

LOCAL 300

MAIL HANDLER NEWS

Vol. VIII, No. 1



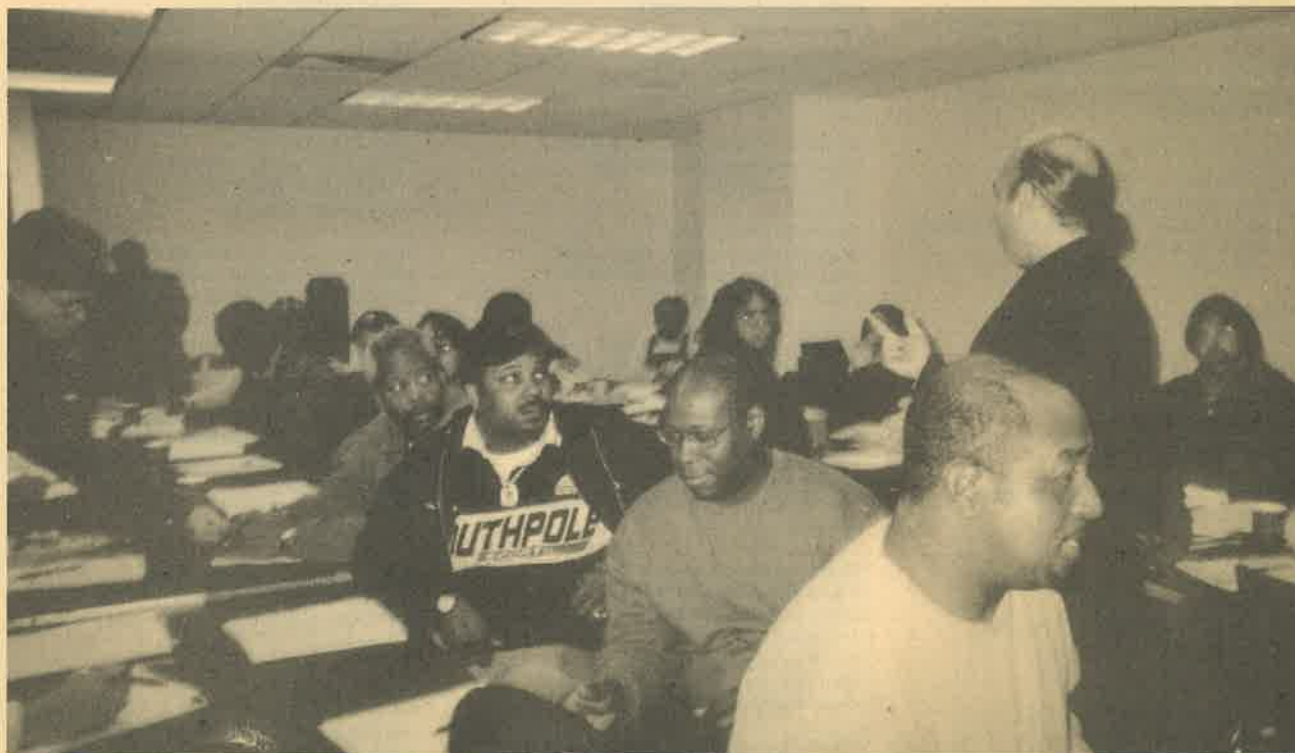
April 2003

The current Local 300 administration has initiated an aggressive program of Training in order to improve the representation provided to Mail Handlers on the workroom floor. In September a "Defense vs. Discipline" Training was held at the Laborer's Local Building in Long Island City Queens. That training aimed to provide the best defense possible to Mail Handlers under disciplinary attack by the USPS. Attendees members of the Local Union Council and chief stewards Yvette Johnson and Joe LaBargo.

On January 9 and 10, 2003, at the District Council 37 Building in lower Manhattan, Local 300 offered Basic Shop Steward Training Program to 37 new stewards. National Postal Mail Handlers Union Shop Steward Trainer Sam D'Ambrosio taught the program and was ably assisted by Local 300 President Paul Hogrogian. Among the attendees were stewards James

Logan, Raymond Nieves, Clarisse Ballard, Jon Rogers, Ron Buckley, Wayne Sblanó, Dawn Licata, George Cuff, George Talkachov, Rose Smith, William Taylor, Mike Savino, Louis DiTorre, Nuno Alexandre, Tasha Baxter, Dee Agoora, Anthony York, George Crooks, Ricardo Gnzales, David Summerville, Al Lombardi, Gerald Kane, Elizabeth Sloan, Mary Thomas, James Black, Antonio Sanchez, Bruce Kendall, Arnetta Roberts, Angela Massey, Joseph Palou, Anthony Miller, Donna Tillman, Lena Tabb, Alicia Ramos, David Wong, and Rafael DeLaRosa. Also in attendance were Branch Presidents Andre Spence, Richard Thomas, and Steve Schiff.

On February 24 and 25, 2003, an Arbitration Advocate Training class was held at the District 37 Building in New York. The class, taught by Local 300 attorney Paul Schacter, was attended by over 30 Local 300 members who will do arbitrations for the union.



Local 300 President Paul Hogrogian teaching an Arbitration Advocate class to Local 300 members in February. Also pictured are Jerome Anderson, Branch President, Carteret; Andre Spence, Branch President, the Bronx; William Freeman, Chief Steward, the Bronx; Ron McConnell, Chief Steward, Morgan Station, Joe Soto, Chief Steward, New Brunswick; Willie Delgado, Steward and Local Safety Rep., Cooper Station, NYC; Stan Howard, Branch President, AMC-JFK; NYC; Gwen Green, Steward, NJBMC; Jim Perkins, Branch President, Mid-Hudson; Ardelia Mitchell, Safety Rep. Brooklyn; and Ricky Gonzalez, Chief Steward, Hackensack.

LOCAL 300 UNION DIRECTORY

LOCAL 300 EXECUTIVE BOARD

401 Broadway Ste 1400
New York, NY 10013
voice (212) 431-0040, fax (212) 941-649
webpage www.local300npmhu.org

Paul Hogrogian, President,

e-mail hoagievp@aol.com

Robert Blum, Vice-President,

e-mail RB7011@aol.com

Jeff Perry, Treasurer and Editor

e-mail perjef@ix.netcom.com

Linda Yancey, Recording Secretary,

e-mail yanceyl@msn.com

Thomas Ruther, CT State Exec. Bd.

e-mail truther@optonline.net

Charles Price, NJ State Exec Bd.

e-mail charlespnj@aol.com

Lawrence Hill, NY State Exec. Bd.

e-mail lh1193601@aol.com

Mid Hudson Branch, Local 300 NPMHU

James Perkins, Branch President

USPS, Mid-Hudson P&DC, PO Box 10066
Newburgh, NY 12552-0066
voice (845) 567-2244 and fax (845) 567-1335
e-mail jrp55@idsi.net

NYC Branch, Local 300 NPMHU

Richard Thomas, Branch President

401 Broadway Ste. 1400
New York, NY 10013
voice (212) 431-0040, fax (212) 941-6499
e-mail bloodnyc@mindspring.com
also at -- Morgan GMF, 341 Ninth Ave.
New York, NY 10199-9998
voice (212) 330-3028, fax (212) 736-2357
e-mail mgnnyc@earthlink.net

NY PMPC Branch, Local 300 NPMHU

Kevin Tabarus, Branch President

288 Grumman Rd. West
Bethpage, NY 11714-3566
tel (516) 349-5092/3, fax (516) 349-2834
e-mail kevintabarus@netscape.net
webpage www.l300beth.home.mindspring.com

Westchester Branch, Local 300 NPMHU

Steven Schiff, Branch President

USPS Westchester P&DC
1000 Westchester Avenue
White Plains, NY 10610-9998
voice (914) 697-4190, fax (914) 697-4109
e-mail westch@ix.netcom.com

Western Nassau Branch, Local 300 NPMHU

Joe DiChiara, Branch President

USPS, Western Nassau P&DC
830 Stewart Ave.
Garden City, NY 11599-9998
voice (516) 228-7683, fax (516) 228-7576
e-mail westnassau@aol.com

Stanford Branch, Local 300 NPMHU

Chris Colombo, Branch President

USPS, Stamford P&DC
427 West Ave.
Stamford, CT 06910-9998
PO Box 110202 Stanford, CT 06911-0202
voice (203) 326-2068, fax (203) 323-5315
e-mail cc300@ix.netcom.com

DVD Branch, Local 300 NPMHU

Bernard Schramm, Branch President

USPS, Dominick V. Daniels P&DC
850 Newark Turnpike
Kearny, NJ 07099-9998
voice (201) 991-8180, fax (201) 991-6884
e-mail schramm1@ix.netcom.com
webpage <http://pw2.netcom.com/~schramm1/main.html/index.html>

Hackensack Branch, Local 300 NPMHU

Emilio Millito, Branch President

USPS, Hackensack P&DC
560 Huyler St.
So. Hackensack, NJ 07606-9998
voice (201) 440-1903, fax (201) 440-4466
e-mail hack1@mindspring.com

IMTC Carteret Branch, Local 300 NPMHU

Jerome Anderson, Branch President

60 Minuet St.
Carteret, NJ 07008-1112
voice (732) 541-1756, fax (732) 541-8860
e-mail a753man@aol.com

Kilmer Branch, Local 300 NPMHU

William Donohue, Branch President

USPS, Kilmer P&DC
21 Kilmer Rd.
Edison, NJ 08899-9998
voice (732) 819-4349, fax (732) 777-1996
e-mail nbl-300@ix.netcom.com

Monmouth Branch, Local 300 NPMHU

Robert Blum, Branch President

USPS, Monmouth P&DC
307 Industrial Way West
Eatontown, NJ 07799-9997
voice and fax (732) 542-3277
e-mail rb7011@aol.com

Newark Branch, Local 300 NPMHU

Jeff James, Branch President

USPS, Newark P&DC, 2 Federal Sq.
Newark, NJ 07102-9997
voice (973) 642-3326, fax (973) 642-0007
e-mail bpnewark@aol.com
also at Newark AMC, 345 Brewster Rd.
Newark, NJ 07114-9741
voice (973) 596-0150, fax (973) 596-8522

NJ & BMC Branch, Local 300 NPMHU

Andrea Haynes, Branch President

USPS, NJ & BMC
80 County Road
Jersey City, NJ 07097-9998
voice (201) 673-1767, fax (201) 714-4869
e-mail dre55@l300nji-bmcbranch.org
webpage www.l300nji-bmcbranch.org

NJPMPC Branch, Local 300 NPMHU

James Smoot, Branch President

1200 Harrison Ave.
Kearny, NJ 07032-5931
voice (201) 246-0166, fax (201) 246-8744
e-mail l300tuff@mindspring.com

Paterson Branch, Local 300 NPMHU

James Ferrigno, Branch President

USPS, Paterson P&DC
194 Ward St., Paterson, NJ 07510-9711
voice and fax (973) 278-6474
e-mail ferrig973@aol.com

West Jersey Branch, Local 300 NPMHU

Brian Odoms, Shop Steward-in-charge

USPS, West Jersey P&DC, 54 S. Jefferson Rd.
Hanover Township, NJ 07999-9998
voice and fax (973) 515-9459
e-mail bilal2x@msn.com

SMALLER BRANCHES

Elizabeth Branch, Local 300 NPMHU

Barry Sampson, Chief Ship Steward-in-Charge

USPS, 310 N. Broad St.
Elizabeth, NJ 07207-9998
tel. (908) 820-8447

L.I.C. Branch, Local 300 NPMHU

Lisa Tate, Chief Shop Steward-in Charge

USPS, LIC, 46-02 21st St.
Long Island City, NY 11101-9998
tel. (718) 349-4673

Staten Island Branch, Local 300 NJBMC

Joe LaBargo, Chief Shop Steward-in-Charge

USPS, 550 Manor Rd
Staten Island, NY 10314-9998
tel. (718) 816-2755, e-mail l300stat@mindspring.com

Monsey Branch, Local 300

Dave Brown, Chief Steward-in-Charge

15 Melnick Dr.
Monsey, NY 10952-9998

LOCAL 300 UNION COUNCIL

ISC-JFK Branch, Local 300 NPMHU

Stan Howard, Branch President

Building 250, USPS, ISC-JFK
Jamaica, NY 11430-9998
voice (718) 553-7369, 7128-9 fax (718) 553-9230
e-mail amejfk@ix.netcom.com
webpage <http://amejfk.home.netcom.com>

Brooklyn Branch, Local 300 NPMHU

Thomas Stanziale, Branch President

USPS, Brooklyn P&DC, 1050 Forbell St.
Brooklyn, NY 11256-9998
voice (718) 348-3802, 06 fax (718) 348-5447
e-mail L300broo@mindspring.com
www.geocities.com/CapitolHill/lobby/7824/main.html

Bronx Branch, Local 300 NPMHU

Andre Spence, Branch President

USPS, Bronx P&DC
558 Grand Concourse
Bronx, NY 10451-9701
voice and fax (718) 665-4877
e-mail l300spence@aol.com
also at -- HASP, 815 Hutchinson River Parkway
Bronx, NY 10465
voice and fax (718) 678-8358

Flushing Branch, Local 300 NPMHU

Trevor Stuart, Branch President

USPS, Queens P&DC
142-02 20th Ave.
Whitestone, NY 11351-9998
voice and fax (718) 886-6894
e-mail flu300@ix.netcom.com

Hicksville Branch, Local 300 NPMHU

Robert Lussos, Branch President

USPS, Hicksville
Mid-Island P&DC,
160 Duryea Rd.
Mellville, NY 11747-8000
voice (631) 755-2644, fax (631) 756-4701
e-mail l300midisland@earthlink.net
webpage www.local300nhu.com
also at -- 185 West John St.
Hicksville, NY 11802-1007
voice (516) 933-1028

LaGuardia AMC Branch, Local 300 NPMHU

Roland Phillips, Branch President

c/o USPS, AMC-LGA Building 28
Flushing, N.Y. 11371-9718
voice (718) 205-2303
e-mail rolandp2@aol.com

President's Report

by Paul Hogrogian



Local 300's Union First Team has completed its first two hundred days since being sworn into the local's Executive Board positions in July. These months have been extremely busy for all of Local 300's officers.

The next three years are going to be challenging ones for our members, stewards, and officers. The Postal Service is aggressively implementing its Transformation Plan. Simply put, the Postal Service wants more production with fewer people. The USPS is trying to accomplish this through job abolishments and reversions, consolidation of facilities, and excessing of employees. The Postal Service has little regard for its employees in carrying out these ill-advised actions. Local 300 is aggressively fighting the Postal Service on this front. Rest assured that we will do our best to minimize any potential damage.

In my initial president's report, I outlined several ambitious programs that we planned to introduce. I am proud to announce that we are now successfully implementing these programs.

Contract Administration

In a departure from the past, Contract Administration has unquestionably become Local 300's main priority. As in the past, however, I continue to head Local 300's Contract Administration Department. We have begun to address the overwhelming backlog of cases on our arbitration dockets. I have authorized the Branch Presidents to meet with the appropriate Postal Service representatives to discuss resolution of the many grievances currently certified for arbitration. The cases that cannot be resolved will be reviewed to determine whether

these cases have enough merit to present them to an arbitrator. Vice President Robert Blum has been working with me in Contract Administration and has been a major asset.

Training

Local 300 has implemented an aggressive training program. In September 2002 Local 300 conducted a successful "Defense versus Discipline" training program presented by National Shop Steward Trainer Sam D'Ambrosio. All officers of Local 300, as well as some other union representatives, took part in the training.

Local 300 conducted Basic Shop Steward Training in January and Arbitration Advocate Training in late February. Plans are also underway for several other trainings to be conducted throughout the coming year. To ensure top-notch representation of our membership, continued training of our officers and stewards is imperative.

Communication

This is the second edition of the *Local 300 Mail Handler News*. Our first edition was a great success. We plan to continue to keep the membership updated on the many issues that affect postal employees through this publication.

You are reminded that Local 300's official web site is regularly updated. The web site provides links to much useful information for Mail Handlers. The web site also provides an easy

means to correspond directly with Local 300's officers

Treasurer Jeff Perry serves as the editor of our newsletter and the administrator of the web site.

Finances

Your newly elected Executive Board has pledged that Local 300 will become more fiscally responsible. Local 300 is still facing a severe financial crisis. We have begun to "trim the fat", while still providing superior representation. We have considerably decreased (by approximately \$100,000) the deficit that we inherited upon taking office.

We committed not only to eliminate frivolous spending, but also to increase revenue. Local 300's Executive Board, along with the National Office, joined in a membership drive in which the National Office committed to providing a \$50 "bounty" for signing up long time non-members and Local 300's Executive Board authorized an additional \$25 "sign-up bonus." The program was successful (see article by Vice-President Blum). We urge you to continue to encourage your co-workers who are not union members to join the National Postal Mail Handlers Union. No one should ride the backs of the dues-paying membership. Joining the Union is not only the right thing to do; members can pick up a \$20 bounty year round from our Local for each non-member he or she gets to join our ranks. Remind these individuals that this is a new
(continued on p. 4)

(continued from p. 3)

day in Local 300. All Branch Presidents have been provided with a list of all non-members from their respective facilities.

Local 300 is also aggressively seeking to increase its associate membership. These are federal employees who pay dues to belong to the Mail Handlers Benefit Plan. To this end I have appointed Vice President Blum and NJ State Executive Board Member Charles Price to spearhead our efforts. Brothers Blum and Price attended many health fairs during open season to increase membership in the Mail Handler Benefit Plan. This is a source of revenue that our local has long ignored.

Automation

Local 300 continues to aggressively fight to ensure that the Mail Handler Craft is properly awarded all

appropriate work associated with new automation introduced within our jurisdiction. We have been successful in securing jurisdiction over the Automated Air Assignment (AAA) throughout our local.

RI 399

As you know, there has been an ongoing battle between clerks and mail handlers regarding which work should be performed by each craft. The Postal Service's position was outlined in Regional Instruction 399 (RI-399), which was issued on February 16, 1979. Local 300 RI-399 Representative Cliff Golden has been working to ensure that each installation negotiates an RI 399 inventory of all job assignments. Brother Golden has been successful in finalizing inventories for several of our branches. Cliff will continue to meet with the NY Metro RI-399 Commit-

tee concerning our jurisdictional disputes.

Anthrax

Local 300, with the assistance of the National Office, was successful in having the Kilmer and Monmouth facilities tested after the discovery of anthrax in a mailbox in Princeton, NJ. The Postal Service had initially refused to do any testing. Thanks to the persistent efforts of Local 300 Vice President Blum, National President John Hegarty and Dick Collins of the National Office, the Postal Service capitulated and tested the facilities in question. Fortunately the tests were negative and our members' fears were put to rest.

I again thank the membership for its support, and assure you that Local 300's officers will continue devoting our time and energy representing you to the best of our ability.

Two New Officers Chosen

In September 2002, Rochelle Taylor resigned as Recording Secretary of Local 300. Rochelle moved to Virginia to be with her family and transferred to the Postal Service in that area. Before leaving, her co-workers threw a number of parties for Rochelle indicative of the esteem in which she was held.

We in Local 300 thank her for her years of service on behalf of Mail Handlers as

steward, chief steward, and Recording Secretary and we wish her the best in the future. She will be truly missed.

Pursuant to Article IV, Section 4 of the Uniform Local Union Constitution of the National Postal Mail Handlers Union, two officer positions were filled by majority vote of the Executive Board of Local 300 when it met on October 30, 2002.

The two new Local 300 officers are Linday Yancey, Recording Secretary from the Queens P&DC in Whitestone, Queens and Brian Odums, Branch President, of the West Jersey Branch in Whippany. On behalf of officers and members of Local 300 we congratulate both new officers and wish them the best in their positions.



Linda Yancey, Recording Secretary



Brian Odums, Branch President, W. Jersey

Vice-President's Report

by Robert Blum



A few months have gone by since the last publication of the LOCAL 300 MAIL HANDLER NEWS and the outlook is as precarious as ever. The combination of Postal Transformation (with it's fool hearty decisions such as consolidations and job abolishments costing us unnecessary disruptions) along with establishment of a Presidential Postal Commission, is a lethal one-two punch.

The Presidential Postal Commission is stacked with members from private industry giving their "expert" recommendations for changes to our Service; only the most naïve among us would expect a fair shake from that group. In fact there is only one member of any Labor organization on the Commission. That one person is the head of a Prison Guard Union in New York, who has supported politicians whom many consider as anti-labor. There wasn't even the guise of fairness to at least put one Labor Leader from a Postal Organization on the Panel. This Commission is to advise the President no later than July 31, 2003. Local 300 as well as the National Union are committed to challenge every attempt to take away our hard earned rights and benefits.

Important legislation currently in both the Senate and the House of Representatives that we should give our full support to are S 380 and HR 735. These two bills are an effort to correct the over funding of the Civil Service Retirement System by the Postal Service. If passed they will have a direct positive effect on the Postal Service's bottom line. The Postal Service will not have to contribute Billions of Dollars because the CSRS is already funded. Please write, phone or e mail your Senators and Congress People asking them to support this crucial legislation. The National Union has prepared an

Action Alert Link on its web site (www.npmhu.org) where your message can be sent from.

In other Postal related Congressional news, the House Budget Committee proposed its plan for balancing the budget over the next ten years. This plan includes cuts of nearly 40 Billion Dollars from Postal and Federal Employee health care and retirement programs.

If any of you have any doubt of the lack of concern for your well being and safety by Postal Service management, how about the decision to deny Administrative Leave to us in the New York Metro Area during the monstrous blizzard in February. This was a unilateral decision directly from the top. Can we possibly take Management seriously about safety (unless it's used to discipline us) when we were expected to report to work during one of the largest blizzards in this area's history? Local 300 is filing the appropriate Grievances in all Facilities.

In the past few months both the National Union and Local 300 have concluded a membership drive. The results were somewhat successful. The National membership increased by a few hundred Mail Handlers. In Local 300 there was a gain of 39 Mail Handlers. We would like to thank every one of you who made an effort in this important work. Special thanks to West Jersey P & DC Shop Steward Melinda Jennings who alone signed up 9 New Members.

The long awaited T-Shirts and

Aprons for the Local 300 Membership have arrived. Many Branches have already distributed them to their respective members. If you have not received your T-Shirt or Apron by the time you read this paper, please contact your Branch President in the large facilities, or State Representative in the stations for your item.

Although Local 300 has, and is facing severe financial difficulties, it was promised that the financial resources we do have will be spent on better defense of the Membership. Under President Hogrogian's leadership already three training classes have been held in the first six months of this Administration; Defense versus Discipline, New Shop Steward Training, and Arbitration Advocate Training. More training is planned such as Advanced Arbitration Advocate Training and Article 12 Training.

In October 2004 the current lease for Local 300 headquarters will expire. We are already planning for this event. The Executive Board of Local 300 without exception believes we are paying too much on the current lease. Exploration of a location for a new Local 300 headquarters will commence very soon. Suggestions from the Membership are welcome. Please feel free to e mail me at (rb7011@aol.com) on this or anything else.

In April, President Hogrogian, Treasurer Perry and I will be attending the Semi-Annual Meeting of the Local Unions where National

2003 BERNARD HOLLOWAY, JOHN A. ORCHARD, EDWARD J. MILLER, AND WALLY MERWIN MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP AWARDS

TO ALL REGULAR MEMBERS OF LOCAL 300

The Executive Board and the Local Union Council of Local 300 of the National Postal Mail Handlers Union are proud to announce the annual competition for the Bernard Holloway, John A. Orchard, Edward J. Miller, and Wally Merwin Memorial Scholarship Awards.

Once again Local 300, NPMHU, will be awarding four \$1,000 scholarships for study at an accredited college, university, or trade school. The scholarships are available for children, grand-children, and legal wards of our regular members.

The four brothers memorialized in this scholarship devotedly served the cause of Mail Handlers and enabled us all to benefit.

In awarding these scholarships we re-affirm our commitment to increasing the educational opportunities

available to our members and to the working class. We also reaffirm our commitment to struggle for knowledge and genuine democracy in order to create a better world in which an informed and enlightened people can best decide their fate.

All members are urged to read the "Requirements" for consideration and to urge every eligible applicant—a union member's child, grand-child, or legal ward who meets the scholarship requirements—to apply.

Completed applications are due by August 8, 2003, and winners will be announced by August 29, 2003. Applications and "Requirements" can be obtained from Local 300 Shop Stewards or by writing to:

2003 Memorial Scholarships
c/o Jeff Perry, Treasurer
Local 300,
401 Broadway, Suite 1400
New York, NY 10013



Labor Day in Battery Park

by ROBERT BLUM

A small but enthusiastic group of Mail Handlers represented Local 300 at the Labor Day celebration held in Battery Park in NYC on Tuesday, September 3, 2002. Ten Branches were represented as well as Members of the Executive Board. The event drew thousands of trade unionists from NYC and the entire metropolitan area. Major themes of the day included honoring the heroic deeds of the firefighters, police officers, building trades and other workers involved in the World Trade Center rescue and recovery effort as well as bringing attention to the heads of corporate America that the people who protect their streets, teach

their children, build their buildings and move their mail deserve secure decent paying jobs, not broken promises or stolen pensions and savings.

There was the usual array of politicians telling the crowd how great unionized workers are and how much they are needed. It sounded like the same old same old to me. These speakers included Governor Pataki, Mayor Bloomberg, and Governor McGreevey. Only AFL-CIO President John Sweeney spoke on the needs of workers and took the Corporations to task. The stage was mainly filled with politicians of every stripe, and even George Steinbrenner received an honor.

Notably absent were Senators Clinton and Schumer.

Although several thousand people turned out, I don't believe a gathering of this type has the same effect as the normally held parade down Fifth Avenue.

To sum it up; the weather was beautiful; it was great to see all the unions gathered together. Politicians received way too much attention and rank & file workers participation was only as an audience.

[For information regarding our participation in the Labor Day 2003 activities in New York see the Blum article on p. 23.]

IN DIFFICULT TIMES WE MUST WORK TOGETHER

by Jeff Perry, Treasurer

This issue of the *Local 300 Mail Handler News* appears during what are probably the most difficult times faced by postal workers in three decades. Throughout this Local our members are being hard hit by attendance related disciplines, light duty denials, and other management attacks. Postal workers face a so-called "postal transformation" that projects the elimination of 37,000 full-time jobs and includes plant consolidations, tour changes, tour consolidations, job abolishments and reversions.

In addition, the U.S. economy and the world economy are mired in the deepest prolonged economic slump since the Great Depression. Unemployment is up, real wages are down, costs are rising in the areas of health, housing, and day-to-day living costs, and our retirement monies have been savaged by several years of stock market tumble and low interest rates.

If that were not enough, on December 11, 2002, the President of the United States issued an Executive Order establishing a President's Commission on the Postal Service. The Commission, comprised of non-postal people who are, for the most-part, deeply tied to the Republican Party (and to the Republican Party's neo-conservative agenda), will have its last public hearing on April 29 and it is scheduled to issue a report by July 31, 2003. That report is expected to seriously threaten our postal work conditions. Recommendations it may make include the following — to reduce mail delivery to five days or less, to expand so-called "work-sharing" to permit private (read "non-union") companies to perform postal mail processing and other functions, to eliminate the Postal Service's monopoly on mail delivery, to erode collective bargaining rights of postal unions (allowing contract negotiations to drag out for years and imposing postal wages by congress-

sional legislation), to establish a user fee for delivery, and to further increase postal discounts for businesses while increasing postal costs for individual users.

If that isn't enough, the same President, amid patriotic appeals which have divided the working class, has led us into a war which WILL IMMEDIATELY DIVERT AT LEAST 80 TO \$100 BILLION (YES \$100 BILLION IMMEDIATELY--with much more to come later) from necessary social programs at home — programs for jobs, education, housing, social security, veterans' (yes veterans!) benefits, etc. (In New York City alone some 50,000 families recently wrote to the Board of Education about pulling their children out of underfunded and failing schools.) This same President is attempting to contract out or privatize at least 425,000 federal jobs (half of the current federal government's civilian, non-postal workforce) and he has attempted to roll back the union rights and Civil Service protections of 170,000 federal workers transferred to the new Homeland Security Department.

In the face of such attacks, we, as Mail Handlers, should take a very questioning and critical attitude

toward what the President and his Commission, and what postal management and Postal Service reports say. We have to begin to discuss such issues with our co-workers, seek out and find the best and most objective current information we can find, and look to work together to build and strengthen our union and other means of defense. Local 300 is committed to providing you more and better information on these issues--and we want your help.

As a step in this direction, in addition to reading our newspaper, we would like to encourage those of you that have access to the internet to visit our union's webpage at www.local300npmhu.org. Though far from perfect, the website is developing and we are continuing to try to turn it into a tool where members can get, or be pointed to, information that we need. We ask that you share with us information that you see which can be used by other members. These are difficult times and we must work together to identify our problems (and their causes) and to develop plans to remedy those problems. The union's newspaper and website are two tools that we can use in that process.



Awards and Decisions

by Paul Hogrogian, President

The following awards and decisions have been issued in Local 300 cases. Local 300's arbitration advocates should once again be commended for their superlative performances. To All Local 300 Advocates: CONGRATULATIONS AND THANK YOU FOR A JOB WELL DONE. KEEP UP THE GOOD WORK!

1) Arbitrator Joseph Cannavo ruled that the Postal Service violated the National Agreement when it improperly instituted a new "Attendance Control Policy" in NYC. The arbitrator ordered that the Postal Service "revise or rescind" the policy. NYC Arbitration Advocate Florencio Hooker was the advocate for Local 300.

2) Arbitrator Sarah Holden ruled that the Postal Service violated the National Agreement when the Postal Service improperly abolished a Mail Handler craft bid in Huntington Station. NY State Executive Board Member Lawrence Hill was Local 300's arbitration advocate.

3) Arbitrator Nicholas Zumas ruled that the USPS violated the National Agreement when it utilized clerk craft employees in Mail Handler operations (Allied Labor-FSM Support) in the Bronx. DVD Branch President Bernard Schramm arbitrated the appeal for Local 300.

4) Arbitrator Sarah Holden modified a removal issued to a NYC Mail Handler for being continuously absent. The arbitrator cited mitigating circumstances (pregnancy and follow-up baby care). Florencio Hooker was Local 300's arbitration advocate.

5) Arbitrator Cannavo modified a removal issued to a NYC Mail Handler. The arbitrator cited double jeopardy and denial of the employee's due process rights. NYC Advocate Florencio Hooker represented Local 300 in this grievance.

6) Arbitrator Joseph Cannavo ruled that the Postal Service violated the National Agreement by issuing a Removal to a Western Nassau Mail Handler for falsification of the pre-employment application. The arbitrator awarded full back pay. Western Nassau Branch President Joseph DiChiarra was Local 300's advocate for this grievance.

7) Arbitrator Cannavo rescinded a Removal and an Emergency Placement in an Off-Duty Status issued to a Bronx Mail Handler for "Threatening and Disrespecting a Postal Supervisor." The arbitrator awarded full back pay. NJBMC Branch President Andre Haynes represented Local 300.

8) Arbitrator Sarah Holden modified a Removal issued to a NYC Mail Handler for violation of a Last Chance Agreement. The arbitrator cited extenuating circumstances. Florencio Hooker represented Local 300.

9) Arbitrator Cannavo reduced a Removal issued to a Mid Island Mail Handler for allegedly committing an unsafe act and causing damage to postal property (tow truck). Hicksville/Mid Island Branch President Robert Lussos was Local 300's advocate.

10) Arbitrator Joseph Cannavo returned a NJBMC Mail Handler to work without back pay. The Mail Handler had been removed

for attendance related infractions (Last Chance Agreement violation). NJ State Executive Board Member Charles Price was Local 300's advocate.

11) Arbitrator Cannavo rescinded a Removal (unilaterally modified to a 30-Day Suspension) issued to a Westchester Mail Handler for disrespect towards a postal supervisor and taking an unauthorized break. The arbitrator ruled that the supervisor instigated the situation. The arbitrator awarded full back pay. NJBMC Advocate Thomas Mullahey arbitrated the appeal for Local 300.

12) Arbitrator Cannavo ruled that the Postal Service violated the National Agreement by improperly terminating a JFK Mail Handler's light duty assignment. The arbitrator awarded the Grievant full back pay. JFK Advocate James Freeley was Local 300's advocate.

13) Arbitrator Cannavo modified a removal issued to a Westchester Mail Handler for engaging in a verbal altercation and using profanity towards another employee. NJBMC Advocate Tom Mullahey was Local 300's arbitration advocate.

14) Arbitrator Cannavo ruled that the Postal Service violated the National Agreement by it disallowed a bid by a NYC Mail Handler. The record indicated that the employee was placed on light duty *after* the grievant bid on the job and before it was awarded. NYC Advocate Florencio Hooker represented Local 300 in these grievances.

15) Arbitrator Cannavo ruled that
(continued on p. 9)

WE SALUTE

Ms. Elizabeth Peterson

by Henry Holmes, Steward, Bronx

Ms. Elizabeth Peterson, Mail Handler, started in the Bronx Post Office in 1988. She is a single mother of three lovely children: Lydia age 15, Lawanda age 14, and Rashid age 9. Her love for dancing started when she was eight years old when her mother insisted that she attend the Ruth Williams Dance Studio. Elizabeth's mother encouraged her daughter to dance. Since that day she has never stopped dancing. She continues to apply herself by learning different types of dances (Ballet, Modern Jazz, African, Horton Tap, etc.) and she teaches children 4 to 17 years old on Wednesday's and Saturday's at the Dance Studio in Harlem.

Elizabeth Peterson was also involved and helped to implement the Single Mother's Workshop. The program allowed single mothers to take free dancing lesson and bring their children along. While the



mothers were dancing free, babysitting privileges were granted. This program lasted six years under the direction of Aziza, Elizabeth's mentor.

Elizabeth's daughter Lydia attended Def Dance Jam Workshop under Aziza's guidance. This program enabled deaf, hard-of-hearing, disabled, and children without disabilities to learn to communicate with each other while they learned dance.

Daughter Lawanda, while quite an academic student, also enjoys playing the piano. Son Rashid takes tap

classes at Ruth Williams and loves it.

Elizabeth's children also participate and perform with her and members of the Dance Studio in Harlem at Lincoln Center each year. Elizabeth is forever thankful to her mother for putting her in dancing school. It has provided her a perfect outlet in her life mentally and emotionally.

(And we, in Local 300, are thankful for brother and sister Mail Handlers like Elizabeth Peterson who contribute to our union and contribute to make a better world. We salute you Elizabeth, and we salute such efforts.)

("Awards and Decisions"— continued from p. 8)

the Postal Service violated the National Agreement in Westchester when not all the leveler plates on the docks operated properly. The arbitrator directed the Postal Service to make the necessary repairs. Connecticut State Executive Board Member Tom Ruth represented Local 300.

16) Arbitrator Cannavo that the Postal Service violated the National Agreement when it denied light duty to a Brooklyn Mail Handler. The arbitrator cited the fact that the Postal Service did not make every effort to find light duty work in other crafts. Brooklyn Arbitration Advocate Yvette Johnson was Local 300's advocate for this grievance.

17) Arbitrator Cannavo rejected the Postal Service's proposal to the Mid Island LMOU, which would have forbidden the use of LWOP for vacations. The current LMOU provision allowing LWOP for vacations remained in effect. Branch President Robert Lussos represented Local 300 in this impasse arbitration.

18) Arbitrator John Phelan, in an expedited award, ruled that the Postal Service violated the National Agreement when it denied Administrative Leave to Bronx Mail Handlers for September 11 & 12, 2001. Congratulations to NYC Arbitration Advocate Herman Trevathan, who advocated the arbitration appeal.

19) Arbitrator John Phelan, in an expedited award, ruled that the USPS violated the National

Agreement when it denied a Westchester Mail Handler sick leave. Connecticut State Executive Board Member Tom Ruth represented Local 300.

20) Arbitrator Thomas Fritsch, in an expedited award, rescinded a 14-Day Suspension issued to a Westchester Mail Handler Shop Steward for AWOL. Full back pay was awarded. Congratulations to Westchester Advocate Andrew Piacente, who advocated this arbitration for Local 300.

21) Arbitrator Phelan, in another expedited award, ruled that the Postal Service violated the National Agreement by using the OTDL rather than the holiday scheduling procedures in Westchester. Connecticut State Executive Board Member Tom Ruth represented Local 300.



In his first month in office, Local 300 President Paul Hogrogian (along with National Trainer and NPMHU Vice-President, Sam D'Ambrosio) offered a "Defense vs. Discipline" training class to officers and members of Local 300. The meeting was held at the Laborers International Union of North America (LIUNA) Building in Long Island City Queens. At that meeting a few of the Local 300 officers had a photo taken with some of the guests in attendance. Pictured above (left to right) are Tom Ruther, CT State Board Member, Local 300; Joe D'Amato, LIUNA; John Hegarty, National President, NPMHU; Armand Sabatoni, Secretary-Treasurer, LIUNA; Paul Hogrogian, President, Local 300; Vinny Masino, LIUNA, and Robert Blum, Vice-President, Local 300. The photo credit goes to Chris Colombo, Branch President, Stamford, CT.

COLA OF \$250 ADDED TO BASE WAGES

The second guaranteed cost-of-living adjustment to be paid to all mail handlers under the 2000 National Agreement has been set at \$250, based on changes in the National Consumer Price Index for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers (CPI-W). This COLA of \$250 was added to wages effective March 8, 2003. Printed below are the resulting wages to be paid to mail handlers until September 2003, when another COLA payment will be added to base wages.

Mail Handlers (M) Schedule Full-Time Annual Basic Rates Effective March 8, 2003 (PP 07-03)

Full-Time Regular - Level 4					Full-Time Regular - Level 5					Part-Time Regular and Flexible Hours - Level 4			
Step	Yearly	Hourly	BiWeekly	Overtime	Step	Yearly	Hourly	BiWeekly	Overtime	(Part-Time Regulars)		(Part-Time Flexible)	
A	\$27,217	13.09	\$1,046.81	19.64	A	\$28,614	13.76	\$1,100.54	20.64	Step	Hourly	Step	Overtime
B	32,182	15.47	1,237.77	23.21	B	33,919	16.31	1,304.58	24.47	A	\$13.09	A	\$13.61
C	34,528	16.60	1,328.00	24.90	C	36,330	17.47	1,397.31	26.21	B	15.47	B	16.09
D	37,983	18.26	1,460.88	27.39	D	38,665	18.59	1,487.12	27.89	C	16.60	C	17.26
E	38,261	18.39	1,471.58	27.59	E	38,965	18.73	1,498.65	28.10	D	18.26	D	18.99
F	38,544	18.53	1,482.46	27.80	F	39,270	18.88	1,510.38	28.32	E	18.39	E	19.13
G	38,822	18.66	1,493.15	27.99	G	39,567	19.02	1,521.81	28.53	F	18.53	F	19.27
H	39,102	18.80	1,503.92	28.20	H	39,870	19.17	1,533.46	28.76	G	18.66	G	19.41
I	39,382	18.93	1,514.69	28.40	I	40,175	19.31	1,545.19	28.97	H	18.80	H	19.55
J	39,666	19.07	1,525.62	28.61	J	40,473	19.46	1,556.65	29.19	I	18.93	I	19.69
K	39,945	19.20	1,536.35	28.80	K	40,776	19.60	1,568.31	29.40	J	19.07	J	19.83
L	40,225	19.34	1,547.12	29.01	L	41,073	19.75	1,579.73	29.63	K	19.20	K	19.97
M	40,505	19.47	1,557.88	29.21	M	41,378	19.89	1,591.46	29.84	L	19.34	L	20.11
N	40,785	19.61	1,568.65	29.42	N	41,679	20.04	1,603.04	30.06	M	19.47	M	20.25
O	41,064	19.74	1,579.38	29.61	O	41,980	20.18	1,614.62	30.27	N	19.61	N	20.39
										O	19.74	O	20.53

Hackensack/Paterson Merger Update

by Robert Blum, Vice President

Local President Paul Hogrogian along with Vice President Robert Blum, Hackensack Branch President Emilio Milito and Paterson Branch President Jim Ferrigno attended a meeting in November 2002 with Postal Service officials regarding the opening of the new Northern New Jersey Metro Processing and Distribution Center and the merging of Hackensack and Paterson into one facility. The Postal Service said that Mail Handlers currently working in both of these facilities will receive a letter to choose whether they desire to go to the new facility or remain in their current facility, both of which will have a very limited number of Mail Handlers employed there (approximately 12 Hackensack, 5 Paterson). The letters will also include a choice of temporary (120 days) detail assignments. Both of these choices will be made on a seniority basis. Those Mail Handlers choosing to remain in either facility and successful in doing so, will not be able to switch to the new facility later on.

No official date has been established as the date the new facility will open. Local 300 informed the Postal Service that all

related contractual provisions will be strictly adhered to including Article 12.2G6 which states, "Any Mail Handler involuntarily moving from one postal installation to another postal installation shall have seniority established as of the employee's time in the Mail Handler craft." Local 300 Representatives also raised a variety of other concerns about the new facility including adequate parking and serious concerns on environmental issues. Local 300 has requested the Assistance of OSHA and that Environmental Protection Agency as well as the offices of Senator Corzine and Congressman Rothman concerning environmental dangers. Local 300 is coordinating efforts on this issue with the American Postal Workers Union and the National Association of Letter Carriers. Local 300 requested an immediate update on these issues. Affected Mail Handlers can contact either Branch President Emilio Milito (201-440-1903) or Branch President Jim Ferrigno (973-278-6474) with any questions. We will provide updates as soon as the information is available.



Local 300 President Paul Hogrogian (on the left) with Long Island City Mail Handler Fenton Lomas and Local 300 Chief Shop Steward Lisa Tate. On May 11, 2002, while on duty at the Long Island City Post Office Brother Lomas raced from the facility to rescue someone from a burning vehicle that had overturned. For his bravery and heroism, Fenton Lomas received awards from both Local 300 and from USPS management.

SOCIAL SECURITY

Privatization = Piratization

by Jim Freeley
ISC/JFK

There are several plans being talked about that are supposed to insure that Social Security benefits will continue to be paid in the future. Unfortunately most of these are schemes intended to reduce the basic benefits available to future recipients.

Most prominent among these is the idea that workers should be able to start paying less into the Social Security System, take that money and invest it in private accounts. The idea behind this is that a worker can get a higher return for their money than if they leave it in Social Security. The theory is that the "market" will make people wealthier. If you as an individual will only entrust your hard earned money to private investment when it comes time for you to retire you will have riches beyond your wildest dreams. This is promised by the same type of pirates who participated in the deregulation of the Savings and

Loans Banks, and who more recently were involved in the Enron and Arthur Anderson fiascos.

These private accounts have only one real purpose, and that is to make money for stock brokers and other players in the financial industry. A large portion of any funds invested with them will go for fees and commissions. They will not have the low administrative costs of Social Security or the Thrift Savings Plan (TSP). A large part of the money put in private investment accounts will go towards bonuses for people in private financial organizations and not to the worker who has invested her/his money.

Another problem to be factored in is how you invest the money. The most common numbers being talked about are 2 to 3%. This would be the amount you would be allowed to divert from Social Security to individual investments. For a Level 5 Mail Handler Step O

this would amount to between \$15 and \$23 per pay period. What kind of investment do you think the average person can make with that kind of money? On the other hand taking that kind of money out of the Social Security System every two weeks, when multiplied by one hundred and fifty million workers will lead to billions upon billions of dollars less being placed into the Trust Fund. This will have the effect of bringing about a radical reduction in benefits for future recipients.

So, fellow Mail Handlers, beware of the privatization scheme being proposed for Social Security by the anti-worker pirates! It would have the same effect on you as privatizing the Postal Service, a destruction of your standard of living in the future!

Watch the Local 300 Website at www.local300npmhu.org for actions you will be able to take to secure your future and that of your family.

National Union Scholarship Winners from Local 300

Local 300 is proud to announce that our Local had four winners of the National Postal Mail Handler Union Scholarship in 2002. Each scholarship is worth up to \$4,000 over four years. Photos of the winners along with the names of their proud sponsors are provided. We congratulate them for their achievements and wish them the best in the future.



Michael Pearson
Robert Pearson L. 300
Loch Arbour NJ



Daniel Herman
Ronald Herman L. 300
Levittown NY



Danielle Farrar
Joseph Farrar L. 300
Newark NJ



Christopher Colon
Janet Felix L. 300
Bronx NY

On the Separation of the Bronx HASP from the Bronx Post Office

October 2, 2002

To: All Members of Local 300-Bronx Branch

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

The Postal Service has notified Local 300 of its intention to separate the Bronx HASP/IMTC from the Bronx Post Office (notice-dated August 21, 2002). The Postal Service's target date to effectuate this separation is February 22, 2003.

The Postal Service must comply with the provisions of Article 12.6C3 of the National Agreement when it implements the proposed separation.

Article 12.6C3 provides for the following:

All full-time HASP employees will have the option of remaining at the HASP or remaining with the Bronx Post Office without loss of seniority.

All Bronx HASP employees will be canvassed as to their preference. We have been assured that all Mail Handlers will be assigned to their preferred facility.

Bids at the HASP left vacant by those electing to go to the Bronx Post

Office, all residual bids, and other newly created HASP bids will be posted on an office-wide basis. This may be the last chance for a Mail Handler from the Bronx Post Office to bid into the HASP.

It is also my understanding that there will be several bid cycles before the HASP becomes separated from the Bronx Post Office. Once the separation becomes finalized, Mail Handlers will no longer be able to bid back and forth between the Bronx HASP and the Bronx Post Office.

The Mail Handlers Union, at the branch, local and national levels, is opposed to and is fighting the Postal Service's proposed actions. We have been meeting with Postal Service representatives regarding this matter.

Local 300 will also file all necessary grievances. It is the Union's position that the Bronx HASP has been established as a "section" of the Bronx Post Office through local negotiations. The Postal Service is unilaterally implementing something that they cannot gain through negotiations. The Postal Service is attempting to circumvent the terms of the National Agreement as well as

the Local Memorandum of Understanding. The Postal Service's proposed separation would adversely affect the rights of all Bronx Mail Handlers regarding, but not limited to, the following: vacations, holidays, light duty, overtime, bid jobs and part-time flexible conversions.

Local 300 believes that this change is being proposed because of conflicts between the managers of the HASP and the managers of the Bronx Post Office. We believe that Bronx Mail Handlers should not suffer because of intra-managerial disagreements.

You can be assured that Local 300 is doing everything in its power to prevent the separation of the Bronx HASP from the Bronx Post Office. However, we must hope for the best but prepare for the worst. You will be kept informed of any future developments.

Should you have any questions concerning this matter, do not hesitate to contact Local Headquarters or Bronx Branch President Andre Spence.

Fraternally,

Paul Hogrogian
President, Local 300

Leo Bumpus R.I.P.

With sadness, Local 300 reports the passing of Leo Bumpus on February 12, 2003. Brother Bumpus, 53, served as Administrative Vice-President and Branch President of the Bronx Branch of Local 300 from its inception in the 1980s until July 2002. We extend our deepest sympathy to his family and friends.



THOUGHTS ON 25 YEARS

by Andy Piacente, Westchester P&DC

I just completed my 25th year as a Mail Handler, 20 as Branch President of the Westchester P&DC. I remember over 15 years ago when Bruce Dean, an assistant to then Postmaster Ray Murphy, said to me, "You know Andy, Mail Handlers' worst enemy are other Mail Handlers." Truer words were never spoken. What Bruce meant was that **WE DO NOT STICK TOGETHER!**

We have people who suck up to supervisors and other managers. We have people who rat other people. I can't tell you how many times a Mail Handler came up to me after getting written up saying "Why am I getting written up, what about so and so?" It's like getting busted for speeding while others around you are going the same speed. You tell the cop "What about all those others?" The cop will respond, "Yeah, they were speeding, but I caught YOU!"

We have equipment operators pulling 4, 5, 12 postcons and hampers, not giving a damn if they hit someone. We have people pulling 3, 4, 5, postcons by hand, not caring about hurting even themselves. We actually have had altercations over equipment that management is supposed to supply us. **WE FIGHT OVER POST CONS!** In my 25 years, we have never had enough equipment. **EVER!** The way I see it, if a company doesn't supply a carpenter with a hammer and nails, nothing can get hammered and nailed.

If I don't have postcons and hampers, then mail can't be sorted, case closed.

We have people who have never showed up for 1, **NOT EVEN ONE** union meeting, we've had demonstrations where less than a dozen people showed up, and that was at a time when we had over 400 Mail Handlers in our facility. We have people who literally **RUN** when management offers us a **FREE** hamburger while they deny us annual leave that **WE'VE** earned, harass us when we

call in sick or, God forbid, get injured. Believe me, if you want to see your value to this company, get injured. Any person reading this who has ever been injured can tell you about the absolute hell management puts you through if you have the audacity to get hurt. Then you'll see how much you're worth to them.

Worst of all, **WORST OF ALL**, is the scab, the non-member, the free rider, the Mail Handler who refuses to join the family and help us fight for what's right. Management can try to outspend us in the grievance procedure but we must keep hacking away. We must keep grieving the crossing of crafts and the casual usage. President Paul Hogrogian has casual grievances down to a science and has won more casual award money than anyone I know (and his work is being used by the National Office to help train reps around the country on how it's done). The point is that these cases take money and the only way we can stand up to management's bottomless pit is for the little guys to pool our money, form a union, and fight back. Scabs absolutely refuse to do that. The "I can't afford it line" is bull----. I have raised three children including twin boys and they all went to parochial school. No one has more bills than I do, but if I don't contribute to the union, then I am contributing to the other side.

Anyway, the union is taking nothing from you. The union negotiates our raises and rightfully gets a little of the raise back to help in the negotiating of future raises. That's how it works. My mother was a seamstress in a sweatshop and a member of the International Ladies Garment Workers Union. My father was a Longshoreman and a member of the Longshoreman's union. How could I ever face them as a scab?

Then there's the 204b. You would think that management would call them a 204A or something, but 204

"b." They are telling you what they think of you. Too many of these Mail Handlers are sitting on a pointed fence. One day they're your friend the next day they're telling management what you do. I don't know how they do it. No amount of money could make me do that.

Always remember that a "good manager" will always try to do the work of 10 people with 5 people. That's their job. Now, if you're going to be dragging 5 postcons by hand, lifting heavy bags without help, or running around like a maniac and get hurt, who's fault is that? **WORK SAFELY!** You don't want to know the consequences if you don't. You pull 5 postcons by hand and run over your heel, the first thing management wants to know is "Why were you pulling 5 post cons?" When you tell them because you had no equipment and no help that ain't going to stop the letter of warning or suspension you've got coming. You're also going to have to explain it to an arbitrator.

Our contract says you are supposed to give a fair day's work for a fair day's pay. There's nothing in there that says you have to do the work of five people. Have a safe work day!

Contribute to Our Newspaper

We are especially interested in articles, letters, graphics, photos, clippings etc. that you think appropriate. Members are encouraged to submit material to Jeff Perry, Editor, c/o Local 300, 401 Broadway, Room 1400, New York, NY 10013 (tel. 212-431-0040, fax 212-941-6499, or e-mail perjef@ix.netcom.com). Materials may also be given directly to your steward, chief steward, or Branch President for forwarding.

BUSH ADMINISTRATION ATTACK PLAN INCLUDES ATTACKS ON POSTAL AND FEDERAL WORKERS

by Jeff Perry, Treasurer

When the Bush administration began its attacks in Iraq, the domestic side of their attack plan was also underway. It included a number of proposals which are aimed directly at postal and federal workers.

A key to understanding the Bush game plan is to examine the Bush administration budget. The Bush administration has stated that it needs \$80 to \$100 billion for the first stages of its war effort in Iraq. That \$80 to \$100 billion is coming out of badly needed social programs at home--programs for jobs, education, housing, social security benefits, veterans benefits, etc.

On March 12, 2003, in the House Budget Committee, the Republican agenda for postal and federal workers was revealed in proposals put forth by the Committee Chairman, Jim Nussle (R-IA). The Republican Plan seeks to get \$40 billion from postal and federal employees' health care and retirement programs.

Our union, the other postal unions, the labor movement, and other friends and supporters will be opposing these and similar budget proposals by the Republicans. Included in the Republican attack plan are the following proposals:

1. Change the Federal Employees Health Benefits Program (FEHB) to a Voucher System.

The Republicans seek to cut \$12.5 billion over five years from what the government pays to the FEHB by replacing its current method of payments by percent to a system of payment by fixed amount which, though adjusted annually, would be a lesser per cent than that now paid. (This plan is in some ways similar to what the USPS did to us when it moved from paying Night Differential at 10% per hour to paying ND at a fixed amount per hour).

2. Limit COLA for Federal Retirees.

The Republican plan would cut postal retirement benefits by \$4.1 billion over the next five years by decreasing current Civil Service Retirement System COLAs to half a percent below inflation (the COLA is currently a 100% protection against inflation. Similarly FERS COLAs would be restricted to one per cent below inflation when the rate exceeds 3 percent).

3. Change the Formula for Calculating Pension Annuities.

This Republican proposal would cut federal retiree benefits by \$915 million over five years by switching to a "high-four-year" calculation (we currently receive our retirement based

on a "high-three-year" formula) for people who retire after September 30, 2003. This plan (by lowering our "average pay") would reduce initial pensions by about 1.5 to 2.0 per cent. CSRS employees would be particularly hard hit--losing \$620 in 2004 and \$3200 over five years. FERS employees would lose \$190 in 2004 and about \$1,000 over five years.

4. Restructure the Government's Matching Contributions to the Thrift Savings Plan.

This Republican proposal would cut \$2.2 billion from government matching funds by changing from the current formula (one per cent whether enrolled or not, dollar for dollar for the first three percent for enrollees, than fifty cents on the dollar for the next 2 percent for enrollees --for a total of five percent) to a plan that would only pay the 5% if the employee contributed 10%. Because a 10% contribution is too high for many, the Republican plan projects a government saving of \$375 million in 1974.

While these Republican plans are currently being fought, they clearly reveal one part of the domestic side of the Bush administration attack plan. We must be clear and firm in opposing these attacks.

POSTAL SERVICE DEVELOPING BIO-AGENT SYSTEM

BY ROBERT BLUM, Vice President

The Postal Service has announced that they are continuing to develop a **Bio-Agent Detection System**. This system is to give warning inside Postal facilities of Anthrax and other Bio-threats in the mail stream. In a meeting with Postal Officials from the Central New Jersey District held on March 18, 2003, we were informed that the Kilmer, NJ, P & DC is one of twelve test sites chosen nation-wide for testing of these systems. Local 300 will continually update the progress of this program as information is received.

TRAINING



Group photos from the February 2003 Arbitration Advocate training held in new York City.

A PRIORITY OF THE NEW ADMINISTRATION



Pictured above from the Arbitration Advocate Training conducted in February by Local President Paul Hogrogian and Union Attorney Paul Schachter are: Jim Perkins, Branch President, Mid-Hudson; Stan Howard, Branch President, AMC-JFK; Willie Delgado, Steward, Cooper Station, NYC; Andre Spence, Branch President, Bronx; Antonio Sanchez, Steward, Flushing; Steve Lindsay, Steward, Morgan Station, NYC; Gwen Green, Steward, NJIBMC; James Smoot, Branch President, NJPMPC; Albert Baxter, Steward, Mid-Hudson; Minerva Fuentes, Steward, Morgan Station, NYC; Don Utz, Steward, Stamford; Larry Heyman, Steward, New Brunswick; Alexander Bokman, Steward, Brooklyn; Ricky Gonzalez, Steward, Hackensack; Ron Marshall, Steward, NJIBMC; Al Lombardi, Steward, Hackensack; and Cynthia Brown, Steward, Mid-Hudson.

TAKE ACTION NOW!

POSTAL RETIREMENT BILL

UP FOR VOTE IN THE HOUSE!

As we go to press the House of Representatives is expected to soon vote on legislation that will help stabilize Postal Service finances. The bill, HR 735, corrects a problem created when the Postal Service overpaid, through no fault of its own, into the employee retirement system. The National Postal Mail Handlers Union, the other unions and management groups, and large mailers are working in a coalition to pass this legislation immediately.

Key committees of both the House and the Senate have already unanimously approved bills that will — if approved by the full House and

Senate, and signed into law by the President — lower U.S. Postal Service CSRS pension contributions beginning this year. The passage of this legislation is critical to the operations of the USPS. It would allow the Postal Service to pay down its accumulated debt to the Treasury Department, and at the same time will allow the USPS to hold its rates steady through 2006. The postal service estimates it would save \$2.9 billion in fiscal year 2003 and \$2.8 billion in FY 2004 (without any negative impact on annuities) through lower contributions.

The National Postal Mail Handlers Union offers its strongest endorsement of these legislative proposals, and encourages all of its members, and their friends and family members to write to Congress to encourage swift passage of this important legislation. For those who have access to the internet we urge you to immediately go to our National Union's website at www.npmhu.org and click on the ACTION ALERT icon which will enable you to quickly send an email correspondence to your Representative in the House of Representatives.



Branch President Stan Howard, AMC-JFK; Lawrence Hill, NY State Executive Board; Bernard Schramm, Branch President, DVD Facility, Kearney, NJ; and Emilio Milito, Branch President, Hackensack at September 2002 Advanced Arbitration Advocate Training.



Jeff Perry, Treasurer; Joe DiChiara, Branch President, Western Nassau; Kevin Tabarus, Branch President, NYPMPC; Robert Lussos, Branch President, Hicksville; and Lawrence Hill, NY State Executive Board Member at February Advanced Arbitration Advocate Training.

Request for Social Security Statement

☐ Please check this box if you want to get your statement in Spanish instead of English.

Mail completed form to:

Social Security Administration
Wilkes Barre Data Operations Center
P.O. Box 7004
Wilkes Barre, PA 18767-7004

1. Name shown on your Social Security card:

First Name

Middle Initial

Last Name Only

2. Your Social Security number as shown on your card:

- -

3. Your date-of birth (Mo.-Day-Yr.):

- -

4. Other Social Security numbers you have used:

- -

- -

5. Your Sex: ☐ Male ☐ Female

For items 6 and 8 show only earnings covered by Social Security. Do NOT include wages from State, local or Federal Government employment that are NOT covered for Social Security or that are covered ONLY by Medicare.**9. Do you want us to send the statement:**

- ☐ To you? Enter your name and mailing address.
- ☐ To someone else (your accountant, pension plan, etc.)? Enter your name with "c/o" and the name and address of that person or organization.

6: Show your actual earnings (wages and/or net self-employment income) for last year and your estimated earnings for this year.

A. Last year's actual earnings: (Dollars Only)
\$, .

B. This year's estimated earnings: (Dollars Only)
\$, .

7. Show the age at which you plan to stop working.

(Show only one age)

8. Below, show the average yearly amount (not your total future lifetime earnings) that you think you will earn between now and when you plan to stop working. Include performance or scheduled pay increases or bonuses, but not cost-of-living increases.

If you expect to earn significantly more or less in the future due to promotions, job changes, part-time work, or an absence from the work force, enter the amount that most closely reflects your future average yearly earnings.

If you don't expect any significant changes, show the same amount you are earning now (the amount in 6B).

Future average yearly earnings: (Dollars Only)
\$, .

NOTICE:

I am asking for information about my own Social Security record or the record of a person I am authorized to represent. I understand that if I deliberately request information under false pretenses, I may be guilty of a Federal crime and could be fined and/or imprisoned. I authorize you to use a contractor to send the Social Security Statement to the person and address in item 9.

Please sign your name (Do Not Print)

Date (Area Code) Daytime Telephone No.

Hubert Harrison's Postal Experience --

by Jeff Perry, Treasurer

St. Croix, Virgin Islands-born Hubert Harrison (1883-1927) was one of the millions of people who emigrated to the U.S. from 1900 to 1910. He arrived in New York City in 1900 as a seventeen year old orphan, immediately went to high school at night, and worked several jobs each day trying to survive. Then, on July 1, 1907, he began his postal career as a clerk earning \$600 per year as a separator. Simply obtaining postal employment at that time was breaking difficult ground and Harrison was one of less than 175 Black postal workers in all of New York City.

Though postal employment pay was better than his previous jobs (its twelve dollars a week salary was about twice that earned by 70% of Black males in the city), conditions in the Post Office were oppressive. There were no union negotiated contracts and postal workers were subjected to President Theodore Roosevelt's "gag orders" that threatened employees with dismissal for merely seeking legislative help or a raise. Twelve-hour work days were considered average as were work weeks of six or seven days. In addition noise, poor ventilation, dust problems, and abusive managers resulted in some 12 percent of the nation's postal clerks resigning in 1906 and 20 percent resigning in 1907.

In September 1907, shortly after obtaining work in the Post Office, Harrison started a postal study circle with several workers which met at his 134th street apartment after work. He was a Tour III employee so many of the meetings were in the early hours of the morning. At work Harrison suffered from conditions in the poor work environment—he developed eye problems (which he attributed to the poor lighting), bad colds, congestion, and "signs of lumbar pneumonia."

Over the next three years Harrison's postal record was exem-

plary—his POD-7 revealed only one charge of lateness on June 23, 1908, for which no discipline was imposed. In July 1908 he received a salary increase to \$800 per year and was promoted to clerk second grade; in 1909 he was promoted to the third rank at \$900 per year; and in 1910 to clerk fourth grade at \$1,000 per year.

In 1911 Harrison wrote two articles for a New York magazine on what he described as some of the more general pressures faced by clerks including political tribute, patronage, discrimination, and anti-labor practices. In particular, he described how political patronage around political clubs worked. Employees were pressured to join political clubs, pay dues, and buy tickets for functions. Several times a year they would actually have to buy tickets that were sold by superintendents and their assistants against all official executive orders. By paying such tribute, Harrison explained, employees were able to keep in good standing in the club and were known as "protected" employees. No matter what these workers did in relation to rule infractions, "wise superintendents" would leave them alone. In November 1907, shortly after Harrison started, a clerk at the Manhattan GPO delivered a pro-Republican speech on the lower East Side. The following week that clerk was given easy work, was exempted from studying distribution schemes, and was promoted to a "soft snap" job.

Discrimination and wage violations were also common. Harrison explained, "if a clerk is a Jew, a Negro, or a socialist [the socialists were a significant third party at the time and elected many NY City officials over the next decade], life can be made very hard." In addition, overtime work was not compensated and at one station where he worked (Grand Central), employees even were forced to pay annually for iced water.

The management policy toward labor organizations was a devious one of divide and conquer. The pro-management union, the United National Association of Post Office Clerks (Local No. 1, which included supervisors), was encouraged and the pro-worker union, the National Federation of Post Office Clerks (Local No. 10), was opposed by all means. Harrison described Local 1 as "an effete organization," advocating "the identity of interest of postal clerks and the postal authorities" and "run to suit the interests of the latter." In contrast, he described Local 10, an American Federation of Labor affiliated union founded in 1910 (with Black members from its inception), as "a self-respecting class-conscious organization" that could not be controlled by management and that existed to further interests of postal clerks. He noted that its national president, Oscar F. Nelson, was fired solely because of his organizational activities.

In 1920 Harrison wrote a newspaper editorial based, in part, on his postal work experience. He stated that "the postal employees of the United States are as faithful and efficient a body of men and women as ever did work for the government." The editorial stressed that based on "the amount of memorizing necessary in a general separation 'scheme,' a city 'scheme' and the various State 'schemes' which the ordinary postal clerk must get by heart" any "self-respecting government" should pay them more. Many of these schemes contained the names of thousands of post offices and the postal clerk had "to 'route' mail to all these places without error." Errors led to demerits on the individual's record and kept the person from getting a raise. Additionally, most postal clerks had to do "laborious porter's work 'juggling' and shaking out sacks of mail" containing "clouds of international dust from Italy, England,

Early 20th Century Postal Worker Offers Many Insights

France, Asia, Africa and South America," which, "in many cases," would result in "consumption." Despite "such services," "risks to their health," and a rising cost of living, for many years the pay of postal workers "remained stationery."

Only in 1907 did postal workers get a slight wage increase, and that was after the Postal Commission of the 59th Congress stated that "upon the postal service more than upon anything else does the general economic, as well as the social and political development of the country depend." Harrison noted that it was "Congressmen who [through franking privileges] load the mail with millions of copies of speeches which they never delivered" held up the report of the Joint Postal Commission designed to relieve the situation. This, he explained, was why clerks and carriers were "driven from the service in droves and . . . forced to seek other employment elsewhere."

In 1910, Booker T. Washington, the most prominent Black leader in America (by virtue of his ties to powerful whites like Andrew Carnegie, Julius Rosenwald, and Theodore Roosevelt) went to Europe where he dined with royalty and made pronouncements to the effect that conditions for Black workers in America were not so bad. Since lynching, formal segregation, and disfranchisement of Black voters marred the land (and there was not one Black elected official in New York City) and Black wages were far below the national average, Harrison, W.E.B. Du Bois, and many others took issue with the accuracy of Booker T. Washington's statements. Harrison wrote two letters criticizing the accuracy of Washington's statements which were published in the *New York Sun*, a popular daily newspaper. Washington, who had built a powerful political machine, soon responded.



A reader of Harrison's letters to the *Sun* was Charles William Anderson, a federal appointee (through his ties to B.T. Washington) and the city's leading Black Republican politician. Anderson was a friend of the New York City postmaster, Edward M. Morgan, who had been appointed postmaster by the Republican President Theodore Roosevelt in March 1905. In 1911 Anderson met with Washington, Emmett Scott (B.T. Washington's assistant), and Fred R. Moore, a newspaper editor and Washington supporter, and they decided on Harrison's removal from the Post Office.

Harrison had transferred to the recently opened (1909) Grand Central Post Office to work in the paper section on February 8, 1911, and on April 18 he was bonded and received a 100% salary increase to \$2,000 per year. Suddenly, on May 1, his salary increase was rescinded and he was dropped back down to \$1000 annually. On July 1 he was "failed of promotion" and on September 1 he was charged with "Leaving the floor of the work room before his tour of duty ended, and using insolent and disrespectful language to his superintendent." Harrison had never even been suspended, but there was something more at play here. The instigator was Washington's friend, Charles W. Anderson, who on September 10 wrote a revealing letter to Washington (that is found in the

Booker T. Washington Papers in the Library of Congress):

Do you remember Hubert H. Harrison? He is the man who wrote two nasty articles against you in the New York "Sun." He is a clerk in the Post office. The Postmaster [Edward M. Morgan] is my personal friend, as you probably know. Harrison has had charges preferred against him and I think he is liable to be dismissed from the service. If not dismissed, he will get severe punishment. Can you see the hand? I think you can. Please destroy this, that it may not fall under another eye — unless it is Emmett's [Scott]. I will attend to Harrison. If he escapes me he is a dandy.

Harrison did not escape. He was "denied a hearing" and removed from the Post Office on September 23, 1911. This was done despite the fact that, as he later pointed out, he had no previous suspensions and "there was no proof of the charges." Further, Postmaster Morgan "knew" from Harrison's "written answers to the charges" and from his service record that he was innocent. Nevertheless, though he was the father of two children at the time (with a third on the way), Harrison was unjustly fired. Anderson took particular delight in the removal and again addressed a letter to Washington, sarcastically

(continued on p. 23, "Harrison")

What does the Union do for ME?

By Kevin Tabarus, Branch President, NYPMPC

Local 300, NPMHU represents new hires in all matters except termination during their first 90 days of employment. The Union is constantly fighting for career positions. If not for the Union contract and the NPMHU, the new employees probably would all be casuals with less pay and no job protections. For health insurance, the Mail Handlers Benefit Plan is only available to Union members. The Union Privilege Program has an impressive list of members-only benefits including a credit card.

The Union negotiates salary, annual and sick leave provisions, health insurance, life insurance, retirement benefits, seniority, the right to a safe work place and cost of living allowances for the craft. The Union represents all members at the National, Regional and Local levels. The National Agreement and the Local Memorandum of Understanding are enforced by the Union through grievances and arbitration. The higher the percentage of Mail Handlers as Union members, the more bargaining power we have against management.

Only Union members receive periodic publications from the National and Local Union offices, such as magazines, newsletters, etc. Union meetings are open only to Union members and provide an opportunity for each member to have a say in their Union and their job. With the Union being a democratic organization, every member has the right to vote for the Union leaders as specified in the National and Uniform Local Union Constitutions.

The Union is active in lobbying Congress for issues favorable to postal employees, and against legislation which would be detrimental to us. We are affiliated with the Laborer's International Union and the AFL-CIO.

Union Privilege Benefits Bonanza

- § *Credit Card* 1-800-522-4000 / www.unionpluscard.com
- § *Customer Service for Existing Credit Card Holders* 1-800-622-2580
- § *Educational Services* 1-877-881-1022/www.unionplus.org
- § *Loan Program* 1-888-235-2759/www.unionplusloan.com
- § *Avis Car Rentals* 1-800-698-5685 (ID# B723700)
- § *Budget Car Rentals* 1-800-455-2848 (ID# V816100)
- § *National Labor College Scholarship* 1-301-431-5404
- § *North American Van Lines* 1-800-524-5533
- § *Mortgage & Real Estate* 1-800-848-6466
- § *Legal Service* 1-888-993-8886 / www.unionplus.org
- § *Flower Service* 1-888-667-7779 / www.unionplus.org
- § *Union-Made Checks* 1-888-864-6625
- § *Union-Made Return Address Labels* 1-888-864-6625
- § *Walt Disney World - Hotel Royal Plaza* 1-800-248-7890
- § *Your Credit Score/Report* www.unionplus.org
- § *Vacation Tours* 1-800-590-1104
- § *Union Plus Educational Loans* 1-877-881-1022
- § *Internet Access* "workingfamilies.com" 1-800-806-2150
- § *Direct TV Discount* 1-888-807-8020 (Code# AF-003-05)
- § *Union Plus Hearing Care* 1-800-766-3363
- § *Union Plus Pet Health Insurance* 1-866-473-7387
- § *Pet Health Care Savings Program* 1-888-789-PETS (#UP2003)
- § *Auto Buying* 1-877-800-2924

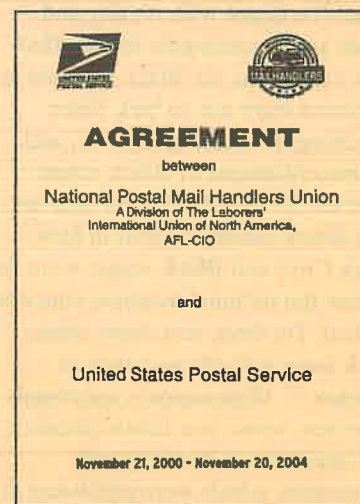
Union Privilege also offers scholarships to members who are interested in attending or sending a child or spouse to a technical or trade school, college or university.

Scholarships

There are many scholarships available to you and/or your family members.

1. *National NPMHU Scholarship*--for info call 202-833-9095 www.npmhu.org
2. *Local 300 Scholarship*--for info call 212-431-0040 www.local300npmhu.org
3. *Union Plus Scholarship* for info call 877-881-1022 www.unionplus.org
4. *Federal Employees Education and Assistance Fund (FEEA)* 1-800-323-4140 www.feea.org
5. *National Labor College Scholarship* 1-301-431-5404

These benefits are for Union members only. They are an added value of Union Membership!



Did you receive your contract?
If not, please contact your steward.

("Harrison," continued from p. 21)

writing:

I am sure that you will regret to learn that Mr. Hubert H. Harrison has been dismissed from his position as clerk in the New York Post Office. I am certain also that you will regret to hear that he is blaming me for his dismissal. As Postmaster Morgan is a *particular personal friend* of mine of long years standing, and as the charge against Mr. Harrison was considered (by Harrison) trivial that "brother" believes that some sinister influence was at work against him, and that influence was set in operation by me. Well, I can endure the charge with fortitude and good humor. Harrison had a dispute with the Superintendent of the Branch Post Office in which he was employed, and as he had had several of these disputes with this and other Superintendents before, I presume the Postmaster thought it high time to drop him and get a man who would talk less and work more.

In early November 1911 Harrison wrote more on the Post Office. In challenging arguments in favor of the privatization of public services he explained that the Post Office was "the one great example of the public ownership of a gigantic public business," and that since its earliest days it had demonstrated the advantage of government ownership. He noted that the Post Office invited comparisons with privately controlled public industries such as railroads,



The Mail Handlers Benefit Plan

1-800-410-7778

coal mines, and lighting systems which he felt should similarly be nationalized, but the argument for nationalization would have been much stronger, he added, if it was not run under a publicly proclaimed deficit, making the argument for nationalization of other industry appear less favorable. He showed that the postal deficit was due largely to bookkeeping procedures in which "a fair fifth of the mails is carried free" for various government departments. If this were corrected and if the Post Office did not bend over backwards in favor of the railroads by paying them "a higher rate of transportation than other [large volume] shippers do" the effectiveness of nationalization could be shown. Harrison emphasized that the Post Office ought to pay the railroads less "since the railroads are post roads, and, therefore, parts of the public domain."

Postscript—Hubert Harrison, the author of these fascinating insights, became a brilliant writer and orator

and a major influence on A. Philip Randolph and a generation of activists in the 1910s and 1920s. He died unexpectedly of appendicitis-related complications at age 44, in 1927. Before his death he was one of the founders of Harlem's Schomburg Center, the major research center of Black history and culture in America. Charles Burroughs, one of the participants in the postal worker study group, became a founder of one of the earliest Black Theater Groups in America (the Krigwa Players) and his son and daughter-in-law were founders of the DuSable Museum in Chicago, the major Black museum in America's second largest city. Harrison and Burroughs are merely the tip of the iceberg as far as talent and social consciousness among postal workers. Edward Morgan, the postmaster who unjustly fired Harrison, had New York City's largest postal facility (Morgan Station) named in his honor. The people who made that decision, had apparently not read the Booker T. Washington correspondence.

(Blum, continued from p. 5)

President John Hegarty, National Secretary-Treasurer Mark Gardner and National Contract Administration Head Bill Flynn will update the Local Unions regarding many issues effecting Mail Handlers. Likely topics include Postal Transformation, Presidential Commission, national financial status, contractual information such as Craft Jurisdictional issues and possible extension of the 2000 National Agreement. Please go

to Local 300's web site at (www.local300npmhu.org) for a review of the meeting after April 14th.

Although its six months away, it's never too early to plan ahead. The New York City Labor Day Parade is scheduled for Saturday, September 6, 2003. This year the celebration will return to the traditional parade format. This will take place the Saturday after Labor Day. With the anti worker, anti union climate within and outside the Postal Service more blatant than ever, our participa-

tion is important. Please try to attend this event. This year's theme is Human Rights; Workers Rights; and, the Right to Organize. AFL-CIO President John Sweeney will be the Grand Marshall. Please go to (www.local300npmhu.org) or to your Branch Office for upcoming details.

President Hogrogian and I will be visiting many facilities in the near future. If you see us, please come up and introduce yourself and share your thoughts and concerns.

www.local300npmhu.org

Under our new administration headed by Paul Hogrogian Local 300 is taking important steps to improve communication with and among our members. Our newspaper is one example. In the long run, however, our most important example may be **our webpage**.

Although it is really just beginning, our webpage, under the editorship of Treasurer Jeff Perry, is already becoming an important means of communication and source of information for our officers, stewards, and members.

The website can be reached on the internet at www.local300npmhu.org. Its opening page lists links to subject areas where people can get all kinds of information. It begins with listings of work addresses, phone numbers, e-mail addresses, and (where applicable) fax numbers and websites for our officers and major branches. It then has announcements, news, a calendar of events, a contract information section (with important rules, regulations, and victories), a benefits and privileges section, an information for members section (that includes such things as the workers' bill of rights), lists of labor and other contacts, a legislative section, a safety section, a section for readers' questions and comments, an election results section, photos from our officers' installation, minutes from our unions' Executive Board and Local Union Council, and a commentary section.

The website is a major effort of this administration to build a truly democratic union, to increase the information flow at all levels, to share knowledge, and develop an informed membership, with the aim of improving our work conditions, our lives, and our collective strength in our struggles with the bosses. We do believe that **KNOWLEDGE IS POWER** and that **A DEMOCRATIC UNION MAKES US STRONG**. We hope that you will visit the website and give us your thoughts, comments, and ideas.

GIVE US A CLICK – www.local300npmhu.org

|||||.....

NEW YORK NY 10013-3022
401 BROADWAY, SUITE 1400
PAUL HOGROGIAN
TJB PJ *****AUT0**3-DIGIT 100

PRSRST STD
US Postage
PAID
Permit No. 898
New Brunswick, NJ

National Postal Mail Handlers Union
Local 300, AFL-CIO-CLC
401 Broadway Suite 1400
New York, NY 10013-3005