



# Local 300

## Mail Handler News

National Postal Mail Handlers Union, AFL-CIO

Fall  
2008

# HELP SAVE THE BMCs!!!

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

US Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator

I am an employee of the United States National Postal Mail Handlers Union (NPMHU) including more than 900 Mail Handlers parcels, trays, tubs, and other types of Proposals" (RFP) seeking to privatize

We have processed all of this mail efficiently and better than contract employees.

They simply do not have the

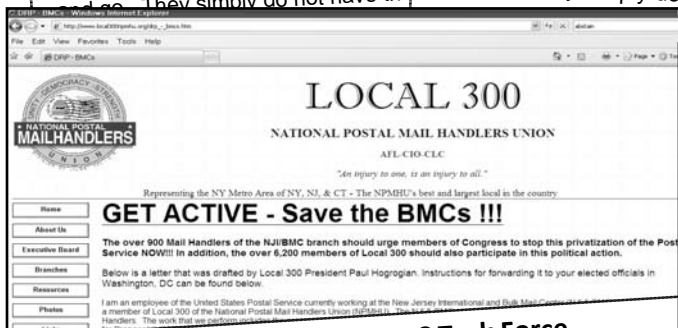
US House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative:

I am an employee of the United States Postal Service and a member of Local 300 of the National Postal Mail Handlers Union (NPMHU). The NJI & BMC employs over 2,000 employees including more than 900 Mail Handlers. The work that we perform includes the processing of parcels, trays, tubs, and other types of mail. The Postal Service has issued a "Draft Request for Proposals" (RFP) seeking to privatize this mail as well as my job.

We have processed all of this mail efficiently and effectively for over 35 years. We work safer and better than contract employees. We are career employees, while privatized workers come and go. They simply do not have the commitment to getting the job done right.

To find out  
how to help,  
see page 19



### Creation of BMC Task Force to Defend Mail Handler Work at the BMCs

Whereas, the 21 existing Bulk Mail Centers employ a high proportion of Mail Handlers; and

Whereas, USPS management is moving towards privatizing the parcel business, by issuing a Draft Request For Proposal to explore private contracting for work traditionally performed by NPMHU bargaining unit employees at the BMCs; and

Whereas, the National Postal Mail Handlers Union believes that "the draft RFP represents a wholly unacceptable approach to mail processing," and has made a commitment to protect Mail Handler work through contractual, legislative, and



Save the NJI/BMC Press Conference 10/27/08 - Local 300 President Paul Hogrogian, NJI/BMC Branch President Thomas Mullahey, with Leaders from the APWU, Jersey City Mayor Jerramiah Healy, NJ Congressman Albio Sires (D-13th Dist.), and Congressman Donald Payne (D-10th Dist.)

### **BMC TASK FORCE MEETING -- OCTOBER 22-23, 2008** **AFL-CIO HEADQUARTERS BUILDING** **ATTENDANCE ROSTER**

POSITION	BMC FACILITY	LOCAL
LOCAL PRESIDENT	KANSAS CITY, KS	297
BRANCH PRESIDENT	NJI/BMC	300
STEWARD	SPRINGFIELD, MA	301
BRANCH PRESIDENT	SAN FRANCISCO, CA	302
LOCAL PRESIDENT	LOS ANGELES, CA	303
BRANCH PRESIDENT	CINCINNATI, OH	304
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BRANCH PRESIDENT	PHILADELPHIA, PA	308
BRANCH PRESIDENT	ATLANTA, GA	310
LOCAL PRESIDENT	DALLAS, TX	311

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EDITOR *Local 300 Newsletter*

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# President's Report

**By Paul Hogrogian**

*These remain very busy and critical times for Local 300 and the National Postal Mail Handlers Union. The following is an update on some of the most crucial issues confronting us.*

On October 30, 2008 New York Metro Area (NYMA) Vice President Steve Forte met with representatives of Local 300 and the APWU to discuss the current situation in the NYMA and plans to consolidate certain mail processing operations in installations throughout the Area. NYMA Manager of Human Resources Alice Newman and Manager of Labor Relations Gary Johnston also attended the meeting. Local 300 was represented by President Paul Hogrogian and Treasurer Kevin Tabarus.

Forte explained, that mail volume was down between 11% and 12% from last year and that revenue was \$3.3 Billion under plan for Fiscal Year (FY) 2008. He explained that the projections for FY 2009 were even worse. They are projecting a \$1.1 to \$5 Billion net loss for FY 2009. Forte cited the failing economy as the main reason for the sharp decline in mail volume and revenue. He emphasized that neither the employees nor the managers were at fault, since productivity has actually increased.

Forte reported that Postal Headquarters mandated a nationwide reduction in work hours to compensate for the drop in mail volume and revenue. To accomplish this directive, Forte said that some mail processing operations had to be consolidated. While Tour 2 operations were the more likely to be reduced in some installations, other installations could accomplish their goals in other ways. Each individual installation will have its own plan. Management did not discuss the individual plans of each installation. Forte said that the Plant Managers of each installation will meet with Local Union officials while formulating their plans and certainly before implementing them. Input from Union Officials would be solicited and encouraged. Forte made assurances that the implementation of any plan would be consistent with the provisions

of the National Agreement, specifically Article 12. Should management violate the National Agreement, appropriate grievances will be filed at the local level.

Forte asserted that there is no nationwide or NYMA mandate for the elimination or consolidation of Tour 2. He claims that the Postal Service has a need to review all mail processing operations. He indicated that many of the mail processing machines are not being utilized to their full capacity and therefore some operations needed to be consolidated.

The following are the highlights of the NYMA's plans to consolidate mail processing operations in installations throughout the New York Metro Area:

## **Automation**

Forte reported that most installations would consolidate its automation operations (DBCS, OCR, BCS, etc.) from 3 tours to 2 tours. He explained that due to the severe drop in mail volume, the work that is currently being performed during Tour 2 could now easily be absorbed on Tours 1 and 3. Most automation operations would move to a 2 tour operation effective in January 2009. Tour 2 Automation bids could be abolished.

However, Forte also reported that mail preparation operations for automation would still be needed during Tour 2 hours to prepare mail for the other tours. This means that not all Tour 2 Mail Handler automation bids have to be eliminated. Platform and Mail Transport (MEO) bids are also necessary to support the mail prep operations.

Forte repeated that each installation would have its own plan and that some installations (such as Monmouth and DVD) could accomplish its goals without adversely affecting Tour 2 bids.

## **AFSM100/Flat Operations**

Forte reported that AT THIS TIME there is enough volume to justify 3 tours of processing flats. Therefore, AFSM 100 bids should not be eliminated or abolished during the implementation of these plans. However, an individual installation may attempt to justify the abolishment of AFSM 100 bids in their facility based on that installation's flat volume. However, Forte emphasized that this all could change if mail volume, specifically flat volume, continues to decline.

## **SPBS/APPS/LCTS Operations**

Forte explained that plans to consolidate SPBS and APPS operations have not been finalized and that no decisions have been made AT THIS TIME. Each individual installation's mail volume in those operations would dictate the need for either 2 or 3 tours.

Low Cost Tray Sorter (LCTS) operations would be scheduled consistent with the operations that they support.

## **AFCS/MEO Bid Reductions**

Forte reported that AFCS and Mail Equipment Operators (MEO/PIV) bids may be reduced in some installations.

The decline in cancellation mail in some installations could result in some AFCS not being run. "If a machine is not needed, it should not be turned on." Therefore, some AFCS bids in those installations that do not use all of their AFCS, could be eliminated.

Forte also reported that some Mail Equipment Operator (MEO/PIV) bids could be eliminated. He explained that management was using the PIVM System to evaluate the need for MEO bids. He said that preliminary reviews have revealed a large amount of

*(Continued on Page 4)*

**President's Report (from Page 3)**

time during which no mail was being transported. He claimed that according to his reports, PIVs are moving mail only 17% of the time. It is imperative that all Mail Equipment Operators "hook up" their loads in order to get credit for this work.

**Area Mail Processing (AMP)**

Forte also reported that not only was the NYMA looking to consolidate operations within installations, they were also looking at consolidating operations between installations. The NYMA previously consolidated outgoing operations at several installations. Monmouth operations were moved into Kilmer and Trenton, and Newark and West Jersey operations were moved into DVD.

However, Forte reported that additional consolidations could not easily be accomplished without adversely affecting service standards.

NYMA Manager of Human Resources Alice Newman announced that the planned consolidation of Bronx incoming mail into Morgan is officially dead and that written notices would be sent to the Unions in the near future. This is a major victory for Local 300 and the APWU. This shows what can be accomplished when we all work together. Special thanks to Bronx Congressman Jose Serrano, who was instrumental in blocking this planned consolidation.

**Manual Operations and Sunday Operations**

Forte also reported that they were looking at consolidating Manual Operations into one 10-hour tour. Forte also said that they were looking at eliminating Sunday mail processing operations in some installations. Forte reiterated that he would not make these changes if service standards were adversely affected.

**Overtime**

Forte stressed that overtime must be greatly reduced at all installations. Forte said that the NYMA goal for overtime is less than 4%. He explained that if overtime was reduced, it would mean that fewer positions would have to be eliminated.

**Lay Offs**

Forte explained that only if mail volume continues to decline well beyond their current projections, would layoffs even be considered. Currently, all employees hired before November 21, 2006 are protected under Article 6 of the National Agreement against involuntary lay offs. Postmaster General Potter also recently commented that he was NOT considering any layoffs.

**10 hour/4 Day Schedules**

Forte said that 10 hour/4 day schedules may be preferred in certain operations (AFSM 100, APPS, etc.). This would facilitate consolidating those operations into 2 tours. However, there are currently no provisions in the NPMHU National Agreement concerning such schedules. There are discussions occurring at the national level regarding this issue. National President Hegarty has assured me that any implementation of 10 hour/4 day schedules would be strictly VOLUNTARY. As more details on this become known, the information will be reported to the membership.

**Voluntary Early Retirement (VERA) and Hiring**

Forte indicated that there was a possibility that VERA would be offered again in the near future. He seriously doubted that any monetary incentives would be attached to such offers.

Forte also indicated that there are no plans for hiring career employees within the NYMA during Fiscal Year (FY) 2009.

**NJI & BMC/NY L&DC/NJ L&DC/NJ STC/ Bronx STC/Stamford/ISC JFK**

Forte reported that the operations at the NJI & BMC, NY L&DC, NJ L&DC, NJ STC and Bronx STC should not be affected by the implementation of these plans. He also reported that JFK operations fall under the Global Division and not under his jurisdiction.

During a separate meeting, Stamford Plant Manager Frank Marshall announced that he was considering a scenario where almost all Tour 2 operations would be

moved to other tours. Through the efforts of Local 300 President Paul Hogrogian and Local 300 Connecticut State Executive Board Member Thomas Ruther and through the intervention of National President John Hegarty, the Stamford Installation and Connecticut District agreed to continue to staff the SPBS, LCTS, Mail Transport and platform operations during Tour 2 hours in Stamford.

\* \* \*

On November 14, 2008 New York Metro Area (NYMA) Vice President Steve Forte met AGAIN with representatives of Local 300 and the APWU to provide an update on the NYMA's plans to consolidate certain mail processing operations in installations throughout the Area. NYMA Manager of Postal Operations William Schnaars, Manager of Human Resources Alice Newman and Manager of Labor Relations Gary Johnston also attended the meeting. Local 300 was represented by President Paul Hogrogian and Vice President Robert Blum.

Forte and Schnaars assured the Union Representatives that the NYMA had no plans at this time to subcontract the NJ L & DC Military Mail operation beyond the 10-week holiday peak volume period.

Management explained that the 17 Processing and Distribution Centers (P & DCs) within NYMA's jurisdiction had submitted their individual tour consolidation plans. Most of the plans involved moving operations off of Tour 2 and on to the other tours. Any exceptions would be based on the results of local staffing models. Management stated that there were 2 P & DCs (Monmouth and West Jersey) where the staffing models supported little change to the current tour 2 operations. Forte expects the P & DCs to implement their plans during January through March of 2009.

Management further explained that portions of the plans submitted by the plants were contingent on the implementation of the 4 day/10 hour work week schedule. As I have previously reported, the Mail Handlers' Union currently has no provisions in its National Agreement concerning the implementation of alternate

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work schedules such as the 4 day/10 hour work week. The parties at the National Level have been discussing a possible MOU on this issue. I have been assured by our National Office that any participation in such alternate work schedules would be purely voluntary in nature. Management reported that the Area had also formulated alternate plans based entirely of 8 hour work days.

Forté reported that no Mail Handlers would be excessed out of their installations

as a result of the implementation of the current tour compression plans. However, several Mail Handler positions could be abolished and some Mail Handlers could be reassigned to other tours WITHIN THE INSTALLATION. The number of Mail Handler impacts based on the current staffing proposals varies by installation, ranging from a low of 2 positions in one installation to a high of 12 in another installation. Management stated that there are several surveys currently underway to adjust staffing on flats and SPBS/APPS operations but the modeling

is not completed and the impacts have not been determined. As the results of these staffing surveys are completed, they will be discussed with Local and Regional Union representatives. Management also stated that the exact number of Mail Handler impacts could change based on whether or not the 4 day/10 hour work schedule is implemented. Management also warned that the NYMA was in danger of losing its APPS machines in Brooklyn and the NJ L & DC if volumes continued to drop.

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***The chart below summarizes the plans submitted by each of the NYMAs P&DCs. (Please keep in mind that these plans are VERY PRELIMINARY.)***

Installation	OCR/BCS/DBCS	Flats	Manual Ops.	APPS/SPBS	Factors
Kilmer	2 / 8 hour tours	2 / 10 hour tours*	1 / 8 hour tour	2 / 10 hour tours*	MEO Reduction** AFCS Reduction
Trenton	2 / 8 hour tours	2 / 10 hour tours*	1 / 8 hour tour	2 / 10 hour tours*	MEO Reduction** AFCS Reduction ATU Installation
Monmouth	2 / 8 hour tours	2 / 8 hour tours	1 / 8 hour tour	2 / 10 hour tours*	MEO Reduction**
Mid Island	2 / 8 hour tours	2 / 10 hour tours*	2 / 8 hour tours	2 / 8 hour tours	MEO Reduction**
Western Nassau	2 / 8 hour tours	2 / 10 hour tours*	2 / 8 hour tours	1 / 10 hour tour* & 1 / 8 hour tour	Opening Unit
Morgan	2 / 8 hour tours	3 tours no change	2 / 8 hour tours	2 / 10 hour tours*	MEO Reduction** AFCS Reduction
Bronx	2 / 8 hour tours	2 tours no change	1 / 8 hour tour	n/a	DMU Consolidation
DVD	2 / 10 hour tours*	2 / 10 hour tours*	1 / 8 hour tour	2 / 10 hour tours*	Univ. Sorter Installation SSM Elimination
Teterboro	2 / 8 hour tours	2 / 10 hour tours*	1 / 8 hour tour	2 / 10 hour tours*	SPBS Reduction AFCS Reduction
West Jersey	2 / 8 hour tours	2 / 10 hour tours*	n/a	2 / 8 hour tours	
Newark	2 / 8 hour tours	2 / 8 hour tours	n/a	n/a	
Brooklyn	2 / 8 hour tours	2 / 10 hour tours*	1 / 10 hour tour*	2 / 8 hour tours	APPS Volume
Flushing	2 / 8 hour tours	2 / 10 hour tours*	1 / 10 hour tour*	2 / 10 hour tours*	MEO Reduction**
Staten Island	2 / 8 hour tours	2 / 8 hour tours	2 / 8 hour tours	n/a	
Westchester	2 / 8 hour tours	1 / 10 hour tour* & 1 / 8 hour tour	1 / 8 hour tour	2 / 8 hour tours	MEO Reduction** AFCS Reduction SSM Reduction
Mid Hudson	2 / 8 hour tours	2 / 10 hour tours*	1 / 8 hour tour	2 / 8 hour tours	Platform Reduction
San Juan	2 / 8 hour tours	1 / 10 hour tour* & 1 / 8 hour tour	1 / 8 hour tour	2 / 8 hour tours	SPBS Reduction

\* Requires Implementation of 4-Day/10-hour work week (It would be only on a Voluntary basis, Union approval required)

\*\* Mailhandler Equipment Operator (Level 5 PIV Operators)

***Note: This is Management's proposed plan that includes 4 days / 10 hours work schedules. They also have a plan that is limited to 5 days / 8 hours work schedules.***

### **President's Report (from Page 5)**

Forte reiterated that the Plant Managers of each installation would meet with Local Union officials from the respective branch to discuss the implementation of the plans. Input for the Union Officials would be solicited and encouraged. Forte again assured the Union officials that the implementation of any plan would be consistent with the provisions of the National Agreement, specifically Article 12.

Management emphasized that staffing analysis will be ongoing throughout the year to align with the decline or changes in mail volume. The staffing changes that were discussed at the November 14 meeting were based on the staffing models that have been completed up to this date. There are other activities underway that may affect staffing and bids as the year progresses, such as analysis of LDC 17 allied/indirect activities.

*I would also like to update you on the following issues:*

#### **SUBCONTRACTING/OUTSOURCING**

The Postal Service's continuing efforts to subcontract mail handler work to low paid, non-union, private contractors is a major problem facing our Union. The Postal Service has proposed several subcontracting programs.

As I have previously reported, the Postal Service has already subcontracted the NJI & BMC's "093" (Iraq/Afghanistan) military mail operations. Local 300 filed grievances protesting this action and the grievances were appealed through the Grievance/Arbitration procedure. Although the arbitrator ruled that the Postal Service had failed to follow the proper procedures in subcontracting the mail in question, he refused to rightfully return the work to career postal workers. However, Arbitrator Brown did award the Mail Handlers at the NJI & BMC a "substantial financial remedy." Local 300 representatives were successful in negotiating a \$900,000 settlement (See related story on Page 6).

In March of 2008 postal officials notified Local 300 that it was once again considering subcontracting the remainder of the Military Mail operation.

Local 300 representatives once again met with NY Metro Area postal officials to discuss their latest proposal. After several meetings and after much hard work, we were able to convince the USPS to keep this work In-House. However, the Military Mail operations were moved from the NJI & BMC to the NJ L & DC. While Local 300 is pleased that the work in question remained "In-House," we are well aware that the USPS can change their position on this issue at any time.

Newark AMC was not on the first list of Air Mail Facilities to be subcontracted. However, Local 300 has now been notified that the Postal Service now plans to close this facility. This is projected to be accomplished by the Spring of 2009. Local 300 will file all the necessary grievances on this matter. In all likelihood our grievance will be linked to the grievance pending at the national level concerning the closing of the other Air Mail Facilities. Local 300 has been working with other postal unions and elected officials (especially Representative Donald Payne (D-NJ), who represents parts of Newark) to pressure the Postal Service to keep this work "In-House."

The USPS at the Headquarters level has submitted to Congress a revised Network Plan that, among many other things, contained a proposal to potentially subcontract some of the work (the processing of parcels) currently being performed at the Bulk Mail Centers. The Postal Service has begun formal implementation of Article 32 of the National Agreement and has issued a Draft Request for Proposals (RFP) from interested private contractors. This is a national initiative and could affect BMCs across the country. NPMHU National President John Hegarty stated that "if the USPS were...to subcontract any of the BMC work currently being performed by mail handlers, we fully intend to pursue all of our negotiated rights under Article 32, and to fight vigorously for all mail handler jobs."

Local 300 and the NPMHU at the national level will continue to use any resources at our disposal to fight the unwarranted subcontracting proposals put forth by the Postal Service and to ensure that the rights of our members are protected. (See related story in this issue)

#### **Training**

Local 300 continues to implement its aggressive training programs.

"FMLA" training is scheduled for 2009 after the implementation of the new Department of Labor regulations. New stewards will receive "Basic Shop Steward Training" in January or February of 2009 and new Arbitration Advocates will also be trained sometime during the next year. An "Advanced Arbitration Advocate" seminar is also scheduled for December of this year. Plans are also underway for several other trainings to be conducted throughout the coming year.

#### **Finances**

Local 300 has continued to reduce our expenses while providing quality representation to our members. We continue to build up union funds to ensure that Local 300 will be able to continue to function while we face the problems that lie ahead.

#### **RI 399**

RI 399 arbitration hearings are once again being scheduled in front of the new RI 399 arbitrators. Hearings are scheduled for Mid Hudson, Mid Island, DVD and for other installations within the jurisdiction of Local 300.

#### **NAT'L REASSESSMENT PROCESS/OWCP**

Phase II has been implemented in the Westchester, Northern NJ, Central NJ, Triboro and Connecticut Districts. The NYC and Long Island Districts will be implementing Phase II in the near future.

Local 300's efforts have been successful so far in keeping any of our members out of this program.

Both Local 300 and the National Union will continue to closely monitor the situation and take whatever action is necessary to protect our members.

Should any Mail Handler receive a letter stating that they are to be included in the National Reassessment Process; Local 300 Headquarters

*(Continued on Page 7)*

# Recent Arbitration Decisions

The following awards and decisions were recently issued within the jurisdiction of Local 300. Local 300's arbitration advocates should once again be commended for their superlative performances. To All Local 300 Advocates...CONGRATULATIONS AND THANKS FOR A JOB WELL DONE. KEEP UP THE GOOD WORK!

1) Arbitrator Garry Wooters ruled that the USPS violated the National Agreement when it unilaterally stopped a practice of allowing Mail Handlers to call in to indicate their availability for rest day overtime. The arbitrator directed management to restore the practice until and unless it is changed by agreement or after notice and opportunity for bargaining. DVD Branch President Ray Bermudez represented Local 300.

2) Arbitrator Sherrie Rose Talmadge overturned a removal issued to a Brooklyn Mail Handler for attendance related infractions. The arbitrator cited mitigating circumstances and the fact that the discipline was not progressive. NY State Executive Board Member Lawrence Hill was Local 300's arbitration advocate.

3) Arbitrator Joseph Cannavo ruled that "FMLA paperwork with restricted information must be stored in the Medical Unit and not kept under the control of the FMLA Coordinator." Mid Island Branch President Robert Lussos represented Local 300.

4) Arbitrator Talmadge ruled that the Postal Service violated the National Agreement

by reverting two Level 5 vehicle operator positions while continuing to staff those positions with detailed higher level Mail Handlers. The arbitrator directed the Postal Service to repost the 2 positions in question. DVD Branch President Bermudez was Local 300's arbitration advocate.

5) Arbitrator Talmadge ruled that the Postal Service violated the National Agreement by denying the Grievant (a Part-Time Union Official) employment and engaging in a non-disciplinary lock-out. The arbitrator ordered the Grievant made whole. Mid Island Branch President Lussos was Local 300's arbitration advocate.

6) Arbitrator Thomas Fritsch modified 2 suspensions issued to a Brooklyn Mail Handler for attendance related infractions. The arbitrator cited the fact that the actions were not progressive in that a cited Letter of Warning had been rescinded earlier. NY State Executive Board Member Lawrence Hill was Local 300's arbitration advocate.

7) Arbitrator Talmadge modified a Removal issued to a NYC Mail Handler for attendance related infractions. The arbitrator ruled that the action was "excessive" and cited mitigating circumstances. NYC Branch President Willie Delgado represented Local 300.

8) Arbitrator Talmadge modified a Removal issued to a NYC Mail Handler for attendance related infractions. The arbitrator ruled that the action was "excessive" and cited mitigating circumstances. NYC Arbitration Advocate

Herman Trevathan represented Local 300.

9) Arbitrator Talmadge modified a Removal issued to a Westchester Mail Handler for an allegedly engaging in Sexual Harassment. The arbitrator ruled that the Removal was not progressive and that discharge was too severe a penalty. Westchester Arbitration Advocate Andrew Piacente represented Local 300.

10) In Brooklyn, Arbitrator Talmadge rescinded a Notice of Removal issued to a Brooklyn Mail Handler for attendance related infractions and a violation of the Last Chance Agreement. The arbitrator cited the fact that the Postal Service misinterpreted and misapplied its own definition of "any six (6) month period." The arbitrator awarded back pay and reinstituted the Last Chance Agreement. Larry Hill advocated this arbitration for Local 300.

11) Arbitrator Frank Giordano, in an expedited award, rescinded a 7-Day Suspension issued to a Westchester Mail Handler for attendance related infractions. The arbitrator ruled that the absences should have been protected under the FMLA. Westchester Arbitration Advocate Andrew Piacente represented Local 300 in this arbitration.

12) Arbitrator Brenda Strashun, in an expedited award, rescinded a Letter of Warning issued to a Westchester Mail Handler for attendance. The arbitrator ruled that the cited absences were not excessive. Andrew Piacente represented Local 300 in this arbitration.

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should be contacted immediately.

## **NEW AUTOMATION/CRAFT JURISDICTION**

The Mail Handler craft has been designated the primary craft for most (almost all) of the functions on the new Flat Sequencing System (FSS). This craft designation determination for the FSS should result in the creation of additional Mail Handler positions. Flat Sequencing Systems are scheduled to be installed in the NJI & BMC and Mid Island facilities in 2009.

## **2008 NPMHU NATIONAL CONVENTION**

The 2008 NPMHU National Convention was held August 11-16, 2008 in Orlando, Florida. Delegates to the convention voted on amendments to the National and Uniform Local Union Constitutions and on various other resolutions.

Local 300 was well represented at the Convention by 41 delegates (40 elected delegates and the Local President). Local 300's delegates were among the most active and most influential delegates attending the Convention. I want to

personally thank & congratulate all of Local 300's Delegates for their efforts.

I hope that this report has addressed many of your concerns.

I would like to take this opportunity to wish all Local 300 members and their families a happy and healthy Holiday Season and New Year.

**Paul Hogrogian**  
**President - Local 300 NPMHU**



# Vice President's Report

By Robert "Bobby" Blum

In my previous newsletter articles I have consistently and vigorously advocated **Political Action**. Time and time again we have relayed to you the importance of involvement in the political process. The cover story on the Bulk Mail Center Rally is an example of what we are doing and continue to do to achieve the best possible outcome for Mail Handlers in the never ending struggle to protect our jobs and benefits. A few weeks prior to this rally we previously met with NJ Senators Lautenberg and Menendez along with the APWU on the **Bulk Center and subcontracting of our work in general**. We try to leave no stone unturned in our righteous resistance. We also have strongly encouraged your participation by becoming **Legislative Activists** and most importantly by voting for candidates for offices in all levels of Government who have demonstrated their concern for our interests. As this article is being written immediately following Election Day 2008, it appears that you have overwhelmingly taken up the cause of **Political Action**. Beginning with the largest turnout in recent history and the historic election of Barack Obama, to the election of many more labor friendly politicians, the **Working Class** of this nation has vociferously spoken. Of course our work is not done. We thank those who have stood with us side by side such as Jose' Serrano, Albio Sires, Donald Payne, Frank Lautenberg, Robert Menendez and welcome our new allies such as President-elect Obama and Michael McMahon (House of Representatives) from Staten Island. In return for our support we will push them to continue the fight to stop Postal Privatization, outsourcing and subcontracting of our work and pass legislation such as H.R. 4236 (requires the Postal Service to bargain with Unions on subcontracting). When they don't **we will challenge them**. In Local 300 and around the country we have partnered with LIUNA with great success in the political arena. We also have partnered with the APWU in the fight to save the Bulk Mail Center network and have great appreciation

for their efforts on this issue. The Mail Handlers and Union Staff at the NJI & BMC have really stepped up to the plate with a letter writing campaign. Next year we will again hold our bi-annual **Legislative Conference** in Washington DC, where the National Postal Mail Handler Union's **Legislative Activists** from around the United States will be holding face to face meetings with Senators, Congressmen and their staffs to put forth our positions on our Postal Service issues/legislation-H.R. 4236, Do Not Mail Legislation, Federal Employees Compensation Act (FECA) and other working people's causes such as The Employee Free Choice Act. The Mail Handlers and Union Staff at the JFK Branch did a great job with a petition drive on this issue.

As mentioned above and in our previous newsletter, **H.R. 4236** is a very important piece of legislation that requires the Postal Service to bargain with the Unions each time it wants to contract out mail processing, mail handling or even surface transportation if the contract involves fifty or more work years of work that otherwise would be performed by career postal employees or cost the Postal Service \$5,000,000 or more. This bill currently has over 130 co-sponsors and was introduced by Rep. Steven Lynch of Massachusetts. It is also called **The Mail Network Protection Act**. At our National Convention held this past August, Delegates passed a resolution unanimously in support. Again we need you to let your Congressional Representatives know you want them to get this legislation passed as soon as possible. Please log on to [www.local300npmhu.org](http://www.local300npmhu.org) or [www.npmhu.org](http://www.npmhu.org) to get your voice heard through our **Legislative Activist Network**. The proposal to subcontract out work from the **Bulk Mail Centers** is a prime example of what this legislation concerns. As previously reported the Postal Service is vehemently opposed so you know it's the right thing.

These are the most serious of times. The Postal Service has produced a document

called **"Roadmap to Closing the Gap"** which is their strategy to reduce costs by instituting the measures outlined in the article by President Hogrogian based upon the meetings held on October 30, 2008 and November 14, 2008 with USPS New York Metro Area Steve Forte. The Postal Service's strategy is based almost entirely on adversely affecting Craft Workers. There is no mention of any affect on higher-level management to match the drastic measures that are proposed for the Crafts. The Postmaster General currently has nearly 40 Vice Presidents working for him and the number continues to grow. The Postal Service is the only organization I know of that on one-hand claims that they have excess capacity in their plants due to low volume then attempts to subcontract out the work we do have. This makes absolutely no sense!

Our next meeting with Mr. Forte and his staff is scheduled for December 8, 2008. An update will be provided after this meeting. Please continue to check our website [www.local300npmhu.org](http://www.local300npmhu.org).

The Postal Service's so called Business Plan is a disaster. This plan utilizes privatization, subcontracting, reduction of work hours and extreme discounts for major mailers to avoid Postal System processing has had no success. In fact I believe without considerable changes to the current plan the Postal Service is doomed to failure. Career work hours have been reduced by millions but the Postal Service is still running a shortfall of billions. Employee productivity is at an all time high point. The Postal Service cannot continue to exist relying on cost cutting. Successful organizations have plans that encourage growth and increased market share, not giving away business. The Postal Service's current strategy is leading to extinction. Major mailers are provided with huge discounts to avoid Postal System processing yet the Postal Service has made a big deal of its use of increased automation to increase efficiency but

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gives away the work at the same time. Who the hell is running the show? The Business Plan must maximize volume not minimize it. The Postal Service is a cost effective means of communication. The Postal Service is better at targeting customers than other forms of communication. The Postal Service has tremendous name recognition and is the most trusted among all government agencies. The Postal Service has constantly and continuously told us their greatest asset is their workers. The current Business Plan says otherwise and we should not be the victims for the ineffectual and reckless managers who's Business Plan is a failure.

Our nations **Veterans** have always had an opportunity to find a decent job in the Postal Service. The hiring method gives preference to Veterans through testing, either five or ten points (disabled) on the register. Additionally military service time may be counted towards postal retirement. The Postal Service's increased use of subcontractors and privatization that have no such rules have broken this bond. Our nations Veterans merit far better from the Postal Service!

One plan directly targeting Mail Handlers is the strategy regarding Power Industrial Vehicle Operators. The Postal Service has begun to monitor Drivers in order to eliminate these positions where possible. This monitoring includes driving without any loads, PIVs activated but not being driven, development of PIV routes, decreasing PIV equipment, reduction of unwarranted higher level pay and repositioning of PIV bids.

An Unsafe practice in certain plants especially during the Holiday Season is management bypassing the BDS systems that are attached to the AFCS after the 2001 Anthrax attacks. The Postal Service at the national level has expressed its desire to eliminate this unsafe practice. Please make your Branch Presidents or Steward aware of this unsafe practice. We will contact the national office of any plant that does not cease from doing this.

Of course we are quite ecstatic with the Postal Service's jurisdictional craft determination for operation of the Flat

Sequencing System (FSS) that provides Mail Handlers with nearly all the work. We appreciate the hard work of our National Office in achieving this success. At the same time the Postal Service is currently testing at the Dulles, Virginia P & DC machinery called the Bulk Flat Processor (BFP). The BFP takes pallets of flat bundles and converts them into Automation Compatible Trays (ACTs) that will be inducted into the FSS for delivery point sequencing of flats. The BFP machine if successful will de-palletize bundles, automatically cut bundle straps, automatically buffer bundles into six separations, automatically create ACTs and automatically load the ACTs onto dollies. All the work the BFP will potentially do falls under Mail Handler Craft jurisdiction. Although this machine is currently

is only in the testing stage, there is potentially serious concern if approved and deployed in the field. As more information becomes available updates will of course be provided.

As of the writing of this article the exact number of Mail Handlers taking early retirement offers or **VERA** is not known but the number probably will not be as many as the Postal Service desired. The possibility exists of an additional **VERA** offer. In my opinion the proposed reductions of Tour 2 mail processing is in part a sinister strategy to coerce senior employees to accept retirement instead of working on other tours. With the current economic situation outside jobs to supplement retirement benefits will be far less available. Without a decent monetary incentive **VERA** makes little sense.

**EDR** is the abbreviation for **Evaluate, Discuss, Recognize**. This is a process that the Postal Service will shortly be implementing with the desired goal of "Enhance communications between employees and their supervisors and

to support individual performance and improve the overall workplace." The Postal Service uses the Employee and Labor Relations Manual (**ELM 370**) as basis for its implementation. I fully believe the true purpose is another tool for justification of initiating discipline. **EDR** calls for bi-annual, face to face meetings between employees and supervisor. Be real careful with this one.

Despite the threat of a tropical storm the 2008 **New York City's Central Labor Council's Labor Day Parade** went on as scheduled on September 6,



*Some of Local 300's 2008 Labor Day Marchers*

2008. In fact Local 300 had its largest contingent in quite a few years. Many children marched along with Members and their families. Thousand of Union Members and their families marched up 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue in support of organized Labor. Our contingent all received Local 300 T-Shirts. A great time was had by all!

On November 13 & 14, 2008 the **Local 300 Council & Executive Boards** will have held their meetings. Discussions and planning will take place regarding the subjects mentioned in the articles in this newsletter as well as other topics including Financial Reviews, training programs, RI399 issues and arbitration scheduling, Casual grievances and tracking, Local 300 Women's Committee and reports from the Executive Board Members to the Local 300 Council. After the meetings are held please go to [www.local300npmhu.org](http://www.local300npmhu.org) for the minutes of these meetings.

I want to wish every Member of Local 300 and their Families a happy, healthy and joyous holiday season.



# Treasurer's Report

By Kevin Tabarus

The state of Local 300's Treasury continues to improve despite recent increases in expenses. A large portion of the increased expenses were due to two major elections: (1) election of Local 300 Delegates to the NPMHU National Convention and (2) an Election for Officers of Local 300. These costs were expected and are unavoidable.

However, an extremely large percentage of the membership does not vote in the elections (In the Delegate Election almost 80% of the members did not vote/In the Officer Election over 60% of the members did not vote). We hope that in the future we will see more of our members participate. More members should vote. The election process is quite simple. Ballots are mailed to your home address and the postage for mailing your ballot is already paid. We all work in the Post Office, so mailing the ballot is also easy. Many other labor unions require their members to vote in person at the union hall. Our election process for the members cannot be made any easier, so please vote and encourage your co-workers to do the same.

The working families of this country continue to vote more and more in elections for the President of the United States, members of Congress, State Legislators, etc. This was made apparent with the recent November 2008 election. However, we must maintain our active role in politics. Be sure to encourage your co-workers, family, friends, neighbors, etc. to vote in every election. We should always vote on Election Day for **labor friendly candidates**. Don't let the middle class

disappear. Remember, there are more of us, then there are of them - the 'upper class.' The working families of America can only maintain their recognition by voting on every Election Day.

The Postal Service is definitely not the same now as it was in the past. The economy of this country has radically affected the volume of mail and lowered the Postal Service's revenue. First Class Mail, Standard Mail, Presort, Parcels; all have seen a drastic decline. Banks and credit card companies are not mailing credit card applications as frequently as they had in the past. These mailings used to be a large part of our mail volume. While the nation is trying to figure out how to put food on the table, the American public is not making as many purchases through the mail. This means fewer parcels being processed through postal facilities. The large mailers and advertisers realize this and as a result we see less catalogs and advertising mail than before.

Management is *attempting* to get more and more aggressive. They are attempting to implement their 'wish list' of; less overtime, less sick leave usage, and more casuals. Management has reported that they are operating at a severely large deficit. They are now pushing the **panic button**. I'm sure many of you had heard of management's plans to abolish jobs, reassign personnel, reduce the complement in Associate Offices, eliminate tours, consolidate facilities, and sub-contract out our work.

Thankfully, Local 300 has maintained the

financial resources needed to fight back against management when they push that **panic button**. Local 300 has continued to improve the state of our finances. Enforcing the terms and conditions of your employment does not come cheap. In fact, representational activities are quite costly as they were the largest expense that we incurred last year.

Local 300 will continue to be aggressive in protecting the rights of all Mail Handlers. When management violates the Overtime Desired List, we will ensure contractual compliance along with appropriate remedies. When management tries to deny Sick Leave and/or FMLA usage, Local 300 will ensure that the provisions of the contract and the Family Medical Leave Act are not violated. When management continues to replace Mail Handler positions with casual employees, we will process the necessary grievances (Casuals In Lieu Of Career Mail Handlers) to ensure that the improper practices cease and that the proper restitution be made.

The future shows a large storm cloud on the horizon. It is definitely headed this way. To be prepared to weather this storm, the Local will continue the cost-cutting measures that have been in place for years. The financial state of Local has never been better. We will strive to maintain our financial strength which will continue to give us the ability to weather this storm and any other storms in the future.

## New FSS Jobs to Mail Handlers

The **primary duties** for work assignments on the new Flat Sorter Sequencing Systems (FSS) has been **awarded to the Mail Handler craft**.

Clerks will be assigned to the duties on the FSS for the feed station of the Automatic Induction. Allied duties such as

clearing jams have been assigned to whichever craft can perform the work most efficiently and effectively.

Two locations within Local 300 are on the deployment schedule for 2009 (*which is subject to change*).

Facility	Install Date	Acceptance
NJI/BMC #1	5/2/09	7/3/09
NJI/BMC #2	7/4/09	8/28/09
NJI/BMC #3	8/29/09	10/16/09
Mid Island #1	9/12/09	10/30/09
NJI/BMC #4	10/17/09	12/4/09
Mid Island #2	10/31/09	1/15/10
Mid Island #3	1/16/10	3/5/10

# Local 300 Branch Membership Meetings



*September 9, 2008 - NJL/BMC Branch*



*September 13, 2008 - Westchester Branch*



*October 4, 2008  
Kilmer Branch  
(Pictured above) Members  
attending the meeting. (Pictured  
left) - Michael Krane, Jose  
Francisco Jr., Michele Preston*



*October 19, 2008 - Stamford Branch  
(Pictured left) - Congressman Christopher Shays (R-CT), National NPMHU  
President John Hegarty, Local 300 President Paul Hogrogian, and Don Utz.  
(Below left) Members attending the meeting. (Below right) Cong. Shays,  
Local 300 Treasurer Kevin Tabarus, Nat'l NPMHU Pres. John Hegarty,  
Gordo Ross (RETIRED), Local 300 President Paul Hogrogian, and  
Local 300 CTSEBM Tom Ruther*



# Local 300 Branch Membership Meetings



*November 2, 2008 - Western Nassau Branch Meeting*



*November 18, 2008  
NJI/BMC Branch Meeting*



*October 25, 2008 - New York LDC Branch Meeting*



*October 25, 2008  
New York City Branch Meeting*



*November 18, 2008  
DVD Branch Meeting*





# **The New Hard Times**

**By Linda Yancey**

**Recording Secretary & Chair-Local 300 Women's Caucus**

As the financial crisis deepens and whole sectors of the economy slow to a crawl; every American worker, every man, woman and child will feel the affects of this bleeding economic crisis. It has been years since the Great Depression, when Wall Street failed and left main street citizens in economic, social and personal peril. Not since World War II, has the country been in the dire shape it is currently in. The woes of Wall Street affect not only the job markets as it brings with it downsizing and rising unemployment; (and this is especially true in the case of women, because we are the last to enter the job market and therefore, the first to be laid off); but the economic crisis also brings with it rising cost in fuel, food and housing. Any changes in government spending and the way that companies do business, will certainly affect us here in our postal environment. For us as a postal family; and because we provide a service to the American public; the turmoil of the economic crisis is only the tip of the iceberg when it comes to us as a business. Never in my twenty some years in the Postal Service, have I witnessed anything like the changes that are now unfolding in our postal lives. The rumors have spread quickly; and the Postal Service's reorganization plans have started to spread like a virus throughout the Nation. Some people say that the Wall Street crisis mirrors what we are facing here. It's like being in a hospital bed on life support; waiting for someone to produce a miracle or pull the plug. This may be true indeed; as that we are facing some of the most dramatic changes we have ever faced before. Because of the nation's success in communication, that has put businesses and people in touch with faster technology such as e-mails; and paying bills electronically; the result has been in the Postal Service suffering a huge decrease in first class mail volume and a huge deficit of its own. This has led postal management to restructure all efforts in becoming a viable business. Like the energizer bunny, they will keep on

going, going and going and do whatever is necessary to stay afloat. No matter what we think, do or say, the Service will find new ways to preserve the future of this business and dismantle anything that costs more than a dollar. Clearly, the Service realizes that even if the first class should happen to rebound, it will be nowhere near the mail volume of years ago. Nationwide the Service claims that there are 88,000 employees too many on the postal roles and causing havoc--in that, with faster technology; and the limited number of people needed on a machine; jobs are becoming scarce for folks in the processing field. To balance the business and reduce spending; the promise of VERA (voluntary early out program) was offered. Unfortunately this move didn't pan out as they had hoped. This has led the Service to use other means to reduce the workforce and save money. This could mean anything from cutting overtime, to become very aggressive on disciplinary action. In addition to unveiling faster technology, they are talking about trimming and/or suspending certain operations. They've already consolidated facilities; and there is talk of consolidating Tours as well. And finally (to add insult to injury); they will examine the medical limitations of the Limited and Light duty employees. Every area of operations and policy will be examined. And, in judging by the present and relentless attempts in changing the business; sadly, (and more to the point realistically), the fundamentals of the Postal Service's business practices will not include any assistance in lessening the impact these changes will have on our personal lives. This knee-jerk move will create serious problems and family strife in many homes. For many, childcare and eldercare issues will rise to monumental proportions; and transportation (if excessed miles away) will be difficult for some people. It's already happening. Survival is not a word to use loosely here folks; now would be a good time for you to somehow make the changes necessary

in your personal lives to meet the impact of the Postal Service's dramatic Make-over.

As Postmaster General Potter stated, at a recent hearing on the future of the Postal Service; "Less mail means less revenue. The gap between what we're bringing in and what we are spending is growing. We have to make sure we are doing everything we need to do to protect our business. Every aspect of this business will be scrutinized to benefit our cause." This is more than a reflective statement from the PMG on the state of the business; it's a life changing situation for us personally. As I've said time and time again, this business was always about its own personal survival, but now it's about our destiny as employees of the business. Another thing that ties in here is that it is also about us as a Union and as a membership. I've known the P.O. to always have something in mind, in trying to throw a hammer at the Unions. Our National Agreement provides us certain protective rights; and because of our successful history of collective bargaining; the Service's action will not deter us from protecting what is rightfully ours. Mail Handlers are feisty and resourceful people and the Union is a force to be reckoned with. We've rallied with congressional leaders outside many facilities to bring awareness to our issues and have had some success in putting a dent in the Service's plans to outsource and excess. Our National Executive Board and Local Union leaders will leave no stone unturned to place an answer and a strategy on the table that will meet the needs of our members.

There are those of you out there who remember an economic time and a change in the postal air that mirrors today; when the country was again at war; where economic situations was of great concern; and the Unions were striving and struggling to be accepted. For me, these times also remind me of a statement that was made by one of the most popular and influential Presidents of our time--

*(Con't on Page 15)*

# NPMHU POLITICAL ACTION COMMITTEE (PAC)

The National Postal Mail Handlers Union Political Action Committee (NPMHU PAC) contributes to campaigns of candidates for and incumbents of Congress who repeatedly demonstrate "concern for working people and for [the] aims and objectives of the NPMHU and the entire trade union movement." The PAC is non-partisan in its operations, and, by

federal law, is financed completely through voluntary contributions from members and groups who subscribe to the objectives of the Mail Handlers PAC.

Your Union needs your active involvement in contributing to the Political Action Committee and YOU NEED TO BE

INVOLVED, to assist candidates who will work to protect the wages and benefits of all mail handlers.

Our PAC membership is growing each year. We invite you to join the NPMHU Political Action Committee, and to help grow our PAC even larger this year.

## You Can Be a NPMHU POLITICAL ACTIVIST

There is a quick way for Mail Handlers to contribute to the NPMHU PAC. Simply call in to the PostalEASE system, or visit the PostalEASE option on the web at [www.liteblue.usps.gov](http://www.liteblue.usps.gov). Follow the instructions printed in this magazine. Your PAC contribution will be made directly from your bi-weekly postal payroll. You also have the option of sending in a personal check or authorizing a credit card contribution. Your contributions will also be entered in to the incentive program that entitles you to awards based on your contribution level. There are five distinct PAC membership levels/ awards. Awards will vary from year to year, but all awards provide the opportunity for our PAC members to show their support for this important program.

## NOTICE CONCERNING PAC CONTRIBUTIONS...

*Contributions to the Mail Handlers PAC are not deductible as charitable contributions for purposes of federal income taxes. In addition, federal law requires that the Mail Handlers PAC report to the Federal Election Commission the name, mailing address, occupation, and name of employer for each individual whose contributions in any calendar year total in excess of \$200. Please also note that the Mail Handlers PAC has political purposes, and that all members have the right to refuse to contribute, and the right to revoke their authorization for any continuing contributions, without any reprisal.*

### You can make your PAC contribution by bi-weekly salary allotment through PostalEASE

- Dial 1-877-4PS-EASE -- (877-477-3273)
- Press # 1 for PostalEASE
- When prompted, enter your eight-digit USPS **employee identification number**.
- When prompted again, enter your USPS **PIN** number.
- When Prompted, Choose Option # 2 (to select payroll allotments)
- Then Choose Option # 1 (to select allotments)
- When prompted Press #2 to continue
- When prompted Press #3 to add the allotment
- When prompted for the routing number enter **054001220**

• When prompted for the account # enter the following:  
**11260001** \_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_  
(the last nine digits of your account number is your social security number – this info will allow us to identify you as the PAC contributor).

- Press #1 if correct
- When prompted Press #1 for "checking"
- When prompted, input the **bi-weekly dollar amount** of your PAC allotment.
- Press #1 if correct
- When prompted Press #1 to process
- You will be provided a confirmation number as well as the start date for the salary allotment.

- Record the confirmation number for your records
- Record the start date of the salary allotment

- Press #1 to repeat or Press #9 to end call

### Or, to initiate your bi-weekly PAC contribution on the web

- Simply go to [www.liteblue.usps.gov](http://www.liteblue.usps.gov)
- Enter your eight-digit USPS **Employee ID Number** and your **USPS PIN**
- Follow the link to PostalEASE – you will again be asked to enter your Employee ID Number and USPS PIN

- Follow the link for **PAYROLL- Allotments/NTB**
- Continue to the **ALLOTMENTS** section

- Your ROUTING TRANSIT NUMBER is:

**054001220**

- Your ACCOUNT # will be:

**11260001** \_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_

(the last nine digits of your account number is your social security number – this information will allow us to identify you as the PAC contributor).

- For ACCOUNT TYPE – please select "**CHECK-ING**"

- When prompted, please input the **AMOUNT** that you would like to contribute to the PAC each pay period.

- To process your PAC allotment, you will need to select the **VALIDATE** button, and to finalize the transaction, please select **SUBMIT**. Be sure to print out a copy of the confirmation page for your records.

PAC contribution by personal check, money order, or credit card: (cut here and return to NPMHU PAC)

You can contribute directly to the Mail Handlers PAC by filling out the following information and mailing it to the P.O. Box listed below. Please enclose your check or money order, or provide authorization to charge your credit card.

My contribution of (please circle one): \$26 (Member) / \$52 (Sponsor) / \$100 (Activist) / \$250 (Leader) / \$500 (Ambassador) / other amount \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_ VISA \_\_\_\_\_ MasterCard \_\_\_\_\_ Expiration Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ Acct. # \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_ Please charge my credit card as indicated above.

MAIL TO: Mail Handlers PAC  
P.O. Box 65171  
Washington, DC 20035

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

FAX AUTHORIZATION TO: 202.785.9860



# Local 300 Council Meeting

On November 13, 2008 Local 300's Union Council held their meeting at Local 300 headquarters. The Local Union Council is comprised of the members from the Executive Board and all of the Branch Presidents from Local 300's jurisdiction.

Reports were provided regarding the major issues that are confronting the local at this time. The Council meets two times a year.



(Standing l-r): Greg McArthur - Stamford, Stan Howard - ISC/JFK, Steve Schiff - Westchester, Thomas Mullahey NJI/BMC, Thomas Hynes - Kilmer, Andre Spence - Bronx, Wilfredo Delgado - NYC, Trevor Stuart - Flushing, Charlie Price - NJSEBM, Robert Koontz - Newark, Jerome Anderson - Carteret, Yvette Johnson - Brooklyn, Ray Bermudez - DVD, Al Lombardi - Teterboro, Eric Richard - NJL&DC, Kevin Tabarus - Treasurer. (Seated l-r) Thomas Ruther - CTSEBM, Linda Yancey - Recording Secretary, Bobby Blum - Vice President, Paul Hogrogian - President, Peter Bilotta - Western Nassau. (Not Pictured: Jim Perkins - Mid Hudson, Brian Odums - West Jersey, Larry Hill - NYSEBM, George Cuff - NYL&DC, Bob Lussos - Hicksville)

## Peter Bilotta - New Branch President Western Nassau



Since the General Election of Officers for Local 300, the Officer position of Western Nassau Branch President became vacant. The Local Union Constitution states, *"In the event of a vacancy in any office of this Local Union, the vacancy... shall be filled by majority vote of the Local Union Executive Board."* Such vacancies shall be filled only for the unexpired term of office."

The Local 300 Executive Board appointed **Peter Bilotta**. In September, Peter joined the Local 300 Union Council filling the Branch President vacancy at Western Nassau.

(Continued from Page 13)

President John F. Kennedy. He said: "Ask not what your country can do for you; ask what you can do for your country". Basically, what President Kennedy was trying to relay to America was that-- we can meet any challenge, and champion any cause; but in order for it to work-- we have to do it together. Like him I

feel the same way. The times may be challenging, but like Kennedy, I believe that your cooperation and energy is the threshold of our success and the key to our future.

*Linda Yancey is the Recording Secretary for Local 300 & Chairperson of the Women's Caucus*

## Safety on Staten Island

On Staten Island, numerous safety grievances were submitted to management regarding the scissor lifts that are currently being used at the facility. Grievances were filed requesting as a corrective action that: management replace these scissor lifts due to a safety concern to our Mail Handlers who currently work on the platform.

Local 300 at the Staten Island facility, had a major victory regarding the replacement of the scissor lifts. The scissor lifts were replaced with a much safer equipment for our Mail Handlers to load & off load mail arriving to our facility. Good work and thanks to: the members & stewards of the Staten Island Branch of Local 300, for their endless help and support in making this major victory happen.

## Online Deals

For union members only—  
just a click away!

### Car Rental Discounts

Save up to 25% when you rent a car, van or SUV from Avis, Budget or Hertz.

### Union-made Clothing

Take up to 10% off union-made in the USA.

### ConsumerReports.org

Get an annual subscription at 27% off.

For more information visit:

[www.UnionPlus.org](http://www.UnionPlus.org)

## Money Matters

### Take Control

- Union Plus Credit Card
- Personal or home equity loans and lines of credit

### Know the Score

- FICO credit score
- Union Plus Credit Education

### Manage Your Debt

- FREE credit counseling and budget advice
- FREE financial assessment

For more details, benefits and financial tools visit:

[UnionPlus.org/Finance](http://UnionPlus.org/Finance)

Fall 2008

# Clerks Excessed Into the Mail Handler Craft

by Kevin Tabarus - Treasurer

There are literally several hundred clerks within the Local 300 area that have been declared, **excess**. They (management) simply don't have work for them. Many of these excess Clerks don't work mail on their scheduled days. They are placed on a "stand-by" operation and sit in the swing room for 8 hours a day.

It is quite possible that in the future clerks might get involuntarily excessed into the Mail Handler craft. If a clerk is involuntarily excessed into our craft they will not bring their clerk seniority into the Mail Handler craft. Provisions for the proper application of seniority standing can be found in Article 12 of the National Agreement. The seniority standing of an involuntary excessed employee can be confusing. Hopefully, you will be able to understand the procedures from the information below.

As many of you know, when a current employee (such as a Letter Carrier, Clerk, etc) **voluntarily transfers** into the Mail Handler craft, their new Mail Handler

Seniority Date is, ONE DAY JUNIOR, to the junior PTF Mail Handler within the installation.

For example, if a Letter Carrier or Clerk transfer into the Mail Handler craft on November 22, 2008 and the junior PTF's Seniority date is May 10, 2008 – The new PTF Mail Handler that transferred from another craft is May 11, 2008.

## **For INVOLUNTARY EXCESSING of Clerks into the Mail Handler Craft.**

- Their new Mail Handler seniority date is the date that they became a Mail Handler.
  - If a Full-Time Regular Clerk is excessed into the Mail Handler craft, they will remain a Full-Time Regular, even if there are Part-Time Flexibles (PTFs) within the installation.
  - If a Part-Time Flexible Clerk is excessed, they will remain a Part-Time Flexible

***For example;*** If at an installation, there

is currently one (1) Mail Handler PTFs with a seniority date of 2/2/08, then two (2) Full-Time Regular and three (3) Part-Time Flexible Clerks are excessed into an installation on October 25, 2008 – their seniority dates will be 10/25/08. The Full-Time Regular Clerks that were excessed into the Mail Handler Craft will still be Full-Time Regulars as Mail Handlers (with a seniority date of 10/25/08). The Part-Time Flexible Clerks that were excessed into the Mail Handler craft will still be PTFs as Mail Handlers (with a seniority date of 10/25/08). The Mail Handler PTF that was at the installation before the Clerks were excessed would still be a PTF, even though his/her Mail Handler seniority date is before the excessed Full-Time Regular Clerks (new FTR Mail Handlers).

However, on 11/22/08, there is a need to convert one (1) PTF to FTR. The Mail Handler PTF with a seniority date of 2/2/08 would be converted to Full-Time Regular and be senior to the FTR (ex-Clerks) which were excessed into the Mail Handler on 10/25/08.

## \$900,000 MILITARY MAIL ("093") SETTLEMENT

Local 300 President has announced that Local 300 has reached agreement with the Postal Service's NY Metro Area which resolved several pending grievances protesting the subcontracting of the "093" Military Mail. The settlement, which resulted from a decision by Arbitrator Robert Tim Brown, provides for the payment of \$900,000 to all affected NJI & BMC Mail Handlers.

The settlement agreement was negotiated by Local 300 President Paul Hogrogian, who also prepared the original grievances for processing through the grievance/arbitration procedure. Former NJI & BMC Branch President Tom Reid and NJI/BMC Chief Steward Robert Anderson processed the grievances through the steps of the Grievance/Arbitration procedure.

In order to be eligible to share in this settlement, a Mail Handler had to have been employed and working at the NJI/BMC during the period from 11/4/06 thru 2/16/07. Those Mail Handlers who were assigned to and working in the Military Building during this period will receive a larger share of the

settlement due to the fact that they were the most affected.

The settlement payments will be made in two installments. The first installment of \$600,000, which was shared equally among all eligible NJI & BMC Mail Handlers, was paid in October. The second installment of \$300,000 will be paid before the end of the year. Those eligible Mail Handlers who were assigned to and working in the Military Building during the relevant time period will receive an extra share of the second installment.

Local 300 Vice President Robert Blum, NJI & BMC Branch President Thomas Mullahey and NJI & BMC Steward Felix Feehan are coordinating the compilation of the lists. Formulating these lists is a monumental task and therefore, we ask for your patience.

Local 300 has been successful in obtaining a substantial monetary settlement in this case. However, we would have preferred that the arbitrator rightfully returned to work for career Mail Handlers to perform. Local 300 will continue to fight management's attempts to subcontract our work.



# Work 4 days a week, 10 hour days?

by Kevin Tabarus - Treasurer

There has been much discussion regarding a 4 day work week. Currently, Article 8 of the National Agreement clearly indicates that, ***"The employee's normal work week is five (5) service days, each consisting of eight (8) hours."*** There are no provisions in our National Agreement for a work week of four (4) service days, each consisting of ten (10) hours.

The APWU does have existing provisions for work schedules of four (4) days, ten (10) hours each. To repeat, the NPMHU does not.

Some members have expressed an interest in 4 day / 10 hour work schedule. Many members see a benefit of traveling to work one less day a week. But there are many other factors which should be considered.

- The three (3) days of rest would more than likely, not be consecutive.
- Overtime pay would be paid
  - After working more than 10 hours in a day or,
  - Working a non-scheduled day.
- Overtime scheduling for non-scheduled day would be for 10 hours, not 8 hours.

- Overtime would be much less
  - Before Tour and After Tour Overtime would be all but eliminated.
- Required (Extra Day) Overtime and Required Holiday work would be for 10 hours, not 8 hours.
- Two less holidays a year.
  - Currently, the contract provides for 10 holidays (8 hours a day) which pay a total of 80 hours of holiday leave a year.
  - A 4 day / 10 hour work schedule would still provide for 80 hours of holiday leave a year, not increase holiday leave to 100 hours.
- There would be no hope for a three tour operation. Management would rather have operational schedules of 20 hours a day (4 hours a day for machine maintenance). Most operations would be limited to two tours. Tour 2 would be the likely tour to be eliminated.
- Ten (10) hours of leave would be used for each full day of; ANNUAL, SICK, LWOP, or AWOL

These are only some factors to be considered before desiring a 4 day / 10 hour work schedule.

**NO LAYOFFS** - The official statement below came directly from USPS Headquarters in Washington, DC.



## POSTAL NEWS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Nov. 12 , 2008

[usps.com/news](http://usps.com/news)

Statement of Gerald J. McKiernan  
Manager, Media Relations, USPS

## 40,000 Layoffs at the Postal Service – NOT TRUE

A news story currently in wide circulation is reporting that the Postal Service will soon layoff 40,000 employees. This story is not accurate. Originating out of Shreveport, LA, the story does quote a Postal Service spokesperson. Unfortunately, that spokesperson was in error. The Postal Service is not laying off employees. Efforts to match our workforce to a reduced workload are focused on voluntary early retirements. Voluntary early retirement has been offered to a number of employees and to date, 3,685 employees have accepted the offer.

# 2008 NPMHU CONVENTION

Local 300 was represented by 41 delegates at the 2008 NPMHU National Convention. Local 300 could not have been represented by a better group of delegates. Elected delegates from across the country unified in Orlando, Florida and 'got down to business.' The convention proceedings were very productive and informative. Reports were provided by the National Officers regarding the status of the organization & Mail Handler craft. Delegates voted on changes to the National & Local Constitutions, Resolutions, etc. A resolution was passed, that called for the creation of a Bulk Mail Center Task Force. The BMC Task Force which will meet to coordinate the Union's efforts to fight any attempts to subcontract or privatize the mail processing currently being performed at the BMCs. Several National Officers were re-elected by acclamation including: John Hegarty - Nat'l President, Mark Gardner - Nat'l Secretary-Treasurer, Paul Hogrogian NE Regional Vice President.



**Local 300's Delegates to the 2008 NPMHU National Convention**

Paul Hogrogian, Robert Blum, Kevin Tabarus, Linda Yancey, Larry Hill, Charlie Price, Thomas Ruther, Steve Craig, Al Lombardi, Jerome Anderson, Jeff James, Brian Odums, Thomas Hynes, Yvette Johnson, Elizabeth Sloan, Robert Lussos, Don Utz, Dawn Licata, Steve Schiff, Andrew Piacente, Anthony York, Andre Spence, Steve Megargel, Matt McDonald, Gwen Green, Michael Jacobus, Thomas Mullahey, Thomas Reid, James Smoot, Ray Bermudez, Hugh Kavanagh, Stan Howard, Wilfredo Delgado, Lucy Lombardo, Peter Chan, Charles Hanley, Cynthia Brown, Gwen Roberts, Joseph Palau, Herman Trevathan, Trevor Stuart - with John Hegarty - National President NPMHU, Mark Gardner - National Secretary/Treasurer, and Julio Figueroa Local 313 President Puerto Rico

## Local 300 Memorial Scholarship

We are proud to announce the Winners of the 2008 BERNARD HOLLOWAY, JOHN A. ORCHARD, EDWARD J. MILLER, and WALLY MERWIN AND AARON PRESTON Memorial Scholarship.

**DANIEL MICELI**  
(Son of Pete Miceli - NYLDC)



**CLARA SUSVILLA**



(Daughter of Gerardo Susvilla Jr. - Bronx)



**YI CAI (ISAAC) TONG**  
(Son of Min Liang Tong - Westchester)



**ARIEL SAULNIER**  
(Daughter of Wayne Saulnier - Mid Hudson)



### Scholarships Available NOW!

**NPMHU Arthur S. Vallone  
National Scholarship  
Program - Applications  
available online at:**

**[www.npmhu.org](http://www.npmhu.org)**

**Deadline: 3/15/09**

**Union Plus Scholarship  
Applications available  
online at:**

**[www.unionplus.org](http://www.unionplus.org)**

**Deadline: 1/31/09**

**Contact Kevin Tabarus for  
info at 212-431-0040**

# Get Active - Help Save the BMCs !!!

The Postal Service has issued a DRAFT REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS to Outsource work currently being performed at the BMCs. Local 300 has a large BMC in Jersey City, NJ employing over 900 Mail Handlers.

This Draft Request for Proposals is to subcontract work at all BMCs across the country. If the parcel work that is done at the BMCs is subcontracted, **thousands of Postal jobs nationwide will be lost.** It does not make sound business sense to give our work away, while there is already not enough work available to keep Postal Employees gainfully employed. There are currently thousands of postal employees on non-productive (stand-by) time.

It simply is not good business to subcontract out work when the Postal Service is already paying thousands of employees to remain idle due to lack of work.

Now it is the time for the members of Local 300 to get POLITICALLY ACTIVE. We have to mobilize and let our elected representatives on Capitol Hill know how we feel. Let Congress know that you do not want to see the Outsourcing of the US Mail and the subcontracting of the work at the BMCs.

On the following pages, you will find form letters that YOU SHOULD FILL OUT TODAY. These letters should be mailed to your Senators and Congressional Representative.

To find out their addresses, go online to the Legislative Center at [www.npmhu.org](http://www.npmhu.org) and type in your zip code. If you are in need of help in mailing out these letters;

1. Just fill them out & cut them out
2. Give them to your Shop Steward or Branch President
3. The Union will mail them for you

We have to make a concerted effort to stop all attempts to subcontract out the US Mail. Don't let them be successful in subcontracting out our work one piece at a time. If they are successful at the BMCs, next they might try to subcontract out your facility. Help save the BMCs today.

# Press Conference at NJI/BMC

The National Postal Mail Handlers Union, in a joint effort with the American Postal Workers Union, held a Press Conference outside the NJI-BMC in Jersey City, NJ on 10/27/08. This demonstration was to protest the proposal to privatize the work done at the 21 BMCs nationwide. Local Political Leaders were also in attendance to show their support; NJ Congressman Albio Sires (D-13th Dist.), Congressman Donald Payne (D-10th Dist.), & Jersey City Mayor Healy. There were 200-300 employees at the demonstration.

NJI/BMC Branch President Thomas Mullahey & Vice President Bobby Blum met with NJ Senators Frank Lautenberg and Robert Menendez who also support us in stopping the attempts to subcontract the BMCs.

Due to scheduling conflicts, the Senators were unable to attend the demonstration.

Video clips are available on YouTube. Go to the Local 300 website at [www.local300npmhu.org](http://www.local300npmhu.org)



# BMC Task Force

The BMC Task Force was created in a resolution adopted by the delegates attending the 2008 National Convention, to ensure a coordinated strategy in responding to the Postal Service's ongoing plans to contract with one or more private companies to take over some of the mail processing, especially of parcels, now being done at the BMCs. They held their first meeting at the AFL-CIO Headquarters in Washington, DC on October 22-23. The Task Force is comprised of representatives from each of the twenty one (21) Bulk Mail Centers, all members of the National Executive Board, and representatives from the National Union's Contract Administration and Legislative and Political Departments. Local 300 was represented by NJI/BMC Branch President Thomas Mullahey and Local 300 President Paul Hogrogian, who is also a member of the National Executive Board as Northeast Regional Vice President.

The Task Force discussed a host of issues related to potential subcontracting at the BMCs, and put together an Action Plan aimed at stopping, or minimizing, any such subcontracting. The Task Force discussed the current (and uncertain) status of USPS plans to subcontract work from the BMCs; the planned deployment of the Flat Sequencing System or FSS machines, which is currently scheduled during Phase I of the FSS deployment to be moved into at least three of the BMCs (New Jersey, Atlanta, and Springfield, MA); strategies and grievances filed under Article 32 of the National Agreement, at both the National and Local levels; implementation of Article 12 of the National Agreement for dealing with reassignments, potential closings or consolidations, excessing, and related issues; and a host of legislative and political responses to the potential subcontracting. The Task Force also analyzed the particular situations being faced at each individual BMC, which are located across the United States and together employ almost 8,000 mail handlers.

Part of the BMC Task Force's Action Plan includes gearing up our efforts to obtain co-sponsors, a Senate counterpart, hearings and eventual passage of H.R. 4236, the "Mail Network Security Act." *This would provide for the protection and the integrity of the US Mail.* If passed, the Postal Service would be required to negotiate with the Union(s) about

any large subcontract relating to mail processing. Another part of the action plan is putting local and nationwide political pressure on the new 111th Congress and the new Obama Administration to oppose contracting out of more postal work to low-paid, no-benefit workers who are employed by contractors that pose mail security risks, that do not comply with veteran preference laws, and that could unilaterally halt mail processing, whether through strikes, lockouts, or other means.

When the economy is in such weak shape, mail volume is down, and voluntary retirements are being encouraged by postal management, the Task Force agreed, it makes no sense whatsoever to be giving away work to the unregulated private sector.

Right now, the Postal Service has not decided whether to issue a final Request For Proposals for subcontracting mail processing work out of our BMC network. The members of the BMC Task Force will continue to communicate, and if necessary meet, as developments warrant.

## Creation of BMC Task Force

### to Defend Mail Handler Work at the BMCs

Whereas, the 21 existing Bulk Mail Centers employ a high proportion of Mail Handlers; and

Whereas, USPS management is moving towards privatizing the parcel business, by issuing a Draft Request For Proposal to explore private contracting for work traditionally performed by NPMHU bargaining unit employees at the BMCs; and

Whereas, the National Postal Mail Handlers Union believes that "the draft RFP represents a wholly unacceptable approach to mail processing," and has made a commitment to protect Mail Handler work through contractual, legislative, and administrative efforts;

Therefore, be it resolved, that the NPMHU formulate a BMC Task Force so that Union leaders can meet, as needed, to share information in the struggle to protect Mail Handlers' jobs; and

Be it further resolved, that the National Office lead this BMC Task Force to coordinate and strengthen the response of our Union to proposed outsourcing.

## **BMC Task Force Resolution**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

US Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator

I am an employee of the United States Postal Service and a member of Local 300 of the National Postal Mail Handlers Union (NPMHU). The NJI & BMC employs over 2,000 employees including more than 900 Mail Handlers. The work that we perform includes the processing of parcels, trays, tubs, and other types of mail. The Postal Service has issued a "Draft Request for Proposals" (RFP) seeking to privatize this mail as well as my job.

We have processed all of this mail efficiently and effectively for over 35 years. We work safer and better than contract employees. We are career employees, while privatized workers come and go. They simply do not have the commitment to getting the job done right.

There is also a security issue to consider. Postal Service employees go through extensive background and criminal checks, and are subject to rigid controls. The same is not always true for subcontracted workers.

The Postal Service also provides veterans "Veterans' Preference" when hiring career postal employees. The NJI & BMC has historically provided well paying jobs to our returning veterans. Private contractors do not provide such preference to veterans. Should the Postal Service go forward with its plans to subcontract the processing of parcels, there will be fewer of these postal jobs available for our veterans returning from Iraq, Afghanistan, and other duty stations.

The subcontracting of the parcel mail will result in the reduction of thousands of postal positions nationwide including hundreds in the Northern New Jersey area. The loss of these jobs will have an adverse effect on the economy of those New Jersey communities in which these postal workers live and work.

I hope you will contact the Postal Service and ask them to stop this privatization. We have the capacity, personnel and experience to continue to perform this work.

Thank you for your assistance on this issue.

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Signature*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Print Name*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Address*

--- Cut here ---

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

US House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative:

I am an employee of the United States Postal Service and a member of Local 300 of the National Postal Mail Handlers Union (NPMHU). The NJI & BMC employs over 2,000 employees including more than 900 Mail Handlers. The work that we perform includes the processing of parcels, trays, tubs, and other types of mail. The Postal Service has issued a "Draft Request for Proposals" (RFP) seeking to privatize this mail as well as my job.

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Thank you for your assistance on this issue.

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Signature*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Print Name*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Address*

---Cut here---

## Mail Handlers (RSC M) Schedule

**Full-Time Annual Basic Rates Effective November 22, 2008 (PP 25-2008)**

Full-Time Regular - Level 4					Full-Time Regular - Level 5					Part-Time Regular and Flexible Employees - Hourly Basic Rates - Level 4			
Step	Yearly	Hourly	BiWeekly	Overtime	Step	Yearly	Hourly	BiWeekly	Overtime	(Part-Time Regulars)		(Part-Time Flexible)	
										Step	Hourly	Step	Hourly
AA	31,307	15.05	1,204.12	22.58	AA	32,817	15.78	1,262.19	23.67	AA	15.05	AA	15.65
A	35,591	17.11	1,368.88	25.67	A	37,103	17.84	1,427.04	26.76	A	17.11	A	17.80
B	40,965	19.69	1,575.58	29.54	B	42,845	20.60	1,647.88	30.90	B	19.69	B	20.48
C	43,506	20.92	1,673.31	31.38	C	45,456	21.85	1,748.31	32.78	C	20.92	C	21.75
D	47,245	22.71	1,817.12	34.07	D	47,981	23.07	1,845.42	34.61	D	22.71	D	23.62
E	47,545	22.86	1,828.65	34.29	E	48,307	23.22	1,857.96	34.83	E	22.86	E	23.77
F	47,853	23.01	1,840.50	34.52	F	48,638	23.38	1,870.69	35.07	F	23.01	F	23.93
G	48,151	23.15	1,851.96	34.73	G	48,957	23.54	1,882.96	35.31	G	23.15	G	24.08
H	48,457	23.30	1,863.73	34.95	H	49,286	23.70	1,895.62	35.55	H	23.30	H	24.23
I	48,759	23.44	1,875.35	35.16	I	49,616	23.85	1,908.31	35.78	I	23.44	I	24.38
J	49,068	23.59	1,887.23	35.39	J	49,940	24.01	1,920.77	36.02	J	23.59	J	24.53
K	49,367	23.73	1,898.73	35.60	K	50,265	24.17	1,933.27	36.26	K	23.73	K	24.68
L	49,672	23.88	1,910.46	35.82	L	50,588	24.32	1,945.69	36.48	L	23.88	L	24.84
M	49,975	24.03	1,922.12	36.05	M	50,919	24.48	1,958.42	36.72	M	24.03	M	24.99
N	50,277	24.17	1,933.73	36.26	N	51,246	24.64	1,971.00	36.96	N	24.17	N	25.14
O	50,579	24.32	1,945.35	36.48	O	51,569	24.79	1,983.42	37.19	O	24.32	O	25.29
P	50,884	24.46	1,957.08	36.69	P	51,895	24.95	1,995.96	37.43	P	24.46	P	25.44

## NEGOTIATED WAGE INCREASE AND DUES INCREASE

The fourth of six general wage increases to be paid to all mail handlers under the 2006 National Agreement will be implemented effective November 22, 2008, and will be reflected in paychecks on December 12, 2008 (Pay Period 25 of 2008). The wage charts resulting from this 1.2% increase, (as outlined in Article 9 of the National Agreement) are printed above.

Also, as required by Article XIV, Section 3 of the National Constitution and Article VIII, Section 2 of the Uniform Local Union Constitution, Mail Handlers will see an automatic membership dues increase of fifty cents (\$.50) per pay period, effective with this November 2008 negotiated wage increase.

\*\*\* Since November 2006 a Level 4 Top Step Mail Handler's wages have increased 10.57% (including COLAs) . \*\*\*

National Postal Mail Handlers Union  
Local 300, AFL-CIO  
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New York, NY 10038

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