



National President John Hegarty (r) and Local 305 President Kenny Hayes (l) stand before the panel picturing and remembering Joseph P. Curseen, Jr. and Thomas L. Morris, Jr. who succumbed to the 2001 anthrax attack at the postal facility in Brentwood, Washington, DC.

## Ceremonies Mark Tenth Anniversary of Anthrax Attacks

Ten years have elapsed since the horrific anthrax bio-terrorist attacks, allegedly facilitated by a lone madman, and delivered through the United States Postal Service. In the wake of the tragic terrorist attacks of 9/11, a weapons-grade strain of the biological agent anthrax was intentionally placed in envelopes and dropped into the mail stream in Trenton, New Jersey. These attacks ultimately killed five people and infected countless others. The attacks were targeted at various news organizations, political figures, and others. As anthrax spores were detected and inhalation infections announced in several states, public panic ensued. Suspected targeted buildings were evacuated and locked down, including the campus of the United States Capitol, to which at least two of the anthrax filled letters were mailed.

As these envelopes, laden with the deadly white powder, made their way through the postal processing system, quantities of the powder escaped into the air, to be inhaled by unsuspecting postal workers. Traces of the deadly anthrax were detected in mail processing facilities in Trenton, New Jersey, Wallingford, Connecticut, and at the Brentwood Road facility in Washington,



DC. Following reports of illness from workers in those facilities, and confirmation of the deadly microscopic agent, an emergency response plan was initiated, eventually locking down the facilities, directing medical testing and treatment, and calling for antibiotic medications for workers and others who may have come in contact with the deadly airborne bacteria.

Tragically, lock-down of the Brentwood Road facility happened too late. Two postal workers, Joseph P. Curseen Jr. and Thomas L. Morris Jr., already had inhaled the aerosolized anthrax and had taken severely ill. Sadly, these two workers succumbed to the effects of the bacteria. Thomas Morris died on October 21, 2001, and Joseph Curseen the following day. These two brave and dedicated postal workers paid the ultimate sacrifice as a result of the despicable actions of an alleged lone perpetrator. Following Congressional action to rename the Brentwood facility in honor of our fallen brothers, that processing plant went through extensive remediation and renovation, reopening in December 2003 as the Curseen-Morris Mail Processing and Distribution Center.

