



National Postal Mail
Handlers Union

National Executive Board

Paul V. Hogrogian
National President

Mark A. Gardner
Secretary-Treasurer


Jefferson C. Peppers III
Vice President Central Region

John A. Gibson
Vice President Eastern Region

David E. Wilkin
Vice President Northeastern Region

Lawrence B. Sapp
Vice President Southern Region

Rudy Santos
Vice President Western Region

The Mail Handler, ISSN:1098-5689, is published quarterly by the National Postal Mail Handlers Union, 1101 Connecticut Avenue, N.W. Suite 500, Washington, DC 20036. Periodicals postage paid at Washington, D.C. and additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to The Mail Handler, 1101 Connecticut Avenue, N.W. Suite 500, Washington, DC 20036 Copyright 2015: National Postal Mail Handlers Union. All rights reserved. Reproduction without permission is prohibited. The Mail Handler is published for the members of our union. For additional copies please send \$2.00 to: National Postal Mail Handlers Union—National Headquarters, 1101 Connecticut Avenue, N.W., Suite 500 Washington, DC 20036, (202) 833-9095. 

National Postal Mail Handlers Union

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

PREPARATION FOR NATIONAL NEGOTIATIONS

Dear Members,

Although our current 2011 National Agreement does not expire until May 20, 2016, preparations for National negotiations are well underway. A bargaining strategy session was held during the recent Semi-Annual Meeting of the Local Unions (SAMLU) in Boston, MA. During that session, National Officers, CAD representatives, and Local Presidents and representatives from all Local Unions around the country discussed various issues, proposals, and priorities that will arise during negotiations. In response to an "Official Call for Bargaining Proposals" to the field, hundreds of contract proposals concerning proposed changes to numerous articles were received at National Headquarters. Proposals were submitted by members, stewards, and officers from almost every Local Union in the country. The Field Negotiating Committee comprised of NEB, CAD, and Local Union representatives met for a full week in October to review, analyze, discuss, and debate the submitted proposals received from the field. Formal negotiations are scheduled to begin in February.

We will be seeking, among many other things, a strong economic package consisting of general wage increases and maintaining the COLA, limitations on subcontracting, improvements to the Article 12 provisions governing reassignments and excessing, and enhancing the benefits of our MHA members. We expect this round of bargaining to be extremely difficult. This is made evident by the fact that the current contract negotiations between the USPS and the APWU have reached an impasse over the Postal Service's insistence on severe cuts to wages and

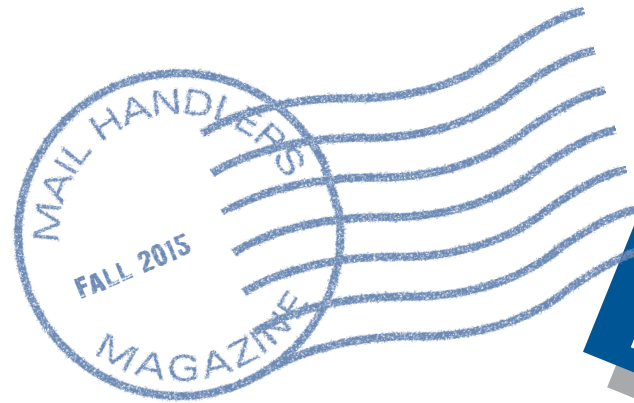


PAUL V. HOGROGIAN, National President

"The NPMHU will make every effort to reach a negotiated agreement with the Postal Service."

benefits, including the creation of a new permanent lower wage scale for new career employees with reduced benefits. I firmly believe, however, that our negotiating team is up to the task. Our goal is to achieve a new contract that enhances the pay, rights, and benefits of all Mail Handlers. The NPMHU will make every effort to reach a negotiated agreement with the Postal Service. Any such agreement will be subject to ratification by our membership. If a fair agreement cannot be negotiated, the parties will enter into a binding arbitration process. The membership will be kept informed during this entire process through updates and bulletins.

The Postal Service's ill-conceived plans to close and consolidate dozens of additional mail processing installations are still pending. The National Office has been working with the Local Unions, in contesting these closings and consolidations on contractual grounds, and in pressuring political representatives on Capitol Hill to oppose these changes.



As I have previously reported, the Postmaster General has announced that the Postal Service has suspended all pending closures and consolidations until at least April 2016. The moratorium notwithstanding, the NPMHU continues to address closing and consolidation issues through its Contract Administration Department and through the Article 12 Task Force. We are also continuing to address the closing and consolidation issues in the political and legislative arena. We will continue working with the other postal unions on this critical issue.

Another issue of vital concern to Mail Handlers and all postal workers is that of postal reform. We continue to lobby Congress for meaningful action on this issue. The presidents of the four National Postal Unions have been meeting with the Postmaster General and her senior staff and with representatives of the mailing industry to form a coalition on a possible consensus postal reform bill. Any such bill would include a solution to the ill-conceived requirement that the Postal Service pre-fund future retirees' health benefits.

Meanwhile, Senator Tom Carper (D-DE) has introduced a Postal Reform Bill called the 2015 Improving Postal Operations, Service and Transparency Act (iPOST). While the Carper Bill addresses numerous important provisions — many of which have evolved over several years of discussions among various postal stakeholders — the NPMHU views this bill as a work-in-progress. There are certain provisions in the bill, such as those that would amend FECA to eliminate certain benefits for injured workers reaching retirement age, that the NPMHU simply cannot support.

The NPMHU will continue to work with its allies throughout the postal community to refine the iPOST bill, in an attempt to fashion final legislation which will best service the collective interests of NPMHU members, the USPS, and the customers who rely on postal products and services.

The struggle over the Small Parcel Sorter System (SPSS) continues. The SPSS is currently deployed in several sites throughout the country and will be deployed in other facilities nationwide.

As I previously reported, the USPS had originally awarded all work on the SPSS to the Mail Handler craft. I had also previously reported

that USPS had reneged on that determination and instead awarded the “facing functions” to the clerk craft. This reversal defies all principles of good faith bargaining. The NPMHU has filed an appeal to the RI-399 NDRC, filed charges with the NLRB, and filed suit in U.S. District Court. A National-level grievance under Articles 7 and 15 has been filed, and affected Local Unions are encouraged to file similar grievances at the Local level. The NPMHU will do everything within its power through any available forum to challenge this reversal. No options are off the table.

The recently negotiated “Vacancy MOU” with the USPS concerning the filling of residual vacancies is already achieving the desired results. Hundreds of MHAs from installations throughout the nation have already been converted to Full-Time Regular career status as a result of this MOU. This MOU also will continue to operate to provide future career opportunities for our MHAs.

I remain confident that, through the work of our Contract Administration Department and our legal representatives, we can successfully meet any and all challenges that lie before us. The continuing support of all Mail Handlers is very much appreciated.

Fraternally,

Paul V. Hogrogian
National President

“OUR GOAL IS TO ACHIEVE A NEW CONTRACT THAT ENHANCES THE PAY, RIGHTS, AND BENEFITS OF ALL MAIL HANDLERS.”