



The

Union Mail

Vol. 62 No. 2 | February 2019

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.



Eleanor G. Bailey 1931 ~ 2018

February is Black History Month

State of the Union 2019



Jonathan Smith

How blessed we are that the government shut down does not directly affect us! But we have to show solidarity with our federal sisters and brothers by joining protests, signing petitions, and calling Congressmen. We need to invest in our future by standing by their side, because I promise you, sometime soon, we will need them to stand with us. They are our allies against privatization. and the Postal Service needs to know we are not fighting for a fair contract alone.

Despite the difficult road ahead I am excited about the new year. We have 21 brand new shop stewards coming aboard from every craft. The future of each of our crafts depends on the union fight for more jobs, not more overtime. By refusing to give up clerk craft jobs in 2012, NY Metro kept slots for PSEs to fill as career employees. I believe we have some grievances coming up early in 2019 that will give us the opportunity to get quite a few PSE conversions. Executive Vice President Tiffany Foster has filed these grievances for clerk jobs in every installation.

Maintenance is under serious attack. Management is trying to cut the staffing down to the bone. The carrot with this stick is overtime, overtime, overtime. We have to get away from this "What's in it for me" attitude and pay attention to the craft as a whole.

For instance, if you know of someone who was fired, transferred

or retired and they have been gone for more than 30 days, bring it to the union's attention so we can make management post the job.

Then, since cuts in custodial staffing were made by implementing the TL-5 program, we have to make sure that the TL-5 rules, equipment, and cleaning products are being enforced. We know it is not effective. But when our custodians use the brooms and mops that are prohibited under TL-5 (even for project work), they are making it seem as if the work can indeed get done with the lower staffing.

There is no facility within our installations under TL-5 (Morgan, NDC or DVD) or anywhere, properly using the system. There is no "team cleaning." The only part of TL-5 that is being used is the false data created by the custodians that all the work is being completed by using TL-5 cleaning techniques (what a joke)! Based on this, management cuts custodian staffing every year. Why help them destroy the craft?

Protect jobs! File PS1767s when non-TL-5 equipment or products are issued. Use the 4776s (route sheets) which are management's written instructions to the custodians. The 4776 tells you exactly what job you are performing and each step of the route.

Also, maintenance employees are taking positions as semi-permanent Acting Supervisors. Management plays the game of taking them down from supervising just long enough so they don't lose their bids. I have directed the union representatives to file grievances on this practice which

circumvents the contract. Don't boo-hoo if this costs you your bid. Either you're union or you're management; you will not be allowed to play both sides of the fence

In Motor Vehicle, we are working on the once a year bid in every installation. In DVD, we are meeting in early February and should be bidding soon after. In the NY District, we have arbitration in January about the key-in procedure on Sunday. This should clear the path for the drivers to bid. In NDC there is nothing scheduled, but we are currently working on it as well as getting a schedule examiner position.

Thank you for the privilege of being your President but I need you to help me help you. We can do together what I can't do alone! ☑

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.
Flo Summergrad, editor
Chuck Zlatkin, acting managing editor
Bernadette Evangelist, graphic designer
To contact your officers, call 212.563.7553.
www.nymetro.org

- President**
Jonathan Smith Ext. 108
- Executive Vice President**
Tiffany Foster Ext. 110
- Dir. Ind Relations**
Kevin Walsh Ext. 106
- Secretary-Treasurer**
Joseph Martir Ext. 107
- Dir. Organization**
Diane Erlanger Ext. 105



Scare tactics don't work. We keep fighting!

By Tiffany Foster, Executive Vice-President



Tiffany Foster

Every day we fight. We fight to protect our jobs. We fight to police and enforce our contract. We fight to get duty assignments created.

We fight to make certain that management provides the employees with a safe, healthy and harassment-free workplace.

NY District management created a new facility in the Bronx Installation for the holiday season calling it the Bronx Annex. After the union cited that a Bronx Annex using Manhattan employees is a violation of the LMOU (Local Memorandum of Understanding), they started calling it the UPPA (Uptown Peak Parcel Annex). This facility was opened to process Parcels from Morningside, College, Audubon, Washington Bridge and Inwood.

We uncovered that management had signed the lease for this building in September and never said anything to the union. No way they had no ideas of how the operation was going to be run. In November, several meetings were held to discuss the parcel operation and the horrendous, unhealthy and unsafe work environment. Management didn't answer questions and ignored our issues.

This Bronx Annex opened for operation on November 15, 2018. The union made visits on November 16, 19, 24 and 29. The work conditions were horrendous. The Annex had only one bathroom for the

employees and that was in the ladies locker room. The men's and women's locker rooms were separated by the lockers and a tarp. There were six porta potties that smelled of urine and feces, next to a work area. The Annex was extremely cold with only one heat blower working in the entire facility. The employees were working in their coats because it was so cold inside.

The place was dusty and dirty. The slop sink looked like it had not seen water in ages. There were three big garbage dumpsters filled with garbage inside the Annex next to where the parcel post drivers worked. This was a breeding ground for rats and gnats which could pose health issues for the employees.

Article 14 requires management to provide a safe work environment for the employees. This is not optional. Management showed no care and concern for the work conditions they had placed the employees in. They only cared about getting their work out.

Management likes to say that safety is first, but it really isn't. The Annex was in a desolate industrial area in the Bronx without adequate lighting and no foot traffic when it got dark. The makeshift employee entrance had a bell and a sign taped to it that said, "press buzzer for entry, please ring bell if no one answers call" and it listed two cell-phone numbers. The Annex was a 24-hour operation with employees arriving at different times of the day even at 12am, 1am, 2am. The union requested that Postal Police be sta-

tioned outside for safety reasons; management wouldn't hear of it. Employees had to travel by cab or in groups because of safety concerns.

The work conditions were inhumane. The employees deserved better. I, your Executive VP, filed an OSHA complaint, and OSHA made a visit to the Annex. Management didn't like that. So, instead of concern for employees' health and safety, management's response to the OSHA complaint was to issue your Executive Vice President a 14-day suspension! {Being fought as a grievance and via the OSHA Whistleblower Protection program.}

The 14-day suspension is retaliation for the union filing the OSHA complaint. It's management's attempt to intimidate the union from policing and enforcing the contract. It's also an attempt to scare the employees and stewards from reporting injuries and safety concerns. Don't be intimidated! All employees have a legal and contractual right to demand a safe and healthy workplace.

OSHA's whistleblower statutes protect you from retaliation. An employer cannot retaliate by taking "adverse action" against workers who report injuries, safety concerns, or other protected activity. (In our CBA Article 21.4.)

Even when we as your representatives are under attack by management, we continue the fight for you and our contractual rights because as the great Frederick Douglass said, "Power concedes nothing without a demand. It never did and it never will." ☐

Legislative and Political Report

By Chuck Zlatkin, Director of Communications

The New Congress

With the results of the hotly contested mid-term election in mind, there has been great interest in the incoming members of Congress and what they might have in store for postal workers and those who support a public Postal Service. Will we see a

being the youngest woman member of the House of Representatives, she is fully aware of the crucial issues that confront postal workers and is a big proponent of postal banking.

There is also hope that Max Rose, a Democrat from Staten Island and Brooklyn's 11th CD, and staunch



Some new faces in the 116th Congress

difference? Will there be a Congress that is responsive to the needs of working people?

It is certainly a diverse group of people who have been elected to Congress. It looks more like America now than it ever has. This Congress is the most racially diverse and has the greatest number of female representatives ever elected to the House. It includes the first Native American, the first Muslim congresswomen, the first Korean-American, and the first Palestinian-American woman. There are 42 new women members, with only four being Republican.

New York Metro Area Postal Union is pleased that in the 14th CD in New York, Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, who was endorsed by NYMAPU, was overwhelmingly elected to Congress. In addition to

union supporter will be someone who steps forward on our issues locally.

There has been optimism that a Democratic majority in the House will make a substantive difference to how our issues will be dealt with in the 116th Congress.

Nothing is guaranteed. Following the disastrous Postal Accountability and Enhancement Act, which was passed by a lame-duck Democrat majority Congress in 2006, the danger to postal workers and a public Postal Service was palpable. In 2009, there was great hope that with a Democrat in the White House, and both houses of the Congress under Democratic control, necessary changes would be made to lighten the burden on the Postal Service. It is 2019, and we are still waiting for relief.

This is not to say that change isn't possible from the new class of members of Congress. But change doesn't take place in a vacuum. While it is true that the Legislative and Political Department of the American Postal Workers Union (APWU) and your representatives at New York Metro

are already at work dealing with the new Congress, the fact of the matter is the most powerful voice to the new Congress is their constituents. Yes, YOU! It certainly isn't too early for you to communicate with your representative in Congress.

Dropping a letter to your rep is certainly in order. Detail to him or her your concerns for maintaining a public Postal Service and how privatization of the Postal Service will only mean higher prices and worse service for all their constituents.

[Please feel free to drop me an email at chuck.zlatkin@nymetro.org if you need help determining who your rep is.]

Special Election in New York City February 26, 2019

With the advancement of Letitia James from NYC's Public Advocate to New York State's Attorney General in the last election, a vacancy opened for Public Advocate. A Special Election was called for February 26, 2019 in New York City. This is a non-partisan election, no political parties. Candidates run as individuals on their own line, collect signatures on petitions for their nomination, and run for office. Beyond what this office can do, it is a definite stepping stone. Besides Letitia James moving from Public Advocate to higher office, Bill DeBlasio served as Public Advocate before he ran for Mayor and won twice. As of press time, there are 23 candidates who have announced for this election. Please educate yourself on this election and make your vote count. Remember, if you are a registered voter in New York City, you are eligible to vote for Public Advocate on February 26, 2019. ☐

STOP POSTAL PRIVATIZATION PART 2

The Heritage Foundation's decades-long fight to privatize the Postal Service

By Chuck Zlatkin, Director of Communications

No one was happier with the announcement of President Trump's Task Force on the Postal System than the Heritage Foundation. They had been waiting for it for 45 years. Back in 1973, three right-wing, anti-union, xenophobes came together out of a mutual frustration with Republican President Richard Nixon's policies being too liberal. Joseph Coors, Paul Weyrich and Ed Feulner created the Heritage Foundation. Coors provided \$250,000 in cash and \$20,000 more per month to fund it through the first year. Weyrich was the conservative thinker, strategist and organizer to make it happen. Feulner was the political functionary who carried out the work. Within ten years, thanks to the financial contributions of right-wing billionaires such as the Koch brothers, and especially Richard Scaife, the Heritage Foundation had an annual budget of \$10 million and hundreds of staff members and researchers, propagating right-wing, anti-worker views and influencing the entire culture. The Heritage Foundation was a force.

In 1981, with the arrival of the Reagan presidency, the Heritage Foundation published a 1,093-page blueprint, *Mandate for Leadership: Policy Management in a Conservative Administration*. It included 2,000 recommendations for the Reagan administration, of which almost 2/3 were adopted. Included in the work was a call for

the end of the postal monopoly, one of the myriads of calls for the privatization of the Postal Service that would come from the Heritage Foundation over the next decades. The Heritage Foundation pushed early on that the long-term future of the Postal Service needed to be re-examined. They advocated for the opening of private express statutes and the rapid increase in subcontracting postal work to private sources.

The Heritage Foundation never wandered too far from a call for postal privatization. In the '80s, '90s, into the 2000s, right up to the current day, the Heritage Foundation has come out with works like:

Privatization: A Strategy for Cutting Federal Spending, 1983; *Privatizing the Postal Service*, 1987; *Curing Postal Service Ills by a Dose of Competition*, 1988; *Postal Service Blues*, 1997; *Real Transformation Needed at Postal Service*, 2002; *Can the Postal Service be Saved?*, 2003; *Postal Service Running Out of Money*, 2011; *Can the Postal Service Have a Future?*, 2013; *Amazon Controversy Makes the Case for a Private-Sector U.S. Postal Service*, 2018.

Trump became special to the Heritage Foundation

In 2014, long before Donald Trump was a candidate to be president, the Heritage Foundation began putting together a listing of conservatives that could hypothetically serve in a future conservative White House. It is rumored that they built a database

of 3,000 people who met their criteria to serve. Reportedly, several hundred people from the Heritage Foundation database eventually received jobs in the Trump Administration. The Heritage Foundation also recommended people to the Cabinet and advised on Trump's Supreme Court picks. Supposedly, then head of the Heritage Foundation, Jim DeMint, advocated for Mick Mulvaney who became head of the Office of Management and Budget and Jeff Sessions to be Attorney General. At least 66 current and former Heritage Foundation members received positions in the administration.

In February of 2018, Thomas Binion, director of congressional and executive branch relations at the Heritage Foundation commented that Trump had implemented 64% of the "unique policy recommendations" from the Foundation. And that it had been done faster than what took place under Reagan.

The Heritage Foundation had its place in the Trump White House, receiving results. And when Trump wanted to strike back at Jeff Bezos and Amazon by going after the Postal Service, he didn't have to look very far within his administration, staff and cabinet to find Heritage Foundation alumni ready, willing, and able to provide him with all the propaganda he would need to attack the Postal Service and move toward privatization. ☐

A lifetime of fighting for justice

In the 1960s, many women entered the ranks of the US Post Office. This hiring came as a result of the Kennedy era ending of separate postal registers by gender. In NYC, the influx of mostly black women workers transformed the post office and its unions. Phil Seligman, Executive VP of the Manhattan-Bronx Postal Union in NYC (later the NYMAPU), talked about the dramatic change this brought. “The change was a more aggressive change, they wouldn’t take abuse, they fought back, they hit back, and it was good.”*

Key among these militant women was Eleanor Bailey, a newly divorced single mother from Long Island, who took a job on Tour 1 at GPO (now JAF) and became a union delegate (shop steward). She challenged management, challenged fellow stewards, and challenged male workers to accept the women. She forced management to build female rest rooms at GPO by staging a 6-hour protest in front of the bathroom. The women workers (including Eleanor in a white miniskirt!) would not let anyone use the facilities until postal management agreed to provide Ladies Rooms.

At that time, raises for postal workers depended on Congress. Postal workers made so little that they were entitled to food stamps. There was no collective bargaining, only “collective begging.” Eleanor recalled the protests in Washington about pay: “[In 1969], the last year before we went on strike we went down there with 200 pounds of



peanuts. . . We walked around the post office and said ‘no more peanuts, no more peanut salaries’”*

The next step was the Great Postal Strike of 1970, the largest wildcat strike in U.S. history, and the largest strike against the federal government. When the Local 36 letter carriers went out, Eleanor Bailey did not hesitate. She was one of the thousands of clerks who walked out or refused to cross the Branch 36 picket lines. As a rank and file leader, Eleanor Bailey patrolled the picket lines and the underground tunnels around the station to make sure no workers snuck in. When she found out that her own father had gone to work, she told him, “Dad, I promise you—cross the picket line, I will break your legs.”* (He didn’t.)

After eight days, the Nixon administration and the Postmaster General capitulated. The 1970 Postal Reorganization Act and the first

national Collective Bargaining Agreement (1971) followed. This established the four major postal unions as exclusive representatives. The APWU covers clerks, maintenance, and motor vehicle: the MBPU became Local 10 of this national union. It is today’s NY Metro Area Postal Union, for which Eleanor Bailey continued as a steward for another 30 years, as well as being Legislative Director, Human Relations Director, and head of the Trustees.

Her militancy continued in helping to found and build the Post Office Women for Equal Rights (POWER) to empower and advance women in the union. She was also an officer of the Coalition for Labor Union Women, CLUW. At her funeral, sisters from NY Metro, as well as the Brooklyn and Mid-Hudson APWU, came dressed in “Rosie the Riveter”/APWU POWER t-shirts to celebrate Eleanor Bailey’s years of struggle for women’s rights.

Since her retirement, Eleanor headed the Moe Biller Retiree Chapter in NYC. Despite her reliance on a wheelchair and two canes, she was a regular participant in Stop Staples rallies and gathering public support for postal banking. She never missed an opportunity to fight to save America’s Postal Service.

And through it all, “Mama E” managed to be a loving mother and grandmother, attend her church, work with her community organization to help youth in the Bronx, and mentor many of the NY Metro stew-

ards and officers. She was never too busy, too tired, or too ill to be there for others.

Eleanor G. Bailey's spirit, her joy in life, her dedication, will always be with us. She was truly a force of nature. ☐

**Philip Rubio, There's Always Work in the Post Office: African American Postal Workers and the Fight for Jobs, Justice, and Equality*

Mark Dimondstein, APWU President: Thank you, Sister Eleanor G. Bailey!

On behalf of our entire Executive Board and the 200,000 members of the American Postal Workers Union, AFL-CIO, I extend our deep sympathies to the Eleanor G. Bailey family in this difficult time of great loss. Our APWU family mourns



with you. Sister Bailey is embedded in APWU history and our ongoing march for justice.

Sister Bailey was a long term proud postal worker, courageous striker in the historic postal strike, dynamic local union leader, a founder of Post Office Women for Equal Rights (POWER), Executive Board member of the Coalition of Labor Union Women, a mentor for dynamic younger leaders, and the leader of the Moe Biller Retirees chapter. At an age when most would

have slowed down and kicked back, she was out there during the Stop Staples campaign.

As an unsung hero Sister Eleanor, and so many others, plowed the fields and built our strong APWU foundation. We can best honor her life by standing on her shoulders and giving our best to the continuing struggle for freedom and justice, the cause that beat in her heart until the end. I am confident as you mourn, you will find much to celebrate in a productive life so well lived.

Thank you, Sister Eleanor G. Bailey. ☐

Eleanor's legacy—Phil Rubio, Durham, NC

Iam so sorry to hear of the passing of Eleanor Bailey. I only got to meet her once, but it was truly a mindblowing experience. It was in October 2004 when I interviewed her for several hours along with Joann Flagler, Gregory Wilson, Frederick John, and Carlton Tilley, at NY Metro headquarters. I was conducting oral history research for *There's Always Work at the Post Office*, a history of black postal worker activism. She had so many insights and stories, and was involved in so many groundbreaking actions including the 1970 nationwide strike



and the founding of POWER. She was generous with her time that day, and her experiences did a lot to inform my thinking and writing. I included some of her stories in that book and also my forthcoming book on the strike. (My favorite was when she talked about how in all her years of grievance meetings with postal management, she would argue confidently from the contract and usually won. But she also admitted with a laugh: "A couple of times I made up stuff!") Eleanor was



an advocate for postal workers, plain and simple, and she would not be put down. It was easy for me to see then the tremendous respect that the others seated at the table with their own stories had for her leadership. Her legacy endures in the APWU and the fight for equality and labor rights, and she will be missed. ☐

Philip F. Rubio is author of There's Always Work at the Post Office: African American Postal Workers and the Fight for Jobs, Justice and Equality

Improper Emergency Placement— “Unconscionable!”

By Flo Summergrad

Article 16.7 in our Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) is the “Emergency Procedure.” This is the only thing management can do to employees without giving them the right to due process. That is why it is limited to emergencies—those times when immediate action is needed.

Article 16.7 stipulates the situations that could constitute an emergency: “where the allegation involves intoxication (use of drugs or alcohol), pilferage, or failure to observe safety rules and regulations, or where retaining the employee on duty may result in damage to U.S. Postal Service property, loss of mail or funds, or where the employee may be injurious to self or others.” That’s it. NOT failure to follow instructions or insubordination.

Because this procedure denies basic due process rights, management is required to exercise the utmost care and good judgment before putting someone on Emergency Placement Off Duty. Further, unless the emergency involves criminal activity, the employee should be returned to duty once the emergency is over. Further disciplinary action may be taken, but the worker should not be left hanging.

At Morgan Station (P&DC), supervisors have run amok with frivolous “EP”s and using the Postal

Police to escort people out. In the last six months, at least 20 people have been “EP”-ed, most with no just cause. This is an intimidation tactic used by lazy supervisors and MDOs who don’t know how to manage people.

Morgan Director Jackie Owens just won an arbitration decision for one of these improper Emergency Placements. (USPS Case # B15CBD17630312) NBA Pete Coradi successfully argued the case. In September 2017, the supervisor put the PSE out for allegedly texting for a Begin Tour. To conform to Article 16.7, she called it “pilferage,” which is not accurate. At Step 2, management changed the story and said the reason was “injurious to self or others.” At arbitration, he blamed the contradiction on a “typo.”

Arbitrator Wellington J. Davis, Jr., wrote: “The mere fact that an employee was placed on Emergency Placement for eleven months without being issued discipline is unconscionable!” He stresses that an EP should be short-lived before disciplinary action is taken if there is just cause. Arbitrator Davis awarded full back pay for this “never-ending” EP, which he considered a fatal flaw in the USPS case.

Kudos to Jackie and Pete! This arbitration should help curb the practice of wrongful Emergency Placements. ☐

Contract update

As per the Constitution of the American Postal Workers Union, the Rank and File Bargaining Committee voted against the acceptance of a proposed agreement that was made by the National Negotiations Committee, and therefore the contract will not be sent out on a referendum. It was mandated that the National Negotiations Committee reopen negotiations. This was attempted on December 19th and 20th 2018. The APWU and the USPS are now at “impasse.” The next major step is interest arbitration. There is still opportunity for the Negotiations Committee to make presentations to management throughout this process. While it is possible that such a presentation could be accepted by management, subsequently approved by the Rank-and-File Committee, then sent on to the membership for a ratification vote, it is more likely that we are headed for interest arbitration. ☐



HURRAY! NEW STEWARDS COMING ON BOARD

More than 20 new shop stewards from all over the Local will be getting training from January 28 – February 1, 2019. They will then be certified to represent their pay locations, adding new energy and strength to our fight against management. The UM and news Flashes will let you know who and where they are. We are excited that so many good members stepped up in every craft! ☐

Thank you, John Dirzius!

By Flo Summergrad

John Dirzius was a union leader who was able to keep on top of a tremendous caseload, postal data, arbitration decisions, and the many



APWU locals under his jurisdiction. In his 48 years of service to the union, John served as a shop steward, President of the Greater Connecticut Area Local for over twenty years, and Northeast Regional Coordinator since 2009. It was in this capacity that we in the NY Metro Area Postal Union worked under his leadership and grew to love and respect him. Many of our stewards learned from him during training classes and none of us will forget his speeches on the importance of the political arena for advancing the cause of working people.

John Dirzius brought to the APWU, not only his brains, but also his great heart. He had a passion for serving the members and he saw the union as a way to fight for better lives and social justice for all. After Hurricane Maria devastated Puerto

Rico, he and APWU President Mark Dimondstein visited the postal workers there and brought solidarity and strength to the people.

From the young man who was fired in 1972 because the Postmaster in Seymour, CT thought his hair was too long [really!], John Dirzius grew into the role of organizing and leading workers to fight for their rights. Well before the Memo that gave PSEs a path to become career employees, he was using his role as NE Regional Coordinator to pressure postal management toward converting the PSEs at DVD and other facilities where there was a clear need for clerk staffing.

As Regional Coordinator for the NE Region, John Dirzius represented all APWU crafts—Clerk, Maintenance, and Motor Vehicle. At the same time, he played a leading role in the New Haven Central Labor Council and the CT AFL-CIO. In addition to work within the labor movement, he served as a community mediator and volunteered in several civic and youth organizations. He and his wife of 44 years have three children and four grandchildren.

Numerous community and labor leadership awards have been bestowed on John Dirzius for his outstanding work. In 2001, his college, Antioch University named him Alumnus of the Year “for his efforts in representing postal workers during the anthrax attacks that closed the Southern Connecticut P&DC and for exposing management’s attempt to hide the truth from the workers.”

The officers, stewards, and members of NY Metro Area Postal Union will forever have the model of John Dirzius’s dedication to emulate. As individuals and as a Local of the APWU, we extend our best wishes to John for a happy and well-deserved retirement. We cannot thank him enough for all that he has given to our organization and the labor movement. We can best honor him by taking up the struggle that he has left in



2016: John Dirzius marches with APWU in support of Verizon strikers.

our hands and putting his lessons to good use. ☑

Ron Suslak appointed APWU NE Regional Coordinator

On January 15, 2019, Ron Suslak, President of the Queens Area Local for 29 years, Vice President of the NY State APWU, and National RI 399 Representative, was appointed as the new Northeast Regional Coordinator by President Dimondstein and confirmed by the National Executive Board.

Congratulations and Good Luck, Ron!

POSTAL PRIDE

SC PO named to honor lynched Postmaster



In 1897, President McKinley chose Frazier B. Baker, a 42-year-old school teacher and father of six, to be the postmaster in Lake City, South Carolina. Racist whites objected that they “would not take mail from the hand of a Negro.” But Baker refused to resign.

On February 22, 1898, a white mob torched the post office which was also the Baker home. Frazier Baker and his baby, Julia, were killed. Lavinia Baker barely escaped with her five wounded children.

The Black community demanded that President McKinley take action on this “horrible occurrence.” More than a year later, 13 white men were arrested and tried by the federal government. But there was no justice. Witnesses lied to protect the killers; the result was a mistrial. The terror against the Baker family went unpunished, a common thread in U.S. Black history.

To ensure that lynching will not be forgotten, U.S. Congressman Jim Clyburn (D-SC) introduced a bill to rename the town’s post office after Postmaster Baker. The bill was co-sponsored by the entire South Carolina congressional delegation and President Trump signed it into law. It is fitting to honor Frazier Baker Post Office as a symbol of Black History Month 2019. ☐

Postal News Briefs

GOVERNMENT SHUTDOWN

The longest government shutdown in U.S. history began on December 22, 2018 at midnight. The legislative and executive branches of government have failed to adequately meet their responsibilities and fund government operations and agencies. Funding takes place when Congress passes appropriations bills or continuing resolutions and the President signs the legislation providing the necessary funds. When there is a government shut-



down, it takes place on the backs of working people. Whatever the motivation for the shutdown, the results are the ongoing pain and suffering of over 800,000 federal workers who are either working without pay or being furloughed. The corporate media make it seem that government shutdowns are somehow legitimate ways of fighting political differences in Washington. This is neither just nor workable. The solution is that the President of the United States and the leadership of Congress must immediately find the solution to fund the government and stop holding working people hostage.

LA TEACHERS STRIKE

The LA teachers are fighting the same privatization push that postal workers face. From Trump’s appointment of Betsy DeVos as Secretary of Education on down, people are being placed in authority over school districts who have no background in education and an agenda to dismantle public education. The LA teachers are in the position of working in an institution led by people who want it to fail. The United Teachers of LA (UTLA) are demanding smaller classes, more support staff, safer school and community schools. This would mean limiting the drain of public funds for private schools.



200 MILLION INDIAN WORKERS IN 2-DAY STRIKE

200 million workers staged a general strike across India on January 8th and 9th. The massive strike, organized by the CTU (Central Trade Union) federation, protested a new labor law that would undermine the rights of workers and unions. Postal workers shut down the mail: “In support with the National Federation of Postal Employees, the All India Postal Employees Union called for two days of strike where the state post offices remained closed.” They demanded more staffing and hiring in response to onerous workloads and increasing unemployment. ☐



LA Teachers Strike photo: Wilson Pumpnickel

CALENDAR

Wednesday, February 20

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 20

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)

SISTERS! Come to NY Metro P.O.W.E.R.

meetings! (As an APWU woman, you are already a member of 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 27 • March 27



APWU LOCAL 10 BLDG. CORP

Beginning Balance as of 11/01/2018	\$ 1,349,733.94
Total Revenue November 2018	\$ 136,420.04
Operating Expenses November 2018	\$ 148,613.86
Total Net Income November 2018	\$ -12,913.82
Closing Balance as of 11/30/2018	\$1,337,540.12

APWU LOCAL 10 BLDG. CORP

Beginning Balance as of 12/01/2018	\$1,337,540.12
Total Revenue December 2018	\$ 112,283.60
Operating Expenses December 2018	\$ 178,097.35
Total Net Income December 2018	\$ -65,813.75
Closing Balance as of 12/31/2018	\$ 1,271,726.37

Call for justice! Judge rules that Mumia can appeal



On December 28, 2018, Judge Leon Tucker reinstated appeal rights for Mumia Abu-Jamal, whose conviction for killing a police officer in 1982 has been contested for decades as a violation of due process.

Unions, including NYMAPU, have joined civil rights activists worldwide in calling for the right to appeal. Judge Tucker's ruling was based on the "appearance of bias" because Pennsylvania Supreme Court Justice Castille insisted on presiding over appeals in Mumia's case even though he had been the prosecuting DA.

Once again, there is right-wing pressure on DA Krasner to delay Mumia's appeal. Justice delayed is justice denied. After 37 years, it is time to let the course of justice go forward. In the letter below, President Jonathan Smith adds his voice to the many who support fairness for Mumi. ☑

January 7, 2019

Dear District Attorney Krasner:

As the President of the New York Metro Area Postal Union, I ask you to do the right thing. Stand for justice, and not stand in the way of the justice process for Mumia Abu-Jamal. Do not appeal Judge Tucker's decision. As a progressive lawyer, you ran for District Attorney on a platform that included fighting for a fair justice process, not just for convictions. You promoted reviewing past convictions and freeing those wrongfully convicted. In Philadelphia, the decades-long denial of Mumia Abu-Jamal's due process rights stands out as the city's most notorious lack of a due process conviction. I urge you to allow Mumia Abu-Jamal to go forward with re-arguing his appeals, which Judge Tucker states would best serve the appearance of justice.

Your immediate attention towards this matter will be greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Jonathan Smith

President



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

“ Look forward confidently to the day when all who work for a living will be one with no thought to their separateness as Negroes, Jews, Italians or any other distinctions. This will be the day when we bring into full realization the American dream—a dream yet unfulfilled. A dream of equality of opportunity, of privilege and property widely distributed; a dream of a land where men will not take necessities from the many to give luxuries to the few; a dream of a land where men will not argue that the color of a man's skin determines the content of his character; a dream of a nation where all our gifts and resources are held not for ourselves alone, but as instruments of service for the rest of humanity; the dream of a country where every man will respect the dignity and worth of the human personality. That is the dream...”

DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.
AFL-CIO Convention, December 1961