

# Postal Newsletter Press

AMERICAN POSTAL WORKERS UNION

NATIONAL POSTAL PRESS ASSOCIATION

Volume 54, Issue 2

March-April, 2022

## The view from my window

By Tony Carobine, President

Having an office on the second floor of an office building puts me above ground level and provides a view of the surrounding area. Gazing out the window to the northwest I can see where huge chunks of the hillsides were removed long ago, remnants of the bygone iron ore mining era. Looking to the southwest, I used to see two large smokestacks that towered high above the ground standing like sentinels, keeping watch over the community. Now demolished, the smokestacks were part of the Ford Motor Company Plant that proudly produced “woodie” station wagon bodies from the 1930’s to the 1950’s, glider aircraft used in World War II, and also the birthplace of Kingsford Charcoal Briquettes.

While the view from my window does not allow me to see everywhere, there are other happenings from the past that come to mind. Such as, a local paper mill in operation for 113 years being sold and shortly thereafter the new owners announcing the facility would be closed, resulting in 319 people losing their jobs. While the mill was a profitable one this move was described as corporate greed – limit the competition – without regard to the well-being of the employees, their families or the community.

In contemplating the view from my window, it occurred to me, that we, as postal workers, sometimes take our jobs for granted and don’t always take time to look at what’s happened in the world around us. If we took the time to do so, perhaps it would give us more cause to genuinely appreciate the lifestyle we have become accustomed to thanks to our union. Good wages, paid holidays, paid vacation, paid sick leave, affordable health care, and a no layoff clause are just a few of the many benefits enjoyed by postal workers because of the American Postal Workers Union. These benefits were

either retained, improved or modified in the recently ratified National Agreement. Anyone who believes that we would have the same level of pay and benefits without our union needs a reality check.

There is no guarantee of course this lifestyle couldn’t be taken away from us at some point. In order to preserve it, we need to support our union in as many ways as possible. As communicators, as caretakers of the “voice of the union,” we have a special responsibility to ensure that we do all we can to help keep our union strong by maintaining

a union presence in front of our members via the “flagship of communication,” the union publication along with as many other forms of communication as possible.

Whether it’s new members, longtime members, or nonmembers, the need to communicate through union publications, social media, websites, mailings, bulletin boards, one-on-one contact and any other form of communication available is a never-ending necessity.

A great example of the impact commu-  
*Continued on page 2*

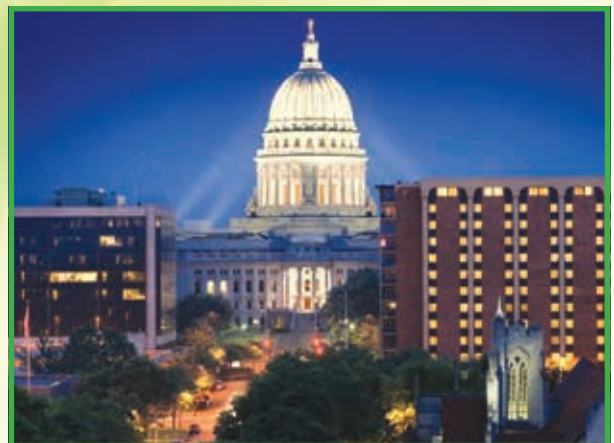
## Madison, Wisconsin site of 2023 PPA Conference

Madison, Wisconsin will be the site of the 2023 Biennial Conference of the APWU National Postal Press Association on Thursday, July 20 through Saturday, July 22, 2023 with a preconference session on Wednesday, July 19. The conference will be held at The Madison Concourse Hotel & Governor’s Club.

A guestroom rate of \$169.00 per day will be in effect throughout the conference. Current tax rate is 15.5%.

“Regardless of the office held in our union, learning about communication as a means to better represent the membership should be a part of every activist’s educational development,” said PPA President Tony Carobine. “Effective communication, both internally and externally is an especially relevant tool for addressing issues affecting postal workers.”

Further information will be forthcoming.





## APWU National Postal Press Association

PO Box 888

Iron Mountain MI 49801

Phone/Fax: 906-774-9599

E-mail: [ppa@apwupostalpress.org](mailto:ppa@apwupostalpress.org)

Website: [www.apwupostalpress.org](http://www.apwupostalpress.org)

### Advisory Council

Anthony "Tony" Carobine  
President

PO Box 888  
Iron Mountain MI 49801

Jenny Gust  
Secretary-Treasurer  
PO Box 587  
Walbridge OH 43465

Cathy Hanson  
Editor-at-Large  
4620 Bloomington Avenue  
Minneapolis MN 55407

Diane North  
Editor-at-Large  
3773 Woodbriar Drive  
Orange Park FL 32073

Terry Danek  
Editor-at-Large  
4261 Knox Street  
Lincoln NE 68504

Lance Coles  
Editor-at-Large  
PO Box 539  
Des Moines IA 50302

Hank Greenberg  
Honorary Member  
2800 Black Oak Drive  
Rocklin CA 95765

**Statement of purpose:** Published by the American Postal Workers Union National Postal Press Association, the *PPA Newsletter* is an educational tool designed to assist PPA members with the performance of their duties as communicators and to help promote the goals and objectives of the APWU.

**This publication is 100% union printer produced: Union typeset, Union layout, Union printed.**



# The view from my window

*Continued from page 1*

nication can have is the recent legislation (*The Postal Service Reform Act*) passed by Congress that will greatly help the financial stability and future of our livelihood, the postal service. Our union relentlessly communicated the importance of members contacting their congressional representatives and urging them to support this legislation, along with spending considerable time educating the public about this vital issue.

In turn, throughout the country APWU activists communicated to the public the importance of this legislation and built public support; through opinion-editorials, television, radio, newspaper interviews, social media and picketing. Yes, an important lesson about what can be accomplished through a vigorous effort using communication.

We should never disregard the benefits of communication. To do so would reduce

the union's strength along with our chances and opportunities to accomplish great things. Internally, we must also maintain the union's visibility, as not doing so will work to disconnect members from their union and may eventually leave them wondering if they should retain their membership. Meanwhile, nonmembers need to be constantly reminded about the value of union membership and that their livelihood is dependent upon a strong union.

In the view from my window I can also see the post office where I began my postal career and where my union brothers and sisters work daily at their jobs serving the public. It is my hope this particular view from my window never changes. Whether it does or not largely depends on each and every one of us; the communicators, representatives, and members of the American Postal Workers Union.

## Overcoming procrastination

Sharon spends hours sorting through papers and performing other nonessential tasks rather than working on the newsletter due at the printer by the end of the week.

Greg hides from his local president, because he hasn't put together the financial report his president requested. Marjorie knows she should be writing a report about the convention she attended but instead keeps putting it off.

What do these people all have in common? Procrastination.

Putting off projects that need to be done, dragging feet when it comes to doing crucial tasks ... everyone procrastinates at one time or another. But if you find yourself continually behind schedule and never caught up, it may be time to examine the reasons behind it. Here are some possibilities:

**Fear of failure.** Sometimes we delay a project or task because subconsciously we are afraid it is beyond our capabilities. We say, "I haven't had time to do it," rather than "I tried and failed." The solution is a

positive attitude. We are more capable than we give ourselves credit for. Don't let the fear of making a mistake hold you back. Everyone makes mistakes now and then, and most can be rectified.

### Feeling overwhelmed.

Faced with a formidable undertaking, some will find reason after reason to delay buckling down. That's the time to remember the old Chinese maxim, "A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step." You can make substantial progress by breaking projects down into incremental steps and focusing on one step at a time.

**Lack of time.** This is a common excuse. Yet we each are allotted the same 24 hours every day. So why do some people accomplish monumental feats while others don't? It's a matter of time management and individual priorities. Start to make use of every minute. Can you wake up just 15 minutes earlier for a jog around the block? Another solution: Give yourself a "productivity hour": one hour at the union office

*Continued on page 3*





# ***The Privatization of Everything***

## **How the plunder of public goods transformed America and how we can fight back**

- Donald Cohen
- Allen Mikaelian

America's leading defender of the public interest and a bestselling historian show us how to prevent the private takeover of our cherished public resources

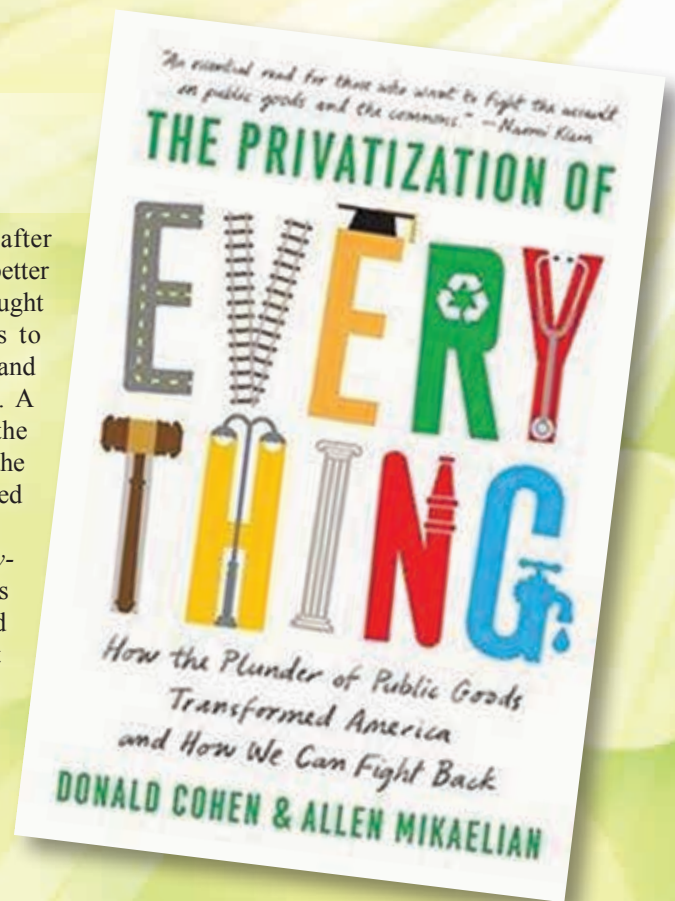
As people reach for social justice and better lives, they create public goods – free education, public health, open parks, clean water, and many others – that must be kept out of the market. When private interests take over, they strip public goods of their power to lift people up, creating instead a tool to diminish democracy, further inequality, and separate us from each other.

*The Privatization of Everything*, by the founder of **In the Public Interest**, an organization dedicated to shared prosperity and the common good, chronicles the efforts to turn our public goods into private profit centers. Ever since Ronald Reagan labeled government a dangerous threat, privatization has touched every aspect of our lives, from water and trash collection to the justice system and the military.

However, citizens can, and are, wrestling back what is ours. A Montana city took

back its water infrastructure after finding that they could do it better and cheaper. Colorado towns fought back well-funded campaigns to preserve telecom monopolies and hamstringing public broadband. A motivated lawyer fought all the way to the Supreme Court after the State of Georgia erected privatized paywalls around its legal code.

*The Privatization of Everything* connects the dots across a broad spectrum of issues and raises larger questions about who controls the public things we all rely on, exposing the hidden crisis of privatization that has been slowly unfolding over the last fifty years and giving us a road map for taking our country back.



*“The Privatization of Everything pulls back the curtain on the multi-decade effort by profiteers to privatize and monetize America’s public goods at the expense of the American people. This book is a must-read for anyone who values the importance our public schools, libraries, transit and health systems and a clean and healthy environment play in creating vibrant communities and a strong democracy. Public goods are indeed for the common good and it’s vital we turn the tide on the privatization agenda that has only succeeded in draining our communities and making the rich richer and Donald Cohen and Allen Mikaelian give us the road map to do just that.”*

*— Randi Weingarten, president,  
American Federation of Teachers*

## **Overcoming procrastination**

*Continued from page 2*

or home where you shut the door, ignore phone calls, e-mails and text messages and concentrate on one special task.

Make a habit of writing down your priorities every day. Have it become as much of your routine as drinking coffee or brushing your teeth. Then focus on doing as much on that list as possible. There will always be interruptions and delays that can't be anticipated, so don't hold yourself to an excessively strict schedule. At the end of each day, check off what you have accomplished, and move the rest to the top of the list for the next day.

There is great satisfaction in seeing a project through from start to finish. Let yourself enjoy the feeling of achievement.

Do it now!



# Content development: what's news?

Ask any person “what’s new,” and the reply will be about something timely, important, useful, or of some consequence. Or it may simply be about something that is interesting. It will often contain elements of conflict, competition, or accomplishment. Something happened . . . or didn’t happen. The main character may be somebody important and well known . . . or a stranger. And so on.

Although “news” is hard to define, we all know it when we hear or read it. News is what makes a newsletter interesting, informative, and worthwhile.

To determine what’s news for your newsletter, ask:

- Is this news to me as an editor?
- As a member of this organization?

If something is news to you, chances are it will be news to your readers, too.

It seems obvious that readers want to know something if it will affect them personally. Sometimes only you may know it is something they need to know. But you always have to make them want to know.

To do this, you have to grab the reader’s attention in the headline and the very first sentence. Learning to write like newspaper journalists is imperative for the volunteer editor.

Writing in a traditional newspaper style can be a real boon to a volunteer editor. It is easy to read, easy to cut, and easy to

write, once you get the hang of it. Getting the hang of it may be even easier than you think. Get to the point fast. In the first sentence or so grab your reader’s attention and get your message across quickly. Put first things first. You’ll keep the reader’s interest longer. And you don’t waste their time.

*“Writing in a traditional newspaper style can be a real boon to a volunteer editor. It is easy to read, easy to cut, and easy to write, once you get the hang of it.”*

## Turn things upside down

The elements of good news writing require that reporters turn things upside down to get the facts straight and told in a fast, easy-to-read manner. You don’t want your article to read like the minutes of a meeting or like a speech. Public speakers often lead up to the main point or an announcement.

This keeps the audience listening . . . sometimes. But if you do the same thing, you are most likely to lose your reader.

Use the inverted pyramid which contains all the important information at the start.

Then as time and space permit, you can fill in the details.

The five w’s: a good news article contains all of the relevant facts answering these questions:

- Who?
- What?
- When?
- Where?
- Why? (or How?)

You can’t write the article until you have the basic facts. You may not even know what your story is until you have all of the relevant information.

The lead is the most important element of a good news story. A good lead is short and to the point. That’s why it grabs attention. It may be only one sentence, but it is never more than two or three.

When you have all the facts, try to say the main message quickly. Pretend you are that person on the pay phone making an urgent one-minute call.

You’ll find that you leave out some facts because they aren’t necessary at that point.

They come later – all the way down to the tip of that “inverted pyramid.”

The inverted pyramid by another name is an upside down triangle. The whole point of it is to put the main point at the beginning of the article. Arrange the rest of the facts in descending order of importance, closing with the least important point.

## How to beat your enemies: stand united!

A farmer, who had a quarrelsome family, after trying in vain to reconcile their differences with words, thought he might more readily prevail by an example. So he called his sons and told them to lay a bunch of sticks before him. Then, having tied the sticks into a bundle, he told the lads, one after another, to take it up and break it. They all tried, but tried in vain. Then, untying the bundle, he gave them the sticks to break one by one. This they did with the greatest ease. Then said the farmer, “Thus, my sons, as long as you remain united, you are a match for all your enemies, but differ and separate, and you are undone.”

— Aesop





# Maintaining editorial enthusiasm

Expert editors show enthusiasm – for their profession, their publications, and the material they cover. Enthusiasm radiates and touches everything editors create. It makes their publication even more attractive and more inviting to readers.

Publications sometimes fall a little short on enthusiasm because long-term editors find it hard to stay effervescent month after month. Without such energy, publications can grow humdrum, adequate but no longer sparkling.

How do you keep up enthusiasm for your work? By constantly injecting novelty into it; by never letting it grow stale. To maintain enthusiasm for your creations, you must constantly work to rejuvenate your skills:

- Your writing;
- Your mechanical techniques (learn to take better pictures and to make the most of your electronic equipment);
- Your feature ideas (dig, really dig, for current and exciting subjects);
- Your basic editorial approach (study what works for other editors; exchange publications, read other periodicals).

When you update a publication and inject it with renewed enthusiasm, you should also aim to improve readability. You do this

by trying to see each issue from the readers' point of view.

Redesign to give readers ...

- Pieces of text, with plenty of heads and shoulders, for easy entry into text.
- A brief contents listing, boxed on page one, so readers can quickly scan for stories of special interest.
- A strong nameplate to convey your organization's distinct personality.
- A masthead that credits all involved in production, including the names of officers and where they can be reached.
- Columns that are easy-to-read (no wider than four inches) and plenty of white space to give readers' eyes a break.
- Contemporary reading cues – rules, boxes, screens – and dependable heads and page positions to aid in locating standard information.
- More creative graphics – employ more varied photo angles, thoughtful cropping, quality-oriented reproduction methods and contemporary art – to enhance text.

Are you as enthusiastic today as you were when you first became editor? Does your publication sparkle with news and information – or has it grown bland? If you find yourself squeamish about answering either of these questions, maybe it's time

to take action and implement some basic makeovers (for both editor and publication). Start today to transform what's good into what's great!

## Are you in style?

There are three styles for setting headlines. All caps were the norm for many, many years in American publications. That was because larger sizes of display letters either were not available or were not convenient to set when metal type was used.

**Is your headline in style?**

**Is Your Headline in Style?**

**Is Your Headline In Style?**

**IS YOUR HEADLINE  
IN STYLE?**

## It's all in the title

How often have you written what you consider to be a fine article, only to discover that a handful of people read it? In this article you may have researched a problem with management that everyone should be aware of or it could be a piece on some accomplishment that your local should be recognized for, yet very few know it. For the life of you, you cannot seem to understand why. Well, maybe it is the way you titled that particular article.

Headline writing is one of the most important areas that part-time journalists have to work on. With just a few extra minutes, you can come up with a suitable headline that will grab your readers' attention and make them want to read the piece that you or another officer worked so hard to produce.



One common practice repeated over and over in PPA affiliated publications is the use of the same headline for each regular contributor. Headlines like "President's Report" or the "Editor's Corner" are just a few. On other occasions the writer's name will be incorporated into a catchy slogan that identifies the writer. The problem is that repeated column headlines say nothing about the content of the article.

With just a little more time, a suitable headline could be run that will let the reader know something about the article. The use of bylines like "President's Report" can still be used but would be secondary to the main headline. A proper headline may mean the difference between whether or not an article gets read, especially if readers see a headline that lets them know that the article contains useful information.

So, to give a little more weight to the headline, all caps were used. But all caps are hard to read. That's because we recognize words by their silhouette, especially the upper portion. When only caps are used, that upper perimeter becomes just a straight line, lacking a distinctive shape.

Later, upper-and-lower case headline styles were adopted. In that style, each word starts with a capital letter but the rest of the letters are lowercase. This was an improvement but still not ideal; the caps in each word slowed the reader.

Finally, downstyle was adopted, whereby headlines are capped by the same rules as body copy. The first letter of the first word in a headline is capped as are proper nouns. All other words are lowercase. This style, by far, is the easiest to read.

Remember: cap heads as you do body type.



# Take time to de-stress your life

The demands and expectations that others place on us, or we place on ourselves, can add stress to our day. It can manifest

a consistent sleep schedule. Being overly tired imposes stress on the body, and increases the likelihood of reacting to events



itself in many ways: Physically, causing high blood pressure, headaches, digestive disturbances . . . even ulcers; emotionally, disrupting the harmony of our personal relationships. And stress may also be an underlying cause of depression and other mental illness.

Because we all experience stress at some time, we must find ways to cope with it. First, though, it's important to note that stress is a result of two sets of factors: the external events of our lives and our internal reactions to them. While we don't always control the former, we can learn to exercise some control over the ways we respond. By doing so, we can de-stress our lives.

Here are five ways to cope:

**1. Get plenty of rest.** Try to maintain

in a stressful manner. Poor sleep habits also increase susceptibility to illness, another cause of physical stress.

**2. Breathe deeply.** When you find yourself feeling overwhelmed by what you have to do, or disturbed by the actions of another, stop and take five deep

breaths, exhaling slowly each time. Concentrate only on your breathing. This may calm you down.

**3. Maintain a "present" awareness.** Much of the time, our minds are busy rehashing what happened in the past or worrying about what may occur in the future: Both kinds of concerns increase feelings of stress. If you feel your stress level starting to rise, get up and take a walk. A change of scenery, fresh air, and a different focus may provide relief.

**4. Exercise.** Research has proven that exercise is a great stress-reducer. Vigorous exercise can be an effective way to shift your attention. As you work out, your mind focuses more on your body and less on the stresses that bother you. What's more, a

sustained period of exercise relieves muscle tension.

**5. Get rid of your "should."** Much stress is self-imposed, resulting from mental "tapes" we play in our heads. "I should be working harder" . . . "He shouldn't have treated me that way" . . . "I should have known better" . . . "I should spend more time with her." Try to stop thinking in terms of what you "should" and "shouldn't" do. Instead, decide what you will and will not do. That subtle change in thinking gives you more control over your actions and reactions, which can reduce feelings of stress.

Finally, realize that stress is not always a negative condition. Some people thrive on it (it keeps them alert, revved up and ready to do their best). But it's up to you to decide how much stress you want in your life and how you deal with it. No one else can change the way you think and feel. To a considerable extent, then, stress may be a personal choice.

## Does your copy pass the dollar bill test?

In a world of flippers and skimmers, how communicators package their words can be key to drawing in busy or distracted readers. Studies indicate that if a story looks easier to read, people are more likely to read it. A few suggestions are to keep copy in short and easy-to-read chunks, breaking up monotonous gray type with such graphic devices as subheads, bullets, pull-out quotes, boldface lead-ins, sidebars, boxes, captions, illustrations, and photographs.

Test your layout with the dollar bill test. Slap down a buck, horizontally or vertically, and make sure no chunk of copy stretches without a break longer or wider than that dollar bill.



## Freshen up your writing

- **Jot it down.** Keep a notebook handy. Scribble down an idea when it comes to you. You may remember it later, but the language won't ever be as alive and fresh.

- **Start the flow, keep it going.** Get the first draft down as fast as possible. There's time later to polish it, add facts and details, correct names, dates, spelling, etc.

- **Start in the middle.** If you have a clear idea about the guts of your article, get it down. Worry about the introduction

later. A lead may come to you as you get into the story.

- **Trim the deadwood.** Read your article carefully. Test every word, sentence and paragraph to make sure each is doing the job you want it to.

- **Attend to the beginning and end.** The lead is your chance to make a good first impression (or any impression at all) and the closer is your opportunity to make a lasting impression.

— *Writer's Little Instruction Book: 385 Secrets for Writing Well & Getting Published*



# Editor's toolbox: tips for APWU communicators

## Disclaimers and libel

*"Opinions expressed in this publication are those of the individual writer and not necessarily those of the union."* The preceding statement (or similar wording) known as a disclaimer is commonly found in newsletters published by APWU local and state organizations. Does such a statement excuse the organization from responsibility should the issue of libel arise? No! This statement merely informs the reader the union may not agree with opinions expressed by contributors. It provides no legal protection whatsoever.

Another misconception involves the deletion of names as a means to escape a possible lawsuit for libel. If the identity of the person is readily determinable, even if the person is not named, defamatory statements in the article will be libelous. Similarly, if someone makes libelous statements about a group of persons, each person in the group may be defamed, depending upon the size of the group and the nature of the statements.

Keep in mind that the legalities of reprinting a libelous statement are the same as for the party that originated it. Also, just because a statement is true it does not mean that it's OK to print it. If a defamatory statement is published there must be a justifiable reason why the statement was published. In some states it's illegal to publish a true statement for no good reason and with the intent of damaging someone's reputation. In other states it's considered an invasion of privacy if there is no justification for publishing the statement.

Further information on the subject of libel and invasion of privacy is available from the PPA. If you are unsure of whether or not an article is libelous, your Postal Press Association can help. Upon request, (if the material has not already been published) the PPA will provide a confidential review and offer suggestions. Over the years this service has helped to avoid many potentially costly lawsuits.

## Nameplates a matter of identity

Every publication benefits from a distinctive nameplate (also called banner or flag) announcing with vigor the name of the publication. Therefore, it should stand out and grab the readers' attention.

It also gives the organization identity as

owner of the publication. Along with the name of the paper in big, bold print, the nameplate should include, in smaller print: who the paper belongs to, such as "Official Publication of the Anytown Local, American Postal Workers Union, AFL-CIO."

**Volume and Number.** (The volume is used to record how many years the paper has been published. The number would indicate what issue it is for the current year. For example: Volume 5, Number 9 means this is the fifth year the paper is being published and the ninth issue of the current year.

## Punch and Polish

Every new story we tackle – whether to edit or write – challenges us to be wary of a tumble into a comfortable, but boring, rut. Expert communicators still strive to avoid the "Fourth-Grade Book Report Syndrome" and its tendency to begin each essay with deadening phrases such as "This book was about." A reminder now and then about how to add punch and polish to written material helps keep us on our toes.

Try asking yourself these questions with each story and issue; they may help you keep your publication's perspective fresh.

**What do your readers most want (or need) to know?** Capture attention with topic sentences that communicate succinctly and invite readers to delve further. Keep messages sharp and to the point. Balance fact with opinion, and make sure readers can tell the difference.

**Which words best describe ideas?** Passive word selections and sentence structures confuse readers. Overuse of jargon and meek verbs such as *is* or those ending in *-ing* are stupefying. Keen imaginations and a thesaurus serve the most experienced reporters in good stead. On the other hand, watch out for adjective-itis and exclamation excesses!!!

**How to highlight strong arguments?** Gone are the days when ALL CAPS and ugly underlining were our only tools for emphasis. Now we have at our disposal boldface

sentence fragments, memorable callouts, photo captions, informative sidebars, catchy titles, an array of typefaces, and a vast selection of bullet styles, plus artwork, to add sparkle. Be wary of clutter, though.

## When is enough consistency enough?

Most editors are fussy, and rightly so. At the same time, variations in style, and even an occasional surprise, results in a more interesting publication. Concentrate on the positive and keep it simple, but remember that rules can be broken, or at least bent.

## Review your listening skills with this checklist

One-on-one communication is a two-way process, and the part most often neglected is listening. Following are eight poor listening habits. Are you guilty of any of them?

**Editing.** You hear only what you want to hear, selectively

blocking out the rest of what the person is trying to communicate:

**Rehearsing.** As the person speaks, you are preoccupied formulating what you will say next.

**Delving.** Instead of listening, you focus on trying to discover a hidden message.

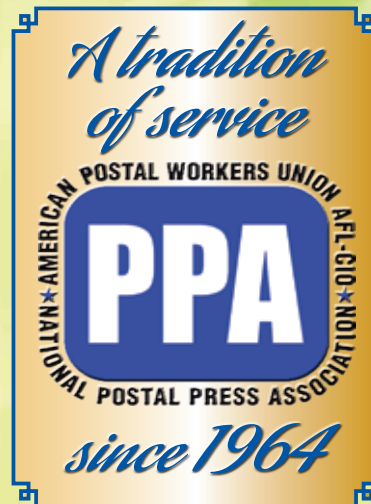
**Daydreaming.** Failing to concentrate, you allow your mind to wander which often leads to an embarrassing request for the person to repeat what he or she just said.

**Personalizing.** You relate what is being said to your own experience and allow your thoughts to go off on a tangent. What the person is saying becomes about you, not the speaker.

**Switching.** You are too quick to change the subject, sending the message that you are not interested in what the other person has to say.

**Arguing.** You are quick to disparage or ridicule what was just said. You are more interested in verbal sparring than communicating.

**Agreeing.** You nod and mumble agreement to everything that is said, just to avoid conflict.





# Overcoming writer's block

When faced with a writing project, it's not always easy to get started. Try these tips to keep the creative juices flowing when your mind is blank:

- **Clarify your purpose.** Before you start writing, identify your goal. Do you want to inform, persuade or move your reader to action? Until you clearly define your goal, you'll remain stuck.

- **Pick the right environment.** If you're in an environment where you're

Much of what we call "organization" goes on in our heads while we are in the act of writing.

- **Keep moving.** If you get stuck in the middle of a sentence looking for the right word, type XXX or ??? You can come back

later and fix it. Now is not the time to staunch the flow of ideas.

- **Enlist help.** If you're really stuck, have someone read what you've written and discuss it with you. Ask the person to tell you whether any sections are unclear.



distracted by noises, find a quiet spot. That might mean writing a first draft away from your desk and returning to your desk to make revisions.

- **Put something – anything – on paper.** You don't have to begin at the beginning. Start where you have ideas. If you have a random idea that doesn't fit anywhere, put it at the bottom of the page in a "parking lot" for later reference. If you don't write down your idea, chances are you'll forget it.

- **Save the editing for later.** Don't try for perfection in your first draft. Type ideas as they come to you. You'll start to see a pattern emerge, and you'll group ideas together.

## Pre-convention workshops planned

The PPA will be participating in the pre-convention workshops sponsored by the APWU Research & Education Department being held on Friday, August 12 in National Harbor, Maryland.

Two half-day workshops will be presented by the PPA. *Communicating at the Local Level:* Examines the importance of information sharing using various mediums with special emphasis on the process of producing a member-oriented, high quality, highly read, union publication.

*Legal Issues and Union Communications:* A review of editorial policies, union election regulations, libel, copyright and federal election laws that apply to hardcopy and electronic forms of communication.

More information about the workshops and registration will be available on the APWU's website, [www.apwu.org](http://www.apwu.org).

