



The

Union Mail

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Published by the NY Metro Area Postal Union

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

Labor Day March in NYC 2022



DeJOY'S DANGEROUS TEN YEAR PLAN UPDATE—See pages 3 and 4

PRESIDENT'S LETTER

We fight for jobs, not OT



Jonathan Smith

Many members are under the misunderstanding that the union's job is to guarantee that you get overtime (OT). Many members don't understand that the reason many of us have a job in the Postal Service today is because the union fought for management to fill residual vacancies. Many members call my office and complain that they are not getting OT, but here is the hard truth, there is no language anywhere in the CBA that requires the post office to give employees OT. The contract states in:

Article 8.5.F Section 5. Overtime Assignments

When needed, overtime work for regular full-time employees shall be scheduled among qualified employees doing similar work in the work location where the employees regularly work in accordance to the following:

A. Two (2) weeks prior to the start of each calendar quarter, full-time regular employees desiring to work overtime during the quarter shall place their name on an Overtime Desired list

B. Lists will be established by craft, section, or tour in accordance with Article 30, Local Implementation.

C. 1. a. When during the quarter the need for overtime arises, employees with the necessary skills having listed their names will be selected in order of their seniority on a rotating basis.

b. Those absent or on leave shall be passed over.

D. If the voluntary Overtime Desired List does not provide suffi-

cient qualified people, qualified full-time regular employees not on the list may be required to work overtime on a rotating basis with the first opportunity assigned to the junior employee.

E. Exceptions to C and D above if requested by the employee, may be approved by Local management in exceptional cases based on equity (e.g., anniversaries, birthdays, illness, deaths).

F. Excluding December, no full-time regular employee will be required to work overtime on more than four (4) of the employee's five (5) scheduled days in a service week or work over ten (10) hours on a regularly scheduled day, over eight (8) hours on a nonscheduled day, or over six (6) days in a service week.

Article 8.5.G

G. Full-time employees not on the Overtime Desired List may be required to work overtime only if all available employees on the Overtime Desired List have worked up to twelve (12) hours in a day or sixty (60) hours in a service week.

Employees on the Overtime Desired List:

1. may be required to work up to twelve (12) hours in a day and sixty (60) hours in a service week (subject to payment of penalty overtime pay set forth in Section 4.D for contravention of Section 5.F); and

2. excluding December, shall be limited to no more than twelve (12) hours of work in a day and no more than sixty (60) hours of work in a service week.

However, the Employer is not required to utilize employees on the Overtime Desired List at the penalty overtime rate if qualified employees on the Overtime Desired List who are not yet entitled to penalty overtime are available for the overtime assignment."

I recently spoke to some maintenance employees who were upset that the union was recently victorious in winning an arbitration that will force the Postal Service to fill many of our vacant maintenance duty assignments and the Postal Service was fined quite a significant amount of money for their failure in filling these maintenance jobs. Over a million dollars and counting, but the members are also upset that the filling of these maintenance jobs may cut the need for OT.

There are people on the street right now in need of a good job with decent pay and benefits. This arbitration decision has the ability to change lives for the better. We forget that once upon a time this was every one of us. We fight for jobs not OT. Please don't forget where you came from. Everyone deserves the same opportunity you were once given. ☐

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LEGISLATIVE AND POLITICAL REPORT

Will Congress attempt to reign in Louis DeJoy?

Chuck Zlatkin, Legislative and Political Director

While barely escaping criminal indictment and withstanding calls for his removal from members of Congress and the media, Postmaster General Louis DeJoy is going ahead with implementing his *Delivering for America* Ten-Year Plan that will bring about slower service, higher prices and the closing of post offices. More than 200 postal facilities will cut back on services as DeJoy implements his plan of consolidation into “mega-centers” and the opening of Sorting and Delivery Centers which he claims is the key part of the plan that will save on the cost of trucks the Postal Service hires to ship mail from facility to facility.

The Postal Service in its Eagle Magazine states that this will be “massive redesign of the postal processing, transportation, and delivery infrastructure,” including a “systematic replacement of many existing facilities.” And “Over the coming decade – and starting in 2022 – the Postal Service will establish a redesigned operational model that will touch almost 500 network mail processing locations; 10,000 delivery units; 1,000 transfer hubs; and almost 100,000 carrier routes. The new footprint of facilities and connective transportation will be greatly simplified, resulting in a modern network of much larger facilities with fewer, fuller trips between them.”

According to Steve Hutkins’ Save The Post Office: “Rather than cutting expenses, this element of the DFA plan will actually run up deliv-

ery costs – to the tune of \$2 billion a year, \$16 billion over the remaining eight years of the 10-year plan. Much of the financial relief Biden and Congress have provided will be for naught, and the changes in the delivery network will ensure that more cost cutting is necessary. The plan is a bad deal for postal workers and for the country as a whole, and the Postal Service has not been straight with stakeholders, employees, and the public about what the consequences will be.”

According to *Government Executive*: “The changes will mean letter carriers no longer go to their local facility to pick up mail for their route, instead traveling farther distances after starting at a consolidated location. The impacted post offices will still conduct their retail operations, but many of the back-end functions will be stripped away and relocated.”

Hutkins puts the arrogance of DeJoy’s plan into perspective: “Congress and the Biden administration have been very good to the Postal Service: \$10 billion in emergency pandemic relief, nearly \$50 billion to fix the problems caused by the retiree healthcare benefit mandate, and \$3 billion for electric vehicles. You’d think everything would be good for a while and we could stop hearing about the existential crisis facing the Postal Service.

“Instead, the Postmaster General continues to call for drastic measures. His *Delivering for America* Plan has already slowed down First

Class mail and raised prices across the board, and it will eventually include reducing retail hours, closing post offices, and disposing of historic properties. The PMG is also talking about eliminating 50,000 jobs.”

The cunning of DeJoy is that he has not submitted the plan to be reviewed by the Postal Regulatory Commission because the Postal Service is taking the position that the plan involves only “operational” matters and therefore is not under the PRC’s Advisory Opinion process. The law requires the Postal Service to seek such an opinion for changes that generally affect service on a nationwide or substantially nationwide basis. Also, the Office of Inspector General is not auditing it because it is too early in the process for an audit.

HR 8781, the Ensuring Accurate Postal Rates Act, was introduced by Virginia’s Representative Gerald Connolly on September 9, 2022. The legislation calls for the Postal Regulatory Commission to reexamine the rate-setting system it established for the Postal Service in 2020. It was co-sponsored by Representatives Sam Graves and Emmanuel Cleaver of Missouri. They want a federal commission to evaluate Postal Service rate increases to see if the USPS is raising costs above normal inflation-based levels. This legislation only deals with a small part of what is happening to the Postal Service under DeJoy, but it is a beginning. ☐

Will DeJoy's sortation and delivery centers threaten jobs?

Chuck Zlatkin, Legislative and Political Director

Postmaster General Louis DeJoy's plans for consolidation and centralization of postal functions may seem sensible to some, but the impact that it will have on postal workers and those who depend upon a public post office is very troubling.

In an August 25, 2022, email to members, APWU Industrial Relations Director Charlie Cash sent a notification regarding Sortation and Delivery Centers. Cash explained that while the APWU was in Convention, the Postal Service notified the union about the creation of 21 Sortation and Delivery Centers (SDCs) throughout the country. He explained that "An SDC is basically a large facility that will house multiple carrier units under one roof and will also have at least one machine to sort packages. It appears these SDCs are being created in facilities that were processing centers that were previously AMP'd elsewhere or created inside larger facilities that the Postal Service believes they have room for an SDC." Cash explained that the administration didn't know much about how many APWU members would be affected because APWU leadership had met with the Postal Service on July 12, 2022 "in what we thought was a meeting to discuss the 'mega-plants'. Instead we were ambushed with the SDC concept. We voiced various concerns, especially on the timeline and how we were not given an opportunity for input."

DeJoy's administration presented the union with 10 locations they were planning on implementing but


didn't provide the 11 other locations. The disrespect that DeJoy has for the union and the members it represents was evidenced by the information not provided to the union.

James Lloyd, Director (A) Labor Relations Policies and Programs, sent a letter to President Dimondstein on August 12, 2022 stating, "the purpose of creating S & DCs is to reduce transportation and mail handling costs, as well as provide Postal customers with additional services. S & DCs will allow for easier standardization and management of operations while improving building and operating conditions for employees."

Eric Katz in Government Executive puts this plan into perspective, "Most post offices around the country operate as delivery units, meaning mail carriers go to them to pick up mail and packages for their routes before bringing them to homes and businesses. Postmaster General Louis DeJoy has repeatedly decried this model, saying it is inefficient and can lead to as many as dozens of such units in one metropolitan area. Instead, he is looking to open 'sorting and delivery centers' around the country, as well as larger mega centers, that can take on more work in less space. Letter carriers will have to travel farther to take mail to its final destination, but DeJoy said it will save costs on the contracted trucks that USPS hires to bring mail between various facilities."

Steve Hutkins of Save the Post Office also sees the problems with the plan, "When a post office loses

its carriers, it also loses one of its main reasons for being there. The Postal Service uses the excess space in the back of the building to justify various modes of downsizing and dismantling: reduced operating hours, relocations to smaller spaces in shopping centers, conversions to contract offices, suspensions over lease issues, property disposals, and, of course, closures. We saw all this in 2011-2015, when the Postal Service did a Delivery Unit Optimization (DUO) initiative that relocated carriers from about 2700 post offices. The OIG did not find much in the way of cost savings, and the Postal Service has never made a post-implementation audit available to the public, if it ever even did one.

"The *Delivering for America* plan is even worse than what the OIG proposed in 2011. It doesn't just empty 10,000 post offices of a crucial function. It also relocates carriers to centralized facilities much further away than the nearby post office where the OIG had imagined them going. These extra miles are the plan's fatal flaw." 



PART 2

Postal history—a second look

Chuck Zlatkin, Legislative and Political Director

To know where you are and where you are going, it can be helpful to know where you have been, where you came from. For postal workers and people who rely on a public post office, understanding how the current Postal Service came to be, is not only helpful, but essential in the fight to maintain the public post office.

Part 1 ended with the appointment of Benjamin Franklin as the first Postmaster General of the United States, but Franklin's involvement with the posting of mail goes back way before that. Franklin was one of the two postmasters that served the Crown in colonial North America. Franklin was an extraordinary talented and accomplished individual who was impactful on the very establishment of the United States. As a hands-on postmaster he was the major force in growing the post office from its British model of serving the interests of the elite to the United States post office which was designed to serve all the people.

Many historians describe the important role that the post office played in the development of the Republic, with some even stating that it wouldn't have survived without the post office.

What was it like for people who worked for the post office? In the beginning people who did the work of the post office were not considered employees but government officials. The amount of mail was not great and the work was in no way difficult. Postal workers received free board and were paid well for the period. But as the country grew and railroads were created, the vol-



ume of mail expanded rapidly. The increase in the number of publications -- from catalogs to magazines and newspapers -- changed the nature of the work. With the need for more staff, and the budgets for postal work not growing, the wages for postal workers plummeted.

The hours of work for postal workers increased, and the working conditions got worse. In addition, getting a job in the post office had become totally political. Appointments for jobs came from political leaders; every time the party in power changed, so did employment in the post office. For this reason, people looked at their postal jobs as temporary. With an unmotivated work force and continuing increases in mail volume, the post office had serious problems.

To deal with the problems of the post office in the late 1860s, there was discussion of making a civil service system. A Civil Service Commission was created in 1869, which finally led to the Pendleton Act, passed in 1883, establishing a genuine civil service. Initially, there was a downside to all of this because once postal jobs were no longer patronage positions, elected officials lost interest in postal workers and

working conditions became even worse. Nothing improved in the beginning of the 1900s, and while other industries were being unionized, there was no union that postal workers could join.

There were basically three types of postal workers: clerks who worked inside stations, letter carriers who delivered the mail in cities, and railway mail clerks. The first group to organize were the letter carriers. They all did the same job, basically worked the same hours, and had the same demands. The National Association of Letter Carriers was formed in 1889.

The circumstances for clerks were much different. Clerks engaged in a wide range of jobs requiring different levels of skills with each having different needs. This made organizing among clerks much more difficult. When the APWU was founded after the Great Postal Strike of 1970, it was the coming together of eight separate unions including: National Postal Union, United Federation of Post Office Clerks, National Association of Post Office and General Services Maintenance Employees, National Federation of Motor Vehicle Employees and National Association of Special of Special Delivery Messengers.

One of the most revolutionary aspects of the public post office was the advent of RFD – Rural Free Delivery -- when it became a permanent part of the post office in 1902, guaranteeing mail delivery to all Americans regardless of where they lived. ☐

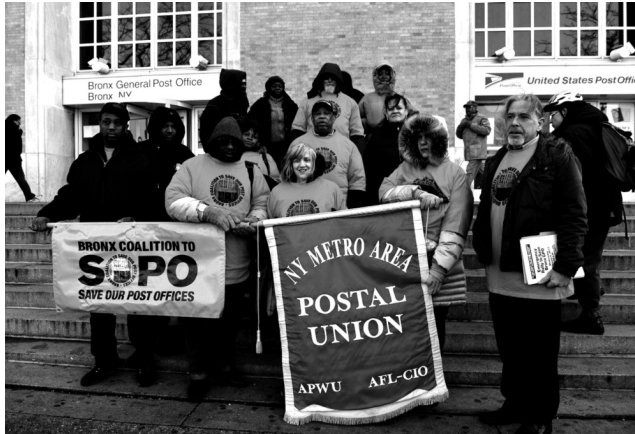
[Look for Part 3 in the next issue of *The Union Mail*.]

Steve Hutkins: A true hero in the fight for a public Postal Service

By Chuck Zlatkin, Legislative and Political Director

Steve Hutkins is a retired NYU Gallatin School professor who became involved with the Postal Service when he read that his local post office in Rhinecliff, New York's Hudson Valley was about to close. He started a website to bring attention to it. The more he learned about what the Postal Service was planning to do with post offices all around the country, he expanded his local website to a national one and savethepostoffice.com was born. The site Hutkins created provides important information for those concerned with maintaining a public post office.

Hutkins and savethepostoffice.com has been acknowledged for its unique contributions. In its first year online, Save the Post Office was named the "Most Valuable Website" by John Nichols in Nation Magazine's annual honor roll. In 2020, Hutkins was one of twenty people honored by Vice.com as "Human of the Year." Vice wrote, "[the] Save the Post Office" project "made Hutkins one of the most consistent independent USPS observers looking out for the best interests of ordinary U.S. residents.... In a way, Hutkins demonstrates the finest example of what a functioning civil society looks like in a year where we haven't had an awful lot of those. The entire premise of a representative democracy is that most people can't or don't want to pay close attention to what the government is doing all the time. But a functioning democracy also



2013 rally to save the Bronx GPO

requires people, like Hutkins, facilitating an informed citizenry that puts a transparent government to good use."

At this crucial time in the fight to maintain a public Postal Service Steve Hutkins' work is more important than ever. Considering the fact that Hutkins had no connection to the Postal Service other than as an appreciative customer, his work in exposing the damage done by Postmaster General Louis DeJoy is amazing. Hutkins is doing the work that should be being done by the national postal unions. Somehow the current leadership of each of the national postal unions is supportive of DeJoy. None of them called for his removal until the 2022 APWU National Convention passed a resolution calling for replacement of DeJoy as PMG.

Beyond the website Steve Hutkins is a pro public Postal Service activist. From 2013 to the present, he has been regularly submitting detailed testimony to the Postal Regulatory Commission on behalf of saving post offices all over the country.

Hutkins' expertise on post offices has led him to have theories on why the Postal Service does what it does. One of the theories is "the Postal Service has a master plan that has been engineered by corporate powers to privatize the Postal Service. There's all kinds of evidence that privatization is the direction they're going, from articles in the Wall Street Journal and Bloomberg News to various other business-oriented media outlets. They're all kinds of conservative right-wing think tanks that produce academic justifications for it. This is happening in other countries around the world. So they want to privatize the U.S. Postal Service, but people are very attached to their post offices. They associate the post office with a public service. I'm starting to think that they want to get rid of the post office so that people will detach their feelings for the place, the post office, from the system that delivers the mail. They won't care as much about what happens to it when there's no post office to anchor the abstraction of the process that delivers the mail into the concrete experience of a place."

Steve Hutkins is a major reason why there is still a fighting chance that the public Postal Service will be maintained. Hutkins provides important analysis and information, essential tools for pro-public postal service activists to use in the fight. Hutkins is an inspiration to many because he shows what one individual can do to change the course of history. ☐

NY Metro P.O.W.E.R. made lots of children happy to start school!

P.O.W.E.R. (Post Office Women for Equal Rights) was founded to enable our Union sisters to develop ourselves as strong women on the job and in our communities. In addition to fighting against sexual harassment, domestic violence, rape, and other issues that affect our lives, P.O.W.E.R. has directed efforts to empowering people in our communities. Our sisters, brothers, and siblings have worked with postal union campaigns like Postal Banking and keeping local post offices open for the public.

This fall, there was a drive to get school supplies for families without sufficient resources for their chil-

dren. A happy start to school is a basis for keeping kids interested in learning. Children are the future. As trade unionists, we understand the connection between education and developing leaders.

In addition to many personal donations, the NY Metro Postal Union contributed to the school supply drive. There was a collective effort to make those funds work for the children starting this school year. P.O.W.E.R. sisters worked together making contacts with shelters that had families with children. Director of Organization Diane Erlanger ordered hundreds of book bags. The sisters spent hours filling the bags



with brand new school supplies.

The book bags were distributed to families in shelters in Manhattan, the Bronx, and Jersey City. Children were able to go to school feeling good. It makes us feel good too. ☑

Congratulations to NY Metro Area Postal Union new officers

Three of the people who have been in acting positions were officially installed on September 21, 2022. Under the NY Metro Area Postal Union Constitution, Article 7, the President must act to fill vacant positions. This is done on his recommendation with agreement by the Executive Board. In this case, all three officers received unanimous support and were announced at the September General membership meeting.

Jacquelyn (Jackie) Owens is now the full time Secretary-Treasure. Kim Smith is now the Director of the Morgan P&DC. Tyrone Blount is now the Assistant Director of the Morgan P&DC

These people are familiar to all of us and were recommended and endorsed based on their hard work in stepping up into difficult jobs to serve the Union. We thank and congratulate all of them. ☑



Jacquelyn (Jackie) Owens, Secretary-Treasurer and Tyrone Blount, Assistant Director, Morgan P&DC



Kim Smith, Director of Morgan P&DC

Officers negotiate the NJI&NDC LMOU

Article 30 of our Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) leaves 22 Items to be negotiated at the local level. These are specific to the installation and affect our lives on the job. These include wash-up time, overtime and vacation structure, AL procedures, etc. Negotiations to change the existing Local Memorandum of Understanding (LMOU) may occur after a new contract is reached. This year, negotiations were held in 3 of our installations.

President Jonathan Smith attended the meetings on the NJ side. Executive Vice President Joseph Martir was in charge of the NY side. The negotiators put in a lot of hours studying the current LMOUs and discussing possible improvements.

Everyone understood that management would attempt to change or weaken language that benefits the workers. The negotiating team had to be disciplined and well-informed on all 22 items.

At the NJI&NDC, the team consisted of Director Jeffrey Lizardi, Assistant Director Cassandra Black, Assistant Maintenance Director Sherell Taite-Pridgen, Clerk Craft Director Flo Summergrad, with President Smith as our advisor. Jeff was the Chief Negotiator, which made him the spokesperson for the Union. On alternate days, he was the Chair. Jeff felt this was a good learning experience. Since APWU represents three crafts, some of the items are craft specific. The NDC team had offi-

cers coming from different crafts. Sisters Black and Taite-Pridgen stepped up strong to represent Motor Vehicle and Maintenance. As President Smith had predicted this experience developed our leaders.

Several small language improvements/ clarifications were agreed to. The major problems were management's reluctance to add the PSA into the LMOU and to propose unreasonable changes to the work areas for the Clerk craft. These items are considered IMPASSED. If they go to arbitration, the Union will keep members informed. However, thanks to the way the rules were written, nothing will change until after the impasse arbitration is concluded. ☐

RETIREMENT and FEDERAL BENEFITS SEMINAR

LOCATION: NY Metro Union Office, 350 W 31st St, 1st floor, NY NY 10001

This is **NO COST** seminar for our members and their spouses/partners only. This will help you understand your federal benefits and your retirement options. This is not just for those ready to retire. Newer workers can learn to plan their benefits NOW.

REGISTER with your steward or bring the form to the Union office. A commitment fee/per person of a \$10 money order will be returned at the seminar. For safety, Masks and Social Distancing will be enforced. (DEADLINE October 28, 2022)

NAME: _____

Spouse or Partner's name (if attending) _____

SELECT: WED 11/2 @ 9am — WED 11/2 @ 12 noon ____ WED 11/2 @ 3pm ____

We can never forget the people who died at work. We are reprinting this article to keep the fight for safe jobs real.

We remember: Eddie Domingo, killed at work

By Flo Summergrad

October 7, 1994 Our union brother and friend, MPE Eddie Domingo, was crushed to death at the NJ Bulk Mail Center. An OSHA investigation cited the Postal Service for failing to have a machine guard to protect the “nip point,” which is where a person or part of their body can be pulled into machinery.

When a worker is killed on the job, OSHA conducts a mandatory investigation, accompanied by representatives from the unions and management. In the case of MPE Domingo, the cause of the accident was a mystery, because his body was found in a different place than where the accident occurred. OSHA did a careful forensic investigation, as well as interviews with mechanics and review of all safety records.

Even so, false rumors were spread to cover up the actual cause of Eddie’s death. These ranged from “He was sleeping under the machine;” to “He was high on drugs.” This campaign was so successful that to this day, people still hear those lies as the cause of the fatal accident.

The facts must be remembered, not just to clear the name of a conscientious postal mechanic, but also to teach workers the importance of reporting and correcting safety hazards.

FACTS: MPE Domingo responded to a call of a stuck sack on the Sack Sorting Machine (SSM 4). He attempted to pull it out from

the top, but it was too jammed. The next step was going under the machine to dislodge the sack that way. Since it was time for lunch, the machinery was being turned off.

FACT: The way under the machine involved going down a ladder to get the SSM. The investigation revealed that loose belting had been thrown on the platform to keep dust from going to the work floor. That made the area pitch dark. At the base of the ladder was debris, including plastic loops and other tripping hazards. As Eddie stepped off the ladder and turned, he tripped.

FACT: These hazards caused him to fall forward. But there was no machine guard to protect the short space where the empty sack buckets go back into the track of the machine -- “the relatch area.” The SSM had already been turned off, but the machine torque meant a few buckets continued to drift to a stop.

FACT: Without a machine guard, Eddie fell against the bucket and was pulled between the bucket and the rail of the machine. Within a split second, he was crushed to death.

At the OSHA closing conference, the Director stressed that “machinery is unforgiving.” This is why anywhere clothing, a hand, or a body can be pulled in (“an in-running nip point”) **MUST** have a guard.

Eddie’s 20 year old son turned to the union and asked, “Do they mean that a \$50 piece of metal would have saved my father’s life?” Yes, Eddie would have lived to go home.

Postal workers are killed each year in industrial accidents. Don’t let it be you! Observe and question. Demand training for any job you’re assigned. File Form 1767 to get hazards fixed. Call your steward. We don’t come to work to die. Stand up for a safe workplace. ☐



Stand Up for Safe Jobs means questioning anything that seems unsafe. Protect yourself by using your right to the Safety tools:

JSA – ASK! Any time you work an unfamiliar job, you should be shown the JSA. Every job is supposed to have an updated Job Safety Analysis – JSA – that tells you how to do each step safely.

1767–Fill it out! This is a simple form to report a hazard or unsafe practice.

Grievance – File! Article 14 says management must provide a safe workplace. Your union rep can file a grievance if your supervisor doesn’t correct unsafe conditions. ☐

POSTAL PRIDE Union Pride

For the first time since the pandemic forced the Labor Day Parade to be cancelled, NYC’s unions marched proudly up Fifth Avenue. The Labor Day Parade is fun for workers and their families. Balloons, music, and bright colors make it a festive event. Our Local provided a trolley to transport anyone who could not walk the full distance as well as food and t-shirts for the participants. The officers who worked hard to organize the NY Metro presence at the parade were disheartened by the poor turnout.

Instead of getting discouraged, President Smith used this as an opportunity to educate our members about what it means to take pride in our unions. Before workers were organized, labor was ignored and taken for granted. His email reminds us that “Labor Day should hold a much deeper meaning for the working class and especially if you have the privilege to be a part of a unionized workforce which fights for fair wages, hours and working conditions. . .

“When we don’t participate in a holiday parade that was specifically created for us, then we are telling the rich that the rest of AMERICA DOES NOT MATTER OR WORSE, THAT THE WE SIMPLY DON’T CARE. People enjoy the benefits and forget the struggle! Thus, losing influence and power to bargain for fair wages, work hours and work conditions. What happened to the power of unions? people got comfortable with the scraps from the rich people’s tables and gave up the fight for a bigger slice of respect and dignity!”

To keep and improve the benefits organized labor has won, we have to show up – not just for the Labor Day Parade, but for all union rallies and campaigns. This is how we “help secure the job that makes everything else in your life possible. ☑

Postal News Briefs

SMISHING: PACKAGE TRACKING TEXT SCAMS



A scam to get your personal information texts your phone about tracking a package and provides a link to click. **DON’T** click the link! This type of fraud, called “smishing,” takes advantage of people’s trust in the Postal Service to ask for information like social security numbers and bank accounts. Genuine USPS messages will contain a tracking number but **NOT** a link. To protect yourself from this and other scams, go to www.uspis.gov/tipsprevntion/mail-fraud.

POSTAL RATE HIKES FOR THE HOLIDAYS

The Postal Rate Commission (PRC) approved postal rate hikes for the peak season. From October 2, 2022 through January 22, 2023, postal shipping rates on Priority, First Class, Parcel Select, and USPS Retail Ground will be raised. In addition to the impact on the public, the Alliance of Non-Profit Mailers has objected that this will hurt their shipping of packages from website sales and large premiums for donors.



The USPS is holding near-record cash, and well above historical norms. For years the cash position of the Postal Service has influenced the timing and amount of postal rate increases. If that held true at this time, the holiday rate hikes would not have happened.

CONTRACT TRUCKING COMPANY DEFRAUDING USPS

A contract company hauling mail for the Postal Service was convicted of defrauding the USPS. BJ Trucking in North Carolina was found guilty of defrauding the USPS by charging over \$1,679,086 worth of unautho-



rized fuel purchases and hundreds of thousands of dollars in illegal transfers to insiders, including Doug Cline, the company owner, and his sister. The contractor was guilty under the False Claims Act which will allow the United States to collect over \$5 million in damages. The hidden cost of using contractors instead of USPS drivers is not always exposed.

POSTAL UNIONS SUPPORT SOCIAL SECURITY FAIRNESS ACT

For postal employees who are covered under Civil Service Retirement, an important bill just got approved by the House Committee on Ways and Means. This is the HR 82, the Social Security Fairness Act, which would allow CSRS retirees to collect the full amount of the social security pensions they paid into. Under the Reagan administration, a law was passed, reducing the benefits for public sector workers who paid into both Civil Service and Social Security systems while the worked. Calling this “double dipping,” the Windfall Elimination Act of 1984 cut the social security pensions of retirees who worked both civil service and civilian jobs by 25% to 55%. The postal unions are asking us all to support the Social Security Fairness Act, which would correct this injustice. ☑



CALENDAR

Wednesday, October 19

5:30 pm

General Membership Meeting
via Zoom

Wednesday, November 16

5:30 pm

General Membership Meeting
via Zoom

As per the NY Metro Area Postal Union Constitution, there is no General Membership Meeting in December. Happy Holidays

ZOOM INSTRUCTIONS

Members Only!

- Download Zoom App
- Open link
- Enter Meeting ID #548-304-2304
- Mute audio
- Video must be on

APWU LOCAL 10 BLDG. CORP

Beginning Balance as of July 1, 2022 _____	\$1,288,054.01
Total Revenue July 2022 _____	\$ 207,975.24
Operating Expenses July 2022 _____	\$ 166,044.49
Total Net Income July 2022 _____	\$ 41,930.75
Ending Balance July 31, 2022 _____	\$1,329,984.76

APWU LOCAL 10 BLDG. CORP

Beginning Balance as of August 1, 2022 _____	\$ 1,329,984.76
Total Revenue August 2022 _____	\$ 204,382.15
Operating Expenses August 2022 _____	\$ 134,741.50
Total Net Income August 2022 _____	\$ 69,640.65
Ending Balance Aug 31, 2022 _____	\$ 1,399,625.41

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 1:00 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 will resume via ZOOM. Next meetings: October 25, 2022, at 5:30 pm; November 23, 2022, at 5:30 pm. ZOOM Meeting ID# 239-026-1053 [Follow ZOOM instructions outlined for the Membership meeting on this page.]

ANNUAL LEAVE CARRY-OVER for 2022 to 2023 is still 520 (As per the MOU between APWU and the USPS signed March 28, 2022.) Some managers are giving out wrong information!

Dwayne Efford wins APWU national COPA prize

Our NY Metro Postal Union delegation clapped and cheered when the winner of the – COPA prize – “Trip of a Lifetime” – was announced at the Convention as our own Dwayne Efford! This was a national raffle selected from everyone all over the country who has been making “COPA-matic” annual contributions to the APWU COPA fund. Our Local’s Director of Organization, Diane Erlanger, stressed that this is yet another way that it “pays to belong” and to contribute to our Union’s ability to get

political support for the issues of Postal workers. Winning this trip was an unexpected thrill for Dwayne Efford, who has been giving to COPA for many years. Dwayne has been a maintenance worker at the NJI&NDC for 25 years. He was an MPE and then was promoted to Electronic Technician (ET). For several years, Dwayne served as a Maintenance shop steward for NY Metro on Tour 1. His wife, Valerie Efford, just retired last year after working as a Mail Processing Clerk in the same facility. ☑



Dwayne Efford (seated), receives his prize from Director of Organization, Diane Erlanger. Behind him is President Jonathan Smith and Dwayne’s son

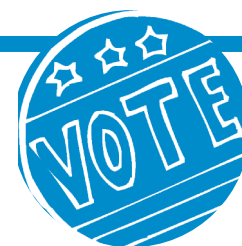


New York Metro Area Local, APWU
350 West 31st Street, 3rd Floor
New York, NY 10001

BUG

Periodicals class
POSTAGE PAID
at New York, NY

VOTE!



Do not take your right to vote for granted.
Suppressing voting rights is the path to destroying democracy.

It can happen here.

In 2022, we are in a dangerous time. Through most of this country's history, voting rights were expanded. In 2022, anti-democratic voter suppression laws are turning back the clock. It is a critical time to use your right to vote.

VOTE! Tell your family and friends to VOTE! Remind your co-workers to VOTE!
This November, use your VOTE!

unionmail@nymetro.org