

READY FOR BATTLE

Let me begin by wishing our National President John Hegarty all the best that life has to offer as he turns to the next chapter of his life. John has served our Union well for over three decades, and has proven himself a tireless leader for all Mail Handlers. It has been both an honor and privilege to serve with John on the National Executive Board since 1996, and to work together with him during his tenure as National President for these past thirteen years. To know John is to know his tireless passion and unwavering commitment to our great Union. His contributions to the National Postal Mail Handlers Union are many and varied. John has long-played a critical role in shaping the success and progress of our Union, and in protecting the many rights and benefits and the financial security enjoyed by tens of thousands of Mail Handlers, past and present. John is well-known for his tireless work-ethic and for his tenacity in representing our membership. But what John is equally well-known for is his ability to accomplish so much, while at the same time treating both friend and adversary with dignity and respect. John is simply a decent and kind person. I know I speak for so many when I wish John all the best on his well-deserved retirement.

And I offer my most hearty congratulations and warm welcome to my friend Paul Hogrogian as he takes on the duties and responsibilities as our new National President. I have known and worked with Paul for many years, and have witnessed first-hand his command of the issues important to all Mail Handlers. I know that Paul is fully-prepared and uniquely-qualified to serve as our National President, and I know that our National Executive Board has made the right choice with its unanimous selection of National President Paul Hogrogian. I very much look forward to working with Paul in the months and years ahead as the NPMHU confronts its challenges, and as our Union collectively develops and implements its strategies to continue our progress on behalf of all Mail Handlers.

And the challenges facing Mail Handlers are many. Combatting the USPS' ill-advised reductions in service standards, its continuing efforts to reduce mail delivery frequency, and its ongoing effort to close or consolidate its mail processing facilities will remain high on the battle list for the NPMHU going forward. Coupling those challenges with the congressionally-imposed USPS "financial crisis" stemming from the 2006 version of postal reform legislation, the growing Republican majority in the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives, the failure by some Democrats and others to push forward responsible legislative fixes to the USPS woes, language in the White House annual budget that is less than helpful to our members' interests, and the increasing anti-union rhetoric being spewed by right-wing candidates and pundits as the country gears up for the 2016 Presidential election will most certainly complicate NPMHU efforts in the near term. And it is with this backdrop that the NPMHU will marshal its forces later this year to prepare for the 2016 round of collective bargaining with the Postal Service.

The NPMHU has remained at the fore in fighting against the backward ideas being implemented by USPS, and we have joined in the collective efforts with our sister postal unions to present a united front, and to develop alliances and implement joint strategies to help fix the Postal Service, and to help secure the future for all of our members. Our Union's interests are well represented on Capitol Hill, and we will keep plowing ahead on that front in the hope that Congress will again become functional, and will enact meaningful legislation to give the Postal Service a fighting chance at recovery. We will remain engaged on the political front, to help elect the most worker-friendly candidate as President in late 2016, and to support and elect Members of Congress, whether Democrat, Republican, or Independent, who are prepared to put the interests of Mail Handlers and workers first. And we will be prepared to engage in what



MARK A. GARDNER, National Secretary-Treasurer

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will surely be a very tough round of bargaining with the Postal Service over the terms of our 2016 National Agreement.

Please know that your Union is well-equipped to engage in these many battles, and with the assistance and support of our officers, representatives, and members across the country, I know that we will fight the good fight together, and that our Union will remain strong and proud well into the future.

Fraternally,

Mark A. Gardner
National Secretary-Treasurer