

## **ARTICLE SIX:**

### **Postal Service, Union Wrangle Over Staples Outlets**

by THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

January 19, 2014 8:15 AM

WASHINGTON (AP) — The opening of Postal Service retail centers in dozens of Staples stores around the country is being met with threats of protests and boycotts by the agency's unions.

The new outlets are staffed by Staples employees, not postal workers, and labor officials say that move replaces good-paying union jobs with low-wage, nonunion workers.

"It's a direct assault on our jobs and on public postal services," said Mark Dimondstein, president of the 200,000-member American Postal Workers Union.

The dispute comes as the financially struggling Postal Service continues to form partnerships with private companies, and looks to cut costs and boost revenues. The deal with Staples began as a pilot program in November at 84 stores in California, Georgia, Massachusetts and Pennsylvania as a way make it easier for customers to buy stamps, send packages or use Priority and certified mail.

"The privatization discussion is a ruse," Donahoe said in an interview. "We have no interest in privatizing the Postal Service. We are looking to grow our business to provide customer convenience to postal products."

Union leaders fear that if the Staples program is successful, the Postal Service will want to expand it to more than 1,500 of the company's other stores. That could siphon work and customers away from nearby brick-and-mortar post offices, taking jobs from postal workers and even leading traditional post offices to close.

Union leaders have been visiting Staples stores to meet with managers, asking them to share the union's displeasure with upper management.

"If Staples insists on continuing to refuse to staff those stores with postal workers, we're going to urge people to take their business elsewhere," Dimondstein said.

The union says it's not asking to shut down the program. It wants the counters to be run by postal employees, not workers hired by Staples. The average postal clerk earns about \$25 an hour, according to the union, plus a generous package of health and retirement benefits. The Staples post office counters are run by nonunion workers often making little more than the minimum wage.

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## **ARTICLE FIVE:**

### **Amazon Taps Post Office For Sunday Deliveries; A Win-Win?**

by **MARK MEMMOTT**

November 11, 2013 10:05 AM



These could be on your doorstep some Sunday.

*Paul Sakuma/AP*

Much of the talk in recent years about how the U.S. Postal Service could stem its huge losses has been about the things it might stop doing — most notably, delivering the mail on Saturdays (something Congress won't let it discontinue).

Now, as we reported earlier, there's word that Amazon.com has struck a deal with the Postal Service for *Sunday* delivery of packages. The service begins immediately in the Los Angeles and New York City metropolitan areas and is planned to expand next

year to other metros, including Dallas, Houston, New Orleans and Phoenix.

The early analyses of the deal say it's a winner for both sides.

For the Postal Service, notes *The New York Times*, the deal offers "a chance to take some business from United Parcel Service and FedEx, which do not deliver on Sundays.

Now, some orders that would have been handled by either of those carriers for Monday delivery will go through the Postal Service and arrive on Sunday."

Package delivery is a profitable part of the Postal Service's business, unlike money-losing delivery of Saturday mail.

Amazon "won't change shipping prices for customers" who want Sunday delivery, Bloomberg News says.

But the online shopping giant "is seeking to siphon away customers from Target Corp. and other retailers," Bloomberg adds, at a time when it is "also facing competition from online-shopping sites that are rolling out new services to get products to customers more quickly and efficiently. EBay Inc. offers deliveries under an hour, seven days a week, for some products, and Wal-Mart Stores Inc. operates a same-day delivery service for groceries and household goods."

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<http://www.npr.org/blogs/thetwo-way/2013/11/11/244515074/amazon-taps-post-office-for-sunday-deliveries-a-win-win>

## **ARTICLE FOUR:**

### Postal Service Hopes 'Harry Potter' Stamps Spell Revenue

by APRIL FEHLING

November 19, 2013



The cash-strapped U.S. Postal Service hopes its new *Harry Potter* stamps will spark enthusiasm among a new generation of stamp collectors. *USPS*

Hold onto your owls, *Harry Potter* fans. The U.S. Postal Service is hoping you'll send your letters with one of 20 new *Potter*-themed stamps it unveiled Tuesday.

The Postal Service will print 5 million of the 20-stamp booklets, featuring film stills of the young wizard and his friends and foes (and yes, messenger owl Hedwig *is* represented). It's banking that *Harry Potter's* mass appeal will translate into strong demand, and that the stamps could get young people excited about stamp collecting, Postmaster General Patrick Donahoe tells *The Washington Post*.

Not excited, however, is the Citizen's Stamp Advisory Committee, a Postal Service panel that "evaluates the merits of all stamp proposals." The USPS bypassed the 56-year-old panel in selecting the *Harry Potter* stamp, the *Post* reports.

Adding insult is the fact the boy wizard is British and that the *Potter* images are photographic stills, rather than the illustrations that typically grace U.S. stamps.

Several panel members, the *Post* reports, are frustrated that the Postal Service "has pushed pop culture at the expense of images that could prove more enduring."

As the Two-Way has reported, the Postal Service is struggling with huge losses — and with finding ways to stem the red ink. Donahoe told the *Post* that the agency "needs to change its focus toward stamps that are more commercial."

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<http://www.npr.org/blogs/thetwo-way/2013/11/19/246166233/postal-service-hopes-harry-potter-stamps-spell-revenue>

## **ARTICLE THREE:**

### Postal Service Will Keep Saturday Mail Delivery After All

by **SCOTT NEUMAN**

April 10, 2013



A Chicago postal worker protests in support of Saturday mail delivery in February.

*John Gress/Getty Images*

The U.S. Postal Service has backed off a plan to halt Saturday mail delivery, saying that Congress has forced it to continue the service despite massive cost overruns.

In February, the Postal Service announced it would end regular mail delivery on Saturdays beginning Aug. 5 in an effort to stanch the red ink in its budget.

The Postal Service board says Congress "has left ... no choice but to delay implementation" of the five-day-a-week plan for mail delivery.

Last year, the USPS lost a record \$15 billion, pushing it toward insolvency.

According to The New York Times:

"The agency's financial reports show that mail volume continues to decline as Americans increasingly turn to electronic forms of communication. Total mail volume was 159.9 billion pieces, down 5 percent from 168.3 billion pieces a last year."

As NPR's Yuki Noguchi, explains, the dilemma: "It competes against UPS and FedEx, but cannot cut costs or make big changes without congressional approval," Noguchi says. "And it's one of the largest employers in the country and the only organization with a requirement to fully pre-fund its retirement plan decades into the future — a financial burden that is forcing it into insolvency."

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<http://www.npr.org/blogs/thetwo-way/2013/04/10/176791834/post-office-will-keep-saturday-mail-delivery-after-all>

## ARTICLE TWO:

### Postal Service Eyes 250 Processing Facilities For 'Consolidation Or Closure'

by **MARK MEMMOTT**

September 15, 2011 1:35 PM



U.S. Postal Service mail delivery trucks sit idle at the Manassas post office in Virginia on September 5.

*Karen Bleier/AFP/Getty Images*

The beleaguered U.S. Postal Service, which is facing losses of up to \$10 billion in the fiscal year ending Sept. 30, today proposed what it says are "sweeping changes designed to save the organization up to \$3 billion a year by cutting its network of processing facilities by

over half and adjusting service standards."

Among the service changes it proposes are:

- Delivery of first-class mail in 2 to 3 days, instead of 1 to 3.
- Delivery of periodicals in 2 to 9 days, not 1 to 9 days.

In addition, the Postal Service says it is studying 252 processing facilities to determine whether they should be closed or consolidated.

The Associated Press points out that is "in addition to about 3,700 local post offices also being reviewed for closure" and that "closing the mail-processing facilities could affect 35,000 workers."

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<http://www.npr.org/blogs/thetwo-way/2011/09/15/140505569/postal-service-eyes-250-processing-facilities-for-consolidation-or-closure>

## **ARTICLE ONE:**

# The Fight To Save The U.S. Postal Service

by NPR STAFF

October 01, 2011 2:21 PM



U.S. Postal Service mailboxes are seen awaiting disposal in San Jose, Calif. Because of steeply declining use, the U.S. Postal Service has removed more than 60 percent of the blue boxes.

*Ben Margot/AP*

### USPO Facts:

- More than half a million people work for the U.S. Postal Service making it the seventh largest employer in the world.
- ... being hit hard by the tough economy and transformed by the Internet.
- Just in the last four years, mail volume is down 20 percent, so the agency is struggling to reinvent itself.
- Postmaster General Patrick Donahoe went to Congress to ask for help. His plan could mean layoffs, post office closings and the end of Saturday delivery.
- ... the agency must set aside \$5 billion to \$6 billion a year to have on hand to pay for health benefits for retiring employees. Carper says almost no state or local governments — and very few private companies — do that.
- ... the Postal Service cannot continue to do business as usual.
- "It's possible to imagine in the U.S. that the post office adapts and transforms into another useful, important operation — but it's not going to be a carrier of letters and sentiments."
- ... the loss of post offices in rural communities would have a devastating effect there. "There are a lot of people in the rural community that rely heavily on the post office," Gamble says, "we carry feed, livestock, seed — a lot of things that the rural community depends on." He says for some folks in rural communities the postal carrier might be the only person they see for weeks.