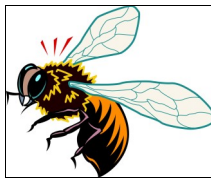


# UNION



# BUG

A Newsletter of the Beaver-Lawrence Counties Central Labor Council

VOLUME 6 ISSUE 10

JUNE 2020

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IBEW 29
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- **Secretary-Treasurer:**  
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- Jody Kohser  
SEIU 668
- Lisa Alexander  
AFSCME 2902
- Sara Dudash  
SEIU 668
- Tom Flook  
IUPAT 530

## Labor Council to Resume In-Person Monthly Meetings

By Rick Galiano  
Labor Council President

The Beaver-Lawrence Central Labor Council will resume its regular schedule of in-person monthly meetings in June. The June Executive Board and membership meeting will be held on June 15<sup>th</sup>. The Executive Board meeting will begin at 6:00 pm and the membership meeting will begin at 7:30 pm.

Both meetings will be held in the auditorium of the IBEW Local 712 Edwin D. Hill Complex in Vanport. Convening the Executive Board meeting in the auditorium instead of the Labor Council office will permit safe social distancing practices to be observed.

Additionally, guests will not be permit-

ted to attend the meetings.

The June meetings will be the first Labor Council in-person monthly meetings since February. The March, April and May meetings were canceled because of the covid-19

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crisis. Several Executive Board conference calls were held between the February meetings and the beginning of June.

An important item on the agenda of the June meetings will be the approval of accrued and pending expenditures.

Another important item on the agenda will be the signing of NWPa ALF

delegate contact information postcards by all Labor Council delegates. Rosann Barker, NWPa ALF director, will give remarks explaining the need for the postcards to be completed.

The NWPa ALF mailed delegate contact information postcards to all Labor Council affiliated local unions in mid-May. Many of these postcards may not have reached affiliated local union Labor Council delegates.

Affiliates that would like to request the assistance of the Labor Council in any matter should contact me or Labor Council Recording Secretary Kerri Theuerl. My contact number is 724-759-8870 and Kerri's contact number is 412-651-3484.

# SEIU Brighton Rehab Update

By Denise Cox  
SEIU Healthcare PA Internal Organizer

My name is Denise Cox and I am an Internal Organizer for SEIU Healthcare PA. I represent eight long term care facilities for our union. I presently am the organizer that represents Brighton Rehab. Currently there have been over 70 residents who have succumbed to the COVID virus. Around 100 of our members have contracted the virus and thank God they have all recovered.

The biggest take away from this pandemic and the experiences we have had with our nursing homes has been devastating. Our members become family to the residents that are in their care. They are also the ones who are there when the residents take their last breaths comforting them because the families are not permitted into the facilities.

After our experiences during this trying time, we realize now more than ever our nursing home issues need to be on the forefront of changing the industry.

The nursing homes and hospitals have not received an PPE assistance from the federal government. Often times our members are given rain ponchos to wear because of the lack of accessibility to gowns and also wear a mask for numerous days.

Our union has been fighting to improve the ratio's that the state has put into place that directly affects staffing. Currently the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania requires a resident to receive 2.7 hours of care in a 24 hour period. This is an archaic ratio and doesn't allow for the proper staffing to give quality care.

Also the funding for nursing homes has remained flat making it harder to get substantial raises when we get to the table. Short staffing has also let to staff leaving the field because of sheer frustration and years of physical toll the job has taken.

The virus has helped to shed light on a broken system and our hope is that we can use this as a catalyst to fix a broken system for the workers that we represent and the residents in their care.

## 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.

# Vote By Mail

By Michel G. Plaskon  
NALC Branch 84

“Cause a Postman is a person in your neighborhood...the people that you meet, when your walking down the street, a person that you meet each day.” As a little boy, I remember those lyrics being sung to a Sesame Street song. I am the Letter Carrier in your neighborhood you see every day binding our nation together, one piece of mail or package at a time. Recently, one of those pieces of mail was probably a mail-in ballot for the past primary election. During a global pandemic, the necessity of voting by mail may be a catalyst for fostering the most basic and principal element of our democracy. Voting!

“Is it safe? Yes, it’s safe, it’s very safe, it’s so safe you wouldn’t believe it”. President Trump claims there will be widespread fraud if a vote by mail system is implemented for the upcoming elections in November. This is simply false. Oregon, Washington, Colorado, Utah, and Hawaii have used Vote by Mail (VBM) exclusively for their elections. California is transitioning to an all VBM system and Montana, Utah and Arizona use VBM to a large degree.

The occurrence of election fraud in these states is statistically negligible. Penalties in the forms of fines and imprisonment are very high. In Oregon, conviction can carry a sentence of up to five years in prison. Tampering with

the mail is a Federal offence. Deterrence is real. One vote is not worth it.

“I want the truth! You can’t handle the truth!” Sorry about your fake news, Donald, but Vote by Mail is successful. In the most recent primaries, mail-in voting has resulted in some of the highest voter eligible participation. Since incorporating Vote by Mail, the states that utilize VBM con-

*The truth is Vote by Mail is safe, reliable and easy, and it will encourage voting.*

sistently have the highest voter turn-out. The truth is Vote by Mail is safe, reliable and easy, and it will encourage voting. Vote by Mail will also strengthen the vital role the United States Postal Service plays in our economy and democracy.

“I’ll be there for you... when the rain starts to pour”. Year in and year out for the past decade, the United States Postal Service has been rated the most trusted government agency. Why? Folks tend to trust people the more they see them; when they know their name. Most Americans know their mail carrier or the person at the Post Office working behind the counter. Day in and day out, Letter Carriers are the Federal employees that come to your doorstep 6 days a week. America can trust the Postal Service to facilitate a vote by mail election.

When it comes to voting, nothing could be simpler. It is an accessible and easier path to voting for working Americans, those living in rural communities, the elderly and handicapped, or the disenfranchised. Most importantly, it will be the safest alternative to ensuring one of our most important rights for Americans during the Covid-19 pandemic and possible resurgence during the fall.

“...and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth”. The United States Postal Service provides universal delivery and pricing to all

American residents and businesses regardless of wealth, race, location, etc. It is one of the last bastions of true government service for the people. It must be saved. Change is in the air. America is waking up. Activism is alive.

As reported in the last issue of the Union Bug by Pittsburgh APWU President Chuck Pugar, the Postal Service is in a financial crisis due to the COVID-19 pandemic. If the Postal Service is not solvent in November, there will not be an opportunity to Vote by Mail. The future of our democracy will lay in the balance this November. Please take action and DEMAND our congressional representatives include postal funding in the next stimulus legislation and guarantees to Vote by Mail in November’s election. “If not us, who? And if not now, when.”

BEAVER/LAWRENCE  
CENTRAL LABOR  
COUNCIL



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

## Calendar of Events

- 06/15 Beaver-Lawrence Central Labor Council Executive Board and membership meetings; Executive Board - 6:00 PM; Membership – 7:30 PM; IBEW 712 Edwin D. Hill Complex, Vanport. (Attendance is limited to delegates only. See Page One article for additional details.)
- 07/20 Beaver-Lawrence Central Labor Council Executive Board and membership meetings: Executive Board – 6:00 PM; Membership – 7:30 PM; IBEW Local 712 Edwin D. Hill Complex, Vanport. (Please check with Executive Board members or in July issue of UNION BUG for attendance

## Community Services Report

By Mark Benkart  
Community Services Chairman

It has certainly been a long and troubled time with this pandemic. As we are slowly relaxing the restrictions, there is still a lot of suffering and strife. The unemployment rate is still off the scales, and the virus is still not done with us. The food banks and food kitchens have been overwhelmed due to this, but there is one organization that could use some much needed help.

The YMCA has been a great place to belong to. Most people do not know that the YMCA supplies

meals to churches and other organizations that distribute to the community. Before the pandemic, they made around 5,000 meals a month. They are now making around 8,000 meals a week according to Aaron Bingle, the food services director. This is very problematic because they are presently not open to the public, which means that the membership is down.

If you would like to make a donation to help them keep this program going, make the check out to the Beaver County YMCA Food Program. The address is 2236 Third Avenue, New Brighton, Pa. 15066.

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 July 13th to be considered for publication in the July 2020 Issue of the **UNION BUG**.