

Philly PARCEL

Official Publication of the Philadelphia Bulk Mail Center Local 7048, American Postal Workers Union, AFL-CIO
Volume XXXII Number I January/February 2015

"One Workforce - One Struggle - One Union"

The Struggle Continues...

- ***Moe Biller***



CBA expires on May 20, 2015.

**We continue to protest the USPS decentralizing
(*Stop Staples*) of services.**

**WE have NOT given up the Fight to maintain Exceptional
Service as outlined in the United States Constitution!!**

American Postal Worker's Union
Philadelphia Bulk Mail Center
Local # 7048

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The **Philly PARCEL**
 Is an official publication of the
 Philadelphia Bulk Mail Center
 Local #7048

American Postal Worker's Union, AFL-CIO

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.....
Ray Pavel, Editor

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The President's View



President's VIEW

Happy New Year!!!!



As I start each New Year I remind the members to consider getting more involved with YOUR Union. In 2014 the local union was responsible for the attendance at both the State and National Conventions. The Lehigh Valley Area Local did a great job of hosting the Pennsylvania Postal Workers Union State Convention. They outdid themselves by providing the delegates with first class hospitality. The business of the convention was busy as usual for the PPWU. I was extremely proud of our delegation being active and participating during the convention. Since that time Local President for the LVAL Bernie Ogozolek, (pictured above, right, with Local 7048 Pres. Tarducci), has retired from the postal service and has stepped down as the Local President for a local he has lead for a quarter of a century. Bernie has been instrumental in making the LVAL one of the best locals in the country.

He was honored back in early December and our local paid tribute to his long career with the APWU. My wife and I attended the dinner and we are proud to call Bernie a friend. He will be missed by his members, but his family will surely benefit. Andy Kubat has taken over as their new local president and though he has huge shoes to fill, we are wishing him the very best as he begins as President of the Valley. Congratulations Bernie.

WEB SITE

I am pleased to report that the local union web site is back and is up and running. The web site address is the same, www.phillybmc7048.com. MVS VOA George Dakun has agreed to be the local web master. By the time you read this article, George would have become accustomed to the working of the updated site. We hope to make it very easy to access and look forward to member suggestions.

FEDERAL PREP

Back in November of last year, the local union hosted four separate retirement and benefit seminars at our union hall for members of the APWU as well as our NPMHU Brothers and Sisters. Well over 100 union members attended that day for the two hour seminar. Prior to scheduling the seminars, we had met with Mike Kerper who is the CEO of the company. After our due diligence we were confident our members would benefit from this much needed information. The feedback was very positive and the only negative was squeezing the last two sessions back to back. We plan on bringing FED PREP back in the early spring of 2015. We have learned that many of our members arranged follow up one on one private sessions with the company and initial feedback remained positive. Feel free to continue to let us know how these one on one sessions went. We believe these types of items made available by the union are beneficial for the rank and file.

2015 LOCAL ELECTIONS

As written in local constitution and by-laws, every odd year the local has their two year term elections. Every elected position will have nominations take place in April at the Union Hall no later than April 15th. The announcement must be made at least 15 days prior to the date and posted on all union bulletin boards. The Judge of Elections and three tellers along with the five (5) member election committee will be finalized at the March GMM.

RANK AND FILE BARGAINING ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Eastern Region Coordinator Mike Gallagher appointed me as his representative to the Rank and File Bargaining Advisory Committee. Each National Executive Board (NEB) member gets to appoint one person to this committee. The purpose of the committee shall be to

recommend and advise the National Negotiations Committee on bargaining demands. Should the national negotiators reach agreement to newly-agreed upon contract language or changes to existing contract language, they shall complete as many questions and answers as possible prior to giving a “tentative” Collective Bargaining Agreement to the Rank and File Bargaining Advisory Committee for consideration. The committee has rights and responsibilities to submit any questions they may have for responses and inclusion in the questions and answers prior to making a recommendation for ratification to the membership. The Rank and File Bargaining Advisory Committee has full veto power over any proposed National Agreement. If the majority of the voting members of the committee vote against the proposed agreement, the contract will NOT be sent out on a referendum and shall be considered a mandate to the National Negotiations Committee to reopen negotiations. **If there is to be a contract sent out for membership ratification,** then the committee shall determine the conduct of the membership ratification vote by mail, providing the envelopes in the referendum are exactly the same in all physical characteristics and destinations and provided the envelopes are private, without a window. There will be five (5) selected to be a subcommittee to oversee the counting of the ballots. Basically the above is from the National Constitution and By-Laws and I felt it was important to explain the duties of the committee. The committee was summoned to Washington DC in early December and met for two days in APWU headquarters to learn and ask many questions of what lies ahead. National Negotiations between the USPS and the APWU start up on Thursday February 19, 2015. I look forward to serving in this capacity.

STAPLES BOYCOTT

Many of our members have participated and are aware of the ongoing battle with the Staples boycott. This battle started back in October 2013 when the Guffey administration was placed on notice that the USPS planned on having postal services handled at selected Staples locations initially in four states (GA, PA, CA and MA). After a major Day of Action back in April 2014, an all-out boycott eventually took place by the APWU and the other postal unions. Soon the boycott was joined by the AFL-CIO, teachers unions, etc. In July the USPS was hoping the APWU would take a victory dance as they wanted us to declare victory. President Dimondstein didn't like the smell of this and would not declare that we had won the fight based on the postal service stating they were changing the name to an “Approved Shipper” program. Sounded like semantics. After the Teacher's Union placed a hurting on the

Staples back to school sales, it seemed inevitable that Staples would back down and away from the program. They did not. They announced in early October that the USPS was moving into all of the Staples locations in the country. The war continues. Now this was occurring while Staples was announcing the closing of additional Staples stores in the USA. The latest financial records of the 3rd quarter sales for Staples as expected were not very good. In late December Staples then announced they were hacked into many of their store locations and their customers who shopped there and used their credit cards had been violated. We then learned around that same time that the USPS and Staples had worked out a deal that customers who shipped from Staples would be offered to ship at a 20% discount which was and is a slap in the face to all postal workers. Giving our work away to a private company and then having it done cheaper by a non-union workforce. Locally we immediately asked our members, thanks to a member suggestion, to **“Return to Sender”** the card they received in the mail announcing this discount. National APWU followed suit and did the same advising locals and state organizations to do the same. My eldest son Vincent took it personally and asked his Facebook contacts to do likewise. The bottom line is, we as a Union have lots of clout, if we fight our fights as one and not as individuals. Thanks for all who have supported this fight and have worn Blue Shirts on Thursdays. The Struggle Continues as Moe Biller would always say. Thanks to the Philly Area Local, a resolution was passed in Philadelphia's City Council supporting the APWU in this battle. The resolution is on page 7 of this edition of the Parcel.

In closing, I along with the local Vice President Joe McGugan were very appreciative of being honored at the November 20, 2014 General membership meeting for our 25 years as Local President and Vice President. To be permitted to serve the membership for over a quarter of a century has been truly inspiring. I personally could not have done so without a VP as strong and committed and determined as Brother McGugan. He is a bulldog when it comes to his union duties. Having our families in attendance along with our union family was touching as we were both caught off guard. The kind words by many will never be forgotten. In closing, if you are able to, try and make a commitment to come out to a union meeting this year especially if you have been away for a while. You get to learn first-hand how your dues monies are spent, as well as exercise your right to both Voice and vote.

Remember in unionism, there is no Favoritism.....

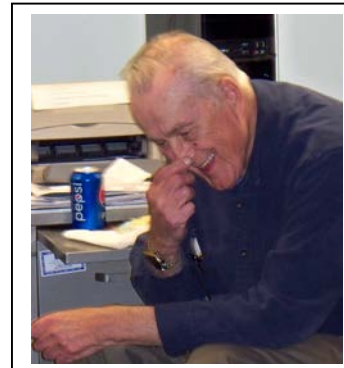
Vince Tarducci



At the November General Membership Meeting, President Vince Tarducci and Vice President Joe McGugan were honored for being in Office in their respective positions for 25 years. That does not preclude their Union positions prior.



3 of Vince and Christine's Sons (Standing in right rear) and Joe's Son (Seated with Phillies shirt) and Sister (Seated to the right), came to help honor the "Dynamic Duo"!



NON-MEMBERS LOCAL 7048

The following represents the list of employees who are not members of this local union. They freely give up any rights to a voice or vote, which ultimately gives them absolutely no say whatsoever in how the local union is run. Though this may be his or her right, there is much confusion as to why anyone throws away such a RIGHT. We make this list available for the sole purpose of informing the membership.

This is as of January 26, 2015.

PHILADELPHIA BMC/NDC

SUAREZ, MICHAEL, Labor Custodian T-3
 Henderson, Kennard, Maintenance, T-3
 Shuss, Betsy, Data Tech Clerk,
 Howard, Tyrone, Clerk FSS T-3
 Raymond, Thomas, Clerk Tour-3

A member who signs one of these individuals to join the APWU is eligible to receive a \$100.00 incentive.

We also took time to celebrate Charles (Pitch) PITCHALONIS 80th Birthday. As a retired USPS employee and Local 7048 Officer, Pitch has been our Office Mgr for a number of years.



Clerk Craft Report



Christmas Annex

I hope everyone and their families had a great Holiday season and enjoyed your time together. While I'm on the subject I would like the membership to know that the local filed numerous class action grievances because casual mail handlers performed distribution work that we are contending is clerk craft work at the Christmas Annex. These are the same violations that occurred over the last couple of years. The violations include the processing of all priority mail at the Annex, manual distribution of priority parcels on the 89 belts, Bullpens, Sack Racks, and on an Originating NMO spider.

Clerk Craft Bid Schedule for 2015 (tentative)

Open	Close	Final Award	Tentative Effective Date
1/23/15	2/3/15	2/12/15	2/21/15
3/5/15	3/16/15	3/25/13	4/4/15
4/16/15	4/27/15	5/6/15	5/16/15
5/28/15	6/8/15	6/17/15	6/27/15
7/10/15	7/21/15	7/30/15	8/8/15
8/20/15	8/31/15	9/9/15	9/19/15
10/2/15	10/13/15	10/22/15	10/31/15
11/20/15	12/1/15	12/10/15	1/9/16

Privatization, Walmart and Goin' Postal

An agreement between Walmart and the private shipping company Goin' Postal threatens to further privatize postal services. Under the arrangement, announced on Sept. 29, 2014, Goin' Postal is lining up franchisees to establish postal kiosks in approximately 2,000 Walmart stores. The arrangement has the potential to dwarf the Postal Service's agreement with Staples, which started as a pilot program at 82 Staples stores and which is being expanded to Staples' 1,500 U.S. stores. The Walmart deal represents a new twist, however, because Walmart isn't offering services through a direct agreement with the USPS. Instead, Walmart's agreement is with Goin' Postal.

Walmart will likely claim that Goin' Postal is just a renter in their stores, and postal management will likely claim that the Postal Service has nothing to do with the arrangement. However, both Walmart and USPS brass will be very happy with the transfer of work from the Postal Service to Goin' Postal kiosks in Walmart stores. The Postal Service doesn't want to pay living wages to postal employees and Walmart wants the additional foot

traffic they hope the kiosks will bring to their big-box stores. Moreover, as you might guess from the name of the company alone, the owner of Goin' Postal, Marcus Price, has issues. A review of his published comments reveals disrespectful remarks about women, anti-union biases, and other problematic opinions. He even mocks Walmart customers. We have been researching the arrangement and our options. We will oppose any management plans to expand the USPS Approved Shipper program to *Goin' Postal* franchisees. We also will press Walmart not to do business with a company whose owner has expressed anti-women attitudes and made other questionable comments.

Stopping the transfer of living-wage jobs to low-wage Walmart jobs is a top priority for the APWU.

PROTECT OUR WORK TO SECURE YOUR JOB

On a daily basis machinable parcels are again being processed by non-clerk craft employees on the LCUS NMO Sorter. Grievances have been filed and settled in the past when this has been done. We have already won this issue in *ABITRATION*. Processing machinable parcels is **CLERK CRAFT WORK!** Any member who witnesses machinable parcels being worked in any area by non-clerks is asked to write a statement so that we can continue to document these violations and file the appropriate grievances. As soon as you witness one of the violations tell your supervisor that you need to speak to a steward. We will need for you to write a statement about what you saw and you will be helping your Union to fight to protect your job.

Currently violations are occurring on both Tour Three and on Tour Two in which our mail is being diverted to other, less efficient machines (LCUS NMO Sorter), and is worked by other crafts. This is wrong for our members, the USPS, and its customers. The secondary breaks these machinable parcels down in a five-digit sort before it leaves the building, the LCUS does not.

We have been assured in the past, by higher level management, that machinable parcels will be worked in the secondary. Now it is up to each of us to be vigilant in making sure that our work remains in our craft. Fight for your job security daily!!!

Filling Vacancies, PSE Conversions

As a result of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on Filling Residual Vacancies, many employees have been able to move to new assignments that

benefited them for various reasons. However, the most significant benefit from the MOU is that more than 9,000 Postal Support Employees (PSEs) have been converted to career status, including 5,200 in the Clerk Craft as of Oct. 31, 2014. The change from PSE to career marks a substantial improvement in pay, health benefits, retirement, and overall well-being for PSEs and their families. Each conversion means a lot to the individual workers, who as career employees now have significantly better lives. The agreement, which outlines

the procedure for filling residual vacancies in the Clerk, Maintenance and Motor Vehicle Craft, was signed by the APWU and USPS on March 24, 2014, and was extended on Oct. 31st. Implementing the MOU has been a slow process, but much progress has been made through the impressive efforts of many dedicated stewards, officers and members.

Bill Schweiker, Clerk Craft Director

RESOLUTION

Supporting the American Postal Workers Union in its efforts to protect living-wage jobs and its insistence on the highest possible standards of customer services, opposing efforts to privatize postal operations, and calling upon Philadelphians to consider this issue when deciding whether to patronize Staples.

Whereas, The United States Postal Service (USPS) has entered into a no-bid deal with Staples to operate postal counters in 82 Staples stores and to provide nearly all the services the USPS provides; and

Whereas, The USPS and Staples plan to expand the program to Staples' 1,500 U.S. stores; and

Whereas, The USPS and Staples have been unwilling to staff Staples' postal units with unionized USPS employees who have the training and experience to properly handle U.S. mail, who have sworn an oath to uphold the highest standards of public service, and who are accountable to the American people; and

Whereas, Low-wage, non-union "postal" jobs at Staples could ultimately replace the living-wage, union jobs of USPS employees, with Staples stores completely replacing US Post Offices; and

Whereas, Privatizing the handling of U.S. Mail risks jeopardizing the sanctity and security of the mail; and

Whereas, Postal workers have been resisting this plan to privatize the USPS, replace their living-wage jobs with low-wage jobs, and potentially degrade service; and

Whereas, The Council of the City of Philadelphia cares about protecting high-quality public services, protecting living-wage jobs, and maintaining universal, affordable mail service for the American people; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That Council of the City of Philadelphia supports the American Postal Workers Union in its efforts to protect living-wage jobs and its insistence on the highest possible standards of customer services, opposes efforts to privatize postal operations, and calls upon Philadelphians to consider this issue when deciding whether to patronize Staples.

Further Resolved that an engrossed copy of this resolution be presented to the USPS Postmaster General and Board of Governors, and to the CEO and Board of Directors of the Staples Corporation.

Maria D. Quiñones Sánchez, Councilwoman – 7th District; *William Greenlee*, Councilmember At Large

(Submitted and Passed at the Philadelphia City Council Meeting.)

Maintenance Craft Report



Custodial Staffing

We continue to wait for changes to take place in our Custodial Staffing. Previously it was posted on our bulletin boards that the APWU was in agreement with a new MS-47 manual, which changes the way Custodial Staffing is determined in a facility. This agreement is not the perfect solution, but I can understand why our National leadership made this agreement. The Postal Service after decades of attempting to rewrite the MS-47 and make changes to Custodial staffing, finally got it right. Our Maintenance leadership made the best out of an unfortunate situation.

The parties agreed that the new MS-47 would be gradually implemented in stages. From this agreement the National APWU was notified that the Phila NDC, would begin preparations and analyzing the Custodial staffing as early as January 5, 2015.

That date, has come and gone and local management still is not aware of exactly when these changes will take place. We will continue to monitor this situation, get involved in the staffing process and update the membership the best we can.

Along with the changes in the staffing, we also have to change the way we address bypassed work. The monthly bypassed route grievances will no longer be filed. The new procedure to monitoring work is to wait until the end of the Postal Service fiscal year (September 30th) then compare the actual work hours performed by custodians against the work hours identified in the staffing package.

It is essential when I research this at the end of the year that all custodians did their part by accurately recording what work you did on your daily assignment sheets.

Mechanization Staffing

Not much has changed from my posting on Mechanization Staffing. Our National Union has completed Arbitration, and we now have to wait for the Arbitrator's decision. That decision will determine how we proceed with staffing in our facility.

Local management still has not given any indication that they plan on implementing the most recent staffing package. In our last meeting on December 2, 2014, management did not agree with the staffing package and was going to try to have the staffing increase. They know as we do that they will not be able to maintain this equipment with the staffing that is projected for our facility.

Management's staffing shows us that mechanics who may have been taking short cuts in doing our jobs, should no longer be doing so. We can't sit by and just watch our jobs disappear. For the senior employees who think they won't be affected by a reduction in staffing, you are wrong. Are you willing to jeopardize your weekends off or Preferred Duty Assignment? For anyone with less seniority do you ever want to see a weekend off?

Changes to non-scheduled days or even tours are the effect of reduced staffing. You have the ability to help fight this battle. Ensure you work safely, properly record all the work you do, have work orders created to repair equipment.

I am aware that it is a royal pain to comply with all safety procedures, but things like locking out equipment, or using your EWP are not optional. They will protect you and show management that a reduction in staffing will not work. Don't depend on the Union to save your jobs, these are things that you can control.

Robert Kovalik, Maintenance Craft Director

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DIR Report

By DIR Chuck Camp



WE CAN STOP THE USPS FROM BEING DISMANTLED

As self-serving as it may seem, we can do the people of this country a huge favor by ensuring that the US Postal Service remains unchanged, while we protect our own jobs. Generally, when privatizing issues are discussed regarding other companies or services, the benefits to the public are a selling point. Not so with the USPS.

The USPS, in its current state, is a major benefit provided to the American People, in some ways free-of-charge. What does it cost the people of this country to have an employee of the USPS come to their house practically every day of the year? NOTHING. The friendly neighborhood letter carrier is always there, looking out for you when you're not home, usually aware if something is amiss, because he/she is so familiar with their daily route. For this, most of us pay nothing. NO MONTHLY BILL and NO TAX DOLLARS! The USPS is funded by revenue raised through mailers. Many times this is money poured into the USPS by big companies mailing packages, advertisements, letters, etc. to the American Public. What most of us pay the USPS is less than 50 cents, to pick up a letter and take it directly to another address, anywhere in the country. Not a bad deal when the big companies pay to fund a benefit to the little guy. If/when enemies take down other forms of communication like the internet, phones, TV, we will still have the mail, as long as we fight to stop the privatizers.

The USPS does all of this without tax money, without bailouts, without the greed and corruption that infects many "for-profit" corporations. Were it not for the ridiculous prefunding requirements put on the USPS by corrupt government officials, hoping to sell off the best parts of the USPS to their rich business contacts, we would be making a small profit even in a terrible economy. In doing all of this for the American People, the USPS also provides good-paying jobs, with health and

retirement benefits, to several hundred thousand people. These are people who are then able to go out and buy cars, and houses, and take vacations, and pump money right back into the American economy. These are not Wal-Mart jobs that employs people at such a low wage, without benefits, that forces workers to collect food stamps or other government assistance while company CEOs rake in fortunes.

In my opinion, there is no better deal out there for the people of this country. They reap numerous benefits without cost or burden. Why would they ever allow that to be dismantled? The answer is that they wouldn't, provided they are aware of the facts. As long as the public has strong feelings about keeping the postal system intact, they will retain this benefit. The corporate greed-heads, who want to pick off the profitable parts to benefit themselves alone, will continue to misinform the public to try to get what they want. It's up to us to keep the people of this country from being hoodwinked into giving up this benefit. Spread the word, take pride in your work, and keep this institution in the hands of the American People.

Your DIR, *Chuck Camp*



FUN FACTS ABOUT OUR MILLIONAIRES' CONGRESS



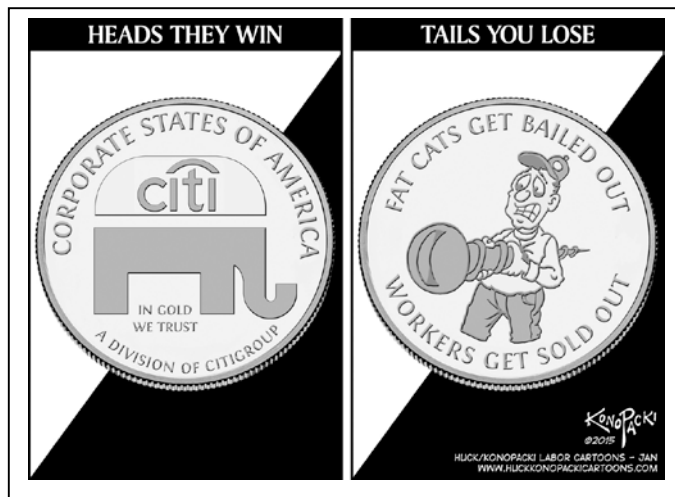
Once a democracy, the United States of America has degenerated into a plutocracy. Democracy, taken from the Greek word “demos” (people) is rule by the people. Plutocracy, derived from the Greek word for wealth, “plautos”, means rule by the rich. In 2013, for the first time in American history, millionaires made up a majority of the members of Congress. As Kali Holloway reported on Altnet.com, the median net worth of members was \$1,029,505. “While the Great Recession took its toll on most Americans, members of Congress saw their wallets grow fatter. Since 2007, the median net worth of Americans has dropped by almost one third. Meanwhile, members of Congress’ median worths rose a staggering 43%!” Republican Darryl Issa is far and away the richest man in Congress. The former Chairman of the House Oversight Committee – the man who wants to bust our Union, privatize our jobs, and steal our pensions – Issa was worth \$448 million in 2013. A fabulous fortune, but how did he “earn” it? Google “Issa arson” and find out for yourself. Familiarize yourself with the swamp of criminality from which this richest of Congressional plutocrats slithered. Issa. This is what Plutocracy looks like.

ISSA: A POSTSCRIPT

The lizard-like Issa was recently replaced by Rep. Jason Chaffetz, a Utah Republican. The new chairman was taken aback by the huge, taxpayer-funded portrait of Issa that arrogantly overlooked Room 2154, where the House Oversight Committee regularly meets. Chaffetz quietly ordered that the picture of Issa be taken down. Said Chaffetz: “I really felt strongly that in that committee room we should be inspired by those we serve, not inspired by past committee chairmen”. In the coming weeks, Chaffetz will hang a series of photos

depicting everyday America – including images representing postal workers. Now, Congressman Chaffetz has a net worth exceeding 5 million dollars. He’s a radical right wing Republican and no friend of Unions. His symbolic break with the Issa years doesn’t mean that he’ll reverse Issa’s union busting – though it’s likely he’ll make a clean break with the headline hunting and grandstanding that were Issa’s stock in trade. But after removing the Issa eyesore from the Committee chambers, he went on to fire over 60% of Issa’s former staffers. I have to admit – he’s gotten off to a good start.

In Solidarity,
Joe Quinlan, Political Director



Remembering My Father Who Fought For The Union Benefits That Former Postmaster General Donahoe Wants To Take.

By [NH Labor News](#) | [January 17, 2015 - 18:30](#) | [Guest Column, USPS](#)

Editors Note: This is a special editorial from John Dick, a Letter Carrier in Detroit (NALC Branch 3126, Royal Oak Merged).

(Reprinted from NH Labor News.)

Yesterday was a milestone for me. Not a day of sadness as much as a day of reflection. January 12th, 2015, was the fifth anniversary of my father's death. His demise came suddenly. A massive heart attack, then poof; he disappeared from our lives. I remember vividly getting the phone call from Big John. I was setting up my route and my phone kept ringing over and over. I was too busy to answer the damn thing but something didn't feel right. I answered the fourth time John called. "You have to get to the hospital right away. Something's wrong with Bob." I dropped my mail and rushed to the emergency room. My heart sank and then shattered into a million shards when the doctor told me, "There was nothing we could do." I felt like an orphan.

Bob "Moses" Dick was a proud union man. He had worked at the Ford Utica Trim Shop for thirty years. From 1963 to 1993 he sewed seats for the automobile giant. He was not a fan or a great example of what you might call the "work ethic." He told me many times as I was growing up that his bosses and even the Ford family only cared about what he could do for them, and he was sure enough going to return the favor. He said "I got a contract with those folks. I do my thirty years sewing those goddam car seats, and in return I have a decent paying job and a secure retirement. I don't have to like them, and they don't have to like me. Don't ever fool yourself, son. You're just a number to them. A cog in the wheel. I don't give them any more than I have to."

He would regale stories to me and my brother about working at the plant. He was outrageously honest, and claimed to have the worst discipline record at the Trim Shop. His temper was legendary, and if he thought a supervisor was acting prickly it was not unusual for him to threaten the health of his bosses. According to Pops, at one discipline meeting his exasperated steward exclaimed, "We have no defense for his actions. We plead insanity!" He loved the UAW, but I am not sure the feeling was completely mutual.

He was proud when I became a letter carrier on October 7th, 2000. The first question he asked me was if I had

joined the union. He loved reading my *Dicktations* and we had him added to our mailing list so that he would receive his own personal copy. He said something to me about my writing that I will never forget. He said I was profound. It was not his style to talk in that way, and all I could say was "Thanks". His death was premature at the age of 70, but he at least was able to retire at the age of 54 and enjoy 16 years of a Ford pension.

Much has changed in the five short years since my father died. Michigan is now a right- to-work state and America is sliding backwards from the promises it had made to previous generations. The middle class is stagnating economically and the wealth gap between the richest and the poorest is dramatic. Many companies no longer make promises to their workers. My employer, the United States Postal Service, still does. But I have to wonder "For how much longer?"

Our Postmaster General, Patrick R. Donahoe, is retiring in February after a nearly forty year postal career. He started as a mail clerk and worked his way up to the head honcho position of the Service. At a recent speech at the National Press Club honoring his retirement, I was shocked to hear these comments from him: "Most young people aren't looking for a single employer over the course of their careers. In today's world, does it really make sense to offer the promise of a government pension to a 22-year-old who is just entering the workforce? And how reliable is that promise?"

Postmaster Donahoe went on to say what the future of the mail would look like. He said "It will not be a person putting a piece of mail in a blue mailbox, but rather a far leaner organization, with a smaller workforce and less generous health care and pension benefits, that competes for e-commerce business, online advertising and other Internet based services." It is hard to imagine these comments being made from a man who spent his entire career at one organization. Guess he wasn't wearing his party hat at this retirement dinner!

Postmaster Buzz Kill made some other parting shots at the postal unions for single mindedly fighting to preserve jobs and benefits and the myopic shortsightedness of the mailers for trying to keep postal rates affordable. Rumor has it he kicked a dog and pushed an old lady before the speech was over. For those of us who have been trying to understand the decisions and direction this man has taken the Postal Service over the last several years, this one speech wrapped it all up in a tidy package and put a bow on it for us. He is a true

believer in the 'New America', where workers have no guarantees or contracts and bounce from job to job every few years. This is the philosophy of our very own Postmaster General.

In February, Megan Brennan will become the new Postmaster General. She has shattered the glass ceiling at L'Enfant Plaza and will become the first female to assume that position. I hope she has differing aspirations for what is possible for the United States Postal Service and its workers. We are the nation's second largest employer, and we are vital to this nation's economy. The 'twenty somethings' I work with deserve a promise from our employer for the hard work they do every day. This is not a job; this is a profession and a career.

A photo of my old man sits on the shot glass shelf of the bar I have in my basement. I will do tonight as I have done many nights in the past; I will raise a glass of strong libation and toast to his memory and honor. The toast will be one of his favorite and I will look at him with a salty tear in my eye; "God Bless the Union!" And for good favor;" Work Sucks!"

Sad to see you go, Donahoe

John "Cementhead" Dick



"Day of Action" gatherings in Washington, DC attempting to meet with respective Representatives. Top pic shows our Pres. Tarducci on the bull-horn with Local 2233 Pres. A J Jones to his left. Nat. APWU Pres. Dimondstein is in the center of bottom pic.

"You Can't Make This Up!"

By Michael Kerper

As the new year is upon us, we tend to feel that our knowledge and wisdom grows with our age. That we see more, and understand more of what we see is an automatic part of the aging process.

However, as it turns out, some things are just unexplainable, *and*, unbelievable!

This is the story of "**Bill**". Bill was a proud servant in the Postal Service in Philadelphia. An APWU member in good standing and by all accounts, a good guy! Unfortunately, Bill passed away this past summer.

Many of you have attended a Retirement and Benefits seminar offered through local 7048, conducted by Federal Prep. During that class, we teach postal employees about things like CSRS and FERS...the pros and cons of the two systems and how the basic calculations work. That seems to be the focus of most of the folks that attend our classes. It's the age old question "What's in it for

ME?!" But maybe, the more important question is "What's in it for my family??"

It seems silly to say that most people care about their spouses and children. Most of us do. Some do not. And that's ok. However, the case of Bill's death clearly illustrates how a lack of attention and planning, combined with two government agencies that are passed the buck, can really cause a nightmare! Here is what happened...

Bill passed away in July. Bill probably thought that he had things in order. He was not married (divorced) and had no children. His closest living relative was his brother, "**Don**". Bill didn't have a will! He didn't think he needed one. After all, he only had one relative. Something as simple as a will that you can do on the internet, was never done. So Don had to petition the courts to allow him to become the administrator of the Bill's estate! Ok, that was not the roughest thing, but it is a bit

expensive and there are attorneys and fees involved. Now, we are into August, and Don can obtain a death certificate.

Don proceeds to call Shared Services. He is assigned to a very nice lady who is a bereavement counselor. She helps Don fill out the necessary paperwork to separate Bill from service, much like retirement papers, along with the Thrift Savings Plan paperwork. To everyone's amazement, the government pays Bill's Government Life insurance benefit in short order. This is good, as Don has medical bills and many final expenses to pay. Now is where the story gets ugly.

Don is waiting for Bill's TSP Death Benefit to be paid. Also unpaid is Bill's unused Annual Leave. After repeated calls to TSP, Don is told that USPS Shared Services has NOT send the "death code". In other words, even though TSP had a death certificate, Bill is not "officially" dead, and therefore TSP cannot process the claim and release Bill's money to Don.

I know. This is crazy. And it goes 'round and 'round like this until I was contacted by Vince Tarducci, your APWU Local 7048 President. Vince alerted me to what was going on and gave me permission to call Don. As soon as Don gave me the whole story, I started to dig. First with TSP. TSP said it was USPS Shared Services that was responsible to provide the death code. The official death certificate did not officially mean Bill was dead. TSP needed USPS Shared Services to tell them that Bill was officially dead. So I called Shared Services. They said "we don't have a death code"! I said that's crazy. TSP is telling Don that they are waiting for a code that USPS Shared Services says does not exist. Back to calling TSP. TSP insists that there is a death code! Back to USPS Shared Services. I spoke to a supervisor on the phone. Same story. Back to TSP. Back to USPS Shared services, where FINALLY someone agreed there was a death code!!!! Shared Services transmitted the code to TSP. The claim was then processed. 4 months of HELL!

Now, backing up the train, why wasn't a code sent originally, and what happened to the unpaid annual leave? The reason is that after the paperwork was received and the life insurance paid, Bill was

REACTIVATED! Why? Because his last day in pay status was submitted incorrectly and his final paycheck couldn't be issued. The problem was they forgot to switch him back!!

"You Can't Make This UP"!

So, how can YOU prevent these things from happening to YOUR family? It's easy. Attend one of our classes. Take notes. Call our office for YOUR FREE CONSULTATION! Don't be afraid, we don't bite. All we will do is save your family time, money, and heartache. Don said to me after I helped him, "I wish that my brother and I knew you before all of this happened". Now, all of you know. It's a new year. Take care of your stuff. Your family is depending on you, so do not let them down.

Michael Kerper is the Chairman and C.E.O. of Federal Prep, Inc. With locations in New York, PA and Virginia, their firm specializes in retirement and benefits for employees of all Federal Agencies. Also, Income Tax Preparation. Their contact information is 1-855-MYTAX99 or www.federalprep.com.



Above are more pics from the "Day of Action" trip to DC.)

114TH CONGRESS
1ST Session

H. RES. _____

Expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that the United States Postal Service should take all appropriate measures to restore service standards in effect as of July 1, 2012.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Mr. MCKINLEY submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on _____.

RESOLUTION

Expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that the United States Postal Service should take all appropriate measures to restore service standards in effect as of July 1, 2012.

Whereas on January 5, 2015, the United States Postal Service has implemented lower “service standards” to virtually eliminate overnight delivery of first class mail and periodicals, and further delay most other mail;

Whereas delayed mail negatively impacts businesses, hurts residents, rural communities and the economy, and drives customers away, resulting in lower revenue and worsens the Postal Service’s financial situation; and

Whereas robust service standards implemented by the United States Postal Service are essential to providing prompt and timely delivery of all mail: online purchases, local newspapers, newsletters, bill payments, letters, invitations, packages, and medicines:

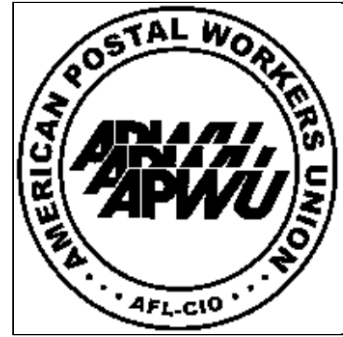
Now, therefore, be it

- 1 **Resolved,** That it is the sense of the House of Representatives
- 2 that the United States Postal Service should
- 3 take all appropriate measures to restore service standards
- 4 in effect as of July 1, 2012.

(This is a sample of the Resolution submitted to the House by Rep McKinley.)

Table of Contents

The President's View Pg. 3
 11/20/14 GMM pics; Non-Member List Pg. 5
 Clerk Craft Report Pg. 6
 Resolution (Phila. City Council) Pg. 7
 Maintenance Report Pg. 8
 Attorney's Notice of Services Pg. 9
 D I R Report Pg. 10
 Facts about Our Millionaires Congress Pg. 11
 Remembering My Father (Reprint) Pg. 12
 "You Can't Make This Up" (Reprint) Pg. 13
 Resolution (House of Representatives) Pg. 15



NEXT GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING:
WED March 18, 2015 @ 4:45 PM

CANCEL YOUR LEAVE IN ADVANCE

If you have pre-approved annual leave in the book and know you no longer need it, please cancel it so that your fellow sister or brother union member who was disappointed can take their annual leave. On some occasion(s) employees who have 8 hours approved for a given day, show up to work their tour and the person who was disappointed for 8 hours is told if they want it they can leave. By this time the employee already traveled to work and it is too late for them to make arrangements. Suggestion is to ask for a steward when your annual leave is disapproved so a steward can check the leave book. Sometimes it is learned that an employee may have canceled their leave at the last minute.

Daily Updates From Your Union Local

To receive updates from your President almost daily, please return this page to the Union Office with your E-Mail address. Please make it legible!!! Please include your full name, and address so we can verify to whom we are e-mailing!! Or, just give us this page with your mailing label included!! Thank you.

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