

The Philadelphia POSTAL WORKER

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Time to Take a Stand!



*Nick Casselli,
President*

What will it take for everyone to get involved in their union, in their community or in our political process? Unions and the working class are under attack in our country by the wealthy and, more

specifically, the Republican Party. They have taken a strong stance against unions and the middle class.

The corporate elites, the 1%, they seem to be against workers having good health benefits; they are against workers having retirement benefits; they are against an increase in the Federal minimum wage; they are against maintaining a strong public school system and they are against maintaining the United States Postal Service for the good of all Americans.

They want unionized workers to feel guilty for making a livable wage and earning decent benefits. They want non-unionized workers to feel like the reason they don't have better pay and benefits is somehow the fault of unionized workers. They like to pit us against each other. Unfortunately, all too often they have been very successful in doing so.

How is it so few can maintain control over so many? It is simple, divide and conquer. The

vast majority of Americans are working class people, and if we stick together on issues that would improve all of our lives, such as a living

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Local President Nick Casselli was a member of the Constitution Committee at the National APWU Convention held in Pittsburgh, PA.

photo by Drew Stevenson

Fighting Today For A Better Tomorrow!



*Nancy
Rolling,
Vice
President*

Hello Brothers and Sisters! The National Convention of 2018 has come and gone, and postal workers from every state attended in solidarity to protest against this White House, and their billionaire

backers from trying to take over our United States Postal Service.

The Postal Service is the most popular agency of the United States Government by far, and one of the most important too. The Postal Service helps aid our senior citizens in getting their medication on time, and their monthly checks.

The Postal Service helps to bind together every community in this great nation of ours; it is vital in getting each and every one of its customers something very significant and important every day.

National Convention

The National Convention showed just how important it was for the unions to come together and take it to the streets in protest to save our United States Postal Service. At this year's National APWU Convention there were speak-

ers from every union possible, old and new, in solidarity and support of the Postal Service.

The highlight of the convention was when Vermont Senator Bernie Sanders addressed the delegates. Mr. Sanders made it more than clear that he supports a strong, public US Postal Service, and that he will always have the backs of working class people. The delegates were also addressed by AFL-CIO President Richard Trumka, NALC President Fred Rolando, NPMHU President Paul Hogravian and a host of other speakers representing union workers from around the world.

Memphis Sanitation Workers Strike

I was particularly moved by the stories told by William "Bill" Lucy and Rev. Cleophus

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Articles must be submitted by the second Thursday of the month. They must be typed. Letters must be signed. Name withheld upon request.

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Time to Take a Stand!

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wage, free healthcare for all, and a strong public education system to name a few, nothing could stop us. However, the reality is we allow ourselves to be divided by the 1% at the top on a number of social, religious, racial and economic issues.

The Republican Party has mastered the art of pitting the 99% against each other. They divide us on moral issues like abortion, immigration, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation and gun rights.

We must ask ourselves why do they do this, and who are they representing? If we can take an honest look at those questions the answer is clear; they do it because these issues divide the working class majority in America and cause people to vote against their financial interests; they are representing the 1% and Corporate America.

It is hard to believe that a political party would work so hard every day to destroy the middle class in our country, but that is what they are doing. They are working hard to keep the American middle class and poor suppressed and struggling. Who are we to think we have a right to livable wages, good health care, strong education for our children, and a retirement after

working for 30 plus years. We should just be happy to have a job that pays minimum wage.

Walmart is the largest employer in America and they pay their employees poverty wages with little or no benefits. As part of their orientation Walmart shows their employees how to apply for food stamps and Medicaid. Taxpayers are subsidizing Walmart while they continue to suppress worker's rights and all the while the Walton family makes billions of dollars.

Working together we can make a difference. Our Union has successfully fought for good wages, benefits, retirement, health care and work rules for our members.

All Workers deserve to be treated with dignity and respect and be fairly compensated for their labor. We can no longer live by relying on others to look out for our interests, waiting for a chance or simply hoping our problems will all work out. If most of us would put half the effort we put into doing our job into fighting to protect our job and middle class values by being active in a union, their community and our political process we would be amazed at the difference it would make. □

Fighting Today For A Better Tomorrow!

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Smith, who took part in the Memphis Sanitation Workers Strike in 1968, a watershed moment not only for organized labor, but the Civil Rights movement.

The strike was the result of workers' reaction to horrible safety conditions, which resulted in the deaths of two workers, Echol Cole and Robert Walker, who were crushed to death in a defective garbage compactor, which the city refused to replace. The sanitation workers were treated as if they were sub-human, which lead to the iconic strike slogan of "I AM a man"; a sentiment that is wholly embodied in the words of Reverend James Lawson, who said, "For at the heart of racism is the idea that a man is not a man, that a person is not a person. You are human beings. You are men. You

deserve dignity."

The struggle of these workers shows us that a united campaign against economic inequality can lead us all, postal workers and working people everywhere, union and non union, to a better place for all of us and a better future for our children.

We all have a common interest in preserving a strong public Postal Service, which is a benefit to every community in our nation. Our allies will be eager to help us, especially if we stand beside them in their fights! So in closing, APWU challenges all the citizens of this country, young and old, to STEP UP and STEP OUT, to join the fight for our future, because we have a long way to go. THE FIGHT IS NOT OVER! In solidarity! □

Which Craft?



John Walker
Maintenance
Craft
Director

The USPS has six separate crafts: Clerk Craft, Maintenance Craft, Motor Vehicle Craft, Mail Handler's, Carrier Craft and the Rural Carriers Craft. Management is always trying to blur the lines

amongst crafts, and have employees from other crafts do maintenance work.

When management makes a cross craft assignment they must justify that assignment under the terms of Article 7.2.B or 7.2.C. If no such justification is provided the cross craft assignment is improper under the inherit prescription in Article 7.2. Management's assignments across craft lines might enable management to avoid overtime in another craft for example; it is not by itself a contractually sound reason.

When the union establishes that an employee was assigned across craft lines the remedy requires payment to the available and qualified employee who would have been scheduled to work, but for the contractual violation.

Occupational Groups

The Maintenance Craft is the only craft with occupational groups which are defined in Article 38 of the National Agreement. The union

stresses the importance of occupational groups within the Maintenance Craft because only the Maintenance Craft has separate occupational groups. The occupational group determines the rights of the Maintenance Craft employees in that particular occupational group.

The union can't stress enough that the Postal Service position of making higher level assignments across occupational groups in the Maintenance Craft will have an adverse impact on bargaining unit members.

As Maintenance Craft employees it is important to preserve the fully negotiated rights of our employees in each occupational group in the Maintenance Craft. A Maintenance Craft employees' right to bid on a preferred duty assignment, for training opportunities, to be assigned overtime and in excessing situations are all based on occupational groups.

If the Postal Service prevails in its position it could hire all maintenance employees as level

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Privatization A Real Threat



Cindy Heyward,
Legislative
Director

If there was ever a time to be concerned about the privatization of the US Postal Service, the time is now. The Trump Administration has shown they will do what they want, regardless of public outcry.

We have seen a subtle rebranding of the Postal Service in the Executive Order the President issued on the USPS. The Postal service was called the US Postal System. This has been repeated in media outlets, news articles and social media. The President's aids and lawyers were well aware of the changing of the words. It's a simple business move, clever one at that; plenty of interest in buying the Postal System, just not very much interest in providing the service that goes with it.

The USPS has been labeled as an organization that is in a financial free fall, and not profitable. What investors or business would want to buy in on a company with that sort of reputation? It's also common knowledge that service companies in the U.S. lose money daily.

When a large company or corporation is looking to sell its business, one of the biggest issues for the buyer, or investors, is the legacy costs. The new owner doesn't want to absorb the healthcare and pension costs of current and retired employees. The company that is being sold begins the process of finding ways to cut those costs so it has a better chance of being sold.

In the case of the USPS it would seem that Congress has introduced legislation that will take retirees and force them into Medicare, even if they have opted out. If the proposed legislation is passed, such as HR 756 now known as HR 6076 and S. 2629, it is likely that Congress will eventually introduce a bill that will take FEHB away from retirees as they already receive Medicare.

Every person who receives mail daily should be concerned with the future of the US Postal Service. And every company who uses the services of the Postal Office should be concerned. Every employee of the US Postal Service should be extremely concerned about what happens next to the US Postal Service.

I urge you to call your Congressional representatives in The House and Senate to let them know "HANDS OFF MY U.S. POSTAL SERVICE". The U.S. Postal Service is the people's Post Office, and has been for 243 years. We must do all we can to stop the privatization of the U.S. Postal Service. Always exercise your Constitutional Rights and VOTE! In Solidarity. □

Clerk Craft Report



**Atiyah Ivey,
Clerk Craft
Director**

The Clerk Craft is the biggest craft under the APWU umbrella. It is an honor, and a pleasure to be the Clerk Craft Director of the Philadelphia PA Area Local. I enjoy what I do because I get to help

our members in many ways; from righting a wrong to ensuring our members are treated in a fair and equitable manner in all aspects of their work life.

Our union is very powerful, but we are constantly being attacked by big business, politicians and special interests. The battle to maintain a living wage and good benefits is constant, as is the battle to keep the US Postal Service a public entity. The threat to privatize the Postal Service is very real.

In order for us to remain strong and survive these attacks we must have a united force. This leads me to this, we need help. Even though we do a good job, the greatest handicap our union faces is unfulfilled potential. We are good, but we could be phenomenal if we had more stewards. Say yes, and become a steward.

The Voice of the Membership

A group of educated, active stewards are the greatest asset any union can have in representing the interests of its membership. It is the union steward on the work room floor who is the first line of defense for our members. They are the ones that management negotiates the futures of our members' livelihood with at the lowest level. A good steward will make sure your rights are not violated and keep you informed and updated on all union related news

and activities. A steward becomes the voice of the members they represent.

What does it take to be an APWU steward for the Union? I think it takes a willingness to want to invest in your future as an employee, as well as a customer of the Postal Service. I think it takes members who have a positive attitude and a willingness to help others. I think it takes members who want to do the right thing, I think it takes you. Anyone who is interested please let me know, or call the Union Hall at 610-522-4520. We are beginning steward training classes in October and want to see new faces in attendance.

Contract Update

Contract negotiations opened between the APWU and Postal Service on June 26, 2018. The current contract expired on Thursday, September 30th, 2018. Prior to the expiration of the contract the parties engaged in marathon meetings in an effort to come to a negotiated deal. The goal of the APWU is to negotiate a good contract that improves wages, benefits and working conditions for our members. In an effort to hammer out a deal the union and management have agreed to a 30 day extension rather than declare an impasse and move the process into interest arbitration. □

General Membership Meetings

**Third Thursday of every
month except July, August
and December**

**7:30 p.m.
864 Main Street
Darby, PA 19023**

**Light Refreshments Will be
Served**

Which Craft?

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3 custodians and simply detail that level 3 custodian to a level 9 MPE or level 10 ET position for as long as they want; ultimately having a negative impact on retirement benefits and the rights of the maintenance employees and their jobs.

When the union establishes that an employee was assigned across occupational group lines the remedy requires the payment, to the available and qualified employee, who would have been scheduled to work, but for the contractual violation. The union stresses that the language in Article 7.2.A is clear and unequivocal in that it plainly prohibits both cross-craft assignments and cross-occupational group assignments. Remember, the job you save may be your own. In Solidarity. □

Scenes from the 2018 National APWU Convention!



Rolling with the MVS Craft



Calvin Smith,
MVS Director

I would like to personally thank the many drivers, mechanics, technicians and stewards who have supported me as I transitioned into my new position as Director of the MVS Craft. A special thanks

to Lewis Carty, who also transitioned into the position of MVS Assistant Director.

Please contact the steward in your area regarding any work related issue you may have or contract violation you witness. We need our members to be our eyes and ears and to keep us informed of what is going on in your work area, and to report it to us so we may address it directly with postal management either through meetings or the grievance procedure. We can't address a specific issue if we aren't made aware of it.

Congratulations to all of the MVS employees who made regular, and to all the mechanics and technician who were promoted. If you are interested in becoming a part of our team, either as a union member or steward, please reach out to any steward or myself.

National Convention

During the month of August, I along with several colleagues attended the National APWU Convention in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Our week was both interesting and busy. Numerous issues were addressed and the energy level was high. This meeting helped to ensure me that there are a lot of members across the country who are concerned about our jobs and actively fighting for us daily.

National MVS Issues

From the National MVS Craft Directors: In Case No. Q06C-4Q-C 11182451, arbitrator Shyam Das sustained the union's non-notification of HCR routes dispute and awarded the Postal Vehicle Service (PVS) 110 HCRs for four years, the life of a regular term contract within six months of the award. This was a significant award for the Motor Vehicle Craft, because it gave us momentum in fighting back against the US Postal Service's attempts to privatize PVS. The APWU had been complaining for years about the Article 32.2 process, to no avail. On numerous occasions, the union raised legitimate concerns with the Postal Service, but those concerns fell on deaf ears. The Das 110 Arbitration is one of several pending Step 4 disputes in which the union charges the USPS with the same or similar violations.

The primary issue is that the Postal Service violated the National Agreement by notifying the union of HCR contracts after they had been let, or not giving the union notification at all. The APWU was able to prove to the arbitrator that despite claims these violations were iso-

lated incidents, the Postal Service had breached the Article 32.2.B process in such a broad manner that we were entitled to a meaningful remedy. The Postal Service has been extremely reluctant to comply with the Das award. This is an arbitration award that they would not like to honor.

One of the glaring significances of the award is that a national level arbitrator agreed with the Union's assessment of the USPS mishandling of the Article 32 process and the obstacles facing the APWU in trying to secure work for the bargaining unit.

In the spirit of good faith cooperation, the APWU entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the USPS on May 17, 2017, extending the deadline for implementing the Das Award.

As of January 2018, USPS notified the APWU that they had insourced 39 of the 110 HCR routes to PVS. They complained about the difficulties they were experiencing with hiring efforts and their attempts to recruit drivers.

On May 14, 2018 the parties entered into a subsequent MOU, which allows for hiring of additional Part Time Flexibles (PTFs) instead of PSEs. The MOU states that local grievances shall be held in abeyance and requires USPS to provide the union with a monthly report on compliance of the Das Award.

The union warned the Postal Service in advance that many of the problems they would experience would be due to their attempts to modify the HCR routes to create less than eight-hour PVS schedules. The APWU for many years has extolled the values of the PVS operators who are highly skilled employees for the services they perform for the USPS.

The APWU continues to remain vigilant in our attempts to win compliance with the Das Award. □



MVS Business Agent, and former Local MVS Director, Ken Prinz addresses the delegates at the National Convention.

The 2018 Philadelphia Labor Day Parade!



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photos by Drew Stevenson

The rally was held in front of Independence Hall on October 8th