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POSTAL CUSTOMER COUNCIL

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POSTAL CUSTOMER COUNCIL NEWSLETTER

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PCC SPOTLIGHT

BEHIND THE SCENES: WHO MAKES THINGS HAPPEN?

***SPOTLIGHT* ON ANNA ROBINSON**



We often shine the ***SPOTLIGHT*** on our speakers and award winners but what about the people who work for the Postal Service and in our industry who quietly and often without recognition make important things happen?

Nominated for our SPOTLIGHT by those who know her best is **ANNA ROBINSON**, Secretary to Jim Holland, Customer Relations Manager for Massachusetts and Rhode Island. Our PCC doesn't work without the help of many. Anna

humbly does not seek credit for all of the behind-the-scenes work that she does. We have it on good authority that our terrific PCC Day Event on September 20, 2022 (see page 3) was organized and managed by Anna Robinson, right down to the delicious lunch. This work takes outstanding organizational skills and no small measure of patience.

In her own words, Anna describes her career with USPS.

"I started working for the USPS in 1985 and spent almost all of my career on the Mail Processing side. In 2017, I joined the Greater Boston District Marketing team as Jim Holland's Secretary. I was introduced to the PCC community, and, at first, didn't understand what it was, or even why it was needed. As I became more involved in the PCC, I realized that the relationship between the USPS and the mailers were dependent upon each other. The members of the PCC learn from each other...what works,

PCC SPOTLIGHT ON ANNA ROBINSON... continued

what needs improving upon, how future changes in the USPS will affect the mailers. I learned that the PCC is an important part of the USPS. From Postmaster General DeJoy down to the smallest mailer, the conversation between the USPS and the PCC is vital. I have been involved in many PCC events, and always learn something new at each event. I have met many interesting people and I am proud to say that I am a member of the Greater Boston PCC.

I have had so many incredible experiences working for the USPS - this one happened during the COVID pandemic and really touched me.

MA/RI DM Mike Rakes wanted to show appreciation to all the businesses that had stepped up during the pandemic to help make their community a better place during the COVID 19 shutdown by holding stamp dedications of the "Thank You" stamp and presenting a Thank You Stamp framed art to them. Along with the Postmasters and Managers, I coordinated more than 72 Thank You Stamp dedications across the MA/RI District.

The magnitude of the effects of COVID 19 on the communities became evident while I was holding the stamp dedications. My husband and I are postal employees, so we did not feel the effects of having our business close, we did not miss a paycheck, we did not worry about how we would eat or if we could pay our bills. Touring multiple food pantries, where the need doubled and tripled in a short period of time, or going to Peabody to visit a program that would send backpacks of non-perishable food with school children, and learning that the need increased from 75 weekly backpacks to over 300 weekly backpacks during the pandemic, a food pantry on Cape Cod that served over 80,000 meals in one year from March 2020 to August 2021, the doctors and nurses that gave their time and energy, putting their own health on the back burner, to vaccinate and test the people in their neighborhoods, visiting the winery that used materials to make hand sanitizer for the USPS, and restaurants that opened their doors and cooked meals for people that would otherwise have no place to eat, made me realize that when communities are hurting, the people in that community step up and ensure that you are taken care of. In the face of all the job loss, food insecurity, housing insecurity, fear of being outside, fear of the unknown, it was heartwarming to see that everybody was helping each other. I was so proud to be a resident of the MA/RI District and to have my faith restored in the people that live in our cities and towns."

After four years of Emmanuel College, Anna had a very brief career as a teacher but decided it was not the right career choice for her. Her employment with the Postal Service turned out to be life changing.

"I have been married for 27 years. My husband is a mail handler at the Boston GMF. Had I not started with USPS, I would never have met him. We have two daughters, Antonia and Marina. And a 9 lb. poodle mix terror named Otis. In my "spare" time, I enjoy cooking and baking and own more than 40 cookbooks."

How lucky we are to have Anna on our team.



NATIONAL PCC DAY - IN PERSON!

FACING THE FUTURE TOGETHER



Alice Gordon receiving the award

On September 20, 2022, the PCCs of Boston, Providence and Western Mass joined together to celebrate National PCC Week around the theme of *Facing the Future Together*.

200 industry and Postal representatives gathered in The Great Hall at the GMF in Boston. After two years of virtual events, participants were excited to meet in person. Together at last!

The program featured remarks by Mike Rakes, District Manager of Massachusetts & Rhode Island, the USPS Keynote by Dr. Joshua Colin, Executive Vice President and Chief Retail and Delivery Officer, a workshop on *Local Connect* by Paul Bolas, USPS Sales Senior Territory Executive and the Industry Keynote "Preparing for the Future of

Business" by Mark Fallon, President of The Berkshire Company. While no person has a crystal ball, each speaker offered insight into the challenges of the future and the importance of adaptability at the personal and institutional levels.

A highlight of PCC Day is the presentation of awards. Alice Gordon was awarded **PCC Person of the Year** for Boston. In a nod to history, her specialty, Mike Rakes and David Guiney, Postmaster of Boston, presented Alice with a beautiful plaque showcasing the original 13 colonies with a display of stamps of the state flags, the state bird, the state flower and the quarter of each of the 13 now-states laid upon a representation of the first American flag with its thirteen stars.

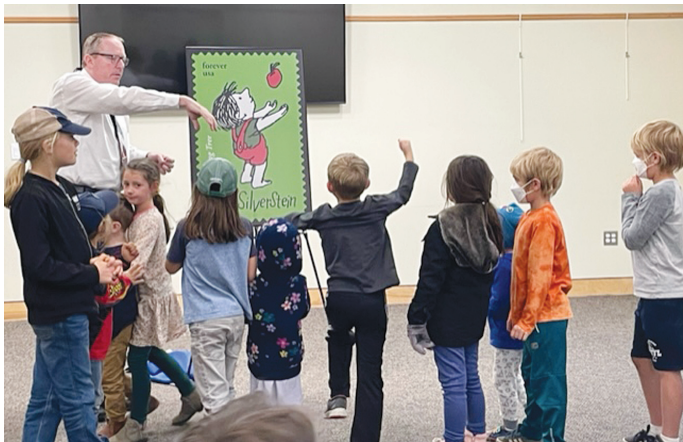
The vendor showcase in the Great Hall, a delicious lunch and fun raffles filled out the day.



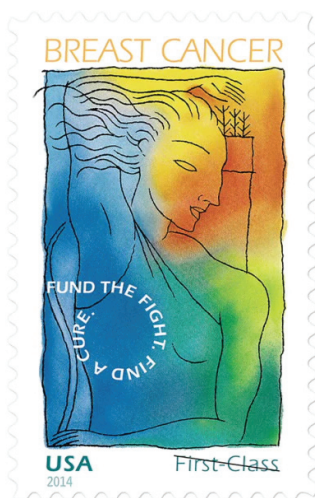
HOMESCHOOLED STUDENTS LEARN ABOUT THE POWER OF MAIL

On Friday, November 18, 2022 at the Pembroke, MA Library, George Kippenhan introduced his “Power of Mail” presentation and the Shel Silverstein stamp dedication to a group of 60 homeschooled children. Kippenhan sought out this opportunity after speaking to Katie Kunevich, a mother who homeschools her children. Ms. Kunevich stated that her children rarely get the opportunity to see a program that is often used in public schools. Together, George and Katie made arrangements with the Pembroke Library and the Homeschooling community to have an educational assembly for the children to teach them about the value of writing letters. A special Shel Silverstein Stamp dedication was held as part of the program. Many of the children have studied and are fans of Shel Silverstein’s work and the event delighted them.

The event was even promoted on a local cable access channel as *Power of the Post* at the Pembroke Public Library, inviting kids aged 7-12 to learn the value and almost-lost art of letter writing with special guest George Kippenhan of the Postal Customer Council of Greater Boston. The promotion can be seen at this link: <https://youtu.be/bRfMAF3ndm8>



MA/RI TOPS THE NATION IN SALES OF BREAST CANCER AWARENESS STAMP



For the second consecutive year, the MA/RI District led all 50 USPS Districts in the Nation in Breast Cancer Awareness Stamp sales for the month of October. The stamp is sold all year in full sheets of 20 but is featured during the month of October.

The MA/RI District sold 958,594 Breast Cancer Awareness Stamps for a grand total of \$718,945.50. Purchase of this stamp supports the Breast Cancer research work of the National Institutes of Health and the Medical Research Program of the Department of Defense.

Mike Rakes, District Manager and David Guiney, Postmaster of Boston led this yearly initiative. With the hard work of our Local Post Offices, the MA/RI District more than doubled the number of stamps sold by the runner up (Delaware/Pennsylvania).

“We are so very proud of our Retail Units for getting behind this wonderful cause” stated Postmaster Guiney.

CELEBRITY VIDEO PODCAST with JAMES JACKSON JR.



On, Thursday, October 27, 2022, the Greater Boston Postal Customer Council premiered a new episode of its National Award-Winning Celebrity Video Podcast Series with Special Guest, James Jackson Jr., star of the Tony Award Winning Best Musical “*A Strange Loop*”.

Mr. Jackson is an actor, musician, and cabaret artist based in New York and originally from Randolph, Massachusetts. Mr. Jackson’s Broadway debut was a starring role as Thought #2 in “*A Strange Loop*”, 2022’s Tony Award Winner for Best Musical. An Obie Award-winner (*A Strange Loop*, off-Broadway at Playwrights Horizons), a featured singer with the Radio City Christmas Spectacular, his cabaret/solo work (*Shady Sings the Blues*, *The Black-Ups*) has toured across the country.

Hosted by PCC Executive Board Member George Kippenhan, James shared his journey from his initial goal of being a music teacher to his rise to every actor’s dream...Broadway. An amazing storyteller, Mr. Jackson’s witty anecdotes about community theatre on the South Shore to performing in multiple productions of “Smokey Joe’s Café” (“it was the only paying gig I could get at the time.”) made for a very fun light-hearted conversation.

James told the hilarious story of sitting behind Lea Michelle, eating jellybeans when “*A Strange Loop*” won the Best Musical Tony. He also spoke about his late mother inspiring him to do his best.

Mr. Jackson spoke about his admiration for USPS. During the pandemic, James taught himself how to knit and would send out assorted scarves and hats to friends and family. He became a frequent visitor to his local Post Office who showed him how to mail each item for speed and cost-effectiveness. He also gave a tip to our audience that if you send a program or item to be autographed by a Broadway performer, it is best to send it with a return stamped self-addressed envelope. It should also be sent to the theatre, care of the Stage Manager with the performer’s name on the envelope. He explained that Broadway Actors get hundreds of pieces of fan mail and that they love it. It takes time, but they will respond to all autograph requests. James stated, “it’s such a fun part of the job.”

“*A Strange Loop*” closes on Broadway in January after a highly successful run. When asked what’s next, James hinted that another collaboration with Tony-Award winner Michael R. Jackson, creator and writer of “*A Strange Loop*”, is in the works. He will also continue performing his Cabaret act, which frequently tours in the Boston/Cambridge area. James was a wonderful, funny, entertaining guest who is a great supporter of the Postal Service. His interview can be found at www.bostonpcc.org under *Presentations*.

OPERATION SANTA 2022



The USPS Operation Santa program helps countless families across the United States during the holiday season. The 110-year-old program provides an online channel for individuals and organizations to adopt letters written to Santa and send gifts anonymously. This year over 25,000 letters were adopted and 18,141 packages shipped for arrival prior to the holidays. Once again, the Greater Boston Postal Customer Council whole-heartedly supported the program. Under the enthusiastic leadership of long-time member Karen McCormick, letters from several families were adopted and gifts that matched the wish-lists were purchased, packed up and carted to a Postal facility to ship out in time. Gifts included a razor scooter, Legos, arts and crafts, Squashmellows, bedding, and clothes. Additional information is available at uspsoperationsanta.com

INDUSTRY ALERT FROM USPS

Elimination of Corporate Accounts – Updated Information

The United States Postal Service is discontinuing the United States Postal Service Corporate Accounts (USPSCA) method of payment. USPSCA includes Express Mail Corporate Accounts (EMCA) and Priority Mail Express Manifest Accounts (PMEM). In January 2023 we will begin closing inactive accounts and will be closing all USPSCA accounts by **July 1, 2023**.

External Customers who currently use USPSCA as a payment method are encouraged to switch to an available alternative. Alternative methods of payment may include Click-N-Ship (CNS), Electronic Verification System (eVS), USPS Ship, ePostage, PC Postage or Meter.

Customers should contact their Sales Account/BSN Representative, if assigned one, or their local Post Office, for assistance with USPS Product/Service account migration.

Questions regarding Account Migration options please send to MSSC@usps.gov.

Any accounts with a balance can request a refund through the resources listed below:

- Customers should contact the Mailing & Shipping Solutions Center (MSSC) @ MSSC@usps.gov for assistance.
- Please include a request for refund with a signed authorization on letterhead, EMCA #, business name and location.

Accounts with a negative balance after July 1, 2023 will be sent to Accounts Receivable for collection.

Customers can make payments to negative accounts by contacting the MSSC using link above.

For questions regarding the Elimination of Corporate Accounts, please email ShippingServices@usps.gov.

RATES: SOME GO UP BUT SOME GO DOWN AND SOME DON'T CHANGE AT ALL

The proposed Shipping Services prices were approved by the Postal Service™ governors. Notably:

- There is no price increase for Parcel Select Ground®, which continues to be a reliable and economical shipping option.
- The pricing for USPS Connect™ Local will remain unchanged. This service provides businesses with an affordable same-day and next-day delivery for their local customers.

In addition, some Priority Mail Flat Rate® retail product prices will be reduced compared with the temporary rate adjustment currently in place, and Priority Mail® commercial rates will increase by only 3.6 percent, well below the rate of inflation.

Overall, Priority Mail service prices would increase approximately 5.5 percent, Priority Mail Express® service prices would increase by 6.6 percent, and First-Class Package Service® prices would increase by 7.8 percent.

Shipping Services price adjustments vary by product. Although Mailing Services price increases are based on the Consumer Price Index (CPI), Shipping Services prices are primarily adjusted according to market conditions. The Postal Service Governors evaluate shipping rates and fees and adjust them when needed as part of Postal Service's 10-year Delivering For America plan which is designed to reverse a projected \$160 billion in operating losses over the next 10 years.

The Postal Service has some of the lowest letter mail postage rates in the industrialized world and also continues to offer a great value in shipping. Unlike some other shippers, the Postal Service has upfront pricing and does not add surcharges for residential delivery or regular Saturday delivery.

The proposed domestic Priority Mail Flat Rate retail price changes are:

Product	Current Prices	Proposed Prices
Small Flat Rate Box	\$10.40	\$10.20
Medium Flat Rate Box	\$17.05	\$17.10
Large Flat Rate Box	\$22.45	\$22.80
APO/FPO Large Flat Rate Box	\$20.95	\$21.20
Regular Flat Rate Envelope	\$9.90	\$9.65
Legal Flat Rate Envelope	\$10.20	\$9.95
Padded Flat Rate Envelope	\$10.60	\$10.40

The Postal Service provides additional resources to assist customers regarding the price changes. These tools include price lists, downloadable price files and Federal Register Notices. This information is available on the Postal Service's Postal Explorer website at pe.usps.com/PriceChange/Index.

Reminder: As we know, the Postal Service generally receives no tax dollars for operating expenses and relies on the sale of postage, products and services to fund its operations.

Here is a rate chart, with thanks to the Greater Dallas PCC, highlighting some price changes. Visit Postal Explorer for full details:

pe.usps.com

Rate Type	Current	New	Change	Percent Change
Stamped Single-Piece	\$0.60	\$0.63	\$0.03	5.00%
Metered Single-Piece	\$0.57	\$0.60	\$0.03	5.30%
MAADC Non-Automation	\$0.53	\$0.55	\$0.02	3.80%
AADC Non-Automation	\$0.49	\$0.51	\$0.02	4.10%
MAADC Automation	\$0.52	\$0.53	\$0.02	3.10%
AADC Automation	\$0.49	\$0.51	\$0.02	3.30%
5-Digit Automation	\$0.46	\$0.47	\$0.02	3.50%

First-Class Mail* Postcards

Rate Type	Current	New	Change
FC Single Piece Postcard	\$0.44	\$0.48	\$0.04

USPS Marketing Mail* Price Changes

Rate Type	Percent Change
Letters	3.29%
Flats	6.25%

Price Change Percentages

By Rate Class	Percent Change
First-Class Mail	4.20%
USPS Marketing Mail	4.20%
Periodicals	4.20%
Package Services	4.20%
Special Services	4.20%

A PCCAC Farewell Tribute and Thank You to Mark Fallon



Mark Fallon began his association with the PCC as a member of the Greater Boston PCC. He quickly joined the leadership ranks when he was invited to serve on the GBPCC Executive Board in 1998. It was not long before his talents were recognized at the national level and sought by the National PCC Advisory Committee. After 6 years serving on that body, Mark completed his term on December 31, 2022.

In recognition of and gratitude for his service, the National PCC Program Office paid tribute to Mark to recognize, celebrate, congratulate, and **thank** him as one of their dedicated leaders. Our Mark Fallon has stepped down as the Strategic Innovation and PCC Policy Sub-Committee Industry Co-Chair.

From National PCCAC:

“For over 60 years, the Postal Customer Council (PCC) has provided opportunities for business mailers and Postal Service management to work together for mutual gain and benefit. As with any business or organization, strong leadership is key to success. Mark has been instrumental in accelerating the PCC Community to new heights. Through his experience and insight, he has helped solidify the partnership between the PCC Network and the Postal Service.

Mark has been a longtime advocate for the PCC Community. He has served in many support roles in addition to being the PCCAC Industry Co-Chair Strategic Innovation and PCC Policy Sub-Committee since 2021. He has held positions as the National PCCAC Member-At-Large (2019-2022), Member of the PCCAC Education Sub-Committee (2016-2020) and a Greater Boston PCC Board Member (1998-2018).

During his PCCAC tenure, Mark was instrumental in the launch and success of *PCC Voice* on LinkedIn, the only approved social media platform for PCCs. Through his due diligence, PCC Voice has grown to over 1,500 members.

Since 1995, Mark has been an industry speaker at the National Postal Forum to share his vision of integrating technology, data quality, process integrity, and of course expert leadership. He has presented to over 100 PCC events around the country since 2001. When not sharing his knowledge or experiences, you can find Mark in his woodshop creating masterpieces.

Thank you Mark for all that you have done with our PCCs and PCCAC Sub-Committees.”

We in Boston are so proud of Mark!

HAPPY NEW YEAR

The Greater Boston
PCC Executive Board
wishes you a First-Class Year!

VIRGIN AND CHILD STAMP UNVEILED AT THE MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS



The U.S. Postal Service issued the “Virgin and Child” Christmas Forever stamp during a dedication ceremony at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston on September 22, 2022.

“I am honored to represent the Postal Service as we dedicate a Christmas stamp that features one of the most revered images in the world — the Virgin Mary holding her infant child, Jesus,” said U.S. Postal Service Organization Development Vice President Jenny Utterback, who served as the dedicating official. “It’s a beautiful piece of art, with particular meaning this time of year. I choose my holiday cards with care, sign them with love or best wishes, and may write a personal note inside. Holiday cards are a special way to connect with family and friends. The stamp on the envelope holds significance as well.”

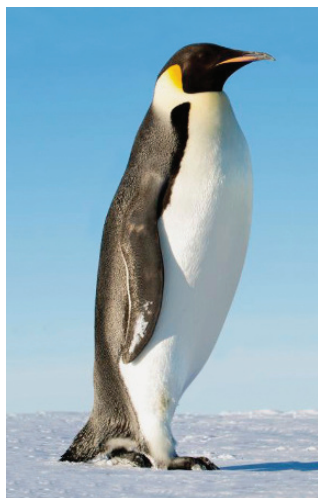
Depicting the tender bond between a mother and her child, interpretations of the Virgin Mary with the Christ child take innumerable forms in the Christian art of the Italian Renaissance. This stamp features “Virgin and Child,” an oil-on-panel painting from the first half of the 16th century by an unidentified Florentine artist. Art historians have long speculated about the identity of this artist and have sometimes associated this painting and related paintings with the names of various 16th-century figures. Scholars now attribute this “Virgin and Child” to a Florentine artist who has been known since the late 1960s as the Master of the Scandicci Lamentation. The name is based on similarities in style evident in a painting called “The Lamentation on the Dead Christ” made for a church in the town of Scandicci, near Florence.

Italian Renaissance artists were often inspired to imitate the compositions of their contemporaries. Scholars believe that this artist based the poses of the Virgin Mary and the Christ child in this painting on the two central figures in the “Madonna of the Baldacchino,” an unfinished altarpiece made by the painter Raphael for a church in Florence between 1506 and 1508.

The “Virgin and Child” painting is in the Robert Dawson Evans Collection at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. Art director Greg Breeding designed the stamp.

USPS also offers stamps honoring holidays of other faiths, such as Hanukkah, Kwanzaa, Eid and Diwali and issues a Lunar Year stamp each year.

THE PENGUIN POST



Did you know that there is a Post Office in Port Lockroy Antarctica known as the Penguin Post? It is the southernmost Post Office in the world. Closed during COVID, it has recently re-opened with a staff of four. In addition to the Post Office, there is a museum and a gift shop. Although isolated, it is visited by thousands of tourists a year. 15,000 penguins reside there and 70,000 pieces of mail are sent from the Penguin Post in a year.

The details are fascinating. We recommend you follow up and read the article accessed through the link below.

<https://www.smithsonianmag.com/smart-news/meet-the-four-women-who-will-run-antarcticas-penguin-post-office-this-winter-180980912/>

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**GREATER BOSTON
POSTAL CUSTOMER COUNCIL**

JOIN THE GBPCC

The Greater Boston Postal Customer Council (GBPCC) is a United States Postal Service (USPS) sponsored organization comprised of a local network of business mailers, mail service providers and USPS representatives. GBPCC offers opportunities to participate in educational programs, networking events and discussions focused on changing postal regulations, rates and local/national mailing issues. If you are interested in becoming a member please use

MEMBERSHIP RESPONSE FORM

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- ☐ Corporate (\$150 unlimited members)
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WHY YOU SHOULD JOIN THE PCC

The Postal Customer Council is a valuable resource for business mailers, large and small. Local PCCs serve as an open channel for USPS-to-business communication, providing information and best practices for cost-effective and profitable mailing, education and training, and solving local challenges. Though most PCC members include large business mailers, government agencies, and business mail service providers, small businesses benefit from PCC membership, too. The award-winning Greater Boston PCC offers these benefits:

- Learn from postal experts about marketing through the mail.
- Find new sources for mailing lists, printing, database management, and more.
- Get discounts to major mailing industry events.
- Network with other mailers, business mail service providers, and USPS executives to discover new ways to make your mailings more efficient and profitable
- Hear first-hand from other decision-makers on how they deal with the same challenges you face.
- Leverage best practices to improve mailing effectiveness, efficiency, and profitability.
- Gain knowledge about postal products, services, and tools to improve mail quality through workshops and events—and earn a professional certificate to boot.
- You can even score tickets to a Boston sports team and socialize with colleagues while cheering them on!

VISIT BOSTONPCC.ORG

For more information about the Greater Boston PCC, visit us at: **www.bostonpcc.org**