

# UNION



# BUG

A Newsletter of the Beaver-Lawrence Counties Central Labor Council

VOLUME 6 ISSUE 9

MAY 2020

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## PSU Labor School Webinar Focuses On Labor Movement Work In Online Sphere

By Steven Kocherzat  
Union Bug Assistant Editor

The question: "Can we take this online?" is of great importance to the Labor Movement at this time because of the Covid-19 pandemic.

On May 7<sup>th</sup>, the Labor School at Penn State held a free webinar entitled Lessons and Strategies for Online engagement: How the Labor Movement is Innovating and Adapting. The webinar pointed out the need for union officials and members to translate their common in-person interactions to digital spaces to support and educate workers, build new relationships and alliances, and conduct union business.

Labor activists and leaders participating in the webinar reported how their organizations are using existing and new digital tools to engage with union members, potential members, and the public. They focused on best practices and lessons learned to expand and adapt union work in the online line sphere, both in the current context of the ongoing pandemic, and beyond. The presenters shared the range of tools that they are using and that participation in union activities has been increasing as a result.

Those who are interested can find resource documents, including a video of the May 7<sup>th</sup> webinar and previ-

ous and future webinars) on-line at <https://ler.la.psu.edu/outreach/labor-school/programs-and-courses/training-and-workshops>.

The Labor School is Penn State's outreach program to the Pennsylvania Labor Movement, providing low-cost education and training programs for workers and their organizations throughout the state. It offers multi-union programs designed to promote recognition of the shared challenges facing workers, as well as special events and workshops on current issues. In addition, it assists local, regional, and national unions and labor councils and federations by designing education programs or providing instructors and speakers on a range of relevant topics.

### PSU Labor School's Flyer of Best Practices for Online Engagement.

The flyer is attached at the end of this issue of the UNION BUG. It was issued by the Labor School on May 18<sup>th</sup>.

# IBEW Local 29 Donates To Labor Council Scholarship Funds

By Sara Dudash, Chairperson  
Labor Council Scholarship Committee

The Beaver-Lawrence Central Labor Council would like to thank IBEW Local 29 for their generous donation of \$1,000 towards our Beaver-Lawrence Central Labor Council scholarship funds.

The Labor Council has been awarding two \$1,000 scholarships for many years to high school seniors who are dependent children or grandchildren of union members in good standing and registered as full-time students in post-secondary programs. We are proud to be able to help union members with the many expenses of their children attending post-secondary schools.

Again, we thank IBEW Local 29 for their generosity.

## Primary Election Day

**Tuesday, June 2, 2020**

Last day to REGISTER before the primary .....May 18

Last day to apply for a mail-in or civilian absentee ballot .....May 26

Last day for County Boards of Elections to receive voted mail-in and civilian absentee ballots (must be received by 8:00 P.M.) .....June 2

GENERAL PRIMARY .....June 2

Please remember to vote (in person or by mail-in)

## UNION BUG

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The opinions expressed in Union Bug articles are those of the author and not necessarily those of the Beaver-Lawrence Central Labor Council or its officers.

## President's Report

By Rick Galiano  
Labor Council President

\* The Labor Council Executive Board has canceled the Executive Board and membership meetings scheduled for May 18<sup>th</sup> in New Castle. The meetings were canceled due to the ongoing Covid-19 crisis. The Executive Board will meet remotely on May 18 at 6:00. Please contact me or any other Executive Board member if you would like to bring a matter to the attention of the Executive Board. One of the matters that will be discussed during the meeting will be when to resume in person Executive Board and membership meetings. Many labor organizations have canceled in person meetings far into the future. My union, the USW,

for example, has canceled its constitutional convention that was to be held in July of this year and will not hold the convention until 2022. Another matter that will be discussed is the rescheduling of the Human Rights Banquet that was to be held on April 18<sup>th</sup>.

\* Please see the flyer attached to the end of this issue of the UNION BUG calling for Congress to support the USPS in the next stimulus package and asks the public to contact their Congressional representatives to save the USPS from the devastating impact of the Covid-19 crisis. The Labor Council Executive Board will discuss the USPS financial situation during its May 18<sup>th</sup> remote meeting. The Labor Council supported the APWU and NALC's "Stop Staples" cam-

paign that ended successfully in 2016 and gave an award to the Western Pennsylvania Postal Workers Solidarity Committee at the Labor Council's 2017 Human Rights Banquet. We will support the postal workers unions in the new battle to save the USPS from bankruptcy and privatization.

\* Please remember to vote in the June primary election.

The Pennsylvania AFL-CIO has not made any endorsements in any races pertaining to Beaver and Lawrence Counties.

\* I am wishing that all union brothers and sister be safe during this terrible time. Thank you to our front line workers and to those who have worked to provide them with personal protective equipment.

## Community Services Report

By Mark Benkart  
Community Services Chairman

The pandemic has been causing quite a change in our personal lives. For some, just being stuck at home is quite a challenge. For others, it is much worse.

Many people have been laid-off or have lost their jobs. Even with unemployment benefits, many workers are having a hard time paying the bills and feeding their families. There have been huge lines at food pantries to the point that many are running out of food.

The Faith Restorations Food Pantry, located in Monaca, has had to turn people away at

times due to running out of food. John Leonard of Faith Restorations is asking for donations to keep the pantry open. John spoke at the September 2019 Labor Council meeting about the work of the pantry. A copy of the flyer that he distributed at the meeting is attached to the end of this issue of the UNION BUG.

The Beaver-Lawrence Central Labor Council has just donated \$500.00 to the food pantry.

For anyone who needs food, their address is 186 Wagner Road, Monaca, Pa. 15061. Their hours are Mondays, 10 am to 12 pm (veterans only), Tuesdays, 6 pm to 8 pm, and Thursdays, 11 am to 1 pm.

If you would like to donate, make the check out to Faith Restorations, and mail to the same address. Call 724-709-8666 if you have any questions.



John Leonard addressing September 2018 Labor Council meeting.

# Help Save The Postal Service

By Charles Pugar  
Pittsburgh Metro Area Postal  
Workers Union President

It's No Joke – We need to save our Postal Service, and it must be done now.

Don't be fooled by a talking head painting imaginary Postal Service flaws. Trump claims the Service is mismanaged and a joke. He says they should be charging four times current rates because they lose money giving services away to his enemy Jeff Bezos at Amazon.

Trump made sure that the Postal Service was only offered a pittance of COVID relief, and only on a take-it or leave-it condition. And Trump just appointed a new Postmaster General (PMG), Louis DeJoy, who is

a major contributor and supporter of his and expected to bend Trump's way. See a pattern?

In reality, the Postal Service has operated just fine pre-dating the founding of this Country. It is self-funded and does not operate on tax dollars, and recent polls say an overwhelming 91 percent of respondents have a favorable view of the Postal Service, higher than any other federal agency.

Oh and big delivery services like UPS, Fedex, and Amazon trust, and pay legally-set rate, for the Postal Service to deliver to their inconvenient and unprofitable addresses – because the Postal Service does, after all, provide universal service to all; and they need the Postal Service.

And experts say that the Postal Service would still be running in the black if not for the 2006 Postal Accountability and Enhancement Act, which is responsible for about 75 percent of cumulative net losses since then. And by the way, that same Act prohibits the Service from providing discount services plus it places price caps on major services like first class mail. Pretty much hand-tied.

Experts predict that the Postal Service will not be able to make payroll come September and there is no comfort in Trump's crony PMG appointment – this is an exigent situation, it's not a pretty picture, and it's certainly no joke.

We need you to save this treasured public Postal Service from this political death knell. Please see the flyer [attached to the back of this issue of the UNION BUG] and participate now.

It's too late after it's gone.



Charles Pugar, Pittsburgh Metro Area Postal Workers Union President



Postal Workers Solidarity Committee activists and supporters at May 17, 2015, "Stop Staples" rally at the Monaca Staples store.



Postal Worker Unions representatives with plaques presented by Labor Council at 2017 Human Rights Banquet in recognition of their successful Stop Staples Campaign. See picture at left. (L-R) Beaver-Lawrence Central Labor Council delegate Josh Luther, Pittsburgh Metro Area Postal Workers Union (APWU); Randy Ball, NALC Branch 84 vice president; Kelly Dickey, National Postal Mailhandlers Union Local 322 president; John P. Richards, APWU Pittsburgh Retirees Chapter President.

BEAVER/LAWRENCE  
CENTRAL LABOR  
COUNCIL



We're on the Web:  
[pa.aficio.org/349](http://pa.aficio.org/349)

## Calendar of Events

- 05/18 Beaver-Lawrence Central Labor Council Executive Board meeting – 6:00 pm via teleconference; membership meeting canceled due to Covid-19 crisis.
- 06/02 Pennsylvania Primary Election – Please remember to vote in person or by mail.
- 06/15 Beaver-Lawrence Central Labor Council Executive Board and membership meetings: Please check with Executive Board members or in June issue of the UNION BUG to find out if the meetings will proceed as regularly scheduled, conducted remotely, or canceled.

V

PA Primary Election  
Tuesday, June 2nd  
Mail-in voting available  
Visit [www.votesPA.com](http://www.votesPA.com)

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Calendar of Events submissions must be emailed to Jody Kohser, Calendar of Events Coordinator, at [jkohser@verizon.net](mailto:jkohser@verizon.net), by 6:00 p.m. on June 8th to be considered for publication in the June 2020 Issue of the **UNION BUG**.



# THE LABOR SCHOOL

AT PENN STATE

## ***Online Member Engagement and Union Advocacy: Examples Across Pennsylvania***

*Social distancing is forcing unions to innovate. Unions and labor organizations are finding ways to use technology to engage members, to advocate, to carry out union business—and in many cases, participation is actually increasing with online initiatives.*

*If you would like more information on any of the initiatives below, or you have initiatives you would like to share, please email [laborschool@psu.edu](mailto:laborschool@psu.edu).*

**Tele-/Online Meetings:** Conference calls or online meetings (like Zoom or GoToMeeting) at statewide-, regional-, facility-levels, or in small groups have been effective.

### **Engagement Tips for Virtual Meetings:**

- *Hold standing, weekly meetings so members have a predictable time to connect.*
- *Some unions have successfully included translation services in their Zoom meetings.*
- *Use the breakout room feature in Zoom for deeper participation.*
- *Create private social media (like private Facebook groups). Participation requires approval and comment settings can be adjusted based on the goals of the communication.*
- *Record critical information on a YouTube channel and text the link out for easy access.*

**Virtual Lobbying:** Invite members and elected officials to the same Zoom meeting so elected officials can hear directly from union members, staff, and leaders.

### **Engagement Tips for Virtual Lobbying:**

- *Have elected officials or policy makers join at a pre-set time after the meeting starts so you can prep with union members in advance and maximize time with elected officials.*
- *Use zip code information to put registrants in breakout rooms with their elected official.*

**Virtual Hiring Hall:** In an effort to quickly help increase staff in grocery stores and help provide work for others who lost their jobs, UFCW 1776 created a virtual hiring hall using Microsoft Forms. The link was promoted via social media, text blasts, and emails to other unions and UFCW members' families to help spread the link and find potential applicants. After gathering the information for potential candidates through the form, union staff then took the information and worked directly with employers to connect them to potential candidates.

**Texting:** Mass texts have been used as a tool to share information from the labor organizations with members. Texts are great ways to send links to resources, video clips, or other information. There are services requiring members to "opt-in," as well as other text systems like Hustle that allow for sending the same message to individual cell phones to avoid the "opt-in" method.

**Telephonic Membership Sign-Up:** Given the inability to conduct in-person new membership orientations, some organizations are doing membership orientations virtually. Others are even doing membership sign-ups telephonically using recorded voice-authorization as confirmation of membership.

**Social Media and Digital Campaigns:** Unions and worker organizations have used social media hashtag campaigns, live streaming on social media, and YouTube to amplify stories and build public support for social justice.

**Online Tools for Campaigns:**

- *Collect Video Stories: Use social media or mass texting to create a link for members to upload their own video stories to personalize your campaign.*
- *Virtual Petitions: Organizations have used Google Forms, Action Network, Resist Bot, and other platforms to quickly create and gather electronic petitions.*
- *Telephone or Email Blasts: Members can flood voicemails or email inboxes of management as an online collective action to win safety or economic demands.*

Special thanks to AFSCME, SEIU Healthcare PA, Teamsters 773, UFCW 1776, UAW 677 Philadelphia Domestic Workers Alliance, PASNAP, the PA AFL-CIO, APWU, and the NALC for sharing their experiences.

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# Contact Your Members of Congress

tell them to **include postal funding**  
in the **next stimulus**

**VISIT:**

**[apwu.org/covidletters](https://apwu.org/covidletters)**

Now is the time for urgent action to **save the United States Postal Service** from the devastating financial impact this crisis is having on its ability to operate and serve the American people.

Postal workers are essential workers who proudly step up everyday and serve the country by processing and delivering the mail, lifesaving medical supplies and prescriptions, critical information from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and absentee ballots.

**We are calling on Congress to add these provisions in the next stimulus bill:**

- One-time funding of at least \$25 billion;
- Funding of the difference between postage revenue and actual operating costs;
- Compensate the USPS for paid sick leave;
- Hazard pay for USPS workers;
- No strings attached for money borrowed by the USPS.

We are asking for everyone's help to ensure that this pandemic does not destroy the U.S. Postal Service, a true national treasure and a vital part of America's response and eventual recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic.

**Tell Congress: Support Our Public Postal Service**

As Congress prepares further legislation to address the ongoing COVID-19 crisis, it is crucial to contact all our representatives and urge them to provide the financial support the Postal Service desperately needs.

**To write a letter to your House Representative and Senators, go to:**  
**[apwu.org/covidletters](https://apwu.org/covidletters)**. Share this with your friends, family, and co-workers!



**[www.apwu.org](https://www.apwu.org)**

Mark Dimondstein, President

Judy Beard, Legislative & Political Director



JB:mw:opeiu#2//aflcio

**POST AND DISTRIBUTE**





## FOOD PANTRY

186 Wagner Road Monaca Pa 15061

Please consider giving a donation to Faith Restoration food pantry. We are entirely staffed by volunteers, so every dollar you give goes directly to helping others less fortunate.

According to the Pittsburgh Food Bank, in Beaver County there are **2581 senior citizens and veterans** having to make the choice between buying their medicine or eating. Help us to help them by making a donation by sending a check to the above address of donating online at [faithrestorations.org](http://faithrestorations.org)

The line you see is just as long around the corner.

