

The Dispatcher

Volume LII Issue 1

September/October 2020

THE DAMAGE IS DONE



APWU Youngstown, Ohio Area Local 443 Officers and Staff

Our local serves bargaining unit workers of the USPS in over 60 facilities in Northeast Ohio. We represent members of the Clerk, Maintenance and Motor Vehicle Crafts of the APWU.

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It's No Joke

President's Report by Dominic Corso

It's No Joke!!!

Regardless of their political affiliation, the American people overwhelmingly support the Postal Service and Postal Workers with a 91% favorability rating in the last Pew Research Poll (March 2020). Locally, we have witnessed, first hand, the impact of the administrative changes that we have had news conferences about and rallies against. Succinctly stated, these administrative changes have negatively impacted and severely damaged the Mail-stream resulting in a mounting backlog pile of delayed letters and packages. The Postal Service has been struck with irreversible damage.

Having been a Postal Worker for nearly 35 years, I have experienced many changes and attacks to privatize the Postal Service—but nothing like this. These most recent administrative changes and the timing of these changes are clearly by design and cynically exploit the devastating impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic. Whenever the Post Office moves this fast with operational changes, rules and protocols are broken. The agenda to be a wrecking ball of irreversible damage is prevalent and is designed not only to wreck Mail-In voting but also to privatize. And all these destructive changes are being pushed without Union or Public input.

In addition to vowing and then blocking all Pandemic Aid (of which other businesses were granted) President 45 called the Post Office a Joke. Well, Mr. 45 It's No Joke when people have their prescription medications delayed. It's No Joke when the results of COVID medical test kits are delayed. It's No Joke when people's Social Security Checks are delayed. It's No Joke when people's lives de[Type a quote from the document or the summary of an interesting point. You can position the text box anywhere in the document. Use the Drawing Tools tab to change the formatting of the pull quote text box.]

pend upon the Postal Service and those critical services are delayed. From the very beginning of his presidency, not only has 45 verbally attacked the Post Office, but now he has appointed his privatizing henchman, PMG DeJoy. Whenever, there was a one of Our Union's Biller would say, "I'll before I start beating him

PMG DeJoy is cemented operational changes of his destructively targets removing city mailboxes, dismantling processing machines, and reducing city delivery. Collectively, these destructive changes will severely reduce the ability of the Postal Service to provide prompt, reliable, and affordable Universal Service to all Americans.

"Hearing PMG DeJoy answer questions from the House of Representatives was like listening to doublespeak with more spins than a top and more holes than Swiss Cheese."

newly appointed PMG, greatest presidents, Moe give this guy a chance, up." So, consider this.

in the destructive "solvency plan". This closing Post Offices,

This reduction in Postal Services creates a void which would be readily captured by competitive delivery companies, like the ones PMG DeJoy has financial ties with. Such competitor delivery and contractors which, as the Washington Post reported, DeJoy and his wife's "holdings include between \$30.1 million and \$75.3 million in assets in USPS competitors or contractors." Clearly a conflict of interest because PMG DeJoy stands to gain monetarily from the destructive reduction of the Postal Service. Hearing PMG DeJoy answer questions from the House of Representatives, was like listening to doublespeak with more spins than a Top and more holes than Swiss cheese.

It's No Joke that the agenda of 45 and the PMG is to put the final nails in the coffin, which were started with the PAEA, that way they can profit from the demise of the Post Office. It's No Joke that "prompt, reliable, affordable Universal Service" for ALL Americans, will be buried.

Once the Post Office is privatized, It's No Joke that we all will lose our jobs. Postal Workers currently on the rolls will be eliminated. Postal Workers currently on the rolls will not be paid the same or have the Union benefits and pension. So, if 45 is your guy, for your own sake and that of your family, convince him to Save the Post Office from privatizing and Save Your Job.

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Local Notes

Originally, when first reported, the Youngstown P&DF did not have projected the removal of any processing machines, called DBs. But because the District Manager did not want to remove 9 DBs from the Cleveland Post Office, he decided (as he stated) to distribute the reduction of DBs with Youngstown and Toledo. The Youngstown P&DF was then slated for the removal of two (2) DB's with stackers from the dismantled DBs, being added to the remaining DBs which increased the stacker length from 222 bins to 302 bins. When the PMG suspended the operational changes, the Youngstown P&DF was in the midst of dismantling. As a result, instead of having the projected 5 DBs remaining with 302 Stackers, Youngstown P&DF currently has 4 working DBs with only one of the 4 DBs having 302 Bins, which is a significant reduction from 7 mail processing machines.

Management could easily reverse the one DB that is only partially dismantled. Maintenance spent one day dismantling DB 2, which means it would take one day to return DB 2 to working capacity. We are fighting to get DB #2 restarted. However, management refuses to turn one bolt to make DB 2 functional again. The reduction of DBs from 7 to 4, has severely reduced the capacity and ability to process the mail and has resulted in adding more time to process the mail. The same amount of mail that use to required 2 hours to process now takes 4.5 hours to process and management still won't lift the ban on utilizing ALL the extra hours of overtime needed to process the mail. So, that part of the "suspension" has not been implemented.

As the old adage goes, "It's always easier to keep up than to catch up." Instead of utilizing all the extra overtime hours needed to process the mail, management simply reaches a predetermined number and stops processing the mail. Resulting in more delayed lettered mail that keeps piling up. For example, during the week of August 17th, 6 trays of political campaign mail (which is a total piece count of about 7,200) was delayed for 3 days in the Youngstown P&DF. Further investigation would be required to determine what kind of delay preceded the delay in the Youngstown facility.

Management has also refused to suspend the operational change of not processing mail on Saturday night. Processing mail on Saturday night was a "catch-up day to process mail" because Sunday is not a delivery day and there is more time to process more mail. So, this part of the "suspension" has not been implemented.

As I explained to Congressman Tim Ryan after the news conference on Tuesday the 18th, a sample mailing was conducted which revealed the fact that the ever critical and legal postmark took three days to be administered and then an additional four days were needed for the sample letter to return for a total of a seven day delay. So basically, a letter mailed from my house took 7 days to come back to my house.

It must be noted that the loin share of PMGs destructive cuts are in the city delivery sections, which are the most profitable for the Post Office. Whereas, the Rural sections of the Post Office are not mentioned as extensively in PMG DeJoy's "Solvency Plan". The sabotaging scheme is obviously two-fold. Portion off the most profitable parts of the Postal Service while appeasing a prevailing political base of the Republican party and widening the political divide.

Historical Repeat

Historically the Postal Service has always been a political football, but PMG DeJoy has designs to turn the Post Office into a political partisan lightning rod.

Also historically speaking, former PMG Marvin Runyon resigned shortly after paying a "voluntary civil settlement" which ended a Justice Department's conflict of interest investigation into the fact that he was attempting to install Coca-Cola vending machines into Postal Lobbies while having financial ties with the Coca-Cola.

Similarly, the destructive actions of the PMG DeJoy, who has financial ties with competitive delivery companies, reveals the sabotaging scheme to privatize the United States Postal Service by dismantling the Postal Service to severely reduce the ability of the Postal Service to provide prompt, reliable and affordable Universal Service to all.

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And not by coincidence, these competitive delivery companies, along with PMG DeJoy, would reap financial gains from the privatizing of the Postal Service.

The Postal Service must not be dismantled so that the few can profit and the many suffer.

Cover up of a sabotaging scheme

Postal Management has changed the counting of mail to create the appearance that less mail is being delayed than what actually is. For example, an APC of first class letter mail used to be counted as 13-15,000 pieces of mail, but now the count as 11,000 pieces.

The Youngstown P&DF averages 150,000 pieces of delayed mail everyday but usually more and now management has ceased to count delayed mail or hides the reports.

The mantra for the Postal Service was "Every Piece, Every Day". This is no longer the case. It's more like "Every Piece, Some Day". In addition to management simply cutting off the processing of committed mail, trucks leave whether the mail is on the dock or not. That is to say, that postal truck drivers are no longer permitted to wait for the processing of mail and are ordered to leave at their designated time whether there is mail in the truck or not. For instance, Transportation records show that where once there were an average of 100 late trips on a daily basis, now there are almost none.

Postal drivers are no longer permitted to record in their scanners that the processing of mail is delayed. They have been ordered to use other scan codes which do not reflect the amount of delayed mail. Management has disciplined drivers and thereby, threatened their jobs drivers if they refuse to use other scan codes

The list of delayed mail also includes Express Mail, Priority, Parcels, Flats, live animals, prescription medications, and medical testing such as Covid Test Kits.

Democracy cannot prevail without fair, free and accessible elections. Since the mail in ballots of the Civil War, the Postal Service has been such an integral part of our democracy. The Postal Service must be funded to continue to be in this election and for elections of generations to come. We are at a pivotal and historical moment in our Nation's history where future generations will judge our actions as preserving the democracy for all people or for its destruction.

As Postal Workers, we are dedicated to the mission of the Postal Service which is affordable, reliable, Universal Service to all Americans as enshrined within the Constitution and the Postal Reorganization Act of 1970. During the COVID-19 pandemic, Postal Workers have become accentuated as essential front line supply chain workers who connect the United States with medicine, finances, packages and letters to loved ones. Over 40, 000 Postal Workers have been quarantined and 75 have died due to the Coronavirus. As Postal Workers and Americans, we wholehearted oppose any action that disrupts, destroys, and undermines the Postal Service of the people.

Back in the Saddle--The Crisis President

One quick word about my Presidency so far. During these four short months, it has been very difficult to get back in the saddle but I am definitely the Crisis President. When I am President, there's a Crisis. The last time I was President of Our Local, it was 2 terms and six years of one mega-Crisis after another. As President, I was challenged with the AMPS, and fighting the closing of the Youngstown P&DF, along with fighting the closing of Postal Stations and AO's. During my last Presidency, the Postal Service was trying to completely outsource and eliminate the MVS Drivers.

We successfully defended these challenges; the Calcutta Post Office, the Youngstown P&DF and the Drivers are still here because Protocol was followed which gave the Union an opportunity to defend. However, with these recent changes, Protocol hasn't been followed and the Union hasn't even had a chance to defend against these destructive changes. And the Pandemic is an unprecedented Crisis. The struggle continues.

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Thank You

This is the first opportunity that I have had to thank all the Members of Our Local for voting me back into being the President of Our Local. This is a tremendous honor. Thank You. I would also like to not only thank all Our Members who voted but also all the Members who have been helping by getting me up to speed with what's happening in Our Local. A big THANKS from me to the E-board and especially the Editor, for all their help. The newsletter that I sent out previously wasn't the right time to thank everyone, because, the purpose of that newsletter was to help Our members deal with the COVID-19 Crisis. Since that newsletter, I have been making the rounds and handing out Facemasks with Our Local 443 Logo, as fast as the masks can be made.

Lastly...Looking Forward

The COVID-19 Crisis has sidelined and presented unprecedented challenges to many of Our Local Union's activities, customs, and procedures. Even a common and fairly simplistic Local Union Meeting has now become a monumental task which mandates safety and creativity. The Pandemic has manifested a new "normal". With this in mind, I have been "attending" many video conferences and Webinars like "Zoom". In the near future, Our Local will be conducting the first video conference with Our Members. I have narrowed down the choices to two modems.

In order to obtain the maximum amount of membership involvement and security, we will need E-mail addresses. The Email addresses of Our Members are used as the major part of validation to gain access to Our Local Membership Meetings. From the Newsletter request that was sent out, the response was very good for E-mail addresses. Thanks to the hard work of Our Editor, Frank Antinone, we have been sending shout outs from Our Local's Website. If you have-not already done so, sign up on the Website so that we can include you in future shout outs and video conferencing.

One last thought; with Local Negotiations on the horizon, now would be a good time to contact your Local about your ideas for our Local Contract.

Be Safe. Be Well.
In Solidarity,
Dominic J. Corso, President
Youngstown Ohio Area Local 443

Maintenance Craft Report

Tracy Petrekovich, Maintenance Craft Director

There are so many things going on, I don't even know where to start... On the news, social media, newspapers, is there anywhere you can look without seeing the turmoil around the United States Postal Service?

Leaving the business of politics aside, I feel we need to focus on what we can do locally to ensure the longevity of our Postal Service. The Youngstown plant was not unaffected by the extensive reorganization plan put in place by the new Postmaster General Louis DeJoy. We have seen mail delays, staffing issues, machine removals, and I'm sure there is more to come. We are still not recovered from the MS-1 implementation placing some Maintenance employees' jobs on the chopping block.

Our plant had seven Delivery Bar Code Sorter platform machines used to sort letter mail. These are machines that were used on an everyday basis. DeJoy's plan mandated the removal of two of our machines, with plans to modify some of the remaining ones. You may have heard how these machines are old, antiquated pieces of equipment that needed to be discarded. NOT TRUE! The machines that were removed are the exact same kind of machines that will be processing mail for the upcoming election, during holiday season, and so on. Machines of this type can process 20,000 to 30,000 pieces of mail an hour. The processing capacity has diminished by almost 30% in a matter of weeks due to these changes. Numbers like that are a devastating loss in a small plant like Youngstown.

Mailbox removals, reduced window hours and overtime restrictions were also part of the reorganization plan. As far as mailboxes are concerned, I know many people have asked if removals are happening in our area. I have even seen reports on social media and can say that I'm not aware of any mailbox removals outside of the normal maintenance routine. Hopefully this continues, especially since the hands-off order issued by DeJoy on 8/18 included mailboxes. Since the Maintenance daily work assignments are not impacted solely by mail volume and processing times, overtime restrictions have not had a dramatic effect on our Maintenance department.

Even though PMG DeJoy issued a cease and desist to the disastrous actions he has brought upon the USPS, it is too late to fix what's already been done. Postal facilities across the nation are telling stories of delays, trucks sent on routes without a piece of mail on board, mail returned to offices because there is not enough time to delivery in a straight 8 hours. The list goes on and on. The changes in Youngstown will affect the ability to process mail, no question. Don't forget about reduced staffing, during an already delicate staffing situation during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Critics of the post office dismiss any claims that the USPS deserves COVID-19 financial relief. DeJoy himself said we are FINE! Postal employees have done an exceptional job keeping the nation going with critical deliveries of food, medicine, etc. during the pandemic. Relief has been extended to the airlines, healthcare companies, small businesses, pay check protection programs, cruise lines, the list goes on forever. What about the USPS? Where are the funds to assist with pandemic supplies like personal protective equipment, sanitization supplies, extra hours covering absences from COVID-19 affected employees? Not to mention the personal risk our employees put themselves in making sure the mail gets where it needs to be. The USPS deserves help too!

Every community needs to reach out to their congressional representatives. Let them know we need our post offices, support relief for the USPS! It is a critical time, you can help to keep the post office viable!!!

In solidarity,
Tracy Petrekovich, Maintenance Craft Director

Motor Vehicle Service Report

Jim Varner, MVS Director

Mid-year has seen a substantial increase in grievance filings in the craft. On the PVS (driver's) side, much of that grievance activity can be blamed squarely on one thing – management's refusal, or inability to hire a second PTF.

Without sufficient staffing, management is relying on VMF employees to act as substitute truck drivers. Although the local union has allowed that practice on a case-by-case basis occasionally, it seems now that the Transportation Department believes the garage is a stand-by pool of

Ad-hoc Motor Vehicle Operators. It is not. The Local Agreement (LMOU) specifies that the VMF and PVS are two separate sections for overtime. Using Automotive Technicians to drive when an employee bid as a Motor Vehicle Operator is available to do those duties creates an overtime violation.

Article 7.2 of the National Agreement outlines the specific situations in which employees from different "occupational groups" (different jobs within the Craft) can "cross" those occupational groups to perform the work of another. Management short-staffing Transportation is not, one of those situations. More grievances!

Two recent vacancies at the VMF each generated grievances due to management's failure to post and bid the positions properly. It seems that every time there's an opening at the VMF that drivers should be able to bid on, we're treated like the red-headed stepchildren of MVS. Clearly management feels they should be able to pick and chose who works at the VMF, and apparently, they do not want any drivers over there for some reason. While I am confident the union will prevail in the challenge to the VMF Storekeeper's position, it's the disruption that concerns me after management has already improperly filled the position. Just remember if that happens, MANAGEMENT is solely to blame for that situation. They created the mess, so don't go complaining about the union simply because we did our job by enforcing the contract!

Other recent grievances filed at the VMF include the union's argument that there should be another Storekeeper position at both the Warren Auxiliary Garage as well as Tour Three at the Youngstown VMF. Of most concern was management's unilateral decision to challenge the validity of the ten-year old Vehicle Towing Agreement. That Agreement stipulates that ALL towing and shuttling duties are the exclusive work of the MVS Craft. The only time that towing is allowed by the agreement, is outside the normal operating hours of the VMF and Warren Aux. Garage, or an actual emergency. After hours shuttling work should be performed by any PTF driver short of 40 hours, prior to contracting out that work. All employees in the craft should be keeping a close eye on this issue and contact me if you feel there may have been a violation.

Finally, I settled an overtime dispute at the VMF created when management allowed a Warren Aux. Garage employee to work at the Youngstown VMF. While the union now views Warren to be an Auxiliary garage of Youngstown, they are still considered two separate sections for overtime.

There was some concern about the remedy payment amount being different for each employee. Generally, I like to negotiate a defined settlement amount and then split that amount up on a pro-rated basis between eligible employees. I do that because it avoids the confusion that results from everybody seemingly being treated differently. To get that particular grievance settled, I made the decision to accept management's provision on determining each employee's share based on their individual Level and Step. That doesn't mean I'll always accept those terms, but in that instance, I thought it was the best resolution for Youngstown's Auto Technicians.

The 2020 APWU Local 443 William Blakley Memorial Scholarship Application

Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Contact Phone Number: _____

Social Security Number: _____

I will graduate from: _____ High School,
located in _____ (City) on _____ (Month & Year).

I will attend or currently attend: _____ (College, University or
Technical School) in _____ (City & State).

I will be enrolled for the _____ (term) of _____ (Year).

Name of my father, mother or guardian _____

who is a member in good standing as of **October 4, 2019** of the Youngstown, Ohio Area Local 443, which is an affiliate of The **American Postal Workers Union, AFL-CIO**.

I hereby make application for a \$500 scholarship grant. I understand I must be a 2014 - 2020 graduate from an accredited high school and I will attend only an accredited non-discriminating college, university or trade school if selected.

A Letter of Acceptance or schedule of classes from the higher education facility is required with the scholarship application. No money will be dispersed until the above information is received and verified by the Scholarship Committee. Send completed application to:
Scholarship Committee Local 443, P.O. Box 443, Youngstown, Ohio 44501.

Applicant signature: _____

Local Union Certificate:

I hereby certify that the above stated parent/guardian is a member in good standing and the applicant is eligible to apply.

Scholarship Committee Member Signature Only: _____
(Application must be received by October 9, 2020 at 16:00)



The Times They Are A-Changin’

by the Editor

Here We Go Again

For those of you that don’t know me, I was editor of *The Dispatcher* from 2008 – 2016 when I retired from the Post Office. During that time I was National Editor-at-Large and *The Dispatcher* won 5 National Awards which I was very proud of.

When Dominic Corso asked me to come out of retirement and be editor when he won the election as president, how could I resist? Hopefully, I can shake the cobwebs off and get the paper back to where it was when I left.

DeJoy of Crooking

Donald Trump’s pick for Postmaster General who was a major donor for Trump and the Republican Party is none other than Louis DeJoy. He is doing his best to destroy the USPS and mail-in voting that has been going on for a century. That way privatization will be implemented the way Trump and the GOP want.

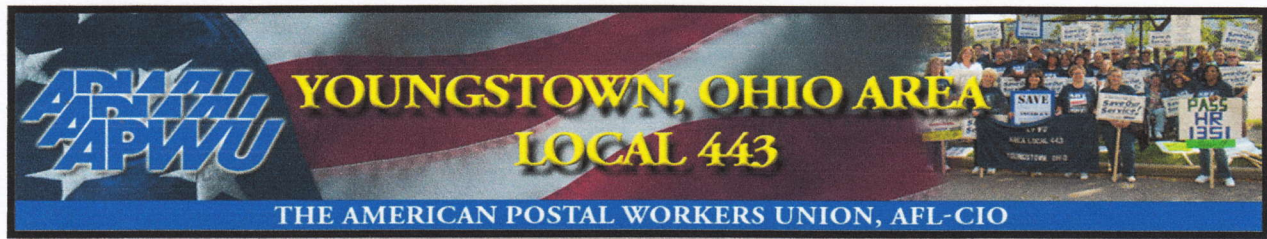
The way mail-in voting works is that the more votes counted, the fairer it is but the GOP feels it at a disadvantageous to them. Also, it is harder to hack mail-in votes, so Russia can’t help like in 2016. So, Trump cries that it is a fraud. To put the icing on the cake, PMG DeJoy decided to rip out many, many mailboxes and to disassemble many machines that were used to sort the mail. Not after the election, but NOW! The less ways to vote the better. The PMG also cut out overtime for clerks and carriers on top of it all.

The heat got too hot for the new PMG, so he decided to stop what he was doing and leave everything the way it was until after the election. There’s one small catch, he is leaving the mailboxes and machines that were ripped out the way they are now, not returning anything to help with the election ballots. **THE DAMAGE IS DONE!**

I’ve got a train to run,

Frank Antinone





ATTENTION LOCAL 443 MEMBERS AND RETIREES!

Since the COVID-19 Virus has hit the world, much of our communication has been severely hampered, especially within our APWU National, Local 443 and our members.

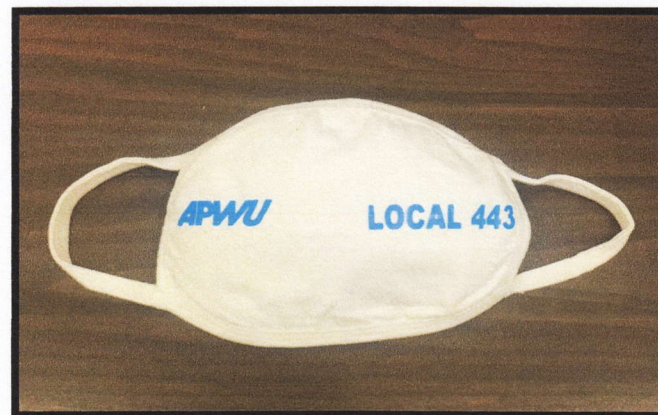
Due to the COVID-19 health risks and State ordered gathering mandates, we haven't been able to have general membership meetings, which is the loss of a great source of communication for our members. To help fill this communication void, we have our union publication, *The Dispatcher* and our website www.yal443.org.

Our website has many features that truthfully hasn't been used the way the website should be used. President Corso and I have re-started utilizing the shout-outs to keep our members and retirees on top of the latest information and happenings. There are also an interactive section where members can submit questions for your Local Officers to answer, a Photo Gallery, News Articles and much more. There is also a section for Video Conferencing that we are looking into as well.

A Member or Retiree being on the mailing list for *The Dispatcher*, does **not** automatically allow access to our website, *you must register*. Being registered on our website will also allow you future access to the Video Conferencing of our general membership meetings. For members who are registering for the first time, they will receive a cloth mask with the APWU logo, like the one pictured below.

So, be in the know about the latest information that could affect your job, your paycheck and working conditions ... JOIN YOUR UNION'S WEBSITE TODAY ...

Please register on our website
www.yal443.org



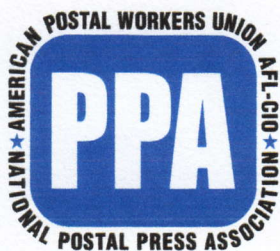
The Dispatcher
Frank Antinone, Editor
PO Box 443
Youngstown, Ohio 44501-0443

Non-Profit Organization
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on membership meetings.



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