



# AT THE GATE

NOVEMBER 2023

A TWU Local 100 newsletter for members of the Stations Department from the desk of Stations Vice President Robert Kelley



**Robert Kelley**  
VP, Stations Department



Stations Department on the front lines as rank & file members campaign for our endorsed candidates in the 11/7 election.

## A MESSAGE FROM THE VICE PRESIDENT

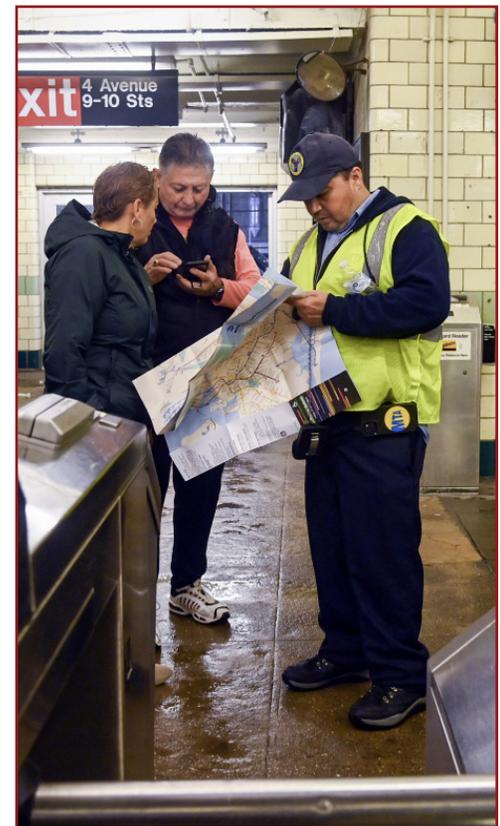
The Holiday Season is upon us! Hustle and bustle vibrate throughout our city, our workplace. It is also the time when some chime in with “Year in Review” assessments and/or their predictions for the coming year. I look at a past year as a building block for the next -- **Our Future.**

### Activism is an Answer!

The streets of Washington Heights and Inwood were decorated with posters last summer warning of the ‘unmanned’ elevators the TA wanted on the ‘A’ and ‘1’ lines. Local elected officials took notice and the plan was frozen. That same spirit -- Our Union being a “Street Presence” -- has been carried over to the courthouse as we express our anger over the assaults on us!

I publicly served notice on the District Attorneys, the Judges and the

MTA that “we will hold them accountable!” in instances of assaults on Transit Workers. In the matter of the cowardly attack on Brother Baboo Singh on Sept. 12, I had to enlighten the staff of the Bronx D.A. – the Assistant District Attorneys (ADA’s) to the Transit Authority’s Rule Book so that they could find grounds to charge his attacker under the law governing attacks on T.A. employees, which means he will face up to a seven year jail term. I won’t stand for any “slap on the wrist penalties” when one of us is assaulted.



Station Agent giving directions to passengers during NYC’s unprecedented storm in September.



## Quality of Life

Quality of Life is a constant concern. We are entitled to have for our use facility rooms in good condition. Structural defects must be corrected promptly. The 'NYCT' has the personnel: carpenters, painters, plumbers etc. to get it done. I want to see more of them deployed to Our Workplace.

Quality of Life goes beyond the station environment. It can be affected by the way our duties and responsibilities are carried out, day to day. The Union/ Management Roundtable (founded by Exec. Board Member Nicolette Browne) has provided a forum where concerned Agents and Cleaners from the road can share their views on "what can be done to improve our working conditions."

Station Agents, especially those working **Customer Service Centers**, must carry relevant brochures and maps with them as they assist passengers in the control area. It is an awkward moment when your hands are full and



you have to point to which staircase a customer (who speaks only a smattering of English) should take to catch the desired train or if the iPhone needs to be utilized for detailed travel information.

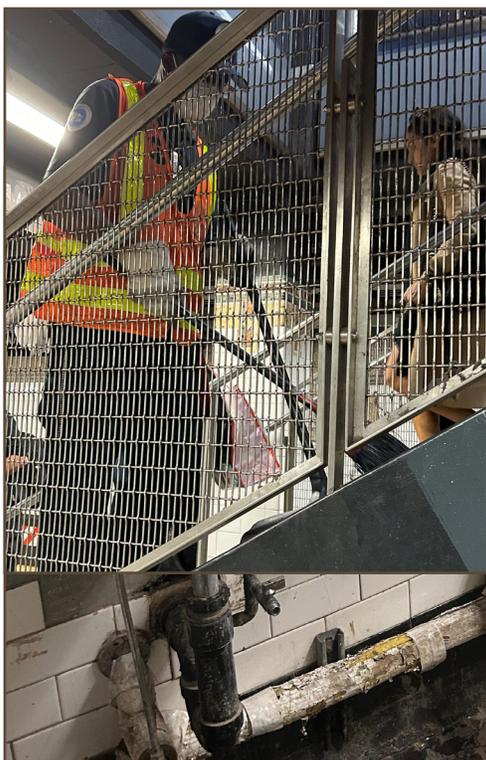
The solution is to equip Agents with cargo pants. Fanny packs are also under consideration. Face shields/visors are also being tested to protect us from possible air-borne contamination from riders who do not practice social distancing. These are some of the options that will enhance the way we work. Solutions born on the road

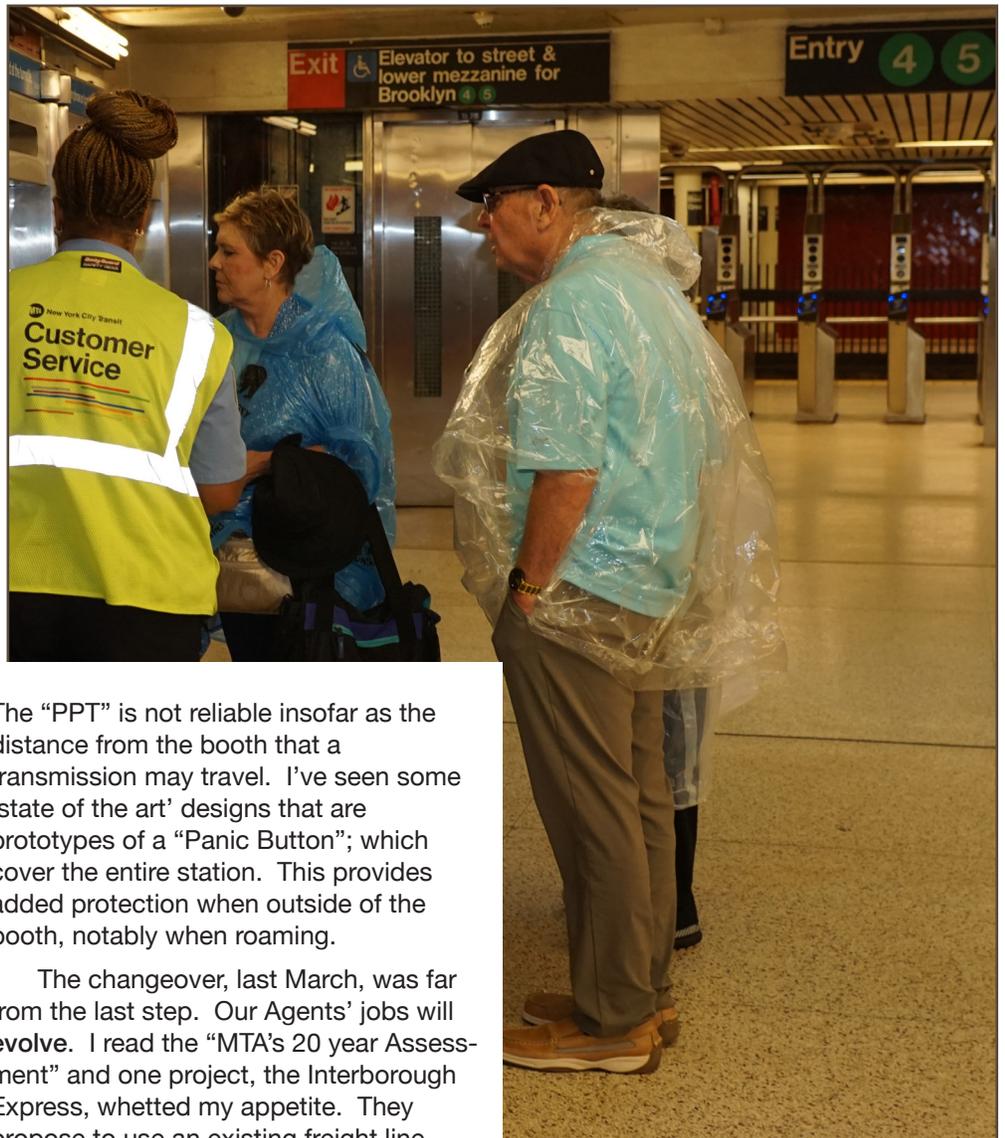
that came out of our monthly dialogue.

Quality of Life is more than our five days at the job. It's also the time we spend at home, enjoying our families and friends, engaging in activities that are of interest to us. That is certainly part of the equation in our lives. A Four Day Workweek (four ten-hour tours) would enrich many of our lives. However, it is not for everyone. I want to see a 'Pilot Program' implemented and if successful, expanded.

The impact elsewhere of workers having a 'Four Day Week' has been positive (less people call out sick and the turnover rate drops). The role of the 'S/A' is changing and I do not want to subject those who can do the 8 hours, and are happy with that, being forced into a ten-hour day. There is work to be done, it is doable, so let's see it in operation on a limited basis.

In a perfect world we would all love our jobs. Subway stations are surely no Garden of Eden, but we show up and do our jobs. It's a matter of survival. The paycheck keeps us sheltered, fed, the utility companies satisfied, our families protected and more; enough that we keep any discontent with our lot in perspective and do what has to be done to get that bi-weekly compensation.





For the first time this century a **Promotional Test** is being given for the position of Station Agent. Now CTA's won't compete against the thousands who take the open competitive exam and thusly, after acing the test, be called to their new title much sooner (no four years on the waiting list). A path to promotion has been opened and I want it expanded to all titles in Stations, including Revenue and Supply Logistics. Everyone deserves the opportunity to find that place where they are happy with their jobs (\$\$\$).

In negotiating the 'Station Agent of the Future' agreement, I acknowledged that change is a constant and you can't be intimidated by it. We had to **adapt**, or Agents would face extinction (devoured by the "Customer Service Department" and their "Transit Customer Service Specialists"). Agents took on new duties. The Booth was no longer the master. It has become a tool in our repertoire: A depot for supplies, a refuge, and a safe haven. Performance of heightened customer service is our primary function; rather than being confined to a booth, we decide when to use it.

**Protection** is an essential companion to any alterations in the way we do our jobs. Seniority must be preserved. We must be safe while executing our tasks. Safety protocols have to be adjusted. I'm fighting for the replacement of the current "PPT" with a "Panic Button" instrument.

## Adapt. Protect. Evolve. Prosper.

The "PPT" is not reliable insofar as the distance from the booth that a transmission may travel. I've seen some 'state of the art' designs that are prototypes of a "Panic Button"; which cover the entire station. This provides added protection when outside of the booth, notably when roaming.

The changeover, last March, was far from the last step. Our Agents' jobs will **evolve**. I read the "MTA's 20 year Assessment" and one project, the Interborough Express, whetted my appetite. They propose to use an existing freight line (which is owned by the MTA and CFX rail) to operate a new passenger service line from Bay Ridge to Jackson Heights.

What makes this worth watching is that there are no issues with "Right of Way" (less red tape). The finished product would bring Station upwards of **75 new jobs**. It will be a reality, perhaps as soon as five years. It is estimated that this addition would carry 118,700 riders on a daily basis.

New Technology, including Artificial Intelligence, will make its way into stations in the coming years. I seek to have "AI" improve the way we do our jobs. Imagine being able to watch the entire station complex, and being able to focus on specific areas, from your Tablet? Or, that same tablet delivering 'real time' travel directions with the length of the journey as well as which trains service the transfer points and their times of arrival.

Teach us! **We can do the work!**

Under the "**SAOF Agreement**" we shall prosper. Agents won a dollar an hour raise from March onward (now retroactively granted to anyone who had the dollar pro-rated). It was vital to ensure true prosperity; which comes from guaranteed job security. It will be Cleaners, Station Agents and Collecting Agents who own our system.

There will be daunting challenges in the next few years. The ugly concept of broad-banding is certain to be dressed up and presented by the Authority time and time again. In my eyes, job descriptions are etched in stone. There can be no trade-offs. I firmly believe that the principle of "Adapt, Protect, Evolve and Prosper" must be followed. I am confident, that by working together, we can put Station First and continue to shape a future that is safe and secure for all of us. **SAFE AND JOYOUS HOLIDAYS TO ALL!**



# HERE & THERE

## LOOKING AT THE CRYSTAL BALL

Recently the MTA presented its “20-year assessment” outlining plans to continue investing in a \$1.5 trillion regional transportation system over the next 20 years. The comprehensive data and analysis used in formulating the approaches to be taken in the next two decades are persistent in addressing reliability and sustainability. The entire bus fleet will be replaced as will 63% of rail service. Climate change, and the fallout from increasingly bad weather events are an underlying factor in many initiatives.

New subway lines are planned, including the Interborough Express (IBX). The Second Avenue Subway will be extended north to 125th St. and south to Houston St. Another extension of the 2nd Ave. line is envisioned to run crosstown to West 125th St. A station will be added to the #7 Line at 10th Ave. It is anticipated that by 2045 there will be 493 station booths in the system.



## MTA on Congestion Pricing: “So Sue Me Too!”

The MTA is seeking to join the federal lawsuit New Jersey filed against the U.S. Department of Transportation as a defendant. The Authority argues that intervening in the lawsuit will ensure that its interests are adequately represented. New Jersey’s aim is clear: a claim on a substantial portion of the revenue generated by Congestion Pricing Tolling. The Traffic Mobility Review Board will make the final recommendations to the MTA Board, Potential scenarios would include discounts for drivers from the Garden State who use the Lincoln and Holland tunnels.



## It’s ALIVE!

The next phase of the “OMNY” roll out has begun. “OMNY vending machines” have been activated at seven stations throughout the system. Customers will be able to use cash at the vending machines as well as digital wallets and credit or debit cards. The machine will allow cash paying customers to take advantage of the card’s financial flexibility; pay as you go and never spend more than \$34 in seven days. Initially, the card will cost \$1 (same as the Metro-Card). However, the OMNY card lasts five years as opposed to the two-year life span of the Metro-Card.





## MTA BOARD

The Board met on October 25th. It was a bizarre gathering, to say the least. Chairman Lieber made the stunning announcement that there was not a quorum (half of the voting Members of the Board must be in attendance), and therefore no votes would be taken. Five minutes passed as latecomers trickled in and a quorum was achieved. Technical issues delayed the start of the Public Comments session: an odd beginning when unusual becomes the norm.

The Chairman did not deliver his usual “State of the MTA” briefing, instead calling on the heads of the various agencies to provide an update. After he introduced Pat Warren, the Chief Safety Officer of the MTA, Warren provided some background to the report with an account of the day before “Ophelia” crippled the city (parts of Brooklyn received eight inches of rain on Friday, September 29). Lieber said that on midday Thursday (9/28) Warren came into his office and notified him that the next day the City

was going to be struck by a massive weather incident. He was spot on in his assessment.

Included now in Mr. Warren’s portfolio are Weather Related Incidents. He commented that Hurricane Ida (in 2021) was called a “once in a hundred-year storm,” but that now such occurrences are becoming common.

Two days before, at the Transit Committee meeting NYCT President Richard Davey noted that 11 subway lines had a full or partial suspension of service on 9/29 because of the deluge and subsequent flooding. He praised the employees, in particular those in Stations, for their efforts to keep people moving. The buses, by and large, kept operating. Davey went on to review the steps NYCT has taken to combat such events. He also decried the lack of companies that manufacture Electric Buses in the U.S. He called for a nationwide effort to set standards for emission-free electric buses.

---

It’s an eerie feeling when “Weather Incidents” are placed in the same category as “Terrorist Attacks”. The difference, though unstated at the meeting, is that an act of Terrorism may or may not occur whereas Weather Incidents will attack the system again and again.





**Pedro Rivera**  
Collecting Agent  
Section Chairman

## COLLECTORS WORLD

*By Pedro Rivera*

Season's Greetings, my Brothers and Sisters. Please, all Collecting Agents: take it up a notch and be extra vigilant out there. The Holidays are here, there are crowds out there, even at night there are greater numbers of people on and around the system. There is a greater chance of an unpredictable situation and the potential for danger. Let us look out for each other and be aware of "what's going on in the surroundings." I would like to wish all Collecting Agents "Happy Holidays, be safe and Happy with our Families."



**Michael LittleBear**  
Division Vice Chairman

## Greetings Supply/Logistics Family

*By Michael LittleBear*

Greetings, Supply Logistics Family! I hope that we are all doing well as we head into the Holiday Season. As the holidays approach and we begin our celebrations, let's remember that we must also push forward with our "S/L" objectives to make our workplaces better and more comfortable. We must stick together so we can advance our Division and ourselves. A New Year is coming and we must continue our fight for Safety and Respect.

Most of all, I wish that everyone has a great and joyous holiday season. **Blessings to all of us and our families!**



**Jerimiah Wade**  
Station Field Representative

## Field View

*By Jerimiah Wade*

I'm a Station Agent with four and a half years on the job. Helping my peers through the challenges the 'road' throws at us is what I love to do. That's why I took the opportunity to become a Union Representative. Joining the TEAM was the right decision. We work together and have the same goal: to give 110% to every member we come across. I travel the field to provide my Local 100 Sisters and Brothers with support and information.



# AT THE GATE

**NOVEMBER 2023**

A TWU Local 100 newsletter for members of the Stations Department from the desk of Stations Vice President Robert Kelley



## WHO TO CALL

TWU (Union Hall): 212-873-6000, at (2 Broadway): 646-252-5587

TWU (Pick Room); 212-424-4309, UAP: 212-736-3579

Member Services: 347-643-8060

Training and Upgrade: 718-780-8700

**Questions about HEALTH BENEFITS COVERAGE? Adding a Dependent?**

**MEMBER SERVICES: 347-643-3727**

**If STRESS in your life, or a loved one's, is pushing you down a dangerous path?**

**The Domestic Violence Hotline: 800-799-7233**

**The National Suicide / Mental Health Crisis Hotline: 988**

**The TWU Local 100 Union Assistance Program is there to help,  
and it is CONFIDENTIAL! **Call: 212-736-5291****

**If you want to check your leave balances (AVA, PLD, Vacation and Sick)**

**Call TIMEKEEPING: 718-694-4600**

*Or e-mail at [StationshourlyTKU@nyct.com](mailto:StationshourlyTKU@nyct.com)*

**Injured on Duty and want to follow up?**

**Call Your Union at 212-873-6000 (ask for Stations). And call 718-694-4212**

You can follow up by **calling the T.A.'s IOD UNIT at 718-694-5725**

**Have to call the BSC?**

**Call: 646-376-0123**



# AT THE GATE

NOVEMBER 2023

A TWU Local 100 newsletter for members of the Stations Department from the desk of Stations Vice President Robert Kelley



## 2023-2024 Stations Division Meetings

Stations Division Meetings are held the 4th Thursday of Each Month 10am and 5pm

November 2023 (TBD)\*

December 2023 (TBD)\*

January 25, 2024

February 22, 2024

March 28, 2024

April 25, 2024

May 23, 2024

June 27, 2024

July 25, 2024 \*\*

August 22, 2024 \*\*

September 26, 2024

October 24, 2024

November 2024(TBD)

December 2024 (TBD)

**\* Dates are subject to change pending Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays**

**\*\* According to the TWU Local 100 Bylaws- Summer meetings are dispensed during the months of July and August by majority ruled vote at the June meeting**

At The Gate is produced by TWU Local 100 Communications,  
195 Montague Street, Brooklyn, NY 11201.  
WWW.TWULOCAL100.ORG 212-873-6000  
Editor: S. B. Anderson. Assoc. Editor: J.M. Green

