



The

# Union Mail

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Published by the NY Metro Area Postal Union

*"The Labor Movement was the principal force that transformed misery and despair into hope and progress."*—Martin Luther King, Jr.

## Save Our Public Postal Service!



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National and Local Petition Campaign Attracts  
Hundreds of Thousands of Supporters of a People's  
Postal Service. .

**See page 4**

# Stewards are the backbone of our union



**Jonathan Smith**

**M**any members have the false impression that the union representative's job is to get you whatever you want. This makes for unreasonable expectations.

Don't ask the union to enforce a right that does not exist. There is no contractual language supporting an employee's right to work when they feel like it; there is no contractual language that says the postal service must give you weekends off because you have childcare issues, etc.

The shop steward's job is to interpret, police and enforce the contract. What is the contract? The contract is a set of rules that is negotiated between the employer and the union. In our case, there is an overall contract (the National Agreement) and then the Local Memoranda of Understanding (LMOUs) that are specific to each installation. The language in the Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) and the LMOU must be applied to all. They can't be bent to please one group or another. There are rules in the contract that we don't like, but there are also protections.

Nearly 90% of U.S. workers are not in unions; therefore, they do not have a CBA. Without a contract, the law of the land is "employment at will" – the will of the employer. In a non-union workplace, management unilaterally makes the rules. Workers can obey or quit.

Under the APWU/USPS Contract, the union can enforce the

rules. If management violates the contract, the steward can correct the supervisor. If needed, formal grievances can be filed.

The steward's strength comes from an educated and informed membership. Asking for a steward, writing statements, and participating in grievances is the way to win. Knowledge is power. For instance, there is no work or time standard in our contract. Management tries to scare employees with discipline because they are not working fast enough. Being rushed by the boss is unsafe and a contract violation. Ask for a steward.

**A good steward solves problems without causing problems.**

We don't defend an attendance discipline by pointing out that another worker's attendance is worse. We fight each case on the fact circumstances of each grievant.

**A good steward stops rumors with facts.** All information from the union should be what we know, not what we think or feel. FACTS matter. We win cases with evidence, not argument. Passion is good, but proof has to be there.

**A good steward works with you not for you.** Many members see the steward as a lawyer. In a discipline case, the steward has your back, but you can't step aside and let the union do all the fighting. The steward assists with contractual language to protect you, but we work together. That's why it's called a union not a law firm.

**Step Up!**

We are looking for some members to step up to the challenge of being a union steward. But let me be clear: DON'T ask to be a steward because

it will get management off your back. DON'T ask to be steward so it can help you get a supervisor's job. DON'T ask to be steward because it will get you off the work room floor. DON'T ask to be a steward so you can snoop into you co-worker's personal business.

But, if you are ready for the fight, please step up. Being a shop steward can be frustrating, but it is also fun and rewarding. There is excitement in getting a PSE converted to career and watching their life change now that they have better wages and benefits. There is satisfaction in winning a case against unjust discipline. A famous philosopher once said: "A life is only well lived if you have done something unselfishly to leave this world better for the generation coming behind you." ☑

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## LEGISLATIVE AND POLITICAL REPORT:

# *It is time for Congress to act on postal issues*

*By Chuck Zlatkin, Director of Communications*

**T**here is no reason at this point in history that postal workers should in any way be surprised by what Congress has done to us. What took place with the Postal Accountability and Enhancement Act in 2006 is the prime example of how postal workers can be taken hostage by less than well meaning legislators. Our work lives were defined by the PAEA's restrictions on what the Postal Service could do. Rather than expanding services the Postal Service was forced into an austerity program that reduced service to the public in the name of fiscal responsibility.

When President Bush signed PAEA into law there were those who felt that this was a Republican partisan effort designed to facilitate the privatization of the Postal Service. With the election of President Obama and Democratic control of both houses of Congress in 2009, it became apparent that the constraints of the PAEA were not to be touched, because nothing was done to change it. Even with Democrats in control, the PAEA ruled.

Now, here we are in another presidential election cycle in 2020. Every member of the House is up for reelection. Postal workers made a great effort in 2019 to push HR 2382, the USPS Fairness Act, which would go a great distance in undoing the most repressive aspects of the PAEA. The bill would repeal the requirement that the Postal Service annually prepay future retirement health benefits.

As of press time there are 294 cosponsors for the legislation. This is an important number.

In the past, if you were not of the majority party, there was virtually no chance that you could get a bill to the floor of the House for a vote. The chair of the committee controlled which bills could advance. There was a possibility that one could push forth with a petition to discharge. A discharge petition is a petition signed by the members of the House of Representatives to bring a bill from committee to the floor for consideration. A discharge petition requires the signature of an absolute majority of the members, which is signatures of 218 members. This was very rarely utilized.

New rules adopted by the House for the 116th Congress (2019-2020) offer a possible pathway to the floor for unreported measures that attract and maintain 290 cosponsors for a period of 25 legislative days. Under Clause 7 of House Rule XV, measures that have met these qualifications can be placed on a "Consensus Calendar" if the sponsor submits a motion. It will be noteworthy to see how House Democrats deal with the

overwhelming majority they have for HR 2382. The numbers are there; the pathway is there; the only question that remains is whether the will is there. Postal workers all over the country will be watching. And when political leaders talk a good game regarding postal legislation, how they deal with HR 2382 is what we will be watching. The time for talk has passed, now is the time for action.

### **Get Sponsors for S.2965**

We have been suffering from the results of the Postal Accountability and Enhancement Act since it was signed into law by President George W. Bush on December 20, 2006. It might be high time that members of the House and Senate do something to get some financial relief for the Postal Service. Two weeks short of the 13th anniversary of that destructive legislation becoming law, Senators Steve Daines (R-MT) and Bryan Schatz (D-HI) introduced Senate Bill 2985, the companion bill to the House's 2382, the USPS Fairness Act, which will repeal the pre-funding mandate put into place with the 2006 PAEA. The PAEA required the Postal Service to pre-fund retiree health care benefits 75 years in advance over a 10-year period, approximately \$5.5 billion a year, and is responsible for 100% of the Postal Service's net losses since 2013. It is essential that this legislation gets passed and signed into law! If we are seri-

*continued on page 6*



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# Thousands sign petition to appoint a Postmaster General Committed to a Public Postal Service

By Chuck Zlatkin, Director of Communications

**W**hen it comes to defending the public Postal Service from postal privatizers, we cannot afford to be silent. Once we learned that Postmaster General (PMG) Megan Brennan was announcing her retirement, it was imperative that we spoke up loud and clear to demand that when the Postal Board of Governors considers appointments for a new PMG, they pick someone committed to maintaining a public

Postal Service.

NY Metro Area Postal Union members joined with APWU members from all over the country, along with allies from A Grand Alliance To Save Our Public Postal Service, in a petition drive calling upon the Postal Board of Governors to appoint a PMG who is fully committed to universal service and the public ownership of the USPS. Over 200,000 peti-

tion signatures were collected online and hundreds of signatures were collected outside post offices by shop stewards and retirees throughout the New York Metro area. As the people we serve understand the importance of keeping the Postal Service public, they will step up and let their voices be heard. We must stay vigilant in this fight and be there to get the word out. ☑

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## Postal Banking update



By Chuck Zlatkin, Director of Communications

**F**or years, *The Union Mail* and New York Metro Area Postal Union have been on the cutting edge of news regarding the possibility of postal banking. From the first OIG report on expanded financial services in January, 2014, through our active participation with the Campaign for Postal Banking's Bronx Petition drive, postal banking has played an important part in all discussions on expanded services and protecting a public Postal Service. Recent news from California has been very encouraging for the future of public and postal banking. California has just started a new experiment in freedom from the big Wall Street banks with the passage of AB-857 into law. The bill, signed into

law by Governor Gavin Newsom (D) in September, will allow cities and counties across California to establish public banks. The new law makes way for California to become only the second state in the country –after North Dakota–to establish public banking.

A grassroots organization called The California Public Banking Alliance was the driving force behind AB-857's passage, building on the momentum of a narrowly defeated ballot measure in Los Angeles that would have led to a city-owned and operated bank. The Alliance expanded the ballot measure to cities and counties across the state. The work to pass public banking brought together city and county

councils, labor unions, civil rights organizations and banking reform advocates. AB-857 supporters included the California Labor Federation; the cities of Los Angeles, Long Beach and San Diego; the national American Postal Workers Union; and the California State APWU. We remain hopeful in New York, that our efforts to educate, mobilize and activate postal customers in the Bronx toward a potential pilot will bear fruit. Our efforts have brought forward over 13,000 petition signatures calling for postal banking in the Bronx. It is our hope that outgoing PMG Megan Brennan will move forward with such a program for the Bronx before she leaves office at the end of January. ☑



# U.S. Postal Service releases “Healing PTSD” semipostal fundraising stamp

By Flo Summergrad

**D**ecember 2, 2019 – The US Postal Service has issued its second “Semipostal Fundraising Stamp”—this one to raise funds for those diagnosed with PTSD (Post Traumatic Stress Disorder).

Post Traumatic Stress Disorder is a chronic mental health condition which can develop in people who have survived a traumatic event. Most of us are familiar with the term when it is applied to veterans of combat. After the Vietnam War, there was a long struggle to have PTSD declared a legitimate medical condition, culminating in the 1983



The money over the price of postage will go to fund PTSD research. By law, all revenue over the postal costs will be paid to the US Department of Veterans Affairs. The stamp was developed under the Semipostal Authorization

National Vietnam Veteran Readjustment Study. Research on PTSD treatment is still continuing.

The Healing PTSD stamp will sell for 65 cents.

Act, Pub. L. 106–253, which grants the USPS discretionary authority to issue and sell semipostal stamps to advance causes it considers to be “in the national public interest and appropriate.” It can only be sold for two years until the issuance of the next semipostal stamp in 2021.

The Healing PTSD semipostal stamp features a photo of a green plant sprouting from the ground, which is covered in fallen leaves. Art director Greg Breeding designed the stamp with original art by Mark Laita. The image symbolizes the PTSD healing process. ☐

# “Boriqueneers” recognized after 100 years

By Flo Summergrad

**T**he 65th Infantry Unit of the U.S. Army, the Puerto Rican fighting force, known as the Boriqueneers, was issued the Congressional Gold Medal by President Obama in June of 2014. First issued to George Washington in 1776, this medal has been commissioned by Congress “as its highest expression of national appreciation for distinguished achievements and contributions.” It is awarded for an achievement that has an “impact on American history and culture that is likely to be recognized as a major achievement in the recipient’s field long after the achievement.” Such is the case with the valor of the Boriqueneers.

The name “Boriqueneers” comes from “Boriquen,” the original Taino name for Puerto Rico, and reflects their pride in their heritage. They were formed as a volunteer unit in 1899, officially becoming part of the U.S. Army in 1908. In 1920, they were re-titled the 65th Infantry Regiment. During WW1 and WW2 they were deployed far from the European front, since the institutional racist policies of the time did not allow them on the front lines. But the unit’s training and organization made the Boriqueneers crucial in Korea, where 61,000 Puerto Ricans fought, earning over a thousand medals for heroism in action



and 2771 were awarded Purple Hearts.

The history of discrimination in the United States military reflects the attitudes of the country as a whole. Many heroic fighters went unheralded because of their race, nationality, or gender. It is only in the 21st century that they have been officially recognized.

The impetus to honor these military heroes came from social movements that demanded their recognition. When we honor our veterans, it is important to emphasize and validate those whose contributions were ignored for many years due to discrimination. ☐

# APWU second Legislative and Political Conference

By Chuck Zlatkin, Director of Communications

**A**t the 2019 All Craft Conference, the APWU held its second Legislative and Political Conference which included intense



**Will Attig, Union Veterans Council**

multilevel training and strategy sessions. The conference concluded with a Legislative General Session and panel, *Rising Up and Fighting for Our Values in the 2020 Election*.

The panel featured Will Attig of the Union Veterans Council; Sondra Cosgrove, League of Women Voters NV; Liz McElroy of the AFL-CIO; and Jamal Watkins of the NAACP. President Mark Dimondstein opened the General Session and highlighted the key issues at stake for postal workers in the 2020 election. He stressed that

it is not enough to elect pro-labor, pro-public Postal Service candidates. We must build a strong movement to win lasting change and build power.

“We must enforce worker class protections and rebuild our power base,” said Legislative Director Judy Beard. “To do these things, we must exchange knowledge and skills to fight for our shared values. Because when we fight for them, we win.”

The conference was a great benefit to all who attended. Participants were given access to information, resources, and guidance in all aspects of legislative and political work. There were legislative and Political Regional breakouts which provided great value as we were able to understand what was impacting our specific regions and how we could work collectively in achieving our goals. For many of us, the ability to take instruction on making digital media part of our political strategy was very benefi-

cial. Even though people were at different levels of proficiency, the instructor, Graham Copp from APWU National, provided each of us with what we needed to make the experience worthwhile. Being able to learn the basis for the historical interlinking of Congress and the Postal Service will also serve us well.

Of great value were the presentations on the APWU’s Anti-Privatization Campaign, detailing to the attendees the strategic plans to mobilize union members, activists, allies and the public in the fight against the corporate/government plan to sell off the U.S. Postal Service. It is hoped that special training sessions will be held for New York Metro Area members and members of the Moe Biller/Eleanor Bailey Retirees Chapter who would be interested in working on the project. Keep your eyes open for mention of the training. ☐

## *It is time for Congress to act ... (continued from page 3)*

ous about maintaining a public Postal Service and providing necessary services for the people we serve, we can accept nothing less than this legislation getting passed.

We have done a pretty good job of lining up co-sponsors in the House and will have to do the same in the Senate. “Our campaign to achieve bipartisan support for H.R. 2382 far exceeded our goal,” said Legislative and Political Director Judy Beard. “61 Republicans and 234 Democrats joining together to

strike the prefunding mandate from the PAEA is a step forward in preserving the people’s Postal Service.” No one can deny the overwhelming public support for this essential institution.

NYMAPU and APWU members cannot afford to slack off. We must make sure that our representatives don’t drop the ball on this one. There is no excuse whatsoever for any House or Senate member to not co-sponsor these necessary pieces of legislation.

The first thing we need to do is: **Call the APWU Legislative Hotline 844-402-1001**, to ask our Senators to co-sponsor S. 2965. And after that, we have to engage our co-workers, friends and neighbors in discussion of the importance of getting this legislation passed.

There will be plenty of discussion about presidential impeachment and potential candidates for 2020. What there won’t be enough of is discussion about Postal Fairness in Congress, unless we do the work. ☐

# NY Metro delegates learn from APWU All Craft Conference

The APWU All Craft Conference took place from October 26



through 31, 2019, in Las Vegas. 27 NY Metro Area Postal Union delegates attended the craft classes and participated in other activities, including the Young Members' Conference, Political and Legislative Conference and the Bulk Mail Center Conference. On the final night, they attended the dinner and ceremony for the Installation of the newly elected national officers of APWU, who will serve from November 11, 2019, through 2022.

NY Metro sent representatives from all three crafts. President Jonathan Smith, Vice President Tiffany Foster, Secretary-Treasurer Joseph Martir, and Director of Organization Diane Erlanger headed our delegation. Young Members were represented by Eveyana Cortez and Brittany Nelson. Communications Director Chuck Zlatkin helped lead the Political and Legislative Conference. Denise Holland, our Director of the Motor Vehicle Services was there

with MVS Shop Stewards Howard Thompson from DVD, Cassandra Black from the NJI&NDC, and Andrew Henry from the Manhattan VMF. Maintenance Shop Stewards learned about the results of the MS 1 Arbitration as well as how to handle Line H grievances. They were given booklets and a thumb drive which consolidated the information needed for understanding maintenance selection and staffing. Maintenance Director Glenda Morris was there with several



Maintenance Craft stewards. From the NJI&NDC were Shop Stewards Sherell Taite-Pridgen and Regina Wilson, from Morgan Station was Steward Zarinah Abdullah-Grant,



and from Riverdale Station was Steward Desiree White. The Clerk Craft had the largest contingent,



**Diane Erlanger, NYMAPU Director of Organization; Judy Beard, APWU Political and Legislative Director; Joe Martir, NYMAPU Secretary-Treasurer; and Janice Kelble, APWU Regional Legislative and Political Grassroots Coordinator**

including Craft Director Flo Summergrad, Assistant Director Naimah Mustafaa, Morgan P&DC, Assistant Director Kim Smith and Morgan Shop Stewards James Moore and Alison Ward. Also attending the Clerk Craft sessions were Coordinating Vice President Deborah Bethea, Bronx Director Daisy DeGout, Williamsbridge Station Steward Katrina Pinckney, along with Trustee Latonya Kindall, Clerk Steward at JAF, DVD Director Howard Satterfield, Assistant Director Sharon Tyrrell, DVD Chief Steward Melissa Wimberley-Jones and DVD Steward Kelly Wilder.

The delegates brought back updated information in each craft, which they are sharing with the members in their stations. We were proud of our Local's active participation in all aspects of the Conference. ☐

*Photos by Chuck Zlatkin*



# Victory for Union representation

By Kevin Walsh, Director of Industrial Relations

On June 26, 2019, Naimah Mustafaa and I were escorted out of FDR Station by Postal Police for no apparent reason. Naimah and I were there to observe an OSHA training being given to our members. The manager said we could not come to the class because of a late notification. I told him that when I found out about the class, that is when I notified management of our visit.

Article 23 of our contract specifies that “duly authorized representatives of the Union shall be permitted to enter postal installations” as long as the purpose is related to official union business and duties related to the Collective Bargaining Agreement. Safety training for postal employees definitely falls in this category.

Obviously, the manager didn't like that the Union showed up to observe the OSHA training. Management summoned Postal Police to escort us out. We were

never given any reason why Postal Police were called. Diane Erlanger filed a grievance and I filed an Unfair Labor Practice (ULP) charge with the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB). This November, the Union was notified that the NLRB ruled in our favor.

Please feel free to use this for any further issues concerning Article 23 and access to facilities. Management must post the Settlement by the manager's office and in view of the employees for 60 consecutive days. This is not the first time management has unlawfully had Union officers thrown out of post offices. Executive Vice President Tiffany Foster was removed from the Bronx Annex last year; Director of Organization Diane Erlanger was ejected from Times Square Station. Under the signed SETTLEMENT, management states in part:

WE WILL NOT eject representatives of NY Metro Postal Union, AFL-CIO, by denying the Union's request

to access any facility where such access is necessary to perform the Union's representational duties as your exclusive collective bargaining representative, including but not limited to, observing employees in training.

WE WILL, upon request, bargain in good faith with NY Metro Postal Union, AFL-CIO, your exclusive bargaining representative.

WE WILL NOT in any way coerce, restrain, or discourage you from your Section 7 right to seek the assistance of NY Metro Postal Union, AFL-CIO, including but not limited to unlawfully denying Union representatives access to any facility, ejecting Union representatives from any facility, or unlawfully using the Postal Police to remove Union representatives from any facility, consistent with past practice, the APWU Collective Bargaining Agreement, and the Joint Contract Interpretation Manual. . . .

[The full text can be made available to any member.] ☐

## CONTRACT GOES TO ARBITRATION PANEL

On November 15, 2019, the interest arbitration hearings on our contract were completed. It is now in the hands of the arbitration panel to work out the final language that we will have to live with.

President Mark Dimondstein produced a short video to the APWU family, summing up the union's efforts once we entered the interest arbitration process. He thanked the Craft Directors: Michael Foster of Motor Vehicle, Lamont Brooks of the Clerk craft, and Idowu Balogun of Maintenance for their forceful presentations which “refuted management's efforts” to reinstate PSEs in the MVS and Maintenance crafts, subcontract more work, and allow management more “flexibility”—that is, to give them the ability to undermine seniority, bidding rights, hours of work, and set schedules.

The main witness for the APWU was a renowned economist who “not only strongly rebutted management's arguments” that APWU workers are overpaid, but provided a powerful justification that we are deserving of good solid wage increases, based on our skills, work, and general wage trends.

“While there is no guarantee of victory in interest arbitration, we delivered a well-prepared and well-argued case that APWU members of all crafts have earned and deserve a good union contract that protects job security and rewards dedicated postal workers. I thank our team, our many witnesses, and all those who did so much work in preparation under the guidance of our Director of Industrial Relations, Vance Zimmerman.

“Thanks for standing union strong and proud during this long and challenging process as the struggle for justice, brothers and sisters, always continues.” The arbitration panel will provide a final and binding award early in 2020. ☐



# NY Metro appreciates our Shop Stewards

By Flo Summergrad

Shop Stewards are the backbone of the union. They are on the front lines of the daily battle with management on the work floor. At the same time, shop stewards often take the brunt of worker disgruntlement with managerial decisions or anger at abusive supervisors. When a worker is issued disciplinary action or sent to work an unpleasant job, it is safer to yell at the steward than the boss. When jobs are abolished or hours changed, people act as if the union is responsible.

Stewards are postal workers too. They voluntarily go above and



Photo by Gloria Wilson

**NY Metro Executive Board and award recipients Ed Dalton and Tiffany Foster. L to R Kevin Walsh, Jonathan Smith, Ed Dalton, Tiffany Foster, Diane Erlanger, Joe Martir**

Saturday, November 9, 2019. Special recognition was given to Edward J. Dalton, Shop Steward and Assistant Director at the NJI&NDC, and Melissa Wimberley-Jones, Chief Steward at the DVD P&DC. These are people who actively police our Contract. Their actions force management to respect the NY Metro Area Postal Union and the Clerks, Maintenance, and Motor Vehicle workers we represent. Our stewards fight for the members' rights to jobs, safety, and justice in the workplace. Ed Dalton and Melissa Wimberley-Jones were each presented with a plaque given "With Our Greatest Appreciation" in recognition of their service.

## Eleanor G. Bailey Award

In addition, a new award was issued in honor of the late Eleanor G. Bailey. Eleanor was a tireless NY Metro fighter for more than 50 years. She was active in the Great Postal Strike of 1970, then served as a militant steward for 30 years, as

well as being Legislative Director, Human Relations Director, and Head Trustee. After her retirement, "Mama E" became President of the Moe Biller Retiree Chapter.

The first Eleanor G. Bailey Award was given to Tiffany Foster in recognition of her "drive for excellence dedication and performance" as well as the "highest standard of integrity, productivity, and leadership."



Photo by Gloria Wilson

**Eleanor G. Bailey Award recipient Tiffany Foster**



Photo by Kevin Walsh

**Melissa Wimberley-Jones gets award from President Smith at the General Membership meeting**

beyond their postal duties to serve the members. For the past three years, NY Metro has held a dinner dance for the stewards to thank them for their efforts.

The third annual Shop Stewards' Appreciation Dinner was held on

## POSTAL PRIDE

### Public Postal Service brings holiday joy

No matter what holiday you celebrate, there is joy in December when cards and gifts arrive in the mail.

USPS proclaimed: “The US Postal Service is ready to deliver more than 28 million packages per day between December 16 – 21, 2019 . . . With a projected 800 million package deliveries between Thanksgiving and New Year’s Day, the Postal Service delivers more packages to homes than any other shipper.” Overall, the number of parcels processed by the USPS has increased over the last five years from 4 billion to 6.1 billion. Wow!

And despite legends of Santa and the elves, this work is done by us – the postal workers!

It takes long hours of accepting, sorting, loading, and delivering to get the packages (and cards!) to people’s doors. Along with gifts, postal workers continue to bring needed items to all Americans at affordable prices. By law, we also handle Free Matter for the Blind and Other Handicapped Individuals.

And, since 1912, USPS Operation Santa has brought joy to children. “The mission of USPS Operation Santa is to provide a channel where people can give back and help children and families – enabling them to have a magical holiday where they otherwise might not – one letter to Santa at a time.” Postal employees send handwritten responses from Santa; they help customers “adopt a letter” to mail gifts.

As Postal workers, we are public servants. In December, this brings special satisfaction. PMG Brennan sent each postal employee a colorful thanks for our valuable contribution to holiday happiness. It says: “YOU MAKE A DIFFERENCE.”

## Postal News Briefs

### PRIVATIZATION CAUSES METROBUS STRIKE IN VA

In August, 2018, DC Metro contracted out its garage in Northern Virginia to a private contractor, Transdev. On October 24th, the bus drivers and utility workers went out on strike. The ATU (Amalgamated Transit Union) says the drivers “drive the same routes, on the same roads, with the same buses as the Washington Metro Area Transit Authority, but they earn \$12 an hour less than the other operators in the region just because they work for a private contractor. They have no raises, no retirement plans and no bathroom breaks! It was WATA’s decision to contract out but they refuse to intervene against the private contractor.”



The Transit Agency is cutting off pieces of the public service piece by piece. Latrice Smith, a striking bus operator under Transdev, warns WATA workers who are still under the public company, that “the day will come when they get a letter that says, ‘We no longer need your service because we’re going to privatize.’” This is bad for the workers and for the public.

### BILLS PENDING THAT WOULD AID RETIREES

APWU is fighting for justice for retirees. Several bills are pending in Congress that would benefit seniors.



Among other Social Security improvements, it would base their COLA on the Consumer Price Index for the Elderly (CPI-E). Currently, it is based on the CPI for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers (CPI-W). The COLA adjustment of 1.6% will raise benefits by about \$24, which will be offset by an \$8 increase in the Medicare B premium.

### AMAZON—NO UNION, LAX SAFETY

Inside Amazon warehouses, a recent study shows that the rate of serious injuries is more than double the national average for the industry. A ruthless system of sorting and packing is controlled by computers and strictly monitored. Racks are loaded at a rate of under 11 seconds per package, even when the object is heavy and must be lifted high up. Where more robots are used, the injury rate increases, disproving Amazon’s claim that the robots make inside jobs easier and safer.



More frightening is the lack of safety for those on the road with Amazon products. The system has been called “reckless.” Delivery contractors are rushed to leave background checks undone and Amazon encourages speed over safety. Despite company “policy,” drivers grab whatever badge is handy so there is no check on who is driving what. A joint investigation by ProPublica and the NY Times revealed over 60 crashes since June 2015 involving Amazon contractors that resulted in serious injuries, including ten deaths. This is only the tip of the iceberg since many are covered up.

## CALENDAR

### Wednesday, January 19, 2020

5:30 pm

General Membership Meeting

Hotel Pennsylvania

401 Seventh Ave (between 32 and 33 Streets)

Paris/Zurich Room, 6th Floor

(check calendar in lobby for room change)

### Wednesday, February 19

5:30 pm

General Membership Meeting

Hotel Pennsylvania

401 Seventh Ave (between 32 and 33 Streets)

Paris/Zurich Room, 6th Floor

(check calendar in lobby for room change)

### WINNERS! November 20, 2020

1. COPA 50/50 winner was Yancy Thomas (Coper Station)—\$72 (COPA contribution \$72)

2. \$100 gift card winner was Lisa Hanks (NJI&NDC)

Come be a WINNER at the next meeting!

**SISTERS! Come to NY Metro P.O.W.E.R. meetings!** (As an APWU member, you are automatically a member of Post Office Woman for Equal Rights—P.O.W.E.R.)

Union Office, 350 W. 31st Street, 3rd Floor

1:00 pm, the 4th Wednesday of every month:

Jan. 26, Feb. 26



### APWU LOCAL 10 BLDG. CORP

Beginning Balance as of September 1, 2019	___	\$1,459,475.28
Total Revenue September 2019	_____	\$ 209,534.69
Operating Expenses September 2019	_____	\$ 174,307.40
Total Net Income September 2019	_____	\$ 35,227.29
Ending Balance as of September 30, 2019	_____	\$1,494,702.57

### APWU LOCAL 10 BLDG. CORP

Beginning Balance as of October 1, 2019	_____	\$1,494,702.57
Total Revenue October 2019	_____	\$ 172,467.57
Operating Expenses October 2019	_____	\$191,948.02
Total Net Income October 2019	_____	\$(19,480.45)
Ending Balance as of October 31, 2019	_____	\$1,475,222.12

## Join the APWU online

This is a perfect opportunity for APWU members to organize everyone in one quick, easy step. Help your coworkers to join the APWU from their phone, tablet or personal computer.

Once the online form is submitted, a confirmation email containing the completed 1187 will be emailed to both the new member and the Organization Department. In addition, the Department will be mailing Local and State Organizations a copy of the 1187.

A guide is available for review/download to aid you in assisting others in the "join online" process. Should you have questions or encounter any issues with joining the APWU online, please contact Anna Smith, Organization Director at [organization@apwu.org](mailto:organization@apwu.org) or call (202) 842-4227. ☎

## BMC Conference remembers fatality

October 7, 2019 was the 25th anniversary of the industrial accident that killed our brother, MPE Ed Domingo, at the NJI&NDC/BMC. At the October 2019 BMC Conference, our delegation distributed a leaflet commemorating Eddie's tragic death and the resulting contract language that benefits other maintenance workers, particularly at BMCs.

Article 14.8A5 was introduced by APWU Maintenance Craft nego-

tiators in response to this accident. It tasks Safety and Health Committees with "identifying areas in which it is appropriate to require the presence of an additional person while maintenance work assignments are performed in hazardous areas . . ." This "buddy system" protects people who work out of sight.

OSHA's 1994 investigation revealed safety deficiencies. Most important, the USPS was cited for failing to install a machine guard to keep

workers from being pulled into an "in-running nip point." When Eddie came down a ladder in the dark, he tripped on debris and fell against the re-latch knob of the moving Sack Sorter. Without a machine guard, his body was pulled between the metal bucket and the track, where the heavy machinery crushed him to death. ☎

**Remember MPE Domingo. Stand Up for Safe Jobs!**





New York Metro Area Local, APWU  
350 West 31st Street, 3rd Floor  
New York, NY 10001  
BUG

Periodicals class  
POSTAGE PAID  
at New York, NY

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## **P.O.W.E.R. Sisters SOCK & GLOVE Drive for Men, Women, & Children**



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