



The Badger Bulletin

The American Postal Workers Union of Wisconsin

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PPA Award Winner

June-August, 2016

THE PRESIDENT'S REPORT . . . BY STEVE LORD

APWU Of WI 2016 Convention Highlights

The 23rd Biennial APWU of Wisconsin State Convention was held in Green Bay April 28-30, 2016. The host local N.E.W.A.L. did a terrific job hosting the event. A retirement class taught by Union Financial Representative Greg Johnson was overwhelmingly attended by the members of the host local the night before the convention. Thursday of the convention both Maintenance and Clerk Steward training was held as well as various convention committee meetings. A big thank you to all of the delegates that served on committees.

Thursday night about 35 of us took the Lambeau Field Tour. Everyone had a great time followed by a ton of food and drink at the Hospitality Room put on by N.E.W.A.L. With my USPS and union career winding down I wanted to make some changes to the constitution that would help the state organization carry on after I am gone and also provide better representation to our members. With that in mind I proposed these changes to the constitution: The elimination of MAL Representatives, the creation of a new position MAL Director, and adding steward's duties to all of the APWU of Wisconsin Executive Board positions. All of these constitutional amendments passed.

After the amendments passed our election was held with all officers winning by white ballot. Jeff Worden will hold the new MAL Director position for the next two years. I encourage MALs to contact Jeff with any concerns you may have. His contact information is in this and every issue of the Badger Bulletin.

Chris Czubakowski ran for Legislative Director and was elected. Chris brings a lot of experience to the position. He has been on release staff to the Wisconsin AFL-CIO for several election cycles. He will be taking over

much of the legislative duties for the state such as being a member of the Wisconsin AFL-CIO Political Steering Committee. Chris is a welcome addition to the board.

Lucy Hauser was reelected as Director of Human Relations, Education, and Organization. Steward's duties were added to Lucy's position but, that was just a formality in Lucy's case because she has always helped out as a steward for MALs. I will also be asking Lucy to take over the educational planning of seminars.

Steve Kendall has been elected Secretary Treasurer once more. Since Steve took over as Secretary Treasurer our treasury is once more on solid ground. After some thought I decided to run for one more term and I also was elected by white ballot. This will be it for me. Whether to the good or detriment of the APWU of Wisconsin and its members I have done much of the work that will now be spread out among the rest of the state board. Hopefully, this will leave the APWU of Wisconsin in good shape for years to come.

The convention also endorsed two candidates running for National APWU positions. **Steve Raymer for Maintenance Craft Director** and **Jeff Kehlert for Executive Vice President**. Mr. Raymer has done so many good things for the Madison Local, the APWU of Wisconsin, and especially the Maintenance Craft that his reelection should be a no brainer to our brothers and sisters in the Maintenance Craft. Jeff Kehlert has over 30 years of union experience in various APWU positions including NBA. His teaching skills and contract knowledge are light years ahead of his competitors for the position.

The convention also endorsed two candidates who have always represented and stood up for working families in

this country. **Bernie Sanders for President and Russ Feingold for the U.S. Senate.**

The Council of Locals was held at the close of the convention. Wausau volunteered to host the next state convention in 2018 and Madison agreed to host the John Akey Seminar next year. There will also be a need for LMOU training after the contract is settled. As soon as information is available for that function I will get it out to the locals. The convention also raised over \$3600 for COPA. Thanks to the APWU of Wisconsin Auxiliary for all their help.

I also attended the Minnesota Postal Workers Convention the first week of May. President Dimondstein was there and told us that the contract arbitration presentations were finished by both sides and now we will wait for the arbitrator's ruling on our Collective Bargaining Agreement. The arbitrator stated that he thought this could be accomplished in 30-60 days. After the new contract is announced we will need new contract orientation training. There was talk about having webinars. I urged President Dimondstein to once again schedule regional orientations instead. Watch for further developments on this when the new CBA is settled. At the Minnesota Convention I was privileged to be invited to the retirement party for Minneapolis Local President Jerry Sirois. Jerry has been a great friend and inspiration to me so I was very pleased when I was asked to take part in the presentation. Jerry's leadership and sharp insight will be sorely missed not only in our four state but nationally as well. Jerry I hope your ride off into the sunset takes a circuitous route and goes by my house from time to time.

See you all soon.

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

2016 Wisconsin State APWU Convention

The 23rd Biennial State APWU Convention was held at the Radisson Convention Center in Green Bay in April. We had craft-specific steward training seminars on Thursday, April 28. The convention proceedings began on Friday, April 29 with a rousing speech by Senator Dave Hansen, who received a standing ovation. The first morning of the convention consisted of committee reports.

At the convention we voted on resolutions, which are suggestions to change contract language. These resolutions give our leaders at APWU Headquarters an idea of what things need to be changed in our contract and a "wish list" of items that would benefit the membership. The approved resolutions are then forwarded to the National Convention to be discussed and voted upon. Following is a list of some of the resolutions that were adopted at the convention:

Streamline the 21-day eReassign process

and allow Local and State Presidents to review the residual vacancies posted on the 21-day list; all PSE's in Function 4 operations in Level 21 and above offices be converted to PTF's; the 1-year requirement to qualify as a Lead SSA be reduced to 6 months; that at least 1 Full-time career duty assignment be created in all Level 18 offices; that a Level 8 Lead Bulk Mail tech Standard Position Description be established; that the USPS bring back philatelic centers to retail windows; to reduce passport appointment waiting time to no more than 24 hours and increase staffing to accommodate the added workload; when a monetary grievance settlement has been processed the Union will receive notification; that continuous credit monitoring be a standard lifetime benefit afforded all Postal employees and their immediate families due to the data breach that occurred in 2014; that PSE's be allowed to carry over their

accrued annual leave rather than receiving compensation at the end of their appointment, if so desired; that the APWU make the APWU website more user-friendly.

Other resolutions that were adopted concerned the structure of the State APWU Executive Board. We created a new position entitled Director of Members at Large, and we changed the job description for all elected offices of the Wisconsin State APWU to include Steward Duties. This will enable all State Officers to represent Members-at-Large in the small offices all across Wisconsin.

National Director of the Maintenance Craft, Steve Raymer, was in attendance at the convention and gave a brief overview of contract negotiations. He explained that the APWU presented the arbitration panel with testimonials from window clerks who gave them insight into the complexities of the Sales & Service Associate position, debunking management's assertion that the

window clerk is similar to a check-out clerk at a store. There were also testimonials from PSE's who were worked to the bone while being treated inhumanely by both management and bargaining unit employees.

The Audit Committee report was presented by Lucy Hauser. Money-saving efforts by the Executive Committee in the past few years have proven to be successful. We are not in arrears on our AFL-CIO dues anymore and have a sizable reserve of cash to effectively manage the state organization.

After lunch we had nominations for all state offices. A white ballot was cast for each office and no elections were held. President: Steve Lord; Secretary/Treasurer: Steve Kendall; Director of Legislation: Chris Czubakowski; Director of Education, Organization & Human Relations: Lucy Hauser; Director of Members-at-Large: Jeff Worden. The 2018 State APWU Con-

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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.

A MESSAGE . . . BY JEFF WORDEN, DIRECTOR OF MEMBERS AT LARGE

A New Era Has Begun

The APWU Wisconsin State Convention was held from April 21 through April 23, 2016 in Green Bay, WI.

At this convention the delegates "UNANIMOUSLY" voted to create a "NEW" Executive Board position on the APWU Wisconsin State Board . . . The position of DIRECTOR of MALs (MEMBER AT LARGE). The reason for this position was due to the large number of MAL's and the fact that they need representation. The State APWU tried using former/retired officer/stewards to represent these offices but . . . it just wasn't enough! There were times in which the APWU State President had to go from one end the state to the other, by creating this position it will be easier to have someone to talk to/represent these offices.

APWU State President Steve Lord had said that at times certain MAL's could be represented by locals' who are within the proximity of those MAL's, and YES that can and at certain times will be done (this will definitely reduce the amount of travel expenses for the APWU State!) APWU State President Steve Lord has said the APWU State Executive Board members can and if need be, will be assigned to investigate/process the grievances for the Members At Large.

My plans are to send a letter to EVERY SINGLE Post Office that is NOT represented/attached to an APWU LOCAL! In other words . . . ALL OF THE Member At Large

OFFICES. This is to notify them that I am the Steward of concern for those post offices. I am also going to work with APWU President Steve Lord on a "Welcome Letter" for all the non-members that are working at these offices to try and sign-up the non-members at those offices! I am also in contact with Anna Smith-Director of Organization at the APWU National Union for whatever "tools of the trade" I can/should be using to sign-up these non-members.

If any member has any questions or for that matter you know a member from an MAL or non-member who is from an MAL, just have them give me a call at (414) 530-7186.

Prior to this NEW position I was the Director of Legislation for the Wisconsin State APWU for over 12 years! I have very much enjoyed keeping the members aware of the issues effecting Postal Workers not only at the national level, but . . . the local/state level as well! I enjoyed attending the "Informational Pickets" (which I still plan to attend). I still plan on working closely with the AFL-CIO, perform door-to-door

member walks, phone banking and well . . . pretty much whatever is needed to help and move forward the issues which are NOT ONLY AFFECTING the American Postal Workers Union, but . . . ALL OF ORGANIZED LABOR and the middle-class as well!

I want to thank the Northeastern Wisconsin Area Local for all of their hard work in hosting this memorable convention.

In closing, I want to say THANK YOU to all who attended the classes, attended the convention and most importantly thanks to those who purchased COPA Raffle tickets. \$3480 was raised for COPA!!!

I want to say thank you to the APWU Auxiliary for all of their hard work-with the COPA Raffle, 50-50 raffle, the auction, hospitality room and helping with registration. You know . . . it would be pretty hard to impossible to get all the things done that need to be done at ANY Convention/Seminar without the APWU axillary. If anyone ever has any questions, just give me a holler at (414) 530-7186.

Take Care.

2016 Wisconsin State APWU Convention

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vention will be held in Wausau.

The convention banquet was held on Friday night with a tribute to Tony Vanderbloemen, former President and current

lifetime Honorary Member of the Northeastern Wisconsin Area Local. President Steve Lord presented a plaque to Tony Vanderbloemen in honor of his 50 years of union activism.

A NOTE FROM THE SECRETARY . . . BY JACQUE CHILDS, SECRETARY

Auxiliary Lends Helping Hand

The 2016 Auxiliary to the State of Wisconsin American Postal Workers Union held the State Convention in conjunction with the State APWU Convention. A lot of work, a lot of fundraising for COPA, and a lot of fun happened.

\$3618.00 was raised for COPA thanks to all those who donated. I don't think we have ever laughed as much at the COPA Auction as we have this year thanks to the auctioneers Willie Mellen, Marty Mater, and Curtis Walker. It was a great time and a great cause.

The Auxiliary held elections and the new officers are President Barb Maciejewski, Legislative Aide, Arlene Beisbier, and Secretary, Jacque Childs. Deb Koszarek who has been President for many many years has decided to retire from her position. Her dedication, hard work, and kind spirit was and is an inspiration. You will be missed. Thanks Deb, we wish you the best in your new endeavors.

Green Bay was the perfect host providing a wonderful tour of Lambeau Field that the delegates really appreciated. The hospitality rooms were full of food, fun, and great conversations. There were also vendors that gave out valuable information for both delegates and their members at home.

The 2014 National Auxiliary to the APWU National Convention voted to

adopt a Human Relation's Project called the Feeding American Backpack Program. Every day in America children are leaving schools on Fridays with nothing to eat until they return to school on Monday. The Feeding America Backpack Program sends children home with healthy food and snacks for the weekends and vacations when school meals are not available. Every dollar raised equals eleven pounds of food, nine meals, or \$19 worth of groceries. We hope everyone will support this program. No child should go hungry in this affluent country of ours or in our state. Contact Treasurer Diane Green, 2547 S. 92nd Street, West Allis, WI 53227 to donate.



Time to Join the Auxiliary!

The Auxiliary membership dues were sent out. If you did not receive a notice or have a friend that would like to join the Auxiliary fill out the attached form. The cost is only \$10 for the year. New members are always welcome.

APWU AUXILIARY

Name:
Address:
City: State: Zip:
Phone: (H) (C)
E-Mail Address:

Mail to: Treasurer Diane Green, 2547 S. 92nd Street, West Allis, WI 53227.

LEGISLATIVELY SPEAKING . . . BY CHRIS CZUBAKOWSKI, DIRECTOR OF LEGISLATION

Let Me Introduce Myself . . .

On April 29th, 2016 at the Wisconsin APWU State Convention in Green Bay, I was elected as the new Wisconsin APWU State Legislative Director. I am truly humbled and honored at having the opportunity to serve in this capacity. I would like to thank State President Steve Lord, the Local Presidents and Delegates for their support and want everyone to know that I am very eager and excited to make some good things happen!

A brief background for those who don't know me; I was hired in 1996 and have been a proud and active APWU member since day one. I am currently a tour three mail processing clerk at the Downtown Milwaukee P&DC and serve as the North Sectional Director in the Milwaukee Area Local. Like so many of you, I am very proud have been a witness to and participated in the historic labor uprising and protests of Act 10. Even though collective bargaining in Wisconsin has been temporarily weakened by Republican big government, I firmly believe that Wisconsin unions are more organized than ever. In fact, these protests sowed seeds that have allowed the APWU to strengthen existing ties and forge new relationships with other union organizations under the AFL-CIO umbrella. And therein, lies our collective strength and power going forward!

Since 2011, President Steve Lord has made it a priority for the state APWU to work with the state AFL-CIO. He has coordinated public outreach with them to "save our service" and coordinated APWU lost time release staff/volunteers for AFL-CIO election programs. Going forward, as Legislative Director, I believe we need to continue to be actively involved with the AFL-CIO state organization in order to elect postal friendly legislators at the local, state and federal levels of government. I intend to work with them and use every other resource at our disposal in order to fight for a legislative agenda that not only protects postal wages and benefits but also preserves universal and affordable service.

Fighting For Our Jobs - If Not You, Who?

In 2012, Union households made up 18 percent of the electorate. These Union households voted 58 percent Obama/ 40 percent Romney. This means that 40 percent of people living in union households supported a presidential candidate who was the embodiment of everything anti-postal and anti-labor. Let that soak in for a minute. I think it's imperative that postal union members begin sharing a certain harsh reality with their family members in 2016. The harsh reality is that the wrong candidate in the White House could be the death knell of the USPS and the standard of living that our families are afforded under our collective bargaining agreement. It is important that APWU members rebut the deliberate corporate misinformation about unionism and reaching out to family members can make a big difference.

It is also important that APWU members statewide consider volunteering some time to the 2016 AFL-CIO Working America Program this election season. The Program is a grass roots effort that uses phone banking/door to door canvassing to mobilize voters to pull the lever for union friendly candidates. Postal workers have historically stepped up to the plate and played a huge part in the success of this program. **Remember two things; No**

amount of time is too small and the more voters that we have contact with, the more it moves the needle in our favor. The AFL-CIO statewide program begins in August (on weekends) and will be running at full speed from September to Election Day. Members who are interested in volunteering should contact President Steve Lord or their Local President. You may also contact me directly at 414-530-7188 or call Emily Mueller, Milwaukee Area Service Organizer at Milwaukee Service Organizer at Wisconsin State AFL-CIO, at 414-745-8343.

State and Federal Legislation - Two Sides of the Same Coin

While we have a tendency to believe that federal laws dominate our daily life that simply is not true. State Legislatures passed more than 24,000 bills in 2014 (that breaks down to 462 new laws per state). In comparison, the 113th congress passed only 296 bills between January 3rd, 2013 - January 2nd, 2015. Because of this disparity, it is important that we keep an eye on state politics. Since Citizens United, the donor class and their front groups have focused on and pumped unfathomable amounts of dark money into state races to influence public policy in ways beneficial to those same moneyed oligarchs. At their behest, certain State Legislatures and State Supreme Court Justices have been very, very busy tilting the playing field away from working people.

In fact, since the Great Wisconsin Gerrymander of 2012, the GOP majority in Madison has continued to feverishly dismantle everything that once made Wisconsin a national leader. They've smashed unions, defunded public services and blown up government transparency, voter access, public education and the UW-System. To be forthright, these corporofascist ALEC robots have betrayed this state, the public trust, and the origins of their own party. It boggles the mind that any of them can even sleep at night with a clear conscious having operated against the public good in all they do. Massive campaign contributions from their benefactors, however, allow them to continue to wear their versions of moral upstanding citizenry on one sleeve and betrayal of the public trust on the other.

The strategy they have used at the state level to privatize public education and cripple the UW-System was to defund, degrade, demonize, and destroy. Sound familiar? It should. This is the same strategy that is used by anti-postal politicians at the federal level to privatize the Postal Service and obliterate good paying union jobs. Brothers and Sisters, we cannot afford to sit on the sidelines of state politics anymore. We need to remind ourselves that our state legislature is where tomorrow's anti-postal federal politicians are being groomed. As such, Governor Walker and his merry band of anti-postal ALEC robots must be stopped. A first step towards accomplishing this will be undoing their election engineering that began with the Great Wisconsin Gerrymander of 2012.

The Great Wisconsin Gerrymander of 2012

On May 24th, 2015, a federal judge began hearing another lawsuit challenging legislative districts drawn after the 2010 census. Plaintiffs

have claimed that the state's assembly map unconstitutionally favors GOP candidates and constitutes an unconstitutional partisan gerrymandering. The statistics speak for themselves; In the 2012 election, 1.4 million Democrats voted in State Assembly races compared to 1.2 million Republicans, but the GOP came away with a 60-39 Assembly majority. Furthermore, those same maps gave the Republican Party an efficiency gap of about 13% in its favor. The efficiency gap provides the number of wasted party votes in an election. This is an extreme number as fewer than 4% of all statehouse plans drawn up between 1972 and 2014 benefited a party to that extent.

The whole 2012 redistricting process was insidious; secrecy agreements, withholding of information, contacting the RNC for approval, erased hard drives, and staff members covertly working with law firms on the maps. I'm glad the courts are getting a second look at this. One of the reasons previous challenges to the redistricting quagmire failed was because there wasn't enough actual data to demonstrate its effects. We have that data now, and I am hopeful we'll see justice this time around!

Raising Legislative Awareness

Social media has become one of the best ways for unionists to share information. As such, I would like to invite APWU Brothers and Sisters from around the state to become a member of my Facebook Group titled, "**Milwaukee North Sectional Director/ Wisconsin State Legislative Director**". This Facebook Group is updated regularly with legislative news and items of concern to postal workers. Joining this group is as easy as 1...2...3! 1. Log onto Facebook and type the name of the aforementioned Facebook Group into the search bar. 2. Click on the name of the Group (this will take you to the Group Page)3. Join the Group by clicking "**Join Group**" in the top-right corner. Please consider joining!

I would also like to share one of the Wisconsin's best political blogs with the membership. The blogsite is <http://www.jakehasablog.com>.

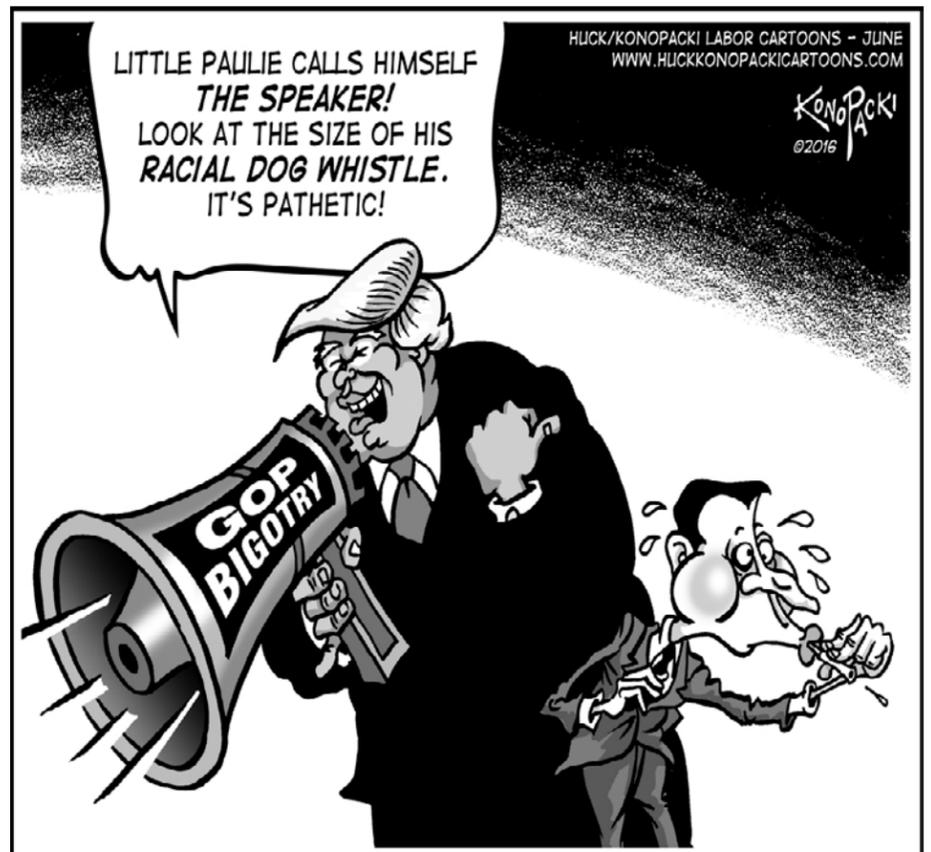
blogspot.com. This impressive blog, authored by a UW-Madison economics graduate named Jake, sheds a much needed light on the myriad of issues that our corporate mainstream press ignores or glosses over. Those who know me, know that I always compare the things that the GOP says to a lottery ticket. That is, in order to decipher the truth, we need to scratch under the surface of disingenuous and misleading rhetoric. Jake does just that! Check it out, you won't be disappointed.

President Obama's New Overtime Rule

President Obama recently extended overtime protection, through Executive Action, to four million more Americans. The new regulation (updated last in 1970) doubles the threshold for salaried workers to qualify for time-and-a-half overtime wages. Under the old rule, time and a half was capped at \$23,660 a year. This allowed employers, like Dollar General, to classify their salaried employees (who made more than the cap) as "managers". This classification, in turn, allowed them to pile massive amounts of hours upon these "managers" without having to pay for those hours. The new rule ensures that salaried workers earning up to \$47,476 a year will now get time and a half overtime benefits after 40 hours. Vulture capitalist businesses that exploit "managers" by purposely remaining understaffed will have an option to either pay the new overtime rate or raise the employee's salary above the new threshold.

This action was very smart, and long overdue - thank you Barack Obama!! Many of us know far too many salaried retail managers that have been overworked and underpaid for this antiquated classification. Somebody tell me one Republican who would have done this in the last 40 years. Then tell me why working class Americans continue to vote Republican. Brothers and Sisters, let's keep this momentum and support going in order to make sure that we dump Trump!

Stay tuned . . . I'll be getting to him in my next article.



Know What to Do for Suicide Prevention

In life, there are times when our loved ones, colleagues, or even we ourselves may face struggles. Sometimes, even temporary problems cause despair and large problems may seem overwhelming. There are times when any one of us may need help. Awareness of some facts about suicide and always taking prompt action may make the difference and save a life. Signs that we or someone we care about are in emotional distress may include:

- Withdrawal and isolation from family and friends
- Obtaining a weapon when depressed
- Giving away prized possessions
- Talking about death often
- Making statements such as, "There's nothing left for me to live for"

KNOW WHO

Suicidal thoughts do not discriminate. Males or females of any age, ethnicity, educational level, or financial status can experience suicidal thoughts. However, risk factors include those with a family history of suicide, mental disorders, substance abuse, or prior suicide attempts. Pay attention to those who talk of harming themselves. This is often a sign that someone is considering the option of suicide and not typically a cry for attention.

KNOW HOW

Do not be afraid to ask directly, "Are you thinking of harming yourself?" Encourage the person in distress to seek immediate help. Talk therapy can be helpful but sometimes a person who is suicidal needs to be assessed for inpatient care and treatment. If in doubt, call 800-327-4968 (TTY: 877-492-7341). There are counselors available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week to assist with questions and guide you to resources.

If someone you know is considering suicide, DO NOT LEAVE THEM ALONE! Remove any potential tools for self-harm, including medications, and seek immediate help. This may mean taking them to an emergency room or calling 911 for local assistance.

WHAT TO DO

If someone you know is considering suicide, DO NOT LEAVE THEM ALONE! Remove any potential tools for self-harm, including medications, and seek immediate help. This may mean taking them to an emergency room or calling 911 for local assistance.

Make the Call!

USPS Employee Assistance Program
1-800-327-4968
(1-800-EAP-4-YOU) TTY: 1-877-492-7341
www.EAP4YOU.com

APWU Of Wisconsin State Convention



Jacquie Childs sells raffle tickets to raise COPA dollars. Over \$3,600 was raised. Not bad for about 65 delegates at a Convention is it? Not much compared to the Koch Brothers though is it?



Tony Vanderbloemen receives recognition for 50 years of being involved in the Labor Movement. That's dedication. He is pictured with APWU of WI President Steve Lord and APWU Maintenance Director Steve Raymer.



State Senator Dave Hansen gave an arousing speech before the opening of the convention. One of the good guys. Photos by: John E. Durben

The next *Badger Bulletin* due date is Friday, August 26, 2016

Facing Yourself in the Mirror



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