

# The Philadelphia POSTAL WORKER

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## Let's Take Back Our Country



**Nick Casselli,**  
**President**

So, America has tried the “Make America Great Again President;” and now what we need to look for in the future is electing a “Take Back Your Country President.” Greed keeps rising simultaneously

with ignorance! At what point do we, the people, take back our country and say enough is enough? At what point do we quit allowing politicians to divide us on social issues? At what point do we demand that politicians quit giving Corporate America tax break after tax break and allowing corporate welfare to run rampant? At what point do we demand a living wage?

At what point do we demand our tax dollars be spent on providing all Americans universal health care, affordable college tuition, and demand a more equitable tax structure? At what point do we demand that our politicians, who are elected by “We the People,” promote the best interests of its citizens instead of the lobbyists who represent the corporations? At what point do we protect the environment? At what

point do we invest in our children and properly fund public education? At what point do we support the Equal Pay Act and demand that women are paid the same wages as men for the same work?

At what point do we promote human rights and stop over crowding our prison cells so the greedy corporations which run them at full capacity do so only to maximize their profits? And at what point do we demand that a review and overhaul of our judicial system take place to address the fact that minorities are placed in jail for misdemeanor crimes while corporate management types get off scot free after costing blue collar workers their pensions and sometimes their lives when safety takes a back seat

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## Privatization is an Attack on Veterans



**Nancy Rolling,**  
**Vice President**

In defense of the public Postal Service, the American Postal Workers Union makes the call – don't sell out our veterans by selling off the Postal Service. Privatization of the USPS saves no tax dollars

because the Postal Service is not funded by tax dollars. Postal privatization puts profit ahead of the rights of veterans.

The United States Postal Service is second only to the Department of Defense as a civilian employer of military veterans. Thousands of our veterans continue their public service as postal workers. They make up over 20% of the postal workforce.

U.S. Veterans magazine has listed the Postal Service among its “Best of the Best” veteran friendly companies for many years. Organizations like the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW), the American Legion and the Disabled American Veterans (DAV) acclaim the importance of postal jobs for our nation's veterans. By federal law, the USPS is obligated to give preferential hiring to veterans, particularly disabled veterans, and the spouses of deceased veterans.

Privatization of the public Postal Service would mean hardship for the thousands of

veterans working as carriers, clerks, mail handlers, maintenance and motor vehicle employees. Our nations' veterans perform these jobs in every corner of the country, and privatization likely means higher unemployment for future veterans.

The USPS website hails the employment of these service-tested men and women as being an asset to the postal organization. It says the Postal Service values their leadership, reliability and the high-tech skills veterans bring to the Postal Service, as well as their loyalty and integrity.

Many of these veterans have suffered injury through their military service. Postal workers who are disabled veterans rated at over 30% disability are entitled to a special leave category, called “Wounded Warriors” leave. Like all postal employees, these veterans have the

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864 MAIN ST,  
DARBY, PA. 19023-2109  
(610) 522-4520**

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**Nick Casselli  
Nancy Rolling  
Assistant Editors**

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**Legal Counsel:**

O'Brien, Belland & Bushinsky  
509 S. Lenola Road, Bldg. 6  
Moorestown, NJ 08057  
(856) 795-2181

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Send all communication to the Editor at the above address or via e-mail to Editor@phillyapwu.com.

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

Visit our web site at  
<https://phillyapwu.org>

# Take Back Our Country

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to profits?

At what point will we realize that we have a human crisis on our hands and figure out a way to end homelessness? At what point do we say it is never okay to place any child in a cage, ever? At what point do we demand that both reasonable gun legislation and immigration policies are formulated and enacted?

At what point do we demand enough is enough and remember our representatives are in office to represent and serve their citizens and not corporations? At what point will we realize that it is time to take back our country and promote our best interests instead of the interests of Corporate America?

## Vote to Protect Your Job

At what point do we demand that Congress end the mandate for the USPS to fund future health care costs for future postal employees, a burden other companies are not required to fund, and that they keep the most trusted

government agency, the people's public postal service, the United States Postal Service, intact and off the chopping block for PRIVATIZATION!!!

Finally I want to talk about what Trump is attempting to do, and if re-elected will implement, his plan to privatize the Postal Service. His plan includes cutting wages and benefits and eliminating our retirement plan. He wants to reduce the number of days that mail is delivered and move every customer to a cluster box. In a nutshell he wants to sell off the profitable part of the Post Office to his buddies. And the people that will be hurt by this move are the general public and US! It is extremely important that you educate yourself on how each candidate stands on your JOB! This year is the most crucial vote for our livelihood. We must elect those candidates that will support the continuation of a strong, public, USPS or we will be without a contract, benefits, or a living wage. □

# Privatization is an Attack on Veterans

(continued from page 1)

benefit of union contracts and earn a living wage to support themselves and their families. Millions of veterans also depend of the public mail service to deliver their prescription medicines and other medical needs.

The scheme to privatize the USPS is a direct attack on our nations' veterans. Those politicians who claim to support military service men and women, but push to dismantle the public Postal Service are hypocrites. They pose for photo ops while laying wreaths on graves and waving the American flag, but the sad reality is they are actively seeking to betray the men and women who served our great nation by taking away their opportunities to obtain good paying, union jobs by trying to privatize the Postal Service.

A recent Gallup poll was release and it rated the USPS the most popular government agency. This is the third year in a row the USPS ranked the

highest with the public. In closing, I would like to say I am proud to be a member of the APWU, a union that will always fight the fight to protect our membership, and always fight to protect our nations' veterans, whom I am proud to work with, side by side. □



# To Know the Contract, Is to Know Your Rights



*Atiyah Ivey,  
Director of  
Industrial  
Relations*

The Interest Arbitration Award for our new union contract is expected within the next few weeks. Once neutral Arbitrator Stephen Goldberg and the Arbitration Panel issues the Award the APWU

national leadership will immediately share the outcome with the members. In addition, as soon as possible after the Award is received the National APWU will mail a new and updated union contract to every member.

Just know that as a member you have a right to exercise your right to grieve any violations. Just because Article 3 gives management the right to manage they must do so within the provisions of the Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA). Therefore, management does not have the right to do whatever they want, however they want to!!!

Management does not have the unilateral right to do our work unless permitted by Article 1 Section 6a and 6b. In level 18 offices they can do only 15 hours of craft work per week. In larger offices they have to meet one of the five exceptions, otherwise they have to pay the employee who would have performed the work.

## **204B's / Discrimination / Past Practice**

Management does not have the right to just make anyone a 204b unless a PS 1723 is issued to the union, in advance. And their use and the amount of time they spend as a 204b is subject to contractual provisions, the violation of which may lead to an individual forfeiting their bid.

Management does not have the right to discriminate against any employee because of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, age, or marital status according to Article 2.

Management does not have the right to unilaterally change established past practices in your office, even when a new boss takes over. Article 5 and the law prohibit unilateral changes to the CBA or past practice, unless negotiated with the union after notice is given.

Management does not have the right to make cross craft assignments unless they meet certain conditions, such as unforeseeable or unavoidable circumstances per Article 7. Intentional understaffing is not an unforeseeable condition.

Management does not have the right to impose overtime without penalties; which include additional premiums for exceeding the 12-hour daily / 60 hour weekly limits. Nor can they schedule overtime (OT) willy-nilly without penalty. CBA Article 8 has 2.5 pages of rules and the JCIM has 13 pages on OT rules that also applies to PSE's working overtime in lieu of full time regulars

Management does not have the right to change your work hours unless they comply with federal law, their own out-of-schedule premium rules and Article 8 contract provisions. Nor can they change your rest days without complying with the work week and craft articles of the CBA.

## **Medical Documentation**

Management does not have the right to demand medical documentation for sick leave absence of 3 or fewer days unless they can show a legitimate business reason do it. It is not just on their demand; they must also consider your welfare - equitably on a case by case basis - per Articles 10, 16, 19.

Management does not have the right to reassign you at will. They must comply with seniority rules, bid rights, section identifications, skill requirements, higher level pay rules and other contract restrictions.

Management does not have the right to treat PSEs as servants or casuals, these employees have specific contractual rights. Being a "Postal Support Employee" is not a green light for mistreatment. PSEs have their own CBA sections covering their employment and their conversion to career status.

Management does not have the right to unilaterally deny light duty to injured workers; they are obligated to make every effort to find work that employees can perform. Being denied work is not automatic. There are strong protections in Article 13.

Management does not have the right to work you in a dirty, unsafe place nor abuse you in any way. Many regulations, laws and Article 14 offer strong protections. Federal law imposes penalties for unsafe conditions.

Management does not have the right to impose discipline at will and must prove "just cause" exists by following six distinct rules. In discipline cases, management has the burden of proof and must comply with due process procedures.

You have a right to grieve violations. The contract has 392 pages of agreed upon work rules that have no value unless they are enforced by us all, including you, the Members. You are the EYES and EARS of this union on the work floor and we depend on you to help us enforce our Rights. □

# Building Equipment Maintenance



**John Walker,  
Maintenance  
Craft  
Director**

I would like to try to explain the new MS1 TL5/TL6 that the postal service is trying to implement concerning building equipment maintenance, and discount any rumors and explain the challenges

the union is facing to protect and save Building Maintenance jobs.

Building Equipment Maintenance is performed by Building Equipment Mechanics, (BEM). A BEM is responsible for maintaining postal building infrastructure; namely, building electrical systems, HVAC, plumbing, air compressors, dock levelers, dock doors, power distribution, switch gears, power panels, and etcetera.

The MS1 TL5 / TL6 is a national agreement that is transferring maintenance work of stations and branches from plant maintenance to Field Maintenance Operation (FMO). Philadelphia, unlike most of the country, already has a field maintenance department separate from the plant that has been set up and staffed with Building Maintenance Employees to take care of stations and branches.

The method of staffing these positions and the duty assignments is similar to other staffing requirements in Maintenance. In order to have a correct staffing package an inventory of

equipment and work tasks must occur first; then, using the MS-1, manufacturer recommended frequencies and work performance standards are applied.

The result is an amount of work time needed to meet maintenance requirements, provide for the safety and health of occupants, and protect the USPS investment in the property. The APWU views this process very seriously and we take umbrage with management's singularly budget driven approach, which results in the degrading of our work location environments. Their cost savings over safety and health approach is having a detrimental impact on employee and customer safety because building equipment is not maintained and cared for properly.

The Eastern Area is now using MS1 TL5/TL6 and dictating to Philadelphia local management to drastically cut staffing of Building

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# Motor Vehicle Services Report



**Calvin  
Smith,  
MVS Director**

The Motor Vehicle Services Department would like to take this opportunity to offer congratulations to the following employees who have recently, or soon will be retired. The retirees are: Mr. Fleetwood,

Mr. Slaughter, Mr. Walls, Mr. McClelland, and Mr. Robinson. Enjoy doing all the things that make you happy in retirement.

Congratulations and BRAVO to the drivers who made regular. Their new positions will become effective March 7, 2020. The Motor Vehicle Services Department is pleased to have you onboard and hope you accomplishing great things.

Bidding on runs takes place annually. This year bidding will take place on April 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup>. Specific times will be posted prior to bidding. STAY TUNED.

Also, prime time vacation submissions will also be in place when placing your bid.

## Report Hazards

The Vice President is charged with responsibility for the health and safety of all divisions of the union. Article 14 of the National Agreement requires management to provide a safe and healthy work environment for all employees covered by the agreement. To achieve this

end, the contract provides for the establishment of joint safety and health committees at various levels throughout the Postal Service.

How do you report hazards or unsafe condition or practices? You can use PS Form 1767, which is to be used to report hazards, unsafe conditions, work practices and, in the opinion of the APWU, hostile work environments. You can use this form to report anything that you think could jeopardize your health and/or safety: dirty conditions, pests, mold, disturbed or broken building materials (tiles, insulation, etc.)

## Safety Tips

- Be Visible! Wear your vest
- Use caution in the parking lot "Slow Your Roll"
- Always Pre-trip your vehicle.
- If you see damage it must be reported prior to leaving the lot.

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# H.R. 2382 Passes the House

## APWU Members Instrumental in Victory!



**Cindy  
Heyward,  
Legislative  
Director**

I want to thank all of my coworkers who participated in the successful legislative action that helped get this important Act on its way to becoming law. The APWU held a day of action on Tuesday,

February 4, 2020, asking all APWU members and their families to call their Congressman to urge them to support this vital legislation. This effort started back in July of 2019, and according to the National APWU thousands of postal workers, unionist and community activist called their Representatives. We truly do have a Grand Alliance to save our public Postal Service.

According to reporting from the Postal Press Association, on Feb. 5, the USPS Fairness Act (H.R. 2382) passed the House of Representatives with overwhelming, bipartisan support – 309 ‘yea,’ 106 ‘nay,’ and 15 Representatives did not vote. The House’s passage of this legislation is the first step toward repealing the retiree health care prefunding mandate set forth in the 2006 Postal Accountability and Enhancement Act (PAEA). The prefunding mandate is responsible for 92 percent of Postal Service net losses since 2007 and is a threat to the financial sustainability of the Postal Service.

“Passing this legislation in the House is a positive step toward relieving the Postal Service of the manufactured financial crisis caused by the prefunding mandate,” said Legislative & Political Director Judy Beard. “APWU members were absolutely instrumental in educating their Representatives on this issue and obtaining support for the legislation. Without you, we would not have been able to achieve this milestone.”

APWU active, retired, and auxiliary members made over 7,570 calls to Congress and conducted numerous office visits urging support for this legislation. “Our members’, allies’, and sister postal unions’ efforts to speak to Congress and the public about the truth behind the Postal Service’s financial burden are paying off with this bipartisan legislation,” said President Mark Dimondstein. “Again, we see the power of workers and collective action.” With H.R. 2382 passing the House, we now turn our attention to the companion bill in the Senate, S. 2965.

### APWU Supported Postal Legislation

House Resolution 33 and Senate Resolution 99: These resolutions call on Congress to “take all appropriate measures to ensure that the USPS remains an independent establishment of the Federal Government and not subject to

privatization.” Privatization would accomplish nothing but increases in postal rates, and reductions of services, especially to those in rural areas. Both resolutions currently hold bipartisan support.

House Resolution 54: The resolution calls for the continuation of a 6-day mail delivery service. Elimination of Saturday delivery would be counterproductive to the thriving e-commerce business the Postal Service is a part of and would drive business and revenue away. The USPS provides affordable last-mile delivery for UPS, FedEx and Amazon to every delivery point in the country, partnerships that have been extremely successful, and profitable. Without Saturday delivery these companies will find alternate, more expensive means of delivery.

House Resolution 23: The resolution calls for the continuation of door delivery for all business and residential customers. Converting existing door delivery to centralized delivery points is wildly unpopular among small businesses and residential customers. The USPS brand is its best asset, that brand is trusted by the American people at their door and inside their businesses, not at a neighborhood cluster box. Revenue is generated every day by letter carriers who connect with business owners and other customers at the door.

House Resolution 60: The resolution calls for the USPS to restore 2012 delivery standards. Prompt and reliable nationwide mail service is critical to retaining business, growing business and satisfying customers. Delayed mail

*(continued on page 7)*



# Careful What You Bid For...



**Donna  
Alvin,  
Treasurer**

I want to inform the membership about a problem within our bid installation. What does a person do when they are removed from the Postal Service for a type of discipline? First, you file a timely

grievance and give a detailed statement to either your steward, or get it down to the union hall within 14 days of receiving the "Notice of Removal." Second, you should file for unemployment compensation right away. Third, you should look for another source of income while you wait for your grievance to run through the process of being heard at arbitration or settled at some earlier step of the grievance procedure. In any case don't expect a quick resolution, even though disciplinary cases are expedited through the grievance procedure it can take months or even a year or two for your case to come to a conclusion.

I, myself was out of work for a job related injury for about a year. My injured on duty (IOD) claim was denied. During that time I made about \$12,000. I am thankful I had some savings during that period, but I went through it all after about six month's time. It got to the point where I almost lost my house. My credit was shot and my creditors were in the process of suing me. I know what pure desperation feels like because I was there.

It took me five years to win my case with the Department of Labor and I got all my back pay. It took me several more years of working a lot of overtime to fix my credit and get to where I am now. That was 2008 through 2015. So now let's fast forward to 2017, when I was tired of chasing a machine in automation and wanted a regular type 9 to 5 job with weekends off.

## SRT Room

I first came to Bustleton Station in May of 2017, when I bid to the SRT room. At first it wasn't a bad job, just very boring. Then things changed, almost overnight, and that was with management. The supervisors became very drunk with power and started issuing crazy discipline. We had letters of warning and suspension being issued out the wazoo to clerks for using their cell phones while they were in the bathroom. The clerks were also issued discipline for dress code violations and for standing at the clock a few units before wash-up.

I have to say it hasn't gotten any better. This past year has been hell for clerks who are working in the SRT room as far as management issuing discipline. We have had 11 Removals. Yes, I said Removals. There are 12 SRT sites around the country (Philadelphia, Akron, Atlanta, Boston, Dallas, Dayton, Fox Valley, Portland, San Francisco, Seattle, Saint Pete and Tampa) and the 11 other sites combined have only 13 Removals. In particular, one of the

Removals it only took management eight months to from a Letter of Warning to a Removal. In Addition, I'm going to give you an estimate that there are at least 50 Suspensions of either seven or 14 days; and about 150 Letters of Warning over the course of the past three years. We have had eight different supervisors in the SRT room since May 2017. Nowhere, in any section of Philadelphia is there so much discipline for what is a 50 person operation. It's no wonder they can no longer keep the section fully staffed. I mean who really wants to work in that type of stressful environment?

I'm not telling anyone how to bid or not to bid to the SRT room, but I do want every clerk in the Philadelphia bid installation to know just what you are in for if you do decide to bid to the SRT room. □

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## Bldg. Equip.

*(continued from page 4)*

Maintenance Employees. When the union requested the staffing package for the FMO, management replied they didn't have one. When the union requested a staffing package for the plant, it turns out that local management had submitted multiple requests for staffing that were denied. Apparently, the Eastern Area would disapprove them, and will keep doing so until local management cuts out approximately 200 pages of inventory from the submitted forms.

The question is, did the building get smaller? No. Did inventory get removed? No. Yet management insists on cutting Building Equipment Employees to maintain the buildings, regardless of the adverse safety and health effects on our employees and customers. Management is supposed to go by the manufacturer's recommended preventive maintenance and time allowances and frequencies, also there is supposed to be space adjustment and miscellaneous work allowances that are fair, reasonable and equitable. This is not being done.

So, the Local is continuing to dispute the Building Equipment Mechanics staffing package, where they came up with the information for the staffing package and the fact the Eastern Area is just dictating to local management how many people to cut with no real justification. In closing, remember, the job you save may be your own. In Solidarity! □

# Nominations for Local Election

In accordance with the provisions of the Philadelphia PA Area Local Constitution nominations for the elected officer positions of the Philadelphia PA Area Local #89 APWU will take place at the

April General Membership meeting, which will be held at the Local Union Hall on Thursday, April 16, 2020, at 7:30 PM. The union hall is located at 864 Main Street, Darby, PA 19023.

The following is a list of the elected officer positions of the Philadelphia PA Area Local #89:

- President
- Vice President
- Recording Secretary
- Director of Industrial Relations
- Treasurer
- Trustees (three)
- Sergeant-at-Arms
- Chief Steward - Tour 1; Tour 2; Tour 3; North-east Area ; Northwest Area; Central and South Philadelphia; West Philadelphia
- Clerk Craft Director
- Clerk Assistant Director (A) Plant and (B) City Stations
- Maintenance Craft Director
- Maintenance Assistant Director (A) Plant and (B) City Stations
- Motor Vehicle Services Director
- Motor Vehicle Services Assistant Director (A) Plant and (B) VMF

Candidates for Chief Steward or Craft Office must be assigned to the Area or Craft they wish to represent. Chief Stewards at the Plant/District Office shall be on the respective Tour for which they are nominated for (for example - a candidate for Tour 1 Chief Steward must have an assignment on Tour 1).

In accordance with the provisions of the Philadelphia PA Area Local #89 Constitution

a Judge of Election (Eddie Mobley) and Teller (Drew Stevenson) were named at the February General Membership Meeting. In accordance with Article XVII of the Local Constitution the Judge and Teller shall be the Election Committee. The Election Committee shall be responsible for the conduct of the Local Elections and shall have full authority to decide all controversies arising out of the election processes until such controversies are finalized. Any member who feels aggrieved in connection with the conduct of an election shall file his/her grievance with the Election Committee. The term "election" shall include the nominating procedure.

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## Motor Vehicle Services Report

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- Be aware of your surrounding area when you are in a different location
- Fill your vehicle after completing your tour
- Be Respectful - return all gas cards to the pouch for the next driver.

Lastly, I would like to thank everyone for your support as your Craft Director. ☐

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## H.R. 2382 Passes the House APWU Members Instrumental in Victory!

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will continue to drive away customers from the USPS to our competitors.

Please contact your elected officials and urge them to support Postal friendly legislation, your job depends on it!

### Postmaster General

Postmaster General Megan Brennan was scheduled to retire this past January, but has agreed to stay on until her replacement is selected. On January 6, 2020, APWU President Mark Dimondstein, our national officers, AFL-CIO President Richard Trumpka, members of

the NAACP, CLUW, union members and activist gathered at USPS Headquarters to demand the Postal Board of Governors (BOG) preserve the USPS and appoint a Postmaster General who supports keeping the Postal Service as a public Postal Service. During the rally a petition was presented to the BOG signed by over 400,000 people supporting our position for a public Postal Service.

Please come out and support us at all upcoming rallies and demonstrations. We are stronger together, and the Philadelphia APWU has a reputation for organizing some of the largest, most well attended rallies in the nation. ☐

# The Great Postal Strike of 1970

*From Wikipedia*

The U.S. postal strike of 1970 was an eight-day strike by federal postal workers in March 1970. The strike began in New York City and spread to some other cities in the following two weeks. This strike against the federal government, regarded as illegal, was the largest wildcat strike in U.S. history.

President Richard Nixon called out the United States armed forces and the National Guard in an attempt to distribute the mail and break the strike.

The strike influenced the contents of the Postal Reorganization Act of 1970, which dissolved the United States Post Office Department, replaced it with the more corporate United States Postal Service, and guaranteed collective bargaining rights for postal workers.

On March 17, 1970, in New York City, members of National Association of Letter Carriers (NALC) Branch 36 met in Manhattan and voted to strike. Picketing began just after midnight, on March 18. This was a mass action where rank and file leaders emerged like Manhattan letter carrier Vincent Sombrotto, who would go on to be elected first branch and then national president of the NALC.

More than 210,000 United States Post Office Department workers were eventually involved across the nation, although initially the strike affected only workers in New York City. These workers decided to strike against the wishes of their leadership. The spontaneous unity produced by this decision empowered the workers.

President Nixon appeared on national television and ordered the employees back to work, but his address only stiffened the resolve of the existing strikers and angered workers in another 671 locations in other cities into walk-

ing out as well. Workers in other government agencies also announced they would strike if Nixon pursued legal action against the postal employees.

Authorities were unsure of how to proceed. Union leaders pleaded with the workers to return to their jobs. The government was hesitant to arrest strike leaders for fear of arousing sympathy among other workers, and because of popular support for the strikers.



*The above members of the Philadelphia PA Area Local Retiree Chapter were participants in the Great Postal Strike of 1970 and were proud to walk the picket line. They are from left to right – Gloria Gettys, Yoonia Farrington, Phil Harris, Theodore Kelly, Phyllis Allen, Bob Reid and Vivian Best.*

## 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