Communities and Postal Workers United (CPWU)

Dec—Jan, 2014 -- *No Closures! No Cuts! No Delay of the Mail!* - www.cpwunited.com

"Tyson Jerome Barnette, twenty-six-year-old Letter Carrier, was shot and killed at 7:20pm on Saturday, November, 23, while delivering mail in the dark in Prince George's County, Md. Brother Barnette was a four-year postal employee and one of the tens of thousands of hourly part-time workers hired to replace a limited percentage of retiring full-time carriers in a rapidly aging workforce.

The postal service and local law enforcement are offering a $125,000 reward for information leading to the arrest of his killer. At this time, they have offered no indication as to a possible perpetrator…"

(*excerpts from article by Melissa Rakestraw in Socialist Worker)*

Who Killed Tyson Barnette? POSTAL MANAGEMENT!

Postal Groups Call for End to After-Dark Mail Deliveries

(excerpted from article by Eric Katz in Government Executive Magazine)

Letter carriers should no longer deliver mail after dark, one group representing employees at the U.S. Postal Service has said in light of the recent shooting of a postal worker at 7:30 p.m. while on the job in Maryland.

The Community and Postal Workers United -- a group of activists from various postal unions -- blamed the death of Tyson Barnette, a part-time USPS worker, on mismanagement at the agency. The consolidations of mail processing centers and a lack of adequate staffing has caused carriers to start later in the day, CPWU said, which has in turn led to after-dark deliveries.

Mark Dimondstein, president of the American Postal Workers Union, also pointed to plant closures as the impetus for night delivery. In a statement, APWU quoted a eulogy from Barnette's coworker, saying USPS must never again "lose a life to save a dollar."

"Let this tragedy serve as a wakeup call," Dimondstein said. "Management must take the necessary steps to strengthen service and safety."

In light of the shooting, the Postal Service inspector general has launched a "series of audits into the delivery of mail after 5 p.m.," according to an OIG spokeswoman...

The audit announcement comes after pressure from Congress mounted to look into late mail deliveries. Del. Eleanor Holmes Norton, D-D.C., wrote a letter to Postmaster General Patrick Donahoe probing for a series of answers into the causes and frequency of after-dark delivery.

"I am deeply concerned about the apparent risk of requiring postal employees to deliver mail after dark," wrote Norton, who serves on the House committee with oversight of the Postal Service. She ... noted the uptick in nighttime deliveries is unprecedented...

"This tragic incident highlights the need in all operational decisions about how and when mail is delivered to give priority consideration to the safety of these dedicated public servants," said Fredric Rolando, president of the National Association of Letter Carriers.

CPWU was much stronger in its warning: "This tragedy will be repeated unless major changes are enforced."

"Grand Alliance" to Save the Postal Service

Greetings from President Mark Dimondstein, American Postal Workers Union

"Sisters and Brothers of Communities and Postal Workers United — Solidarity Greetings! A core premise of our election campaign was the need for building a "grand alliance" between the people of this country and the postal workers and our unions to save the public postal service. I look forward to working with CPWU and everyone sharing and struggling in this common and vital effort."

BRING THE MAIL BACK —a model campaign

Handbooks and Manuals –

ELM, 811.4 – "It is the responsibility of management to provide safe and healthful working conditions …and ensure that all employees work safely."

EL-801/ EL-814 – Hazardous Conditions -- "Carriers are not required to risk personal injury from icy steps, broken or rotten steps or porches, protruding nails or sharp edges on mail boxes, or other hazardous conditions. Carriers must report such conditions on Form 1767, the supervisor must take appropriate corrective action."

Organize carriers (off clock, off premises). Decide how many carriers need to act together to be effective. Alert the media. Decide if you are doing one day, one week, an escalating campaign… Produce instruction sheet & secure a stack of form 1767s.

INSTRUCTION SHEET:

Attempt delivery.
Document the unsafe condition (see list).
Bring back the mail.
Fill out a 1767, (*Report of Hazard, Unsafe Condition or Practice*) make/keep a copy, and submit it to the supervisor.
If ordered to deliver mail, go back out, attempt delivery.
Document the unsafe condition (see list).
Bring back the mail.
Fill out a 1767 and submit it to the supervisor.
Etc.

Examples of unsafe, after dark conditions…

∗being mistaken for a burglar and thus getting shot at,
∗being assaulted by robbers who work after dark,
∗crossing dark streets, especially during rush hour,
∗driving near dark clad pedestrians/cyclists/ skateboarders,
∗dark ice patches,
∗dark oil patches,
∗dark wires from holiday lights/ displays,
∗dark uneven sidewalks,
∗dark wet leaves, dark wet moss,
∗dark wet painted steps,
∗dark low-hanging tree branches,
∗released dogs, unseen.

On October 29th, in Portland, Oregon, "postal protectors" attempted a meeting with District Manager Erica Brix to present a 1000+ signature petition protesting the local subcontracting of postal trucking, mail handling and mail processing. Seven were arrested for trespassing. (photo Michael Hastie)

Prepare for Protests at Staples Stores

On Nov. 10, the USPS announced it was launching a pilot program to put postal retail units in Staples stores across the country. Staples is the largest retailer of office supplies in the nation, with almost 1,600 stores.

"This is a direct assault on our jobs and on public postal services," said APWU President Mark Dimondstein. "The APWU supports the expansion of postal services. But we are adamantly opposed to USPS plans to replace good-paying union jobs with non-union low-wage jobs held by workers who have no accountability for the safety and security of the mail," he said. "Postal workers deserve better, and our customers deserve better."

Dimondstein insisted that, if the plan proceeds, the postal units at Staples must be staffed by career postal employees.

"**We will begin preparations for protests at Staples stores**, " Dimondstein said, "This is a huge step toward privatizing retail services. If we don't draw a line in the sand, mail processing and other operations will soon follow."

Labor Notes Conference

April 4-6, 2014 Chicago, IL labornotes.org/2014

Join thousands of union members, officers, and grassroots labor activists who are on the front lines in our workplaces, our unions, and our communities. Meet troublemakers from around the country and around the world.

More than 100 meetings and workshops include contract campaigns, creative organizing tactics, beating apathy, running for local union office, assertive grievance handling, bargaining over technology, understanding the economy, and reviving the strike.

Communities and Postal Workers United will be hosting a postal workers meet-up and a workshop on Building the Grand Alliance to Save the Postal Service.

Tell Congress: Continue door-to-door and six-day mail delivery. Oppose cuts, closures, and attacks on workers rights. Repeal the pre-fund mandate. Refund the pension surplus. Oppose HR 2748 (Issa). Co-sponsor S316 (Sanders) and HR 630 (DeFazio) – the Postal Service Protection Act of 2013.

The Battle for the Post Office and Democracy

by Clint Burelson, Clerk Craft Director, APWU

"...In spite of this obvious success, there is currently an alleged financial "crisis" threatening this long esteemed institution and Congress's "solution" is to dismantle the Postal Service in order to cut costs…. These are dramatic and damaging service changes that are simply unfounded, unnecessary, and against the law.

"The damaging changes underway at the Post Office are a direct result of the lobbying efforts of large corporate mailers who do not want to lose their deep discounts and pay their fair share of postage. To avoid higher postage rates for advertising, the large mailers have relentlessly pushed the Postal Service to cut costs by reducing postal services to the American people.

"The companies lobbying for the reduction in service to the public are the major banks and financial institutions (Bank of America, JP Morgan, American Express, etc.,) large media corporations (Time Warner, McClatchy, etc.,) and other corporations who stand to directly benefit from the dismantling of the Post Office (UPS, FedEx, RR Donnelly, Pitney Bowes, etc.)

"The owners of these powerful corporations have used their money and power to elect, lobby and otherwise direct important government officials to make the service cuts that benefit the large corporations at the expense of the American people. This lobbying has also successfully protected the foolishly generous rates given to bulk mailers…"

(for the complete article, go to — www.cpwunited.com/documents)

Keep up on the latest fightback!

www.cpwunited.com
www.savethepostoffice.com
www.apwu.org **www.nalc.org**
www.npmhu.org **www.nrlca.org**

Postal Workers Have the Right to Speak Out Against Closures

"... As long as postal workers are acting on their own time and are not using postal funds, however, they can speak against and actively oppose facility closures without violating the Anti-Lobbying Act." www.apwu.org

MAIL BEING DELAYED? POSTAL WORK BEING "SUBCONTRACTED"? TELL US ABOUT IT

Over 150 mail processing facilities were "consolidated" this past year. We're seeking documentation about delay of the mail and subcontracting of postal work, especially trucking, mail handling and mail processing. Contact us, cpwunited1@gmail.com