



The

Union Mail

Vol. 63 No. 2 | February 2020

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.

50th Anniversary of the Great Postal Strike of 1970

New York Metro Area Postal Union to host APWU Commemoration March 28, 2020



See pages 6-7

FEBRUARY IS BLACK HISTORY MONTH

State of the Union report



Jonathan Smith

At the beginning of the year, we need to look at the State of the Union in our ongoing struggle against US Postal management and the political forces that are trying to sell off and privatize our Service.

In every craft, management is seriously coming after our jobs. When someone retires, bids out, or in any way vacates a job, you can be sure that the job will be reverted – with no real consideration as to the need for the position or the operation. The objective is to keep from converting PSEs to career. Over the last two years, our Local has grieved and won every improper reversion grievance in the clerk craft and minimized the staffing cuts in the maintenance craft. They have been increasing our MVS operation but management continues to play this game of cut jobs by any means necessary.

I'm frustrated because management is using exorbitant overtime to cover their lack of staffing problem. This keeps the workforce happy but ultimately kills the craft. When the current employees retire, they won't be replaced, and overtime won't make up for the shortness of staff. This is how they will eventually contract out the work or worse privatize the Postal Service with our help. Everything that shimmers ain't gold.

These continuing reversions mean that they are always short staffed. We must keep an eye out for them crossing crafts to fill in the blanks they have created. This means watching,

documenting, and getting statements as to other crafts doing clerk work, and supervisors doing clerk work.

In the Maintenance craft, the attack is different but with the same slash and burn mentality. Management has used last year's MS-1 arbitration as an excuse to cut jobs. Since we returned from the All Craft Conference in November, management has begun an all-out assault on maintenance jobs. Although they are obligated to give a 6-month advance impact statement to the national Union about what changes will be made in staffing, they have started going directly to the Locals, using scare tactics to make deals.

I have requested and gotten hundreds of pages of staffing packages from the installations represented by NY Metro. Going through the information is the way we protect our jobs because management has no solid basis for making its proposed cuts. The APWU has issued a pamphlet to help guide us through how to demand real information. Instead of just accepting their claim that jobs need to be cut, we need to help the union fight back by keeping track of the actual work that is done and insisting on proper work orders and safety procedures.

We know that management would love to contract out all the work of the maintenance craft. They are coming after the custodian jobs which makes no sense. When there have been no changes in the areas to be cleaned, how can they justify cutting custodians? This is where we must step up and defend ourselves by working to their rules. We need to let the TL 5 system prove itself a fail-

ure. My advice is: Don't help management cut our throats!

As for Motor Vehicle, there are debates about "right-sizing" staff. Forms called 4852s are supposed to show the work needed for every MVS bid. But there are jobs with no identifying paperwork. This is important because at any point management can take away those jobs because we have no proof they were ever needed. Having a bunch of jobs sounds good, but if we don't have Job ID #s that match the work, it leaves employees vulnerable to losing the positions at management's discretion. This is what is happening at the NDC; at DVD, they didn't put up the full number of Motor Vehicle Mechanic jobs. These are different forms of the same trickery, where we are forced to file griev-

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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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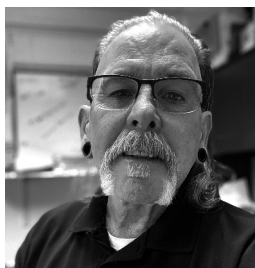
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Welcome new officers of NY Metro Area Postal Union!

KEVIN WALSH *Executive Vice President*



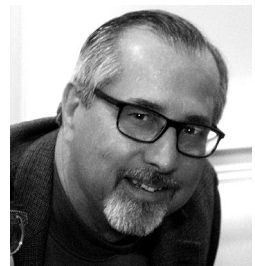
“President Jonathan Smith recommended me to fill the Executive Vice President position to the Executive

Board. The Executive Board voted unanimously to have me fill the vacancy.

“I am both proud and humbled to serve as Executive Vice President for New York Metro Area Postal Union. Thanks for all your support.”

Kevin has been a postal worker for forty-one years, holding clerk bids in both Morgan P&DC and JAF in Manhattan. During his long postal service, Kevin Walsh has always been a member of the NY Metro Area Postal Union. He has served as a Shop Steward, a Coordinator, and a Trustee for the Local, before being elected to full time office eight years ago. He has served the Local as both Director of Organization and Director of Industrial Relations. His experience and knowledge make him ideally qualified to fill the office of Executive Vice President.

EDWARD “ED” DALTON *Director of Industrial Relations*



“I am truly honored to be appointed to Director of Industrial Relations. I want to thank everyone who

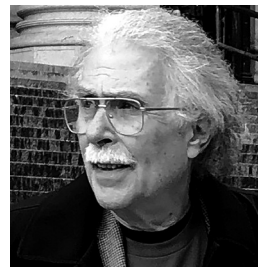
has helped me along the way. I will strive to make the Union stronger.”

Ed Dalton is moving from Assistant Director of the NJI&NDC into the position of Director of Industrial Relations of the NY Metro Area Postal Union. Ed has handled literally hundreds of grievances during his ten years as Shop Steward and Assistant Director. He has covered cases on every tour, fighting for our PSEs and recently converted career clerks, as well as representing many senior clerks.

Over his 31 years in the Postal Service, Ed has always been a Mail Processing clerk and a union member. He worked in the Downtown Brooklyn GPO, then moved to the huge Brooklyn General Mail Facility (GMF). In 2004, when Brooklyn was excessing employees, Ed volunteered to come to the New Jersey Bulk Mail Center, which is now the NJ International and Network Distribution Center.

Ed Dalton has been the “go-to” guy for questions on FMLA, bidding, and overtime issues. If he doesn’t know the answer, he researches it to get it right and get it done. In this spirit, Ed is eager to learn what is needed for his new position.

CHARLES “CHUCK” ZLATKIN *Legislative and Political Director*



Chuck Zlatkin worked for over 35 years in the post office in Manhattan, always as an active (and activist!) member of New York Metro. He has never been afraid to speak his mind on important issues

affecting the union and the labor movement. Starting in 2004, he has written for and edited *The Union Mail*, providing political direction on local, national, and international issues.

When the United for Change slate under the leadership of Jonathan Smith was elected in 2012, Chuck was re-elected as the Local’s Legislative and Political Director. He was especially active in the fight against postal closures and in getting elected officials on board to save our post offices. He organized union members and people from the community to attend hearings and rallies and was tireless in setting up press conferences, providing press releases, and involving politicians in the ongoing struggle. In 2008, he was responsible for the huge rally at the New Jersey Bulk Mail Center to stop privatization of the BMC.

In 2013, Chuck retired and became active with the Moe Biller Retiree Chapter. The next year, he was asked to come to Washington, DC, to assist the newly elected APWU President, Mark Dimondstein as his executive assistant. He played a huge role in the Stop Staples and Postal Banking campaigns.

In 2016, he returned to NY Metro becoming the Acting Managing Editor of *The Union Mail* and given the title of Communications Director to continue work with city officials, US congresspeople, and the press. Now, upon the appointment of the President and concurrence of the Executive Board, he, once again, officially assumes the Constitutional duties of the Legislative and Political Director. ☐

Voting as postal workers?

By Chuck Zlatkin, Legislative and Political Director

It is hard to imagine that people who are concerned with maintaining their jobs in a public Postal Service leading to a dignified retirement, can think that the Trump administration has been good for them. But we can't assume that valuing their jobs and retirement will be postal workers' overriding reason in choosing for whom to vote in 2020. It is estimated, nationally, that at least 35% of APWU members voted for Donald Trump to be President of the United States.

Donald Trump is no friend of a public Postal Service or of the concept of well-paid postal workers with good benefits, either. His Postal Task Force, headed by Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin, and Trump's appointment of Mick Mulvaney as Director of the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) have not boded well for postal workers. Mnuchin, the former investment banker for Goldman Sachs and owner of One West Bank, who profited from questionable foreclosures during the 2007-2008 financial crisis, thinks that you make too much money. And Mulvaney, who once described himself as a "right-wing nut" has put together a plan to make the Postal Service attractive to corporate buyers by eliminating your ability to negotiate for wages and reducing your retirement benefits. Trump was so pleased with Mulvaney's work at the OMB that in January of 2019, he made Mulvaney his Acting Chief of Staff.

People have different criteria for

deciding who will best represent them in government, but as elections get closer, all of us should consider who to place our trust in.

The process for choosing candidates for President is upon us. The caucuses in Iowa and primaries in New Hampshire are here. Postal workers have much at stake in these elections. We can get an idea of where postal workers are leaning by the endorsements of APWU locals in those areas. The American Postal Workers Union Local 44 of Central Iowa has endorsed Senator Bernie Sanders for President at their January membership meeting. In New Hampshire in December, the statewide organization of the American Postal Workers Union (APWU) endorsed Bernie Sanders for President following a unanimous vote by the union's board. Just days earlier, the board and members of APWU Local 230 of Manchester, also voted unanimously on a resolution for Sanders's endorsement.

The primary elections in New York and Connecticut take place on April 28, 2020; and in New Jersey on June 2, 2020. 2020 is a presidential election year but also every member of the House of Representatives is up for election. Many Senators are also running

The National Executive Board of the American Postal Workers Union (APWU) has endorsed Bernie Sanders for President of the United States in the 2020 election.

this year.

Much on our plates

We are still waiting to see what the results are from the APWU Interest Arbitration with the USPS, which as of press time, we are told is 4-6 weeks away.

The USPS has come out with its new 5-year plan; legislation to provide the Postal Service with financial relief from the 2006 PAEA has received great support in both houses of Congress but so far has gone nowhere; and 2020 is also a National Convention year for the APWU. There is much to deal with for postal workers.

Whether we decide to support a candidate for U.S. President in the 2020 election as postal workers, is a choice that each of us will have to make.

Voting in 2020 Primaries

To vote you have to be registered. The purpose of a presidential primary is to select delegates to a national convention of a political party. Connecticut, New Jersey, and New York are all closed primary states. To vote in the presidential primary elections in these states, you have to be registered in a specific political party and can only vote in that party's primary election.

Here are important deadline dates: If you live in **New Jersey**, primary election registration deadline is **May 12, 2020**. If you live in **New York**, primary election registration deadline is **February 14, 2020**. If you live in **Connecticut**, primary election registration deadline is **April 23, 2020**. ☐

Puerto Ricans battle natural disaster and man-made austerity

By Nora Taggart

Mother Nature has been cruel to Puerto Rico. Since December 28, 2019, more than 1,200 earthquakes have hit Puerto Rico's southern region. The U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) stated that over two dozen quakes have been of 4.5 magnitude or greater, including the fatal 6.4 magnitude quake that hit in the predawn hours of January 7. Homes, schools, and other structures like bridges are collapsing. Thousands of people, fearing for their safety, are sleeping outdoors, in tents and even inside cars. There is no way to know when these quakes will stop. This is only two years after Hurricanes Maria and Irma pummeled the island. Over 4,600 deaths are being attributed to the hurricanes.

The government, at the local and federal level, has been cruel to Puerto Rico as well. In 2016 President Obama signed the Puerto Rico Oversight, Management and Economic Stability Act, or PROMESA. This law, which many people consider unconstitutional, gave an unelected, Wall Street-aligned oversight board total control over the entire Puerto Rican economy. The law granted predatory hedge fund vultures a huge payday at the expense of the Puerto Rican people. Extreme austerity measures were imposed on the people such as cuts in government pensions, social programs and school closures. The sales tax now is 11.5%, making it the highest sales tax in the U.S. The University of Puerto Rico's budget was slashed. This has directly impacted the Puerto Rico Seismic Network, which is part of the

Department of Geology of the University.

President Trump and his administration have been no better. Trump, who has called Puerto Rico "one of the most corrupt places on earth," and who ignores that Puerto Ricans are U.S. citizens, has been holding back aid. According to the Center for Investigative Journalism, of the \$43 billion allocated for the recovery, only \$14 billion had been disbursed by the second anniversary of the hurricanes. According to a study published last year in the journal *BMJ Global Health*, "the federal government responded on a larger scale and much more quickly across measures of federal money and staffing to Hurricanes Harvey and Irma in Texas and Florida, compared with Hurricane Maria in Puerto Rico. The variation in the responses was not commensurate with storm severity and need after landfall in the case of Puerto Rico compared with Texas and Florida."

But there is no worse betrayal to the people of Puerto Rico than how the local government has handled these natural disasters. As people searched for clean water, food and medication after the hurricanes and now for tents and cots to deal with the quakes, several warehouses were discovered by ordinary citizens. Pallets of water, generators, baby diapers, tarps, batteries and much more had been sitting there since the hurricanes of 2017. The Puerto Ricans are outraged! Some are even accusing government officials of genocide and profiting from these humanitarian crises.

People to People Power

The people, not trusting the government at the local and federal level, have taken matters into their own hands. Soon after the quakes started rattling the southern part of the island, thousands of people began traveling from other areas to the affected towns to personally deliver supplies. This includes APWU Puerto Rico Local President Juan Carlos González Del-Valle. On his social media site we can see videos and pictures of post offices and homes of postal workers that were damaged by the earthquakes. The APWU Local president took supplies to postal workers who are living outdoors and in tents. APWU National sent EAP consultants to PR to provide emotional and mental support as well. Brother Juan Carlos has been actively demanding that the USPS provide emergency drills to the employees, as well as reminding postal workers that they need to put their safety and that of their family first. "No work is worth more than our lives." ☐



(See report from APWU Puerto Rico Area Local President Juan Carlos González-Del Valle on page 10.)

50-year commemoration of the Great Postal Strike of 1970

By Chuck Zlatkin, Legislative and Political Director

On March 28, 2020, a 50-Year Anniversary Commemoration of the Great Postal Strike of 1970 is

members receive a 41% pay increase. On March 12th, the House Post Office and Civil Service

loss of job, a fine of at least \$1,000 and a sentence of a year and a day in jail. But postal workers were



taking place at the Manhattan Center organized by the American Postal Workers Union (APWU) and hosted by the New York Metro Area Postal Union.

In 1970, postal workers didn't have collective bargaining. To get a raise, they had to lobby Congress to get legislation passed. It was known as "collective begging." To illustrate the conditions: According to the federal government, for a family of four to maintain a moderate standard of living in New York City in 1970, it took an annual income of more than \$11,000. Yet the starting salary for a postal worker was \$6,176 and after working for 21 years, the top salary was \$8,442. In 1970, there were full-time postal workers receiving public assistance.

In the beginning of 1970, Congress proposed that its own

Committee proposed a 5.4% pay raise for postal workers. Postal workers were incensed. Working conditions were unsafe, postal management operated as if postal workers had no rights, but this insulting raise was the final straw. The letter carriers demanded that their union leadership schedule a strike vote. While the leadership was against striking, a vote was scheduled for March 17, 1970. The supporters of the strike prevailed and as the clock struck midnight they began a wildcat strike. New York Metro's president Moe Biller, when he learned of the carriers strike vote, knew that no union under his leadership would cross a picket line; the 23,000 clerks union would support the strike.

It was against the law for federal workers to strike. The penalty for a striking worker included automatic

angry, angry enough to risk it all.

Postal workers in Manhattan, the Bronx and Brooklyn went on strike. Within a short time the strike spread to 30 major cities. The call went out from President Nixon urging the postal workers to return to work and claiming he would begin talking with them if they did. The postal workers refused. Nixon countered with plans to bring in the Army and the National Guard to work the mail. This was a massive failure. The mail in the United States was basically shut down.

Real negotiations began and within a few days a package was offered that included two pay raises of 6% and 8%, reducing the progress to top step from 21 to 8 years, collective bargaining and binding arbitration and amnesty to all strikers. Union members accepted the terms

and returned to work. The strike was victorious. And within 15 months of the strike starting the American Postal Workers Union was born.

Historically speaking, the Great Postal Strike of 1970 was one of the most significant strikes in American labor history, not only for what it did for the economic conditions of postal workers, but also for what it did for the power of rank and file labor union members, and for the people who depend upon a public Postal Service.

The importance of commemorating the Great Postal Strike is to educate ourselves about our own history and to honor the members of our union who risked it all to benefit not just themselves but the generations of postal workers who followed them. Commemorating the Strike also has lessons for us for the struggles that we face today. It helps us understand that much of what we take for granted didn't come to us because of the generosity of management but came to us because of the struggles and courage of postal workers who came before us. There is strength in collective, unified action by postal workers that can bring us positive results if we stick together, educate ourselves, and take courageous action.

The five unions that came together to form the American Postal Workers Union to represent us in collective bargaining was a direct result of the Great Postal Strike of 1970. We are now, 50 years down the road, with many challenges ahead of us. For us to be successful we need to understand where we came from and measure success in terms of what benefits postal workers and the public we serve. To help us do what needs to be done, taking the time to honor and commemorate the Great Postal Strike of 1970 is important. **Plan to be there.** ☐

APWU Celebrates the 50th Anniversary of the Great Postal Strike of 1970

**Join us in this historic
moment!**

**DATE: March 28,
2020**

TIME: 1pm – 4pm

WHERE:

**Manhattan Center
311 West 34th
Street
NY, NY 10001**

**Hosted by:
NY Metro Area Postal
Union**

THE GREAT POSTAL STRIKE OF 1970

*“The strike that stunned the country,”
read the headline in Time magazine.*

Maybe Time was stunned. But 200,000 postal workers had a different view. For them the Great Postal Strike of 1970 was the moment they were “standing 10 feet tall instead of groveling in the dust” as a Manhattan letter carrier put it. They got fed up, joined together, and transformed both the Postal Service and their own lives forever.

Postal workers were part of eight

separate craft unions, including the National Association of Letter Carriers (NALC). But they (like all other federal employees) were denied the freedom to bargain collectively over wages. And like all federal employees, they were forbidden to even advocate for the right to strike.

[Pay was poor]. . . Plenty of postal workers qualified for food stamps.

In 1970, Congress proposed a bill that would give a 5.4% wage increase – not even keeping up with the cost of inflation! Just the year before, they had given themselves a 41% increase!

This was the last straw. On March 17, NYC Letter Carriers voted to defy the law and go on strike. Other NYC postal workers honored their picket lines.

The wildcat strike spread around the country. 200,000 postal workers walked off the job and shut down the mail. President Nixon sent in troops and the National Guard to do the work.

They failed miserably. *Finally, the Post Office Department figured out it needed postal workers.*

Serious bargaining opened up and the 1970 Postal Reorganization Act and 1971 National Agreement (signed by the four major postal unions) laid the basis for what we have today.

Under the newly reorganized Postal Service, postal workers now had rights they never had before. They could bargain collectively for wages, benefits and working conditions. And while they were still prohibited from striking, they achieved a binding arbitration process for resolving contract disputes.

The following year, five of the eight postal unions joined together in the American Postal Workers Union (APWU). ☐

Massive outpouring of support for A Public Postal Service

By Chuck Zlatkin, Legislative and Political Director

On October 19, 2019, Postmaster General of the United States Megan Brennan announced that she was going to retire from her position on January 31, 2020. At the All Craft Conference in Las Vegas, APWU President Mark Dimondstein announced that A Grand Alliance to Save Our Public Postal Service was initiating a petition campaign to the Postal Board of Governors that they appoint a Postmaster General who will stand up for quality, universal service and the continued public ownership of the USPS. The Board of Governors has the responsibility of appointing the next Postmaster General.

With our allies in A Grand Alliance, the APWU and NY Metro Area Postal Union went to work collecting petition signatures. Over 400,000 signatures were collected on petitions echoing what President Dimondstein made clear, “We need a leader of this organization – a new Postmaster General – who believes [in], who will uphold, and who will fight for the public mission of the United States Postal Service... We demand a vibrant, public Postal Service for generations to come!”

A rally and ceremony to present what now was over 400,000 petition signatures was scheduled for January 6, 2020, at Postal Headquarters in Washington, DC. The leadership of the APWU was joined by allies from A Grand Alliance to Save Our Public Postal Service. Speakers at the rally condemned the White House for their explicit attacks on the public Postal Service and

demanding the administration stop its push for privatization.

AFL-CIO President Richard Trumka said, “We all know what privatization means. It means they want to cut your wages; they want to take away your benefits; they want to destroy the great reliability of this agency. They want people to make profit off of us. We’re not going to let that happen.”

“We recognize that it is our US Postal Service that opened up more jobs and provided more opportunities for more Americans from various backgrounds... than any other organization or any other industry in our country,” said NAACP Washington Bureau Director Hilary Shelton. He spoke about how the fight against privatization is “central to the issues of civil rights protections for all Americans and American families.”

The rally and petition presentation at L’Enfant Plaza should have gathered significant media coverage, but on the same day as the event, the Postal Service announced that PMG Brennan had agreed to extend her stay in office to help give the USPS time to find her successor.

The Chairman of the Board of Governors, Robert M. “Mike” Duncan said: “We are grateful to the Postmaster General for her continued commitment to the Postal Service, and share her confidence in the Postal Service’s strong leadership team members who will ensure that we continue to deliver for the American people.”

While this announcement may have import or was just a stunt to

take the spotlight off of the petition presentation, the reality is that the amazing gathering of over 400,000 petition signatures in such a short time demonstrates to all that the support for a public Postal Service is massive. The organizations of A Grand Alliance that came forward and embraced the petition gathering with such commitment bodes well for the future struggles to maintain a public Postal Service.

New York Metro’s officers, stewards, rank-and-file members and retirees can be proud of our participation in this important petition gathering action. Along with our allies, we can impact what kind of future there will be for a public Postal Service, meeting the needs of the people we are mandated to serve, while protecting our jobs. ☐

State of the Union report

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ances to protect our jobs.

Grievances need evidence and statements. But grievances are only part of the battle. Corporate greed wants to sell off and profit from privatizing our good union jobs. Therefore, the APWU has been petitioning for selection of a Postmaster General who believes in public and universal postal service. The fight against privatization is a political fight for the people’s post office. In 2020, our slogan continues to be: The US Mail is not for Sale!

I’m asking the membership not to be the Broker! ☐

BLACK HISTORY:

Our members took action to win King holiday

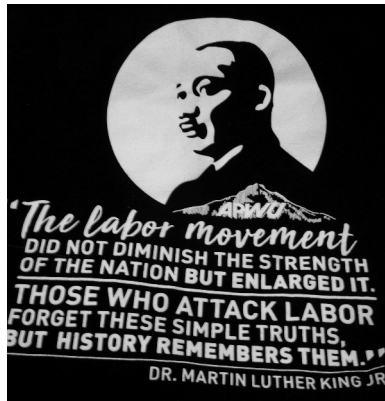
By Flo Summergrad

They didn't give us this holiday. We had to fight for it."

Many current postal workers take the "King Day" Holiday for granted as part of our contractual rights. In fact, the naming of a national holiday to honor a great African American was a result of the same struggle that Dr. King led – a struggle for civil rights. MLK was assassinated in 1968. The legal holiday was not established until 18 years later after a militant national campaign.

Postal workers were active in this fight. Petitions to Washington were circulated on the work floor. Every year, workers of all races submitted leave slips or called in: "MLK Birthday." Most black workers took the day off – approved or not!

Our union members risked reprisal on the job for taking off for MLK's birthday every January. In some parts of the country, people were beaten and jailed for daring to celebrate this holiday, which was not acknowledged in all 50 states



APWU t-shirt

until the year 2000.

New York METRO Area Postal Union members can be proud of our part in that political struggle. The entire membership body rose to its feet and cheered at the Local meeting when President McMillian announced that President Reagan had signed the law to make Dr. King's birthday a federal holiday.

Dr. King was a political activist and a supporter of organized labor. The plight of urban workers was a focus of his Poor People's

Campaign, and he spoke at many labor meetings, including the 1965 National Alliance of Black Postal Employees convention. On March 18, 1968, he brought national attention to the month-long strike of the Memphis sanitation workers, who were still below the poverty level despite full time work and hazardous conditions. Dr. King's return to march with the AFSCME workers was the final act of his life. On April 3rd, he had promised the Memphis strikers: "I may not get there with you, but I want you to know tonight that we as a people will get to the promised land." On April 4, 1968, he was assassinated, but the struggle continued to victory.

Today, APWU members need to draw on the strength of our history. Despite the real threat of privatization, our NY METRO Union leaders, stewards, and the rank and file soldier on in the fight for workers' rights and social justice. Together, we will get to the promised land. ☐

Kids in pens: It CAN happen here

By Flo Summergrad

It is hard to believe that the U.S. government has actually been incarcerating innocent children for three years now. There have been Congressional hearings, Health Department investigations, and protests, yet an untallied number of at least 40,000 kids remain in "camps" with inadequate bedding, clothing, and sanitation. The U.S. government refuses to provide flu

vaccine and at least three children died of the flu. A peaceful protest last December demanding vaccinations was staged by #Doctors4CampClosure. It ended in arrests of the doctors with no answers to health concerns.

After the initial horrified reaction, many Americans have forgotten the plight of these children. But a number of Christian churches are

protesting the inhumane treatment of separated families by drawing a parallel with Mary and Joseph seeking safety. A Christmas nativity display outside a Claremont United Methodist church in California caused a huge outcry by featuring a separated and caged Holy Family. Christ Church Cathedral in Indianapolis held the Holy Family

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REPORT FROM PUERTO RICO

from Brother Juan Carlos González-Del Valle, AWPW President, Puerto Rico Area Local 1070

Earthquakes began to be felt in the southwestern part of Puerto Rico since the 28th of December of last year. On January 7, 2020, a 6.5 magnitude earthquake hit Puerto Rico at 4:24AM followed by hundreds of aftershocks. Power was lost island-wide immediately after the 6.5 earthquake and lasted for a week.

(Postal installations that are permanently inoperable are Yauco PO, Ensenada; Mayaguez Main PO which is temporarily inoperable pending restoration.)

Support from the people and APWU

USPS response was unacceptable. Higher level managers' first response was to instruct supervisors to force employees to go inside buildings after the earthquake.

APWU advised employees not to go inside buildings until management could guarantee that the buildings were safe.

Mayaguez PO employees refused to go inside the post office until management guaranteed their safety. With the leadership of APWU Coordinator Guillermo Aviles, management was forced to move employees to another facility.

The response of the Puerto Rican people was amazing. They flooded the affected areas with first necessity items, knowing by experience that their government is useless.

As always, we received the support of our National APWU sisters and brothers. President Dimondstein placed himself at our disposition and offered us his support. Tiffany Foster has been helping us out dealing with management ineptitude. Sue Carney arranged for psychological professionals to come down to PR and assist postal employees. A very special acknowledgment to the NY Metro members and President Jonathan Smith who donated \$5,000.00 to us and we will be able to buy goods to provide to the affected people of the southwest area.

So far we have 5 employees who are sleeping in tents outside their homes due to structural damage to their properties or just because they are afraid to sleep inside. They are waiting for the FEMA engineers to inspect their houses. One of these employee's house was inspected and the use of his house is restricted to go inside to gather belongings. ☹️

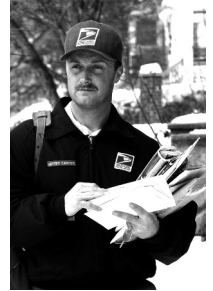
Postal News Briefs

USPS: AMERICA'S MOST TRUSTED BRAND

The United States Postal Service is the most trusted brand in America, according to a Morning Consult study. The Most Trusted Brands report featured an average of 16,700 interviews per brand for nearly 2,000 brands between October and December 2019. The USPS is "reliable," and delivers the mail no matter what the weather.

According to a survey last year by the Pew Research Center, 90% of the public has a favorable view of the USPS.

Commenting on the survey, Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist Michael Hiltzik wrote in his business blog that postal privatization "would inevitably mean crummy service and immense price increases" and "the surest route to turning public admiration for the USPS into public scorn."



GAO; POSTAL SERVICE LABOR CUTS OVERSTATED SAVINGS

A GAO Report says that the Postal Service over-stated its savings from shifting to lower paid and less tenured employees. They were unable to substantiate \$8 billion of the \$9.7 billion in savings the USPS claimed for 2016-2018. Problems like increased turnover resulted from insecurity of jobs, schedules, and lower pay from PSEs, MHAs, and CCAs. In addition, they did not account for doubling clerk and mail handler overtime, as well as a 6% annual rise in union grievances.

The report concluded that the "USPS lacks guidance on what factors to consider in its cost savings estimates, and as a result may make future changes to employee compensation based on incomplete information . . ."

RECORD PARTICIPATION IN POSTAL OPERATION SANTA

More than 12,760 letters were adopted in 2019, the highest number in the program's over 100 years. This was an increase of 240% from the year before.

This brought joy to children all around the country who otherwise would not have had a good Christmas. Postal employees and customers answer letters, which are sometimes for basics like food and clothing. One grandpa wrote, "Please tell Santa his work is beyond compare and please keep it up." ☹️



CALENDAR

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)

Wednesday, March 18

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! January 15

General Membership Meeting

1. COPA 50/50 winner was Regina Wilson (NJ/NDC)—\$58 (COPA contribution \$56.75)

2. \$100 American Express gift card winner was Travis D. Greaves (Radio City Station)

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.)

Where: Union Office, 350 W. 31st Street, 3rd floor

When: 1:00 pm, the 4th Wednesday of every month
February 26 • March 25



APWU LOCAL 10 BLDG. CORP

| | |
|--|-----------------|
| Beginning Balance as of November 1, 2019 | \$1,475,222.12 |
| Total Revenue November 2019 | \$ 180,510.54 |
| Operating Expenses November 2019 | \$ 127,428.32 |
| Total Net Income November 2019 | \$ 53,082.22 |
| Ending Balance November 30, 2019 | \$ 1,528,304.34 |

APWU LOCAL 10 BLDG. CORP

| | |
|--|-----------------|
| Beginning Balance as of December 1, 2019 | \$ 1,528,304.34 |
| Total Revenue December 2019 | \$ 174,587.34 |
| Operating Expenses December 2019 | \$ 222,529.67 |
| Total Net Income December 2019 | \$ (47,942.33) |
| Ending Balance December 31, 2019 | \$ 1,480,362.01 |

Kids in pens: It CAN happen here

continued from page 9

“in detention.” And, under a sign, saying: “Peace on Earth?” St. Sudsanna parish near Boston depicted Jesus in a cage fenced off from the 3 Wise Men.

Jewish activists have held protests, drawing analogies to the Nazi holocaust. Congresswoman Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez (D-NY) referred to the holding pens as “concentration camps.” Japanese Americans protested the re-opening of Fort Sill, OK, to incarcerate undocumented children. That same site had interned Japanese families during WW2 and Apache children when native peoples were displaced.

In 2020, let us end the shameful legacy of oppression. ☐

Trustee Barbara Harris-McKenzie retires

*With Our Greatest Appreciation
We Hereby Present Barbara
Harris-McKenzie A Loyal
and Dedicated Union
Representative With This
Award in Recognition of
Over 34 Years of Commitment
and Dedicated Service to
the Members of New York
Metro Area Postal Union, APWU
AFL-CIO*

Trustee Barbara Harris-McKenzie is retiring from the Postal Service on January 31, 2020. She will serve out her term as NY Metro Area Postal Union Trustee and promises to continue to be active with P.O.W.E.R. and her beloved APWU. Upon being presented with the Appreciation award at the January 2020 membership meeting, Barbara spoke about how much the Union has meant to her and how much she has learned and grown from her participation. She will be missed! ☐



Photos by Kevin Walsh



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

RETIREMENT AND FEDERAL BENEFITS SEMINAR – NO COST!

WHERE: NY Metro Union Office, 350 W. 31st St, 3rd floor, NY 10001

Register early! Seating is limited.

Submit form and \$10 commitment fee to your steward or to the office

(Fee will be returned at the seminar)

DATES: Tuesday, March 24, 2020 9:00am – 11:00am

Wednesday, March 25, 2020 1:00pm – 3:00pm

Thursday, March 26, 2020 2:00pm – 4:00pm

NAME: _____

SPOUSE or PARTNER: (if attending) _____

TELEPHONE: _____

Tues 3/24 @ 9am _____ Wed 3/25 @ 1pm _____ Thurs 3/26 @ 2pm _____