



The

Union Mail

Vol. 66 No. 4 | May/June 2023

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.

NY Metro Goes to Washington!



APWU Presidents' Legislative Conference attendees visit elected officials on Capitol Hill. NY Metro Area Postal Union's Executive Vice President, Joseph Martir and Legislative and Political Director, Chuck Zlatkin lobby on behalf of our members.

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Privatization? Why didn't I ask?



Jonathan Smith

I have noticed that I am always screaming the post office is not for sale, and we will never let the post office be privatized because the post office belongs to the people. Then a young member

asked me such a simple yet complicated question. What is privatization? I realized in that moment that the young people don't fear privatization because they have no idea what it is and its potential impact.

So, the simplest way to describe privatization is when a government-run business, operation, or property becomes owned by a private, non-government party. A private company seeks to maximize profit – not to perform a public service. Cutting the cost of labor (pay and benefits) is the way to increase profit. Even if a private company is unionized, there will not be the legal protections that postal workers have under federal law. For example, the Federal Compensation Act (FECA) covers us for injuries on the job. State compensation laws are much weaker – often limiting injured workers to doctors picked by the state. Some states, for example, do not honor carpal tunnel syndrome as a job-related injury. Most states allow employers to terminate you after you have been hurt. FECA rules insist that you must be offered a job within your medical restrictions when you are able to return to work.

There are federal laws that we take for granted. Military veterans (including disabled vets) have legal hiring and firing protections in the

USPS. Veterans make up about 16% of the Postal Service work force -- nearly three times their 5.8% representation in the workforce overall. Rights to get hired and protected under Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) has made the postal service a desirable job for African Americans, Latinos, Asian Americans, etc., because federal law prohibits discrimination based on race or national origin. Private sector jobs do not pay equal wages for equal work. Women make less in the same job – even in skilled white collar jobs.

Postal jobs are covered by National Collective Bargaining Agreements – the last national contracts in the U.S. Privatization would immediately eliminate those rights. The immediate impact would be to make us “employees at will.” Under United States labor law, without a contract, you have one right – the right to quit!

What really disturbs me is that most of today's postal employees who are enjoying the advantages outlined in our contract (sick & annual leave, vacation bids, grievance procedure, no layoff clause, etc.) did absolutely nothing to earn them, and aren't willing to do anything to protect them. All they do is complain and won't join the union but will run into management not realizing, especially for minorities, this was also an opportunity afforded to them through the labor movement. Yet the nonmember complains the most. Go to private industry and tell them about your baby-sitting issues. Or that you expect the union to protect your job when you don't come to work or document your absence. Poor attendance is an easy way to get rid of workers.

Instead of blaming the union for problems with the job, stand up together to fight management and their push toward privatization.

The absolute worst impact of privatization of the Postal Service is what it will do to the American people because the post office would now be for profit instead of an equal universal service meaning if you lived in a bad neighborhood or poor community, private companies might not deliver to you. Private companies will constantly raise their prices because their concern is their profit margin and not service to the people.

PMG Dejoy has started this process with his Delivering for America 10-Year Plan. Maybe you will appreciate your union when it no longer exists. Unfortunately, by then it will be too late. All because you didn't know what privatization was and you didn't care enough to ask. ☒

Official publication of the New York Metro Area Postal Union.

The Union Mail (ISSN 0049-5298) is published monthly except combined in March/April, May/June, July/August, November/December by the New York Metro Area Postal Union at 350 West 31st Street, 3rd Floor, New York, NY 10001.

Periodical postage paid at New York, NY.
POSTMASTER: Send address changes to:
The Union Mail, New York Metro Area Postal Union,
350 West 31st Street, 3rd Floor, New York, NY 10001.

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Cover photo by Pamela Drew

The struggle continues

Chuck Zlatkin, Legislative and Political Director

Unfortunately, it appears that this column could be permanently subtitled “DeJoy is still the PMG.” Because he still is. It appears that the Biden administration will not replace two members of the Postal Board of Governors whose terms have expired. With the appointment of people who understand that DeJoy’s reign has been destructive to postal workers and the people we serve, there could be a new PMG. For whatever reason Biden seems satisfied with the status quo.

Toxic work environments and workplace hostility under PMG DeJoy

On April 24, APWU had a Workers Memorial Day – Livestream with President Mark Dimondstein, Secretary-Treasurer Liz Powell and Industrial Relations Director Charlie Cash. The program was to promote April 28, Workers Memorial Day. The Union sent out stickers to wear: “APWU Postal Workers Deserve Dignity & Respect” and “Let’s Stop Workplace Harassment – APWU Speak up together!” This would become a day of action, where Locals would have a rally or press conference calling for an increase in staffing.

Charlie Cash and Mark Dimondstein talked about the hostility and toxic work environment that our members are experiencing as a result of short staffing. The call was for local actions, for filling

out Form 1767s (Safety Hazard forms), and working together to fight management. While it was mentioned that the situation is as bad as it ever has been, what wasn’t mentioned is that the increase in toxic workplaces, unsafe work environments, and short staffing are taking place under the administration of Postmaster General Louis DeJoy. As a matter of fact, DeJoy wasn’t mentioned even once by any of the speakers. This wasn’t the case in the comments made by members in the chat, but the comments that mentioned DeJoy were all ignored by Dimondstein, Cash and Powell.

Shamefully, no mention was made of the fact that the APWU National Convention (the highest body of the Union) voted for a resolution for the APWU to call for the resignation or firing of DeJoy.. This could have been forcefully linked to the issue of hostility in the work environment.

Legislation after The Postal Reform Act of 2022

The passage of the historic Postal Reform Act of 2022 (PRA) created a climate where the Postal Service no longer has to face threats of its imminent demise. After years of revenue losses and widely criticized mail delays, the legislation combatted the U.S. Postal Service’s ailing financial condition and added accountability for the agency to deliver mail on time. The law restructured the financing of employee health coverage that promises to save the Postal Service more than \$50 billion over a

ten-year period. The legislation made the delivery of mail six days a week a matter of law -- in other words, the Postal Service can’t unilaterally reduce mail service in the future. Passing the PRA did not solve all the problems of the Postal Service. But it is hoped that the new legislation will create an atmosphere where there will be fewer reasons for those who use the mail service to complain.

As a union, APWU called upon others in the labor movement for support in getting the PRA passed, and they came through for us, especially the Teachers’ Unions. Now it is only right that our members understand that postal workers have to come through for our sisters and brothers in labor.

There are other bills being introduced that will directly impact postal workers and retirees:

APWU supports H.R. 82, The Social Security Fairness Act of 2023 which has over 100 co-sponsors and would remove the Government Pension Offset (GPO) and Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP). The repeal of GPO and WEP would restore Social Security benefits to millions of seniors.

Other bills deserving our support:

- The Social Security Expansion Act (H.R.1046)
- The Equal COLA Act (H.R.866)
- The Vote at Home Act (H.R.1439)

There will be more discussion of these proposed pieces of legislation in future issues. ☐

PART 7

Postal history—The Post Office and the 1960s

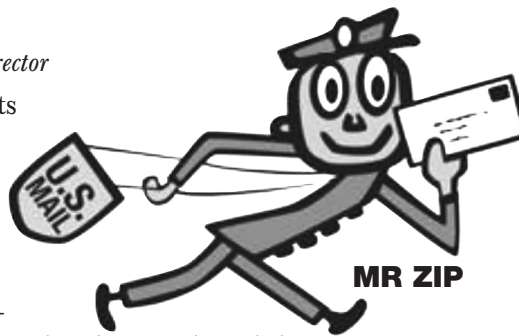
Chuck Zlatkin, Legislative and Political Director

This period included the civil rights movement, the anti-war protests aimed at the Vietnam War, the assassinations of John F. Kennedy, Malcolm X, Martin Luther King, Jr, and Robert F. Kennedy, and the birth of the counterculture culminating in the Woodstock Festival.

The Post Office was influenced by the '60s and the growing economy. Mail volume more than doubled between 1940 and 1960. The Post Office was overwhelmed daily by the volume of mail. Postal management created campaigns to deal with the problem. Traditionally, large volume business mailers sent their mail to the post office at the end of the business day. The Post Office felt the growing volume cut down on efficiency. To help deal with this, the Nationwide Improved Mail Service (NIMS) was created to encourage mailers to send their mail to the post office earlier in the day. This plan was relatively successful in that within two years, mail deposits after 5pm were reduced from 75% to 55%.

To deal with the fact that thousands of experienced postal workers joined the military service during WWII, the Post Office in 1943 began using zone codes to make it easier for inexperienced postal workers to sort the mail. Zone codes were used in 131 cities, paving the way for the establishment of Zip Codes in 1963.

The Post Office asked large mailers to bundle mail to delivery zones. There was no financial incentive for



this, but mailers did receive faster deliveries. Saving delivery time meant less money spent on labor, which limited future postal rate increases. The Post Office created Mail User Councils, which later evolved into Postal Consumer Councils, where the Post Office and large mailers would have regular communications with each other.

This wasn't enough, so the Post Office established the use of ZIP Codes which they heavily promoted. In 1963, the Post Office assigned a five-digit "ZIP Code" to every address in the nation. The ZIP Code made it possible to consolidate address information into five numbers which took the place of the names and locations that were previously needed. ZIP Codes were instrumental in the ability of the Post Office to have presorting done by large mailers by sectional center. Eventually, this was the start of automated mail processing.

The increasing use of the ZIP Code helped the processing of mail, but the increase in volume and the fact that the majority of postal facilities were antiquated and employees were earning low wages led to the inability of the Post Office to retain workers. Workers were plainly

unhappy. Morale among postal workers, which had been low, continued to worsen in the late 1960's. One major issue affecting morale was the low salary and the fact that 80% of postal workers were making the same pay grade at the end of their career that they had been making when they started. There was a 23% turnover rate.

In 1962, President Kennedy issued Executive Order 10988 which allowed federal employees to bargain with management. It was a beginning but not enough.

With the increased volume and the poor working conditions, more and more postal workers were fed up with their situation. The wrongful focus of postal management increased tensions. A large number of new postal workers were Vietnam War veterans who were unaccepting of the way they were being treated as postal workers. There was a growing militancy among the work force as the 1960s drew to a close. Postal workers wanted a significant raise in their wages and better benefits, along with improved working conditions.

When postal workers got word that Congress (which determined postal wages) was about to give themselves a 41% raise and only give postal workers a 3% raise, it was the final straw. The 1970s began with the illegal and historic postal strike which reflected the '60s experience of postal workers and its success changed the world. ☐

Welcome, New NY Metro stewards!

During the first week of March, 2023, 14 new stewards attended Shop Steward Training led by our fulltime Local officers, and were ready to hit the ground running to represent the members of NY Metro in New Jersey, Manhattan, and the Bronx. Already they see what it means to learn the job “hands on.”

As soon as they were certified, management wanted to challenge them and make them uncomfortable. Too bad! Our new stewards felt armed and ready. With only one week of training, they realized that they understood the Collective Bargaining Agreement (the Contract) better than the supervisors did. Many of our SDOs, STOs, and

SMOs just want to be the boss and don't know postal rules and regulations or don't care. Most of us already know our postal jobs better than the bosses. Being a steward is a whole new level of knowledge.

All 14 new stewards have postal experience and learned things to bring back to their crafts. NDC Steward Sandy Candelaria focused on how to fight disciplinary actions. They were taught “how to stay in control of the situation, not to be intimidated by management.” Since Sandy has experienced postal management as a carrier, a window clerk, a mail processor, and a PSM keyer, she has seen their mistakes in many areas. She has the confidence that comes from knowing her job, so

nobody will intimidate her.

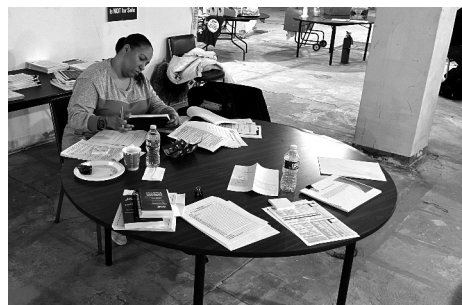
The book training and questions ended with role playing. The new stewards developed scenarios where they argued grievances in different situations. It was fun and that fun will be reality on the shop floor. In their postal job, they are workers directed by supervisors. But in their union role, stewards are the equals of management and will command respect from whomever they are dealing with. It is important, too, for the grievants to show that they respect their union reps. This teaches the supervisor that it is “us” against “them.” (and there are a lot more of “us”!)

New stewards listed below (alphabetical by first name) ☐



NEW STEWARDS

- Ayana Younger NDC (Clerk)
- Dennis Guagliardo Morgan (Maintenance)
- Floyd Thompson NDC (Maintenance)
- Harvey Bradshaw Grand Central (Clerk)
- Korea Maloney Times Square (Clerk)
- Paula Johnson Manhattanville (Clerk)
- Saima Chowdhury Morgan (Clerk)
- Sandra Candelaria NDC (Clerk)
- Sheldon Kirkham Morgan (Maintenance)
- Taryn Adams NDC (Clerk)
- Tasha Yunus NDC (Clerk)
- Trudi Johnson DVD (Clerk)
- Yasmin Taylor Rockefeller & Bryant Stas. (Clerk)
- Younis Saleh DVD (Clerk)



Sad news from the APWU Presidents' Legislative Conference

By Joseph Martir, Executive Vice President

Hello Sisters and Brothers, I want to talk to you about my experience at the National Presidents Conference. Unfortunately, I wish I had better news. According to the Credentials committee, they were expecting 110 delegates yet, 160 delegates showed up. In my opinion, President Mark Dimondstein gave one of the most defeatist speeches I have ever heard.

At the 2022 APWU National Convention, the body overwhelmingly voted on the resolution for calls for immediate removal or resignation of Louis DeJoy as Postmaster General of the United States and for our national Union to publicize the removal or resignation of PMG Louis DeJoy. I posed the question to President Dimondstein, why didn't you publicize it in The Washington Post or The New York Times? President Dimondstein responded that after consultation and careful consideration he fulfilled his obligation to the body. I asked, where did you publish it. President Dimondstein said, in the APWU website and social media Facebook.

We are angry that our national leadership either can't see or refuses to acknowledge what is happening in the field. Together with other locals, NY Metro organized and strateged a rally for May 9, 2023, to voice our distain for the behavior Louis DeJoy is demonstrating towards the APWU craft-represented employees.

Why that date? May 9, 2023, was the next USPS Board of Governors meeting in Washington, DC. The meeting was in open session at Postal Service Headquarters, 475 L'Enfant Plaza, SW, Washington, DC. The notice states: "The public is welcome to observe the meeting beginning at 4:00 p.m. ET in the Benjamin Franklin Room on the 11th floor."



Representative Robert Menendez (D-NJ) aide meets with Joseph Martir and Chuck Zlatkin

We postal workers and APWU members are part of that public.

Make no mistake, our national leadership has made it clear, we are on our own in this fight. Fortunately, we love a good fight, and with or without our national leader we are taking it to the streets!

Sisters and Brothers, it's WAR!! Be ready to fight back!! The job you save may be your own. ☑

Public inquiry on changes to the Postal Network

Excerpted from the PRC Press Release April 20, 2023

The Postal Regulatory Commission today established Public Inquiry Docket No. P12023-4 to provide a forum to gather information, provide transparency, and learn more about the Postal Service's Delivering for America strategic initiatives that may have a significant impact on the postal community.

. . . As part of this public

inquiry, the Commission will seek information on the Postal Service's recently announced plans to create sorting and delivery centers to "reduce transportation and mail handling costs" by aggregating delivery units into "larger Sort and Delivery Centers with adequate space, docks, and material handling equipment to operate more efficiently."

Interested parties who wish to

propose questions regarding the planned initiatives associated with the Postal Service's Strategic Plan, may do so via Docket P12023-4 by filing motions seeking information requests . . .

All materials associated with and filed in this proceeding will be available, where applicable, for review on the Commission's website, www.prc.gov. ☑

DeJoy's "ND Unwind" creates chaos at the NJI & NDC

By Flo Summergrad

As part of PMG DeJoy's Ten Year Plan ("Delivering for America"), the USPS has instituted the "NDC Unwind." "Unwind" means exactly what it says. The 50 years of 21 Bulk Mail Centers ("Network Distribution Centers") is being "unwound." If you unwind something, you break it. The network of the 21 BMCs/NDCs is being disassembled in various ways. The April 19/20 APWU BMC Conference was shown a map of the United States with 65 RPDCs (Regional Processing Distribution Centers). Twenty of the current NDCs will be among these RPDCs.

There is no clarity about how this will function or if it will make the handling and delivery of the mail more efficient. The national and local APWU are not receiving responses to our Requests for Information. The plans are kept a mystery and they change constantly.

At the NJI&NDC, we have been receiving a negative (and unannounced) impact. The four FSS machines that employed many of our clerks, were removed in a matter of months – much faster than predicted. Shortly thereafter, the major clerk area in the International Building – the FSM 100 – closed down on Tours 1 and 2 without warning and the jobs were abolished. The FSM 100 on Tour 3 has continued on paper but clerks were moved with no official notice.

On March 6, Orders & Instructions informed all employees that letters and flats would no longer be worked in this building. Four days later, the primary parcel sorters

(PSMs) were shut down. Mail was moved from the PSMs (Clerks) to the APPS (MHs), claiming that was more efficient. Of course, higher "counts" were because the APPS didn't have to handle heavier and damaged parcels. Now, all machines in the Bulk building are closed and large numbers of clerks have been placed on stand-by time.

This has left chaos, confusion, and stress. **NO ONE KNOWS WHAT'S GOING ON!** At the NJI&NDC, half the building has stopped operations while "people from Headquarters" will now consider what machines to use, how to dismantle or change machinery, and what jobs will stay and what will go. Local management is kept in the dark. No one asks their input. The workers and our unions are kept out of the process. Rumors rule.

Toxic environment gets worse

The APWU has used April 28 (Workers Memorial Day) as a platform for protesting the increasingly toxic work environment in the Postal Service. These are the same workers who moved a boggling volume of mail during the pandemic. With dedication and courage we delivered to the American people. And we did it in the midst of the fear of contracting COVID, being hospitalized, and even dying.

And the eventual thanks we got from newly appointed PMG Louis DeJoy was the current wave of rapid and expensive changes to the existing USPS with the resulting

chaos for postal workers and our customers. The yearly polls of trust in federal agencies have always ranked the Postal Service in the range of 90% or higher. Now, for the first time ever, our rating has fallen to 70%. This is not a reflection of the work that we do. It comes from delayed mail, undependable service, and ever higher prices.

Low morale and daily stress have increased exponentially. Fear and insecurity have replaced the spirit that kept us energized to move the mail. Managers, supervisors, and workers are under constant pressure. Conflicts between crafts have become ugly and competitive. Conflicts between senior and junior workers are exacerbated by false information and boredom.

Meanwhile, with mail slowed down, the pettiness of postal management knows no bounds. People are harassed for tiny lateness – even though they are clocking in far from where they are working. There are plenty of extra clerks, who are not being utilized – apparently management intends to overwork those who are on the work floor. Instead of appreciating their union for a guarantee of 8 hours pay, some workers blame their woes on the very people fighting to save their jobs.

Logging hours of "stand-by time" is a management way to show that the staffing is unproductive. Excessing may be to another office or another craft. This is the time to support and build our Union – not to attack each other. ☒

“What’s the big secret?”

By Peter Boyer

On April 27, management published an update on the progress made towards implementing Louis DeJoy’s Ten Year Plan. This report paints a sunny picture about the current state of the post office and claims that under DeJoy’s leadership, the future will look even better.

For postal workers around the country, the reality is much bleaker. While the public is being fed propaganda from postal headquarters, the men and women who get the job done every day are left in the dark. Questions about how management’s changes will affect our working conditions have gone unanswered. Concerns about the future of our jobs are met with silence. What’s the big secret? We might not know exactly what DeJoy has planned for us, but let’s take a look at other crafts to see how the Ten Year Plan is affecting them.

Management has recently implemented a new system called RRECS that is used to determine how rural routes are evaluated. These route evaluations determine how much a rural carrier will be paid for delivering a route. For years, evaluations were done by people who would physically measure and count all the variables by hand, but this new system uses only data collected from the carrier’s scanner. Carriers needed to log all their actions into the scanner to get credit for the time so it could count towards their evaluations.

Answering a customer question, delivering a package without a barcode, and getting out of the truck to bring mail to a customer’s door

were all options to choose from, but only if you knew where to look. Management essentially only trained the carriers how to clock in and out for the day. All the actions that should have been counted weren’t, and to make things worse, some mail didn’t seem to count towards the daily volume delivered.

Once management released the new route evaluations, about 2/3 of rural carriers took pay cuts. Some carriers had their base salary reduced by \$15,000. When the rural union asked management to share the data used in the evaluations, management refused. Their response to the union was they would implement RRECS now and fix problems later.

Postal Police Officers have also been stonewalled by management. Officers who used to work in the field protecting mail and employees are no longer allowed to leave post office buildings. “The Postal Service has prohibited the Inspection Service from utilizing its Postal Police Officers in any other capacity besides facility protection,” says Officer Nevell Harper, VP of the Postal Police Officers Association and former APWU shop steward. “Even though the trending assaults on carriers, mail theft and stolen arrow keys have exploded, the Postal Service remains steadfast on its position. Rather than allowing the Inspection Service to re-institute its carrier protection patrols, they remain silent.”

What do Rural Carriers and Postal Police Officers have to do with APWU? All our unions must negotiate with postal management.

We shouldn’t expect the sudden changes and secrets to stop with the smaller unions. They’re coming after us, too. DeJoy’s Ten Year Plan highlights new postal facilities that stations and plants will be consolidated into. When our union requested information at the national level on how these consolidations would affect members, management wrote on March 24 that “as the APWU should know, the information it seeks here is confidential and...disclosure could harm our relationships with employees.” What are they trying to hide from us? If it’s going to harm employees, don’t we have a right to know?

Maya Angelou said “When someone shows you who they are, believe them the first time.” Louis DeJoy has shown that he views postal workers as a cost to be reduced rather than people to support. He considers the USPS as a business to make a profit instead of a government service for the American people. We may not know all the details yet, but we know he’s coming after us.

Secrets don’t work when everyone knows about them. Now is the time to share the truth of the Ten Year Plan with the public. Americans rely on the post office – and postal workers – every day, and we need to use the public’s support for us in our favor. Tell your friends and family how DeJoy’s plan will harm our jobs and our post office. Call your Congressmen and ask them to stop the Ten Year Plan. The APWU has 200,000 members, and if each one of us speaks up, we can make our voices heard. ☑

Union WINS arbitrations on Motor Vehicle subcontracting

Two recent arbitration awards stress the importance of Article 32 of the Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) in protecting our postal jobs against contracting out. On March 16, 2023, Arbitrator Shyam Das issued a Supplemental Award addressing the scope of his 2016 decision in the case returning HCR (Highway Contract Route) routes to the postal drivers.

In the original decision, Arbitrator Das ruled that the USPS had “engaged in wholesale and recurrent violations” of the notice requirements in Article 32.2. He ordered the Service to return 110 HCR (contracted routes) to the Postal Vehicle Service (PVS) for four years. In defiance of this decision, management did not complete these conversions of the HCR routes in a timely manner. Therefore, in June, 2021, Arbitrator Das imposed an additional financial penalty on the Service.

By March, 2023, Arbitrator Das was fed up with postal noncompliance. He reaffirmed that his 2016 decision found that the USPS had committed a “widespread violation of notice obligations at the National level” and that this violation applied to more than the one case.

This was proved in a more recent subcontracting case brought by our Local. Arbitrator Lamont E. Stallworth ruled in favor of the Union for management’s violation of Article 32. On May 27, 2021, NY Metro President Jonathan Smith responded to a management letter informing the Union that the USPS would continue contracting out

some vehicle maintenance work at the Manhattan VMF (Vehicle Maintenance Facility). President Smith requested the relevant information to justify subcontracting, an opportunity to investigate, and a meeting to discuss the matter.

Instead, management contended that the Service had concluded that continued subcontracting was “justified and essential,” that they had given this work the required “due consideration.” They sent the Union copies of several contracts that the Service had signed with contractors to perform work on postal vehicles.

False! The USPS had begun the subcontracting of vehicle maintenance without ever informing the Union. Advocate Rick White asserted that the Union is supposed to be involved in discussing the five elements listed in the contract Article 32.1 for “due consideration.” Before making the decision to subcontract, “due consideration” must be given to “public interest, cost, efficiency, availability of equipment, and qualification of employees.”

Article 32.1 D specifically says that “No final decision on whether or not such work will be contracted out will be made until such matter is discussed with the Union.” Obviously, this did not happen. The Union presented convincing evidence that contracts were already decided and signed with private companies without notification or discussion.

Win for NY Metro VMF workers

Arbitrator Stallworth came out strongly against management. He found that “the Service has not satis-

fied the provisions of Article 32.1.A and 39.3.K of the National Agreement in subcontracting the vehicle maintenance work in NYC at issue in this case. Accordingly, the Service must promptly cease such subcontracting, at least until it fulfills the requirements of those provisions. In the meantime, the Service must compensate the VMF employees on this OTDL, at the overtime rate, for the hours of work that were improperly subcontracted from October 23, 2021, until the subcontracting is ceased.”

Also, Arbitrator Stallworth cited arbitration precedent in USPS cases insisting on the five principles for due consideration before making the decision to subcontract. He agreed with the Union that there was no sudden unexpected surge of work that overwhelmed the workforce at the VMF, nor was there a sudden, unanticipated departure of maintenance employees. In fact, there are 30 vacant positions.

Since the Postal Service was found guilty of using subcontractors to do bargaining unit work in the Vehicle Maintenance Facility, the Arbitrator awarded that affected employees **shall be compensated “for their loss of work from October 23, 2021, until the subcontracting is suspended per this Award.”** This is a great win for the workers at the Manhattan VMF. Hopefully it will teach Postal Service management to honor our Contract. ***Congratulations and thanks to NY Metro President Jonathan Smith and APWU Motor Vehicle Craft NBA Rick White!*** 📧

POSTAL PRIDE

We CAN defeat abusive supervisors

For years postal workers have been frustrated by the skewed application of the USPS policy on violence in the workplace. Employees are put out on “Emergency Placement” in the name of “Zero Tolerance” for arguing or yelling loudly. But a supervisor who threatens subordinates is exempt from being disciplined, no matter how many witnesses come forward.

An arbitration award on March 23, 2023, held Postmaster Poole accountable for his threats to union officials. This was a continuation of his dictatorial behavior toward people working in the West Nyack Post Office, which he considered his personal kingdom. Arbitrator Joseph Harris upheld the grievance that the Postmaster violated ELM 665.24 and the Zero Tolerance Policy. Further, “The USPS violated Article 14 and the Zero Tolerance Policy when it failed to place Poole on E.P., failed to initiate an investigation in a timely manner, and failed to provide the Union with requested information regarding the investigation/discipline.”

APWU NBA Pete Coradi forced the issue that no one is above the law, regardless of their position. Enraged at being left off an email about a clerk’s resignation, Postmaster Poole first threatened the Union President with a false accusation of forgery, then became more aggressive. He arrogantly challenged Union Director Finnerty to “come here and find out what happens to people who disrespect me!”

Many statements from West Nyack employees described a long history of Poole’s dictatorial and vindictive behavior. All said that he was protected by management for actions that would have triggered discipline if done by craft workers. Those days are over! Arbitrator Harris ordered that PM Poole be removed from his position and sent to anger management training. ☒

Postal News Briefs

FARMER’S POST COULD BE A WIN-WIN FOR USPS

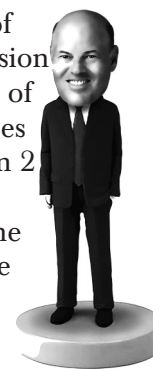
“Farmer’s Post” is an experimental project that would use the US Postal Service to help bring fresh produce from farms to front doors. Right now, up to 50% of fresh grown food in the US is wasted.



Farmers Post would expand the direct-to-consumer market while increasing postal revenue. A simple site would have the customer key in their zip code, select a local farm. Farmers Post would use the existing USPS systems so farmers can offer a standard flat-rate box that would provide a low-cost option when delivered relatively locally—within about two postal codes. World Wildlife Fund, which has initiated this service, estimates that this could mean \$1.5 -- \$6 billion in postal revenue.

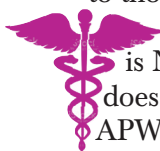
POSTAGE PRICES GO UP. MAILING GOES DOWN

Once again, Postmaster General DeJoy and the Board of Governors are demanding that the Postal Rate Commission allow a rise in postage prices. As of July 2023, the price of a first class stamp will go from 63¢ to 66¢ as well as raises in other services. This 5.4% increase is the fourth hike in 2 years, and DeJoy promises to keep this up twice a year from now on. While he blames this on inflation, even the media like Time magazine, which generally supports the PMG, point out that this is losing customers. More important, this pricing violates the ethic of the Post Office to provide universal service at affordable rates.



SOME OWED REFUND FOR CONSUMER DRIVEN PLAN ‘PREFERRED RATE’

After an employee participates in the APWU Consumer Driven Plan for one year, they get the preferred rate, where the Postal Service pays 95 % of the premium. It was not until the 2021-2024 Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) that this time in that plan applied to PSEs who were later converted to career. This is a tremendous benefit to those PSEs, who will receive a refund for overpayment of premiums. [Remember that the USPS non-career health plan is NOT a Federal Employee Health Benefit (FEHB) Plan and does not count toward the time for the preferred rate.] If an APWU Local believes they have an employee who has not received a deserved refund on their paycheck, they must email the following information for further investigation to Lee Branca (lbranca@apwu.org): *employee’s name, *EIN, *date of enrolment into the Consumer Driven Plan as a PSE, *date of conversion to career. A list will be sent to the Local but must be kept PRIVATE because it contains personal information that must be protected. ☒



CALENDAR

Wednesday, May 17

5:30 pm

General Membership Meeting

Via Zoom

Wednesday, June 21

5:30 pm

General Membership Meeting

Via Zoom

xZOOM INSTRUCTIONS

Members Only!

- Download ZOOM App
- Open link
- Enter meeting ID #548-304x-2304
- Mute audio
- Video must be on

*Reminder: According to the NY Metro Constitution, there are no membership meetings in July and August.
ENJOY your summer!*

APWU LOCAL 10 BLDG. CORP

Beginning Balance on January 1, 2023	\$ 1,377,659.51
Total Revenue January 2023	\$ 169,924.48
Operating Expenses January 2023	\$ 126,716.92
Total Net Income January 2023	\$ 43,207.56
Ending Balance January 31, 2023	\$ 1,420,867.07

Beginning Balance on February 1, 2023	\$ 1,420,867.07
Total Revenue February 2023	\$ 165,132.30
Operating Expenses February 2023	\$ 149,147.79
Total Net Income February 2023	\$ 15,984.51
Ending Balance February 28, 2023	\$ 1,436,851.58

Beginning Balance on March 1, 2023	\$ 1,436,851.58
Total Revenue March 2023	\$ 167,860.72
Operating Expenses March 2023	\$ 219,676.12
Total Net Income March 2023	\$ -(51,815.40)
Ending Balance March 31, 2023	\$ 1,385,036.18

Workers Memorial Day: Members speak up for safety together



Members Speak Up TOGETHER for Safety

This year the national APWU used Workers Memorial Day, April 28, to involve postal workers in a campaign against the toxic workplace. Workers wore stickers and held local events to demand **Dignity and Respect and STOP Workplace Harassment!**

Over the last year, pressure on the workers has made for an increasingly hostile work environment. This is dangerous to our health and to our service to the public. The APWU's call attributes this to short staffing, which creates "a toxic work culture"

which "hurts postal workers and our communities." The trust the American people have had for the Postal Service is being rapidly eroded by rising prices, poor planning, and delayed mail. For the first time, our approval rating has dipped to 70% although we are working harder than ever.

Bullying and toxicity from the top are the result of rushing through costly and complex changes in order to satisfy the business model in DeJoy's Ten Year Plan. Coming on the heels of a workforce decimated by the COVID crisis, massive changes are causing demoralization and chaos. What workers and customers see is

the USPS cutting staff, dismantling systems, consolidating plants, removing carriers from stations that are left half empty. The rejoicing is only happening in postal propaganda. The real experience for those who use the post office is negative.


Postal workers used April 28 to begin to give voice to their experience at the hands of increasingly disrespectful management. This comes from DeJoy's "MOVE IT! MOVE IT!" business mentality. [see the TV ad] Missing is the spirit of a public service, staffed by dedicated people who deserve dignity and respect. ☑️



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

P.O.W.E.R. Meetings

SISTERS! As an APWU member, you are a member of NY METRO P.O.W.E.R. (P.O.W.E.R. stands for Post Office Women for Equal Rights.) Prior to the pandemic, all sisters were invited to P.O.W.E.R. meetings at the Union Office at 1 pm, the 4th Wednesday of every month. Diane Erlanger, Director of Organization and Chairperson of NY Metro P.O.W.E.R, told *The Union Mail*: "Moving forward, the NY Metro P.O.W.E.R. meeting has resumed via ZOOM at a later time." Next meetings: May 24, 2023, at 5:30 pm; June 28, 2023, at 5:30 pm. ZOOM Meeting ID# 239- 026-1053 [Follow ZOOM instructions outlined for the Membership meeting on page 11. 



unionmail@nymetro.org