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Vol. 37 No. 5

April-June, 2014

The President's Report . . .



by **Scott Hoffman,**
General President

Since this is the first *Bostonian* issue since the local's election, I would like to thank the membership for giving me this opportunity. It was clear the mandate to change how we do business was signaled. We will do business different. The need for aggression in dealing with our opponent was expressed. We will be aggressive in our dealings. The Service is deadly serious in their decisions and implementations. We will respond in kind.

It is possible to maintain integrity in an adversarial role. We will be both

Together We Will Make A Positive Difference

adversarial and forthright. This is how you gain respect. This local will not sit at the kid's table; we will not be put off. The new agenda is set with all officers and stewards to come into compliance. The union is a business . . . the business of contract negotiation and enforcement designed to protect its members. It is not a club.

Recently these theories were put to the test. The local exposed the delayed mail as a result of plant consolidations. We were honest and firm in our exposure. Our intentions were pure. We did not look the other way, yet we did not make this investigation public to embarrass. This work manifested itself in job creation which, in turn, led to P.S.E. conversions, which led to service

commitments being met.

When the union does its job by investigating and forcing the Service to adhere to its own regulations via contract enforcement, the end result is positive. It seems the Service needs to be saved

and followed, they protect all interests . . . the Service's, the employees', and the public's. When we don't make them follow the rules, we let the addict destroy the family's balance, so to speak. When we don't engage, or look the other way,

we are enabling the Service to destroy the balance that needs to exist to survive.

By being

soft, we are letting the Service steal our livelihoods. No more! Stop being lulled to sleep by the boss's false promise that everything will be all right if you just be quiet and let it be. This is a fatal approach for us. Let's get going. The officers and stewards are changing their ways of conducting business. The membership needs to also. Together we will make a positive difference.

“Stop being lulled to sleep by the boss's false promise that everything will be all right if you just be quiet and let it be. This is a fatal approach for us. Let's get going.”

from itself. Like an addict, they deny there is a problem, blame everyone else for their woes, lash out at their own, and refuse to play by the rules. Like any intervention, this will be tough. We, and by we I mean us – the officers, stewards and members on the floor – have to stop enabling the Service to self destruct.

The contract, rules and regulations are checks and balances. When enforced

Postal Service, Lawmakers Clash Over Improving Finances

The Postal Service's improving financial situation is fueling a debate between the agency, lawmakers and unions over what kind of legislation is needed to save the struggling agency.

At stake are billions of dollars, tens of thousands of jobs and the future of the agency.

The debate centers on which income best represents the Postal Service's financial health: operating or net. Measured by operating income — revenue minus expenses — the Postal Service has made more than \$1 billion in profit since the beginning of fiscal 2014. However, net income factors in the Postal Service's obligation to prepay for retiree health benefits and fund its worker compensation fund, and there the service shows a net loss of \$1.7 billion.

The Postal Service is lobbying lawmakers for a



major overhaul, including: removing the requirement that the Postal Service prefund 75 years of retiree health benefits in only about 10 years — to the tune of \$5.6 billion a year. Opponents and supporters of reform alike confirm that no other federal organi-

zation has that requirement.

USPS would also like the ability to end Saturday letter delivery, while expanding package delivery to the entire week and flexibility to change prices and add new products in the future while closing underused post offices. Finally, the service wants authorization to further reduce its workforce. The agency has already shrunk by about 320,000 employees since fiscal 2000, but Postmaster General Patrick Donahoe has said legislation would allow the Postal Service to move from 485,000 career employees to 400,000 over the next few

years.

Lawmakers are divided on postal legislation, but there is a growing consensus that the Postal Service

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by Bob Dempsey, Vice President/Treasurer . . . **Working Together**

I'm happy to report that in the last issue of *the Bostonian*, I wrote that in my opinion the Postal Service had no choice other than to convert some PSEs

to career employees in order to run their operation here in Boston and that fact has finally come true with two different groups of conversions.

I believe these conversions were helped by the fact that management was under the spotlight here in Boston thanks to the recently released OIG Audit report (link to the report is available on our website; **BostonMetroAPWU.com**).

Back in December, Scott Hoffman and I went into the primary on tour 3 on a Friday night to investigate the reports of delayed mail in the primary unit. We couldn't believe our eyes when we saw the dates on some of this mail. The oldest tray of mail we found was dated 8/24/13 (almost four months old and, yes, this was FIRST class mail). We were so upset with what we found that we strategized over the weekend on how to deal with this humiliation of first class mail by management. I'm still perplexed on how this was allowed to get as bad as it was and can only guess that lots of people chose to "look the other way" and simply ignore the mess.

At the time, our national union was in the process of trying to stop the Postal Service's proposed change in delivery standards with the Postal Regulatory Commission (PRC). I brought this mess to the attention of our new National Vice Presidents (Debby Szeredy) who was "spearheading" the PRC campaign. I meet with her the following Wednesday morning, along with one of our national attorneys who arranged for a meeting with the OIG that afternoon. Scott went after management in the grievance procedure by filing an Article 3 grievance charging management with mismanagement and failing to maintain the efficiency of the operations entrusted to them.

The above is a perfect example of what we can accomplish when we all work together. We are beyond the days of "just filing a grievance" and need to utilize every possible avenue and resource available to achieve our goal when it comes to our survival.

I'm energized with our "Stop Staples" campaign and very happy to hear that the National AFL-CIO has endorsed our call for a Boycott of Staples. We've been working with the teachers and are pretty confident that they will pass a national resolution at their convention in July to boycott Staples during the back to school buying season. This is the pressure we need to get our message across, and we can succeed when we all work together!

I would like to thank everyone for allowing me to continue to serve as the V.P./Treasurer of our great local. I consider it an honor and will do my best to continue to advance our APWU agenda to better the lives of the membership for the years to come. Congratulations to all the new and returning Local officers and a big thank you for all your years of service to those who are moving on in their lives. Now that the election is over, it's time for us to all work together! I hope everybody enjoys the upcoming summer because we have lots of work to do. Please get involved and support our fight for survival.

I'm happy to end this article by announcing that this year's winner of the Matt Bowen Memorial Scholarship is Michael Colman, son of Karen Colman – Belmont Post Office.

- What is a labor union?
- How have labor unions affected my life?
- Is there still a need for labor unions?

I believe a labor union is an organized movement to get better wages and improve working conditions for its members. If all workers stand together to demand a fair wage for a fair days work, then management would have a hard time denying it. Only by organizing as a group can workers level the playing field with the one percent.

I learned about labor unions first from my mother. She has been a member of the A.P.W.U. since she began working for the post office about 30 years ago. She has taught me the importance of unions since I was a child. I had asthma and my Mom needed to take time off to care for me. She never needed to worry about losing her job because the union was there to help. She instilled in me a respect for unions because being a member gave her respect in a sometimes hostile work environment.

I believe there is more need for unions now than ever. For example, discount stores like Wal-Mart, discount stores with discount wages and discount quality of life for their workers. People think they are getting a great price but they don't see the big picture. The "discount labor force" is given no benefits, minimum wage at best, no health insurance, no job security, and no way to organize. These workers are actually subsidized by the government in terms of free care, food stamps, etc.

We need to give these workers the right to organize without retaliation from their employer. This means a stronger labor force one that stands together united for their fair share.

Labor Unions

by Michael Colman

As a high school senior, writing about labor unions, I asked myself three questions:



GENERAL OFFICERS

General President Scott Hoffman
 V.P./Treasurer Bob Dempsey
 Dir. Ind. Relations Bob Keough
 Assist. Treasurer Matt Dodd
 Recording Secretary Bob Farrell
 Vice President, North Raymond Bell
 Vice President, South Barry Holland
 Vice President, Central Dale Denham
 Vice President, West John Uccello
 017 Vice President Steve Barrows
 020 Vice President John Milso
 Dir. Human Relations Dale Denham
 Dir. Org. Leg. & Educ. Bruce Pearson
 Sgt.-at-Arms John Tobin

CLERK CRAFT OFFICERS

Pres. Clerk Craft Linda Cheevers
 Trustee Clerk Paul Holland
 Trustee Clerk William Thomas
 Trustee Clerk Mary Flanagan

MAINTENANCE CRAFT OFFICERS

President, Maintenance Wayne Greenside
 Trustee, Maintenance Joseph Joyce

MOTOR VEHICLE CRAFT OFFICERS

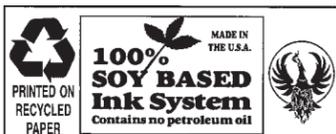
President, MVS William Weaver
 Trustee, MVS Ned Hogan

BOSTONIAN STAFF SCOTT HOFFMAN Editor

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AFFILIATIONS:

Mass State Labor Council, AFL-CIO
 Greater Boston Labor Council
 AFL-CIO
 American Postal Workers Union,
 AFL-CIO
 American Postal Workers Union of
 Mass., AFL-CIO
 Postal Press Association
 Norfolk County
 Central Labor Council



Michael Colman receiving his check for winning the Matt Bowen Memorial Scholarship.



by Robert Keough, Director Industrial Relations . . .

We Must All Come Together

Thank you to all of you that supported and voted for me in the recent local elections. It is important to me personally to live up to the trust you have entrusted to me. I will work hard for all crafts: Motor Vehicle, Maintenance and Clerk. Each craft faces challenges. I look forward to working with Bill Weaver, Wayne Greenside and newly elected Clerk Craft President Linda Cheevers as we move forward.

Local politics can sometimes be a rough and tumble business. This election was no exception. That is just the nature of things. Despite this, however, we must and will come together. Nothing is more important than unity as we take on the issues facing us. I am sorry to see the loss of any able union official but I know our local is in capable hands. I will work hard and support our new General President, Scott Hoffman. Scott brings a new sense of energy and enthusiasm to the job. I look forward to working with Scott, Linda and Bob Dempsey over the next 3 years. It is my honor to serve as your Director of Industrial relations.

As chief grievance officer for our local, I know the grievances that are filed. The number of grievances filed

has declined. Management is not violating the contract less. Honestly I believe that some of the membership, as well of some of our stewards, chooses to ignore contract violations. Complacency has set in. Stewards found to be lacking will be addressed. When we ignore contract violations, we open the door and the Postal Service will kick it in. I hope with a new administration that we see more involvement from the membership. The same bunch of men and woman has been doing the work of the local for many years. I welcome our newly converted PSEs and urge them to get involved, come to meetings, speak up, and ask questions.

We should be grieving violations. Here are a couple of things I see over and over: extending NTFT hours – bar-

ring an emergency – is a violation of the contract. Extra hours worked by a NTFT are considered “out of schedule” and should be paid at 1.5 rate. Not only that, we want those hours posted on a bid. Management has been cutting hours and positions for years, it is **NOT** OK to allow them to extend hours at will.

It is a contract violation for management to ask for documentation for absences of three days or less. The MER was eliminated years ago. There is no contractual basis to request documentation for absences of this type, nor is there any contractual basis to place you on a Deems Desirable list. If you are told you must document an absence or you are on the deems desirable list, you should contact your steward.

by Linda Cheevers, Clerk Craft President . . .

— A Little Bit About Me —

It is a great honor to be elected the Clerk Craft President of the Boston Metro. I have always been someone that has respected unions. Now here’s my chance to make a difference, and I won’t disappoint you. I came into the Postal Service in 1983 thinking I was only going to do one year and move on. At the time the pay was pretty good and so were the benefits. Most people I knew wanted to work for the Postal Service because of the security of the job and the pay. I started my career in the GMF, working in manual distribution and then the CFS Unit where I was a steward for about a year.

I moved on to Cambridge where I was a General Clerk and then a Window Clerk. I worked the window in Harvard

Square for approximately 15 years. I later transferred to Florida for a change of pace and quickly realized the grass isn’t always greener somewhere else and returned to Cambridge after six months.

I went back to the window in Harvard Square. In 2002, I got a bid as a Mail Processing Clerk at the Porter Square Carrier Annex, also in Cambridge. Very quickly I realized how management was becoming more abusive towards the employees. I was constantly calling the union hall, not only for myself, but also for the clerks I was working with. It didn’t take long before former President Moe Lepore asked me to step up and become a union steward. I didn’t accept his offer right away because I knew it was not going to be easy.

I knew I would throw myself into the position if I accepted his offer. After thinking long and hard about it, I did accept the challenge. I was harassed for months by management on a daily basis. The more they pushed me, the more I pushed back. I became the Alternate Chief Steward in Cambridge soon after. It was an eye opener to see how vicious some of these people could be. They didn’t care if you were a good employee with a good attendance record. They didn’t care if you were a good worker who took pride in your job. They wanted someone who would cower and not question their authority. I was not that person.

I’m talking about people who couldn’t manage a lemonade stand! The man-

agement personnel I was dealing with preferred to treat their employees with disrespect and are nothing more than bullies. They don’t have any compassion for employees who are truly going through some hard times and just need some support, meaning not being harassed, until things get better.

I can tell you that management in Cambridge could care less about their employees that are going through hard times. This is their opportunity to kick them while they’re down. I’m sure this is the case throughout our Local. I won’t sit by and watch the harassment and abuse that some people in management inflict upon employees for no reason other than they think they can.

In Unity.

REMINDER:

Annual Scott Miller Rescuer’s Award

All APWU Members and members of their immediate family are eligible.

Attention all APWU Members:

The deadline for submission for the 2014 Annual Scott Miller Rescuer’s Award is **Labor Day 2014**. Please see the First Quarter 2014 issue of the Bostonian for the full details of the award criteria and procedure.

This award is in memory of Scott Miller and in recognition of his accomplishments. Scott Miller was a member of the Boston Metro APWU since 1985, a member of the Executive Board, a Trustee, and a shop steward at the GMF in Boston. Tragically, he passed away suddenly in August of 2006. Scott had many noteworthy accomplishments during his career but is especially remembered for sev-

eral acts of lifesaving where his special training, emergency skills, and grace under pressure allowed him to resuscitate victims of heart attacks and choking.

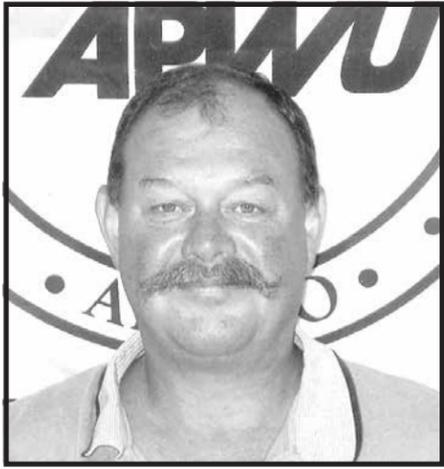
A Certificate of Award and a monetary prize of one thousand dollars (\$1,000) is presented annually by Boston Metro Area Local 100, commemorating the life-saving activities of our departed brother, Scott Alan Miller, and honoring individuals whose acts of heroism and rescue best exemplify Scott’s skill and sacrifice.

We encourage all APWU members **across the country** to submit nominations for this year’s award to the address below. The award may be given to present and retired members of the APWU and to members of their immediate family. Nominations

must be endorsed by your local APWU president or secretary/treasurer, and must include a description of the act, the individual’s relation to the APWU, and the full name and contact information of the nominee. Any documentation in the form of incident reports, newspapers, et cetera, will greatly aid the Boston Metro Local in the deciding the winner of the award.

The deadline to submit applications for this award is **Labor Day 2014**. Send nominations and supporting documentation to:

The Scott Miller Rescuer’s Award
Boston Metro Local 100, A.P.W.U.
137 South Street #4
Boston, MA 02111



by Bill Weaver, MVS Craft President . . .

Sleep Apnea Testing

You are all aware of the horror stories associated with being sent to Cambridge Health Alliance to renew your D.O.T. Medical Examiners Certificate. Very few people are getting their two year or one year certificate. Most are being told that they need to have a sleep apnea test (sleep study). They are being given a three month certificate and are referred to their primary care doctor for a referral for a sleep study. That in itself is one of the problems as some employees have gone to their primary care doctor only to be told they don't believe they fit the criteria to be sent for a sleep study. So your doctor won't give you a referral for the sleep study so your health insurance will not pay for it. What do you do now? Have the study and pay for it out of pocket, which may cost one thousand dollars (\$1,000) or more, (not many of us can afford this) or you risk losing your D.O.T. Medical Certificate and possibly your job.

I contacted the Northeast Area Occupational Health Nurse and told her

about the primary care doctor saying he did not believe his patient fit the criteria. She said that the employee should go back to his or her primary care doctor, and have them write a letter stating why they believed medically he or she did not need a sleep study. Take that letter to Cambridge Health Alliance. If they still insist on the sleep study, the N.E.A. nurse said I should contact her and she will have the Medical Review Doctor look at it to see if it can be resolved. She makes no promises, but it's all we have at this time.

Another problem is what do you do if you are a Postal Support Employee (P.S.E.) and do not have medical insurance? You are up a creek without a paddle (screwed)! You may be terminated or forced to resign.

As we researched this (*Land Line Magazine*), we found a great deal of information on sleep apnea but the information varied. The Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (F.M.C.S.A.) 393.41(b) states: "A person is physically qualified to drive a commercial motor vehicle if that person has no established medical history or clinical diagnosis of respiratory dysfunction likely to interfere with his/her ability to control and drive a commercial motor vehicle safely". Not a word in there about testing.

In order to get the full scoop on what

F.M.C.S.A. expects from the regulations, you must look at the "Guidance" the Agency issues on various regulations. The Agency has established guidance for chronic sleep disorders, including sleep apnea.

So what is "guidance" anyway? This is a direct quote from the F.M.C.S.A. Medical Examiner Handbook. "Regulations/standards are laws and must be followed. Whereas guidelines, such as advisory criteria and medical conference reports are recommendations. While not law, the guidelines are intended as best practices for medical examiners." The agency says that guidance does not have the weight of law behind it. As the explanation goes on, medical examiners are basically told that if they don't follow the guidance, they better provide a reason why.

The guidance varies depending on which article you read. In general, doctors will be able to cite a number of sleep apnea triggers that would call for a driver to have a sleep study test. These would include male drivers and post-menopausal female drivers with a body mass index (BMI) of 28 and have been in a crash. I have also read a BMI of 35 or greater would be a trigger. Also, male drivers with a 17" neck or female drivers with a 15.5" neck; drivers older than 42; drivers with a family history of sleep apnea,

and drivers with a small jaw.

Some questions the doctor may ask you are. Do other people in your household say you snore loud? Do they wake you up because you stop breathing? Do you fall asleep in a chair? Do you have daytime sleepiness, lack of energy, etc.? If you answer "Yes" to some or all of these questions, that may be a trigger to have the medical examiner order a sleep study.

The F.M.C.S.A. has been forthcoming about the medical examiner's responsibilities under the Regulations and what the penalties could be if they circumvent those regulations and incorrectly certify a driver as medically qualified when the driver actually is not medically qualified. The fines are pretty steep, \$10,000 in one instance, \$250,000 in another. We won't get into the likelihood of such fines being levied. The mere threat seems to be enough!

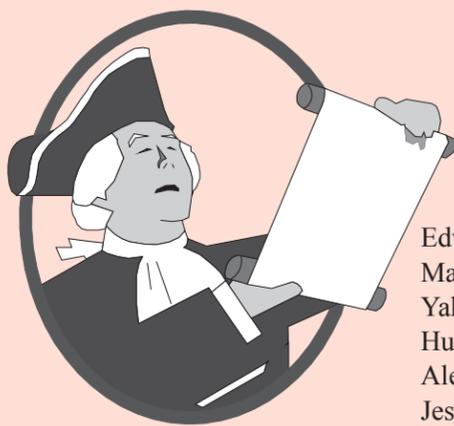
Many believe that they have gone too far. Last year, at the urging of large numbers of angry truck drivers, Congress passed a Bill that prevents the F.M.C.S.A. from proceeding with any regulation of sleep apnea without going through a rule making process. That involves public comment periods, legitimate research, cost benefit analysis, etc. In the meantime, medical examiners are looking to cover their assets – so to speak – and ordering more tests to prove they did all that they could.

WE NEED YOUR HELP! Some members have told us when they went to Cambridge Health Alliance to get their D.O.T. physical, they were approached by a woman stating she was with Harvard Medical School. She asked if they would take a sleep survey and if they did, she would give them a \$50 gift card for Lowes or Home Depot, or a gas card. In one case, a member was contacted on his cell phone while he was home. The union believes this is a violation of HIPAA laws ("Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act") as they must have gotten the member's private information from Cambridge Health Alliance.

We also believe it is a conflict of interest as Harvard Medical School had nothing to do your D.O.T. medical exam or the Postal Service. If this has happened to you, tell your steward or me, and we will get up on union time and get a statement. We need to document this to stop it.

(Excerpts from *Land Line Magazine* and foleyservices.com were used in this article.)

Hope everyone has a great summer! Be Safe.



Welcome New Members

Edward J. Reed
Mark R. Sherzi
Yakim A. Baptiste
Hung Bui
Alexandre Cezar
Jessica L. Collari
Alisha D. Donald
Dino Dunkley
Tommy Flores
Yvonne C. Grimes
Patrick Keenan
Janice S. Kuo
Wm S. McElhaney
Martinjunior Mundo
John Ortiz
Paul J. Verrette
Danielle M. Williams
Shana C. Williams
Mohmed M. Ahmed
Junior N. Albert
Andrew C. Ashe
Helen M. Beverly
Cherylene D. Bowles
Tracy Bertha Boyd

Donna Brietzke
Barbara D. Bryson
Robenson Calixte
John Copans
Brianna Crudup
Michael Dewberry
Dorothy Graves-Devlin
Calliston Huggins
Mesha I. Hylton
Imari A. Jeffreys
Sidonius N. John
Cierra F. Kelly-Snow
Tracey E. Landrum
Carolyn McIntyre-Powell
Donna M. McPhee
Didier Nazon
Jonathan M. O'Hara
Olusegun Olowe
Frank Oppong
NaPorcha Patterson
Tino G. Payne
Rachelle Payoute
Merry D. Rejovis
Nicola N. Robinson

Jermaine A. Sadler
Lang R. Settles
Edienny Silva
Porscha N. Small
Freddy Smith
Winston R. Suribory
Jeffrey D. Sweeney
Teninet H. Telila
Venice J. Thomas
Johnny L. Underwood
Paul J. Verrette
Nicholas Villar
Larry G. Wilson
Martin W. Wong
Patrick Wong
Austin P. Ashworth
Fabiana D.F. Iansen
Christina R. Ingram
Esther James
Mekonen Kidanemariam
Thomas J. Monahan
Alintia S. Roland
Leanne M. St.Germain
Aaron L. Tavares

Welcome New Members of Boston Metro Area Local

Mignon Debbie Agsaoay
Janycia M. DeJesus
Shanice A. McCorvey
Stephen L. Misserville
Laurie J. Poirier
Kim L. Proeung
David Williams
Emmanuella Balthazar-Anis
Michael J. Brown
Jasmin J. Council
Susan M. DiJune
Leole C. Harris
Michael Morris
Merzilia Petit-Frere
Arthur F. Reed



by Wayne Greenside, Maintenance Craft President . . .

Maintenance Craft Update

being installed in place of the three ABB Post-Con loading robots on the first floor of the Boston P&DC.

Of the things that have not changed as yet is still the status of the Northwest Boston facility in Waltham. As of the latest meeting we had with management at the end of May, there still has been no date set or decision made regarding the closing of the facility. Mind you, I'm in no hurry for them to close the facility but the employees assigned there would like to know more about what the future holds for them. However, the rumor mill will continue to throw stories of closure dates. So don't automatically assume that the "word" on the floor is accurate. Local management keeps pushing the closure date

further into the future. So, until we see it in writing, we'll have nothing to hang our hat on.

On another note, as you've seen from the bulletins and on the National APWU website, the "Stop Staples" campaign is in full swing nationwide now. The National APWU Headquarters is asking all members to boycott the Staples stores and website. They're also asking us to get our friends and acquaintances to join the boycott, and they're asking the entire membership to join in the protest rallies wherever they can.

What does all of it mean for the Maintenance Craft, you might ask? Well first and foremost it is an issue of solidarity with our Union in general, but it is also an issue of jobs. If the USPS is success-

ful in closing Post Offices in favor of postal services being provided at postal counters inside the Staples stores and by non-postal employees, that will obviously be a blow to our brothers and sisters in the Clerk Craft for window jobs. But remember, the reduction of postal facilities as a result will also mean less custodial jobs and other maintenance positions related to the upkeep of the buildings too. So we're all in this together. We have to be. There's so much at stake and we all need to participate on one level or another. Go to a "Stop Staples" protest rally, boycott the stores and website, donate to the APWU COPA fund, and write your Congressman and Senator too. Do whatever you can do because I guarantee this. If we all do nothing, we all will lose.

As we move in through the Spring and into the Summer season, we once again see a number of changes on the horizon. First we will see a number Maintenance PSEs selected for conversion opportunities to regular career maintenance employment as Laborer-Custodians. As of the writing of this article, our APWU National Business Agent for the Northeast, Chris Howe, is reviewing the PSE rosters and seniority lists for each district in the Northeast Area. He has been meeting with management at the regional level to correct discrepancies on the lists relating to PSE seniority dates, actual work locations of each PSE, as well as verifying where the custodial vacancies actually are located and open to conversion.

This process must be completed before any Maintenance PSEs can be converted. No specific conversion date has been set. The conversion process for Maintenance PSEs who are members of our local will also involve PSEs from other locals who are assigned to other offices in the same District. The Greater Boston District, as management now calls it, encompasses pretty much the entire eastern half of the State of Massachusetts. Areas with zip codes beginning with 014 and all the way to areas with zip codes that begin with 026, all fall within the Greater Boston District now. The entire district will be viewed when determining PSE seniority standing for purposes of conversion.

So, to be clear on how the "district" and our Local are intertwined, the Boston Metro Area Local #100 encompasses only a portion of the USPS installations, facilities and offices with the Greater Boston District. All offices with zip codes beginning with 021, 022 and 024 (The Boston Installation) fall within our Local. Additionally, only a portion of the other offices (separate installations), beginning with 017 and 020 zip codes, fall under the umbrella of our Local. The remainder belong to other locals within the Greater Boston District.

The second change we'll see has already been installed at the Boston P&DC facility with the addition of a new "Low Cost Universal Sorter" (LCUS) machine to be used to sort packages and parcels that cannot be sorted on the APPS machine. Third is another new machine called a "High Speed Tray Sorter" (HSTS) which is

Postal Service, Lawmakers Clash Over Improving Finances

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cannot cut its way to growth by closing post offices or ending services, Rep. Gerry Connolly, D-Va., said.

Legislation that would end the prefunding requirement would represent a "huge victory," but he said the Postal Service is holding back that legislation by only supporting a major overhaul.

"It is incredibly disappointing that as the proverbial ship is sinking, the postmaster general appears obsessed with stubbornly insisting that the deck chairs be arranged precisely as he wishes, rather than urgently acting to secure relief in plugging the hole that responsible for the sinking the entire ship," Connolly said.

Legislation waiving the prefunding of retiree health insurance would reduce the need for a drastic overhaul, according to Marnee Banks, spokesperson for Sen. Jon Tester, D-Mont., the only person on the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee to vote no on postal legislation.

"Sen. Tester believes that as Congress considers postal reform legislation, it should not reduce mail delivery service standards, particularly for rural customers," Banks said.

Rep. Elijah Cummings, D-Md., said any postal legislation would have to focus on bipartisan areas of agreement and would give the Postal Service the authority to explore new products and innovative measures.

"The improving economy and the significant growth in postal package services have helped the financial condition of the Postal Service, especially compared to several years ago, but we still need comprehensive

reform legislation to ensure the long-term financial stability of the Postal Service," Cummings said.

Though the Postal Service has improved its financial outlook, the major factors that have contributed to a decline in mail revenue — such as the loss of letters to email — remain a drain on its resources, according to a Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs spokesperson.

Tom Carper, D-Del., the chairman of the committee, will keep working in the Senate to pass the Postal Reform Act of 2014.

"Congressional inaction has forced the Postal Service to take drastic measures to reduce its costs, including cutting its workforce and closing distribution facilities. It remains imperative that Congress come to agreement on a plan that fixes the Postal Service so it no longer has to function on the brink of failure," the spokesperson said.

A few months of increasing operating profits does not come close to making the Postal Service financial viable, according to Joseph Corbett, the chief financial officer at the Postal Service. The Postal Service is continuing to work with members of Congress to show why reform is needed.

"We are in a very big hole — a huge hole — financially. It's going to take years of sustained profits in order to get us back to a firm financial footing," Corbett said.

He said the Postal Service only has 13 days of operating costs in cash even though it needs to make \$10 billion in capital investments over the next few years — in its package sorting systems, its scanner technology and other technologies — in order to

boost future operating revenues.

The Postal Service needs the legislation to help spur growth in new areas and give the agency the flexibility it needs in its workforce and prices, according to Corbett.

Right now even a minor economic downturn could erase all the progress the Postal Service has made and plunge the agency into insolvency, Corbett said. The agency is at the ceiling of its \$15 billion line of credit with the Treasury Department.

But lawmakers should take into account the recent financial turnaround at the Postal Service and avoid taking action based on ideology, according to Fredric Rolando, the president of the National Association of Letter Carriers.

He said the improving economy has led to the stabilization of mail revenue, while the Internet has spurred huge growth in online shopping and package delivery services. The Postal Service proposal to end Saturday mail delivery would just hurt a mailing network that is no longer shrinking drastically.

Legislation should focus only on removing the prefunding of retiree health benefits and avoid damaging what he said is an organization that has turned the corner and is now showing profits.

"Without this prefunding fiasco, rather than talk of 'red ink,' the narrative would be a success story — an agency that, without a dime of taxpayer money, operating in a still-soft economy and facing the challenges of the Internet, is profitable while providing Americans with the world's most affordable and efficient delivery network," he said.

Cambridge Article — 2

by Bob Waterhouse, Chief Steward,
Cambridge Post Office

In these dark days of financial crisis that has all but thrown this great universal service into despair, we are seeing the Postal Service cut back our workforce so desperately that they cut back way too much. It is unfortunate that the USPS concocts a formula that spits out a tainted and ridiculous staffing proposal and retains the right to run this business into the ground without a care. I see it first hand or as close to first hand as you can get. Let me explain to you how much these people in management care about saving money in the Post Office.

Back in late 2010 and early 2011, most will remember that we were smacked with several feet of snow in a short amount of time. Well, about 2/3 of the clerks in Cambridge called in for emergency annual leave in lieu of administrative leave. The Postmaster wouldn't even pay them the emergency annual leave. She ordered no leave be paid out at all. Then the union stepped in and she told us that she would pay them the EAL.

Well, as you can imagine, the grievance was filed and I told the supervisor that if they just show me the paperwork of them getting paid, the grievance would be settled right then and there. He refused, so it was appealed to Step 2 in front of the Postmaster who refused to show proof of the employees getting paid as well. Instead, she argued that the employees should have come in regardless of weather conditions. So it got appealed again to Step 3 where it was again denied with management arguing that they should have reported. Finally, at arbitration back in December of this past year, the USPS put up thousands of dollars to pay an arbitrator to sit and see a USPS representative travel all the way down from central New Hampshire only to show up with proof that the clerks were paid three years prior. This was a disgusting waste of money. And this Postmaster has told me several times that they are trying to save money!!!

It is reprehensible that management is THAT blatant

in wasting money. They could have settled that grievance from day one with paperwork showing payment to the clerks and paid not one penny. One can only wonder what can be done about these greedy, lying, arrogant self-servers. Wait until next issue – where I will tell you of her abuse of power, egregious lies, an attempt of harassment and intimidation towards the steward, and an obscene waste of money that reaches well over a hundred thousand dollars.

Anyway, let me update the latest current events in Cambridge. Last year the Postmaster shoved a ridiculous staffing package down our throats, displacing several senior clerks from their jobs. Linda Cheevers and I proposed a staffing package to the Acting Postmaster about 6 months later, and he agreed to implement it as a partial solution to the disastrous job cuts to the Porter Square Carrier Annex. We created 3 full time 40 hour jobs that existed before. The intention was to create more 40 hour jobs and less 30 hour jobs since we have no career clerks left to fill them.

In the back of our minds we also wanted to give the displaced clerks a shot at their old bids. Due to the current language in the contract, however, the insertion bidding kept 2 of the 3 jobs from hitting the bid cycle as two of the NTFT clerks bid 40 hour jobs. I look at it as a win that we got two 30 hour clerks to bid 40 hour jobs, but it fell short from making the displaced clerks whole. By this time, the Acting Postmaster had left and our current Postmaster returned. Seeing as how she rarely does anything that would be considered progressive or constructive, management just idiotically reposted the two 30 hour jobs knowing full well that nobody would bid them . . . and now instead of the staffing improving, it is even worse.

The smoke has settled between the clerks and mail handlers on the ground level. I am currently trying to remove the latest grievances out of the RI-399 forum and possibly push the lead case along with the other existing lead cases concerning cross craft work closer to arbitration. RI-399 is a dispute resolution committee that argues and resolves, through arbitration if

necessary, which craft does which work. This applies only to clerks and mail handlers though. Management referred the two lead cases to delay the process of the grievance-arbitration procedure. I see it as a slam dunk. They are prolonging the issue which will grow to a very expensive bill when it comes to disposition.

The most prevalent grievances these days concern staffing, utilization of our PSE workforce, crossing crafts, bargaining unit work and 204B Supervisors working higher level assignments in violation to the contract. We also have a monster grievance where the issue is the prohibition of non-career employees (in this case PSEs) working the registry section.

Speaking of the Postal Support Employees, I will refrain from explaining the grievance I filed to try and convert them. I'm sure most clerks have heard of the agreement that was made at the National level to fill residual vacancies. I am being told that several Boston PSEs are being converted as we speak, even BEFORE the stipulations of the agreement are followed. My PSEs and I are patiently waiting to reach the last rung of this ladder; the 8th provision that converts our Postal Support Employees into career status. Cambridge has 15 or 16 vacancies in the city – that's 25% of our work force! And there are two other clerks who are out long term. Several PSEs have recently resigned and no replacements have been brought in. We had about 12 or 13 at one point last year, but the current installation head continues to refuse to properly staff her offices. She'd rather curtail operation hours and allow other work to go undone.

It is a travesty that they shamelessly march forward with their inept intellect and half-assed work ethic. The customer lines are long. The mail is constantly delayed and back flowed. Supervisors are notorious for scanning mail as "attempted" after delivery hours have ceased in order to fraudulently inform our own customers that we tried to deliver their mail and to now come looking for it at the office. As you can imagine . . . when the customer shows up - their mail isn't there; it's out on the street for delivery. The ridiculous explanation the supervisors have for the customer is stomach-turning.

Another act of fraud is this new trick they discovered last year concerning the box line mail. I'm not talking about scanning the mail up before it is up either! Now they are telling the webbats systems (the program used to process and record P O Box customer status) information that is untrue to get around the responsibility of changing locks in each box which would result in clerk work hours. So they lie about what they are doing; then they reverse it later, thus screwing up the organization of this system and compromising the security of the customers' mail. I will elaborate on it more in the next issue.

Brothers and sisters, if you see what you believe is a violation, please tell your steward. The members are our eyes and ears, and act as tools for the stewards to best represent you. Be involved. Ask how you can help. Do not despair or get discouraged about what the future MIGHT bring. Instead, know your enemy, stand by your reps and fight for the future we strive for. There is a possibility that we may lose, but if we go down, we go down fighting. I am a realist; not a pessimist and not an optimist; a realist. I do believe however that the direction you go in is predicated on your attitude. If you have the attitude that bad things are going to happen . . . good things will not. I will leave you with this quote from the late great Henry Ford . . . "Whether you think you can, or you think you can't . . . you are right".



The Price Is Right vs. Burger King

by Ray Bell, Area Vice President North

I've been around a while like many of you and, believe me, I do not want to date myself in any way. But, the fact remains that we are progressing as we "progress", our postal careers. How many of you remember that popular TV game show with Bob Barker, "The Price is Right"? If you do, please read on and try to harken back to that particular game where the contestant had to correctly guess under which coconut shell the ping pong balls were – the "Shell Game". Slight of hand – you swore you couldn't/wouldn't be fooled. You even screamed at the TV and those dumb contestants who you were so much smarter than.

That Shell Game is still popular, especially so in the Postal Service. In stations and branches, postal management continues the insulting BUDGET SHELL GAME with "vacant jobs", hoarding of P.S.E.s for no obvious stated reason (other than to cut your over-

time) and, lastly, have the audacity to cry to us that our stations are "over" or overstaffed in CSV. Yeah, right! A joke!

Let me get this straight. We have jobs vacant. They are not reposted. We have had **other** jobs go vacant that were attempted to be reverted due to what Operations Program Support (a/k/a the mothership of postal management) deems as "no longer needed due to decrease workload". This is while this same office is either hoarding or holding (?) a recently converted P.S.E. How can an unencumbered clerk be held? For what? The office and whole service suffers from a "decreased workload", correct? We hear it every day. "The volume is low".

It gets better. They utilize P.S.E.s who haven't yet been converted for **months** – even up to a year, but then still claim your office is overstaffed! Or, they mumble something about Joey's or Jenny's **vacated** bid you haven't seen in a year, and claim that's

what the P.S.E. is covering. You know your station. You then realize this isn't true because the hours of the empty bid are not compatible to those being worked by the P.S.E.

Brothers and sisters, we are playing the BUDGET SHELL GAME – a game of "catch us if you can". It's purely based on deception . . . and lies. There is no "decreased workload" that is why managers won't let their P.S.E.s go. However, the mothership tells these managers that their "hours are over" and that they need to cut a job or two. Meanwhile, there are residual vacancies they say P.S.E.s are covering, **BUT WON'T POST THEM!**

This will further their base hours – and that is taboo for Ops Support. So, here we are. If they allow P.S.E.s to go, the overtime invariably rises. *Not good!* If they post the vacant residual jobs, the base hours increase. *Not good!* If they utilize P.S.E.s for prolonged periods, this demonstrates there obviously is

not a "decreased workload" and makes it a "hard sell" to kill vacated jobs. *Not good!*

The last resort is to confuse us with "slight of hand" and move these BUDGETARY SHELLS around so that we never see the jobs that are hidden underneath. We have to be vigilant – like the contestant – and not get fooled. We know our pay locations better than they do, and we know hypocrisy when we see it. If you have a suspicion or know of trickery in your place – please note it and report it to us. The more eyes on the moving shells, the better! These ping pong balls – after all – are **our jobs!** Don't get fooled. We can win if we have the facts on our side.

Postal management is playing the SHELL GAME, and wants it like Burger King . . . to "have it their way".

No more. Together with communication "grass roots" efforts, we can expose the fraud and stem the tide. Get involved and let's fight back.

Accident Benefit Association (ABA) – A Union Benefit

YOU ARE A MEMBER OF BOSTON METRO AREA LOCAL 100, A.P.W.U., YOU AUTOMATICALLY BELONG TO THE ACCIDENT BENEFIT ASSOCIATION

by Bob Dempsey, Boston Metro Local A.B.A. Rep.

This is a reminder to all Boston Metro A.P.W.U. members that, as a member of the Boston Metro Local, you are automatically covered for LOW OPTION (ABA Value Plan) in the Accident Benefit Association (ABA) – at no cost to you. Under the Low Option Plan, you are eligible to collect \$12 per day (7 days a week) for injuries – on or off the job – due to an accident, which cause you to be out of work, for up to one year. You can also enroll in the HIGH OPTION (ABA Advantage) Plan – for an additional \$1.40 per pay period. The High Option Plan pays you \$24 per day.

A member may enroll his/her spouse in this benefit program – in either the Low Option/Value Plan or the High Option/Advantage Plan. The spouse's payment will be added to the member's payroll dues deduction.

I would advise all members to put in for HIGH OPTION (Advantage Plan). It only costs you \$1.40 per pay period and pays you **\$12 more per day** than the Low Option (Value Plan).

The Bi-weekly dues deductions, which includes the regular dues of \$27.71 (for career employees only), plus A.B.A. amount, are below. **PLEASE NOTE:** P.S.E.s should add the ***A.B.A. amount** to current P.S.E. dues of \$19.15.

	A.B.A. Amt.*	Dues Deduction for Career Employees
MEMBER - High Option ABA	(add \$1.40)	- \$29.11
MEMBER & SPOUSE - High Option	(add \$3.40)	- \$31.11
MEMBER & SPOUSE - Low Option	(add \$.60)	- \$28.31
MEMBER/High & SPOUSE/Low	(add \$2.00)	- \$29.71

A.B.A. PLANS

A.B.A. VALUE PLAN

As a member of Boston Metro Area Local 100, American Postal Workers Union, you are covered for LOW OPTION (the ABA Value Plan) in the Accident Benefit Association (ABA) — **AT NO COST TO YOU**; and you are eligible to collect \$12 per day (7 days a week) for injuries due to an accident.

A.B.A. ADVANTAGE PLAN

You can also be covered for HIGH OPTION (the ABA Advantage Plan) for an additional \$1.40 per pay period, and the High Option pays you \$24 per day. A member may enroll his/her spouse in this benefit program – under either the Value Plan or the Advantage Plan (the spouse's payment will be added to the member's payroll dues deduction.) You can obtain forms to enroll a spouse or change to High Option (the ABA Advantage Plan) by calling the union office.

FAMILY BENEFIT PROVISION

The FAMILY BENEFIT PROVISION is also included with your ABA benefits - AT NO EXTRA COST. The Family Benefit Provision provides a \$2,000 accidental death benefit for the spouse of an ABA member (provided the spouse is not already covered as an ABA member); and also a \$2,000 accidental death benefit for all unmarried dependent children (up to and including the age of 18) of an ABA member.

A.B.A. PLUS PLAN

As a member of the A.B.A., you can now increase your ACCIDENTAL DEATH BENEFITS COVERAGE to a total of \$50,000, \$75,000, or \$100,000, under the new "A.B.A. PLUS PLAN".

Coverage	You Pay
\$50,000	- 754 per Pay Period
\$75,000	- \$1.13 per Pay Period
\$100,000	- \$1.50 per Pay Period

You can also enroll your spouse in the ABA PLUS PLAN if he/she is already a member of the ABA through your dues deduction. They are eligible for a \$50,000 Accidental Death Benefit at a cost of 754 per Pay Period. If you have any questions regarding this benefit, or wish to receive forms, call me at (617)-423-2798.

PLEASE NOTE: An injury **due to an accident** is defined as a break of the skin and flesh or other condition of the body. It must be identifiable as to time and place of occurrence and body member or function of the body affected. **It must be the result of a specific event or incident.** Total loss of time must begin within 60 days after the accident happens that caused the disability. The daily benefit will begin on the day disability first arises. It shall continue for such period as he/she cannot perform service as a Postal employee or follow any other employment. All members are reminded that the A.B.A. insurance contract does not pay on disabilities caused by **lifting, stress, strain or over-exertion**. As long as you are a member of the Boston Metro Local, you are covered under LOW OPTION, if you have an accident **ON OR OFF THE JOB**.

The "APPLICATION FOR BENEFITS" form must be filed within ninety (90) days after the disability ceases or claimant returns to work, whichever date occurs first. In the case of anticipated prolonged disability, the injured member may make claim for partial payments, **BUT NOT MORE OFTEN THAN EACH THIRTY (30) DAYS**. If you have any questions regarding this benefit, call me at (617)-423-2798.

The filing of all A.B.A. claim forms, the High Option/Advantage Plan and "A.B.A. PLUS PLAN" forms, should be done through the BOSTON METRO local office. Please send to my attention.

POSTAL WORKERS: Now Is The Time To Get Involved!

I have constantly been requesting and urging more of our members to become more active in not only the local union but also their communities. We are now at a point where it seems we currently have no other option than to become more involved.

For many years most of our membership has left too much of the fighting for jobs, better wages and our rights and benefits to stewards and officers. It's not enough. We all have to do more.

Times have changed. We have fought off privatization for years. We have come up against a government that has caved in to large corporations, bankers, and large discount mailers. The Postal Board of Governors, the Postal Regulatory Commission, the Republican-controlled House with Privatizer-in-Chief Rep. Issa (R-CA) and even the Democratic-controlled Senate, with Senators Tom Carper (D-DE) and Tom Coburn (R-OK) paving the way for the same privatizers, have to be held accountable. We even have the president of the United States compromising government employees, including postal workers.

We are at a critical time in our history, where the survival of the Postal Service and our very jobs and futures are at stake. That is why we are calling out to you, the members, to get involved now. Writing letters to your legislators is important, but it is not enough. You need to attend your union meetings. You need to sign up non-union members who work side-by-side with you. There are 42,000 of them, and they need to do their share in this fight, too.

How To Do It

We must save the Postal Service and to do so we must reach out to our community groups, families, friends and neighbors. We need to help our local, state

and national union at pickets, protests, and actions that will help save America's Postal Service. We must help people see that an attack on their public mail service is an attack aimed at the poor, veterans,

seniors, the disabled, low-wage workers, union workers, small business owners, and people who live in rural and urban areas. All of the United States will suffer if there is no Postal Service. We must build a powerful movement with the people of this country to save the Postal Service.

We need to rebuild service by reopening facilities that were consolidated or closed. We need to stop the Staples privatization ploy, and assign postal workers to do postal work. We must fight to add postal banking, notary, licenses, and broadband access to the services the USPS offers. The Postal Service must restore and expand business hours. Our customers need affordable, efficient and prompt service as outlined in the Postal Reorganization Act. They need post offices, which were established by the Constitution of the United States.

Want to get active? Here are a dozen things you can choose from:

1. Get involved in your local union. Attend union meetings to stay informed.
2. Check out www.apwu.org for the

alitions to save the Postal Service.

7. Sign up new members to join the union.
8. Ask your local union if you can help spread the word by becoming involved in your central labor council.
9. Ask your local union if you can help spread the word by writing letters to the editor.
10. Ask your faith group and/or community organization to become involved with the movement to Save America's Postal Service.
11. Participate in petition drives, rallies, protests, press conference, visits to elected officials, town hall meetings, and on social media to advance the cause of saving the Postal Service.
12. Educate your children, friends and families on the importance to them of having a vibrant public Postal Service.

This is a fight for our very survival. It doesn't matter if you are near retirement age or a PSE hoping to be converted to career; everything is on the line. If we let them privatize the Postal Service, none of us are safe. It is up to each of us to do our share to build a successful movement to save the Postal Service, to turn it around, and provide the American people with the postal services they deserve.

It is time for all of us to "Ask not what your union can do for you; ask what you can do for your union and the American people."

We need you now!



latest updates and actions.

3. Visit the Stop Staples website at www.StopStaples.com.
4. File a complaint about delayed mail with the Postal Regulatory Commission. (See the Vice President's page at www.apwu.org for more information.)
5. Write letters to your U.S. Representative and U.S. Senators. Go to the "Contact Your Legislators" shortcut at www.apwu.org.
6. Join organizing committees and co-

DEADLINE

for the next issue of *The Bostonian* is

August 1, 2014

Any member or officer wishing to submit an article is advised to send it, typewritten and double spaced, to the Union Office by the deadline date. (Articles subject to editing and available space.)

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I don't need a union, see,
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My boss knows what is best for me,
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He cuts my hours,
my wages shrink.
He decides what thoughts
I'm free to think.

He says, "work fast,"
then barks, "work faster!"
I obey, he is my master.

I'm union free and proud.

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