION**  
 LUCY HAUSER  
 W7205 Newland Rd  
 Black Creek, WI 54106  
 Home: 920/525-3695  
 Cell: 920/841-2909  
 LuHaus9@aol.com

**EDITOR**  
 JOHN E. DURBEN  
 PO Box 47  
 Cecil WI 54111-0047  
 Cell: 920-639-8906  
 Home: 715/745-2248  
 chillhead@frontiernet.net

**Regional Representative 540, 547, 548**  
 DAVID R VILLWOCK  
 61 Lily Ln W  
 Altoona, WI 54720  
 dvillwock@att.net  
 Cell: 414-339-6508

**Regional Representative 535-539, 546**  
 ERIC M FARMER  
 PO Box 8808  
 Madison, WI 53708-8808  
 ericmfarmer@gmail.com  
 Cell: 608-630-3795

**Regional Representative 544, 545**  
 RENEE HEANEY  
 PO Box 1  
 Wausau, WI 54402  
 Err\_nay@yahoo.com  
 Cell: 715-370-1738

**Regional Representative 541-543, 549**  
 STEVEN C PARADISE  
 PO Box 10324  
 Green Bay, WI 54307-0324  
 Steve2dice@usa.net  
 Cell: 920-737-2410

APWU OF WISCONSIN AUXILIARY

**PRESIDENT**  
 DEBRA KOSZAREK  
 5321 S. LaSalle Dr.  
 New Berlin, WI 53151

**VICE PRESIDENT**  
 BARBARA MACIEJEWSKI  
 2145 s 89th St.  
 West Allis, WI 53227  
 414-550-2169  
 angelmajek2@hotmail.com

**SECRETARY**  
 JACQUELINE CHILDS  
 3818 Clover Ln  
 Madison, WI 53714  
 608-222-0772  
 jchilds@uwcatholic.org

**TREASURER**  
 PATRICIA PASELL  
 1367 Pinnacle Cir  
 Sun Prairie, WI 53590  
 hskylvr@charter.net

**LEGISLATIVE DIRECTOR**  
 ARLENE BEISBIER  
 916 Chestnut  
 West Bend, WI 53095  
 262-338-8663  
 arlenebeisbier@yahoo.com

**APWU OF WISCONSIN WEBSITE:**  
<http://www.apwuw.com/>

The APWU of Wisconsin publishes this newsletter as a means of communicating with our members. The union encourages letters to the editor; letters must be signed but name will be withheld upon request. All opinions expressed are those of the writer, and not necessarily those of the state organization or its officers.

The *Badger Bulletin* is a proud member of the APWU Postal Press Association. The *Badger Bulletin* is printed five (5) times per year. Articles not credited are those of the editor.

LEGISLATIVELY SPEAKING . . . BY JEFF WORDEN, LEGISLATIVE DIRECTOR

# Change Is Here To Stay

November 6, 2012 is now etched in history. This was a long and hard battle but, when the dust cleared it was Barack Obama easily defeating Mitt Romney. The electoral vote is 303 for Obama and 206 for Romney. This of course does not include the 29 possible electoral votes from the state of Florida (which at the time of writing this article has still not been finalized!)

It was thought by many republicans that Vice Presidential candidate Paul Ryan would help Mitt Romney carry the state of Wisconsin. **Nothing could have been farther from the truth!** In Wisconsin the results were:

- President **Obama** and Vice President **Biden 52%**
- **Romney** and **Ryan 47%**.

Not only did President Obama win his Re-election for President, he also won all the swing states except for North Carolina.

National exit polls showed that Mitt Romney ended up with a negative image among voters, more viewed him unfavorably than favorable and 54% had felt that his policies favored the rich!

America spoke even louder by putting Democrats in control of the Senate. The Democrats currently hold a lead of 53-47 in the Senate, which includes the two independents who caucus with the Democrats. The republicans needed a net gain of four seats to get the majority.

In Wisconsin, Tammy Baldwin **defeated** the well-known ex-governor Tommy Thompson. **Tammy Baldwin 51%** to **Tommy Thompson 46%**. This was historic because Tammy Baldwin becomes the First Woman from Wisconsin elected to the U.S. Senate and the first openly gay person to serve in the U.S. Senate. During Tammy

Baldwin's victory speech she stated **"I didn't run to make history I ran to make a difference"**.

The current Wisconsin U.S. **Senator from Wisconsin Herb Kohl** (who has always been a good friend of labor) is now stepping down as our Senator. It is good to know that we will now have **Tammy Bald-**

Also, it may NOW be harder for Senator Darryl Issa (R-CA) and friends to destroy/gut the postal service. We may actually be able to stop the possibility of five-day (5) delivery of the mail. We may also be able to stop the ridiculous act of forcing the Postal Service to "Pre-fund our retiree health benefits"! All of this and more is now possible because we have a President who is labor/union friendly!

In the states of New York and New Jersey many waited in line for HOURS to vote! This was due in part because of the damages from the Superstorm Sandy. Even with all the power-outages people still found a way to get to the polls. Some of the voters actually voted with flashlights or had to go to temporary make shift polling places to vote!

What makes this election so great is the fact that people came out in record numbers to vote. This was especially true for the young and first-time voters! People were upset with the Romney/Ryan plan of Destroying Social Security and cutting/doing away with Medicaid/Medicare.

Let's face it, the comment from Mitt Romney in which *he didn't care about 47% of the people in*

*the United States and thought that they were not really important* was probably the starting point for the beginning of the end for his campaign.

What must happen now is that we ALL must work together, yes that's right, even if you didn't vote for Barack Obama. The election is now over and we MUST show our true union solidarity and form as one! We can do it and we will!

Take Care.



**Tammy Baldwin greets the crowd at the Airport in Green Bay during the last week of campaigning for the open Wisconsin Senate position left vacant by retiring Senator Herb Kohl. Baldwin was successful in beating out former Wisconsin Governor Tommy Thompson in the race.**

— Photo by: John E. Durben

**win who also has** always been a good friend of labor so it will be good to keep a labor/union friendly person in the U.S. Senate.

The biggest problem is the Congress while many seats changed hands at the end of it all the republicans have the majority.

One of the things the labor movement will push for is the "Employee free choice act". This legislation would make it easier for employees to form a union without fear of reprisal and/or intimidation.

BY LUCY HAUSER, DIRECTOR OF HUMAN RELATIONS, ORGANIZATION & EDUCATION

## ~ Retirement Or Not ~

The recent announcement of a retirement incentive really took me by surprise, especially since I heard numerous times at the National Convention that there would be no retirement incentive in the near future. For those individuals who had already planned to retire within the next 6 months it's like extra frosting on the cake but without the calories!! Many people, though, had not made any definite plans and are now facing one of the most important decisions of their adult life. Should I, could I, retire? The decision has to be made by Monday, December 3, 2012, and your retirement is effective January 31, 2013.

There are many issues to consider when making the decision to retire. The uncertainty up until the point of a final decision can lead to much stress, but once a decision has been made it seems like a load has been lifted from your shoulders. There are common areas to focus on when planning for retirement. You need to let

go of work. No matter how important you are at work, somebody else will be able to step up and take your place. You need to plan activities for yourself that will keep both your mind and your body healthy once you retire, so get creative and try some new hobbies. Probably one of the most crucial areas to focus on is the financial aspect: consult with financial advisors before making your final decision. Nobody wants to retire and then find out that they can't afford to live the lifestyle that they envisioned. And don't forget to include your spouse/significant other in your decision. Whether you realize it or not, your happiness depends on his/her level of happiness. Develop an open dialog to evaluate each other's feelings because the decision to retire affects both of you, especially since retirement can last anywhere from 5 to 30 years.

Each person has their own individual ideas of what retirement should be, but almost everyone goes through the same



stages along the way. The first stage is called the "honeymoon" stage – it seems like you are just on a really long, relaxed vacation. Afterwards there may be a period of disenchantment or even depression which may require you to make adjustments to your retirement lifestyle. Reflecting on your original retirement goals and tweaking your daily routine will help to balance your new lifestyle. Some people find that they need to develop new hob-

*continued on page 4*

# BADGER BULLETIN BOARD

## *We're All In This Thing Together*

by John E. Durben, Editor

A lot has happened since the last issue of *THE BADGER BULLETIN*. We had what is now known as a "Super Storm" (Sandy) that has devastated the entire East Coast of the U.S. After almost two weeks since the storm there are still thousands of Households and Businesses without power and heat. Just like back during World War II in the early 1940's gas rationing has become a reality once again in some States. People are limited to purchasing gas on even or odd days depending on the vehicle license. They don't have enough gas to run their generators for heat and electricity or for their vehicles.

If they haven't already, someone should be contacting each of you this time of year to participate in the Combined Federal Campaign (CFC) again. Please consider donating a few bucks a pay period to the Postal Employee Relief Fund (PERF). The Agency Code for PERF is: CFC#10268 and contributions are tax deductible. To speed up your donation to the Postal Employees who need our help NOW, you can send your contribution to: Postal Employees' Relief Fund, P.O. Box 7630, Woodbridge VA 22195-7630. (Blankets, Food, water and clothing are all needed.)

Steve mentioned in his article that the Na-

tional APWU allowed for release staff again this year to participate in the AFL-CIO's Workers' Voice Program. I know Jeff Worden was involved in the Program as well. I too had the opportunity of working a couple days a week for five weeks even though I am currently retired. The first couple weeks I was provided a list of APWU members. My job was to call our members and ask them to volunteer a couple hours to make phone calls or knock on doors. I'd like to personally thank the people who agreed to work on the campaign.

While putting in my time with the campaign I was offered VIP tickets to see President Obama when he came to the Airport in Green Bay. After fighting the chili weather and standing in lines for hours I was able to secure a standing room only spot in the third row just to the left of the podium. Except for literally feeling like a sardine, (If I fainted, there is no way I'd hit the ground.) I was happy to get over 400 photos to remember the day by. Of course many of them aren't the best but I was satisfied with a few of them.

The President gave a powerful speech and you could see some of the people in attendance that really believed, had tears in their eyes. I think the most important thing I took



Wisconsin Senator Herb Kohl at one of his final campaign stops in Green Bay as he shows his support for President Obama in the recent election. Kohl also supported Tammy Baldwin in her bid to fill the seat that he will be vacating. Good luck Senator and thanks for standing on the side of Labor.  
— Photo by: John E. Durben

away from his visit is, "We're all in this thing together." Whether you're in the 47 percent or the 99 percent or even our Brothers and Sisters on the east coast at this time – "We're all in this thing together!"

Please note: The APWU Health Plan Open Season this year is from November 12,

through December 10.

The **Penalty Overtime Exception** this year will run from Pay Period 26-12 December 1, 2012 and will conclude with Pay Period 01-13 (December 28, 2012).

The next Badger Bulletin (January, February, March) due date is January 4, 2013.

## Another Poll Shows Americans Reject 'Grand Bargain' Cuts To Social Security And Medicare

Reflecting what voters said in AFL-CIO's election-night poll, a poll conducted on behalf of Democracy Corps and the Campaign for America's Future (CAF) shows that voters strongly reject proposals to cut Social Security and Medicare. When asked which was more important, 70% of respondents said that protecting education, Medicare and Social Security was more important than broad cuts to reduce the deficit. More than half—58%—of the overall sample said that they felt strongly about opposing such cuts. Only 17% of the survey said they felt strongly that across-the-board cuts were important enough to cut the popular programs.

More than half of respondents also said that any plan to address the deficit should start with raising taxes on the wealthiest Americans, not by reducing Social Security and Medicare benefits.

The survey also asked voters about specific components of the plan proposed by Alan Simpson and Erskine Bowles, leaders of a bipartisan commission on reducing the deficit. Specifically, the majority of voters rejected:

- Capping Medicare payments, forcing seniors to pay more (79%).
- Requiring deep cuts in domestic programs without protecting programs for infants, poor children, schools and college aid (75%).
- Cutting discretionary spending, like education, child nutrition, worker training and disease control (72%).

- Cutting taxes for the rich and corporations (67%).
- Continuing to tax investors' income at lower rates than workers' pay (63%).
- Reducing Social Security benefits over time by having them rise more slowly than the cost of living (62%).

Survey respondents also showed that they wanted the deficit reduced by methods other than cutting Social Security and Medicare:

- 69% said that they favored shutting down tax havens abroad by putting a minimum tax on corporate profits reported overseas.
- 89% said they favored reducing Medicare costs by negotiating lower drug prices from drug companies.
- 79% oppose capping Medicare payments, forcing seniors to pay more.
- 72% favor cutting military spending by ending the war in Afghanistan.
- 65% want to cut subsidies to oil companies, agribusiness and multinational corporations.
- 72% oppose cutting

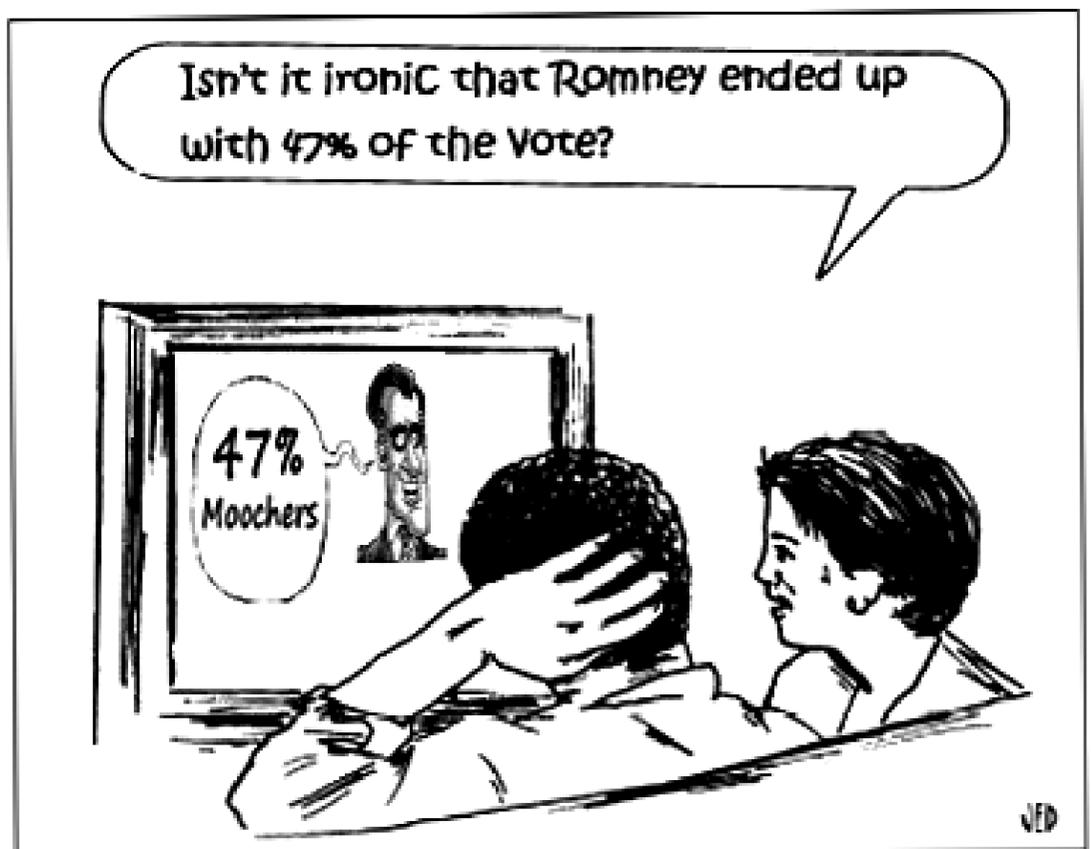
education, child nutrition, worker training and disease control.

- 75% say it is acceptable for a deficit reduction deal to create a higher tax rate on those earning more than one million dollars a year.

The poll was conducted by Greenberg

Quinlan Rosner Research on behalf of Democracy Corps and CAF. Surveyed were 1,000 2012 presidential voters on Nov.6-7, after the election. The poll was weighted to reflect the National Exit Survey and has a margin of error of +/- 3.1%.

— Source: AFL-CIO Now



# Caution Lame Duck Congress Ahead

We've knocked doors and made phone calls together to educate, inform and get out the vote. We celebrate and take pride in our grassroots effort that helped to elect President Obama and Tammy Baldwin, but we cannot rest.

The lame duck congressional session has started and we anticipate that Medicare and Social Security will be on the chopping block so that tax cuts for the top 2% can be extended.

Call 888-659-9401 today and tell Congress no more tax cuts for the rich. No benefit cuts to Social Security and Medicare.

Election Day presented a clear choice between two very different visions for our country and our economy. Voters chose the promise of an America that works for everyone, not just the wealthy few; an America where everyone plays by the same rules.

We are organizing to hold our elected

officials accountable for the brighter future they promised.

A future where Medicare and Social Security programs are preserved in full for the next generation. A future where ending the tax cuts for the top 2% of wealthiest Americans is a part of the conversation to reduce our deficit. A future where every worker's voice is heard and respected in the workplace.

Call 866-659-9401 today and tell your Congressperson no tax cuts for the top 2%. No benefit cuts to Social Security and Medicare.



We need to join together to demand that the President and Congress stand firm against gutting social programs just

to fund more exorbitant giveaways to the rich. Call today!

— Source: AFL-CIO

## State Of Working America Tracks Wealth And Income Shifts From Families To The 1%

The vast majority of America's workers have largely been shut out of the nation's economic growth over the past three decades, reports the 12th edition of The State of Working America from the Economic Policy Institute (EPI).

Released recently and available online, the report finds that the typical American family has added hundreds of extra hours of work each year, while also earning better education credentials, yet is still struggling to keep up.

The State of Working America tracks the economic growth of the middle class — the little there is — and finds that a middle-class family's income would

have been an average of \$19,000 higher per year by 2007 "if the share of growth claimed by the richest households had not grown so much over the past 30 years."

Likewise, wealth for the typical American family would have been \$62,000 higher in 2010 had the growth in wealth over these same years not been overwhelmingly claimed by families at the very top. The research also shows that growing income inequality has not been offset by increased mobility. These trends have not occurred by accident: economic policies have undercut the ability of workers to benefit from economic growth.

— Source: Wisconsin State AFL-CIO

Buy Union This Christmas

## ~ Retirement Or Not ~

continued from page 2

bies or perform volunteer work to keep more active and become truly happy with their new lifestyle. It may take awhile to develop your own unique routine.

Good luck to those who have made the decision to retire. You worked hard for many years so you deserve a long, happy

retirement. And if you find that you need volunteer activities to keep more active, please consider joining the APWU Retirees Department. It only costs \$36 per year and has many benefits. Visit [www.apwu.org](http://www.apwu.org). Click on Departments and Divisions, then Retirees to learn more and print out an enrollment form.



## First Issue For The Re-Elected President: "The Fiscal Cliff"

A new Congressional Budget Office report just recently said that the fiscal cliff — a combination of automatic tax increases and spending cuts — would cut the deficit by \$503 billion through next September, but that the fiscal austerity also would cause the economy to shrink by 0.5 percent next year and cost millions of jobs. The analysis predicted that the economy would fall into recession if there is a protracted impasse in Washington and the government falls off the fiscal cliff for the entire year. Though most Capitol-watchers think that long deadlock is unlikely, the analysts say such a scenario would cause a spike in the jobless rate to 9.1 percent by next fall. Seniors' advocates fear that the debt could be used as an excuse to cut Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid.

— Source: FRIDAY ALERT – Alliance for Retired Americans

## Retirement, Early-Outs And The Incentive

(11/01/12) Many APWU members are contemplating a momentous decision: whether to end their careers to qualify for a \$15,000 incentive. Under the terms of a Sept. 28 agreement negotiated by the APWU, eligible employees who opt for regular retirement, voluntary early retirement (VER) or resignation will receive payment in two installments. The first installment of \$10,000 will be paid on May 24, 2013; the second installment of \$5,000 will be paid on May 23, 2014.

Find out more at: <http://www.apwu.org/index2.htm>

The Next Badger Bulletin  
Due Date is January 4, 2013

