

A BUSY YEAR AHEAD

The coming year will surely present a flurry of activity for the NPMHU and its members, and the many activities in which our Union will be engaged will present both challenges and opportunities. These activities will include: full-scale negotiations with the Postal Service over the terms of our 2016 National Agreement; what possibly will be the culmination of several years of debate among stakeholders regarding postal reform legislation in the United States Congress; preparations and delegate elections for the NPMHU 2016 National Convention and the LIUNA 2016 International Convention; and all of this happening concurrent with our much-anticipated national Congressional and Presidential elections.

To follow up on just a few of the coming activities, as this magazine goes to press, the Field Negotiating Committee has just completed its weeklong meeting to review and discuss the hundreds of contract proposals submitted for consideration from Mail Handlers and Locals across the country. The recommendations of that committee will now be used by our National Negotiating Team.

The formal opening of this round of bargaining is scheduled to take place in Washington, DC on February 25, 2016, at which point the parties will meet to share opening statements and objectives. Following this kickoff session, each party will designate its representatives who will meet on specific bargaining subcommittees to discuss various topics.

As with our prior rounds of national negotiations, this bargaining process will be comprised of a combination of (a) on-the-record main table sessions -- at which all members of the bargaining team will be present, and at which the parties will review and discuss the most significant topics, and (b) various subcommittee sessions that will seek to refine possible work rule and other changes to contract language. All of these discussions will ultimately be presented to the main table for possible inclusion in a larger package that would also address wage and benefit provisions.

This bargaining process is scheduled to run for nearly three months, through the expiration of our current National Agreement on May 20, 2016. It is the intention of our National Office to continue its earlier precedent of keeping the membership informed regarding key events related to this round of negotiations through the distribution of 2016 Contract Updates.

Elsewhere in this magazine is the official Call for the 2016 NPMHU National Convention. This gathering takes place every four years, at which the delegates elected to represent our Local Unions serve as the highest governing body of our Union.

The delegates who will represent each Local Union are elected through a secret ballot process. The full set of rules governing this delegate election process also are printed later in this publication. The delegate elections are scheduled to conclude during March 2016.

Following those elections, National President Hogrogian will appoint delegates to serve as members on the various Convention committees -- Credentials, Constitution, Resolutions, Legislative and Political, Election, and Rules -- each of which will meet prior to the Convention to fulfill their respective mandates, and to prepare their respective reports for consideration and action by the full Convention when it meets in Chicago, Illinois from August 22 to August 27, 2016.

The National Office convention planning team already is in high gear laying the groundwork for a successful 2016 event. As with prior NPMHU conventions, we have every expectation that this 2016 quadrennial NPMHU Convention will prove to be well organized, productive, and entertaining. We eagerly await this gathering in Chicago next summer.

Serving as a backdrop to the busy year ahead will be our nation's Presidential and Congressional elections, which are scheduled to conclude in November 2016. With the entire House of Representatives and one-third of the Senate on the ballot, along with the vote to elect the next President of the United States, the coming year is certain to be filled with full-scale partisan warfare.



MARK A. GARDNER, National Secretary-Treasurer

As of this publication, we are still nearly three months out from the first state primary for the Republican and Democrat Presidential nominations. And already the news channels and pundit shows air nearly non-stop coverage of every possible poll, statement, position paper, attack ad, Twitter post, and imagined scandal of anyone even remotely connected to a candidate. This will surely be a long slog to make it through each political party's nominations, and on to Election Day on November 8, 2016. Mail Handlers will need to resist the urge to tune out of the political process, because of the sensory overload of media coverage. Who ends up in the White House is extremely important to the future of the NPMHU membership and their families. If you are not already registered to vote, please do so now.

The NPMHU will remain engaged in the political process, and will support the views of our membership and the efforts of the AFL-CIO as we encourage support for the Congressional and Presidential candidates who will carry forward the goals of organized labor and support working families across our country. I ask that you each stay committed to this important process, and that you support those candidates who support the views of working class Americans.

As always, thank you for your membership in, and support of, the National Postal Mail Handlers Union.

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

Mark A. Gardner
National Secretary-Treasurer