

"GAME ON!"

As reported in more detail in this magazine, we recently conducted our NPMHU semi-annual Meeting of the Local Unions in Boston. We had good discussions on a host of important topics, and the meetings proved very productive.

Among his many updates to the assembly, National President Hogrogian reported on the outrageous decision by the Postal Service, which was released during our Boston meetings, to reverse its own June 1, 2015 craft determination, which had previously assigned to the mail handler craft the jobs on the new Small Parcel Sorting System (SPSS) machine. This unprecedented and unilateral reversal certainly is not going unchallenged. In fact, within one week of the Boston meetings, President Hogrogian had directed three major challenges to this unwarranted and inappropriate attack on Mail Handler jobs. First, the NPMHU filed an appeal to move this reversal decision to arbitration under the terms of the long-standing USPS/NPMHU/APWU tripartite National Dispute Resolution Process. Second, the NPMHU filed an Unfair Labor Practice complaint with the National Labor Relations Board, seeking injunctive and other relief. And third, the NPMHU has filed a federal lawsuit against the USPS in U.S. District Court, claiming that the USPS breached its binding contractual obligations.

If the Postal Service is taking this reversal action on Mail Handler jobs to somehow test the mettle of President Hogrogian in his early days as our National President, they will surely find that this type of unjustified action and blatant disrespect will be met with a full-force response from the NPMHU. To conclude the discussion on the SPSS reversal decision at the Boston meeting, and to the raucous cheers of those gathered, President Hogrogian clearly and concisely summed up the NPMHU reaction to the USPS when he declared "Game on!"

The final day of the Boston meeting was devoted to an informative group strategy session regarding the upcoming contract negotiations with the USPS for a 2016 successor collective bargaining agreement. Negotiations are scheduled to

formally commence on February 25, 2016, with a contract expiration date of May 20, 2016.

Given the publicly available reports related to the ongoing separate contract negotiations between the Postal Service and two of our other sister postal unions, this next round of bargaining is certain to be difficult, at best. We fully anticipate a full court press from the Postal Service seeking additional workforce flexibility, and continued attacks on Mail Handler wage scales and benefits. Needless to say, the NPMHU will stand firmly against these types of cuts and, as always, will endeavor to reach an agreement that protects our members' pay, benefits, and job security, and will seek to refine contractual work rule language to provide additional protections from the myriad challenges that our members face on a daily basis.

Even though we are a full six months out from the bargaining kickoff date, your Union already has begun the process of developing and coordinating its strategies on how best to approach the difficult issues that will be presented during the upcoming bargaining process. And the NPMHU approach to bargaining is an all-inclusive one, involving various subsets of our National and Local Union officers and other representatives, who will review and discuss proposals that will be submitted for consideration from our members and Local Unions across the country. This encompassing process includes a Field Negotiating Committee comprised of our National Contract Administration Department experts, National Officers, and various elected officials from across our spectrum of Local Unions. This group will review and discuss the merits of each and every contract proposal submitted for consideration by our membership. Ultimately, that Committee will develop a full package of contract proposals to recommend to our negotiating team and the bargaining table beginning in late February of 2016.

Later in this magazine you will read an official call for bargaining proposals, along with a form that you may use to submit your suggestions for consideration by the Field Negotiating Committee. Please note that the deadline for submission of any proposals is September 30, 2015.



MARK A. GARDNER, National Secretary-Treasurer

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For more details and updates on the SPSS challenge, bargaining preparations, and a host of other important subjects, be sure to visit the NPMHU website at www.npmhu.org. Thank you for your support, and for your active involvement in the NPMHU.

In Solidarity,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Mark A. Gardner". The signature is fluid and cursive, written over a white background.

Mark A. Gardner
National Secretary-Treasurer