



# MAIL HANDLER UPDATE

NATIONAL POSTAL MAIL HANDLERS UNION

NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS: 1101 Connecticut Avenue, N.W. • Suite 500 • Washington, D.C. 20036 (202) 833-9095



John F. Hegarty  
National President

## NPMHU LEADERSHIP CONVENES AT SEMI- ANNUAL MEETING



Mark A. Gardner  
Secretary-Treasurer

Officers and representatives from nearly every NPMHU Local Union gathered in the Nation's Capital in late August to participate in the latest Semi-Annual Meeting of the Local Unions (SAMLU).

As usual, the meeting began with National President John Hegarty's comprehensive report to the assembly, which focused on the activities of the National Union during the past several months. Hegarty began his remarks with a substantive review of the recent wage increases, resulting from two cost-of-living adjustments that will become effective on September 6, 2014 for all career mail handler craft employees. All Mail Handlers can review the revised wage charts in the Special Edition Update, and on-line at [www.npmhu.org](http://www.npmhu.org).

President Hegarty commented at length on the Union's ongoing objections to the threatened closures, consolidations, and degradation of delivery service standards. Hegarty said, "The primary objective of the NPMHU is to help protect and preserve the institution of the United States Postal Service with a coordinated strategy to fight the latest round of closings and consolidations scheduled to begin again in January of 2015." President Hegarty went on to highlight some of these unified efforts: "We are working with the American Postal Workers Union, the National Association of Letter Carriers, and the National Rural Letter Carriers' Association to fight the announced closings and consolidations of 82 more mail processing facilities that the Postal Service has targeted. We are fighting this battle on the legislative, legal, and grass-roots front, and this will require rank and file involvement," said Hegarty.

Hegarty also addressed the various subcontracting initiatives underway at the National level. As part of the 2013 Fishgold Award, the arbitration panel established a joint subcontracting committee, the aim of which is the in-sourcing of some mail handler work that previously was outsourced. The committee has been meeting, with a focus on Surface Transportation Centers or STCs; on Mail Transport Equipment Service Centers or MTECs; and on the bed-loading project that was implemented a few years ago.

President Hegarty also addressed the NMO pilot that was started in Chicago, Illinois, Des Moines, Iowa, and nearby facilities during 2013. The pilot has now ended, and we have requested all of the data that the Postal Service has collected. The Postal Service is claiming that it has not yet made a determination on the success (or failure) of the pilot.

"We are working hard to get some of this work back into the Postal Service and therefore into the hands of mail handlers represented by our Union. The process to undo this subcontracting has been very slow, and there are still major hurdles to overcome, but we are pressing forward as hard and as quickly as we can," said Hegarty.

Hegarty next spoke about the sorry state of affairs in Congress and the ongoing stalemate on Capitol Hill.

*"No one should be fooled – the Postal Service's financial status is improving, and without the Retiree Health Benefit Fund and OWCP issues, it is operating at a surplus."*

"There is always the possibility that a lame-duck session of Congress, which will be held in November and December of this year, could produce a postal bill," said Hegarty, but he cautioned that, "any progress towards favorable Postal Reform legislation may be contingent on the outcome of the November mid-term elections."

When addressing the topic of USPS finances, Hegarty noted that the NPMHU has been saying "for almost two years now that the Postal Service has been operating with a surplus from its operations. . . Yet monthly and quarterly finance figures released by the Postal Service repeatedly make claims of a continuing deficit." This is nothing more than a disingenuous campaign to misrepresent recent improvements with a distorted view of reality. "As everyone should know by now, the losses being reported

are primarily caused by payments that are supposed to be made each year into the Retiree Health Benefits Fund," said Hegarty. "No one should be fooled – the Postal Service's financial status is improving, and without the Retiree Health Benefit Fund and OWCP issues, it is operating at a surplus," said President Hegarty.

Following the National President's report, National Secretary-Treasurer Mark Gardner provided a detailed presentation and entertained questions and comments on a variety of topics, including the NPMHU financial statements for the year ending December 31, 2013 and the most recent second quarter ending June 30, 2014; an updated presentation and analysis related to Mail Handler complement, with particular emphasis placed on the importance of organizing recently hired MHAs; a review of membership trends and revenue allocation among

our Union's affiliated organizations; a summary of cost-of living and wage adjustments provided under the 2011 National Agreement; and the recently completed, nationwide membership organizing campaign.

Contract Administration Department Manager T.J. Branch then provided a report on the activities of that department since the last meeting of the Local Unions, addressing and taking questions on each of the following issues: National arbitrations and settlements, including the pending Blood Platelet Leave arbitration decision, the Lead Clerks grievance, and a recent resolution on Payment of Sunday Pay Premium while on Administrative Leave. The CAD report also addressed the Small Package Sorting System (SPSS); and the Quality of Work Life (QWL) process.

On Saturday, August 23, 2014, the third day of meetings, the NPMHU conducted a comprehensive training program focusing on contractual and legal issues specific to MHAs. Their presentation focused on the following topics: MHA appointments; MHA usage, caps and grievance remedies; MHA work guarantees and scheduling; MHA hourly rates and application of overtime; the conversion of MHAs to Full-Time Career Status; leave; holidays; grievance procedures; discipline; health insurance and other employee-benefits; representation under Article 17; membership issues; and pending Step 4 cases.

*NPMHU conducts comprehensive training program focusing on issues specific to MHAs.*



### The National Association of Secretaries of State (NASS) Has Announced Its Support for the Establishment of an Annual NATIONAL VOTER REGISTRATION DAY

WASHINGTON, DC – The National Association of Secretaries of State (NASS) has announced its support for the establishment of an annual National Voter Registration Day. In view of the fact that forty-nine states plus the District of Columbia have voter registration deadlines in October, NASS has designated September as National Voter's Registration Month with the mission being to encourage voter participation and increase awareness of state requirements and deadlines for voting.

As part of this effort, the NPMHU is taking steps to make eligible voters aware of registration deadlines and requirements, as well as promoting state resources to aid with the registration process.

A state-by-state list of voter registration deadlines, with contact information, polling place hours, and links to each state's voter information website, is posted and available for your use under the Legislative and Political tab at [www.npmhu.org](http://www.npmhu.org). In addition, each state's voter help line and toll-free numbers are provided as a resource for the 2014 general elections. Voters who wish to report problems, suspicious activity, or irregularities related to the voting process are urged to contact their local election office.

The time to register is now. Every Mail Handler is encouraged to register and vote. All members are encouraged to check their voter registration information. Updating voter registration information is critical for

people who have recently moved, changed their name, or had their voting rights restored under the law. Forty-five states plus the District of Columbia allow voters to verify their registration status online. Many states also provide voters with online access to sample ballots and polling place locator services. Please take the time to review these resources, register to vote, and most importantly, vote!

For more on voter registration options and deadlines in your state, you can visit the association's non-partisan voting information website, [www.CanIVote.org](http://www.CanIVote.org).

For more on National Voter Registration Day and becoming a partner, check out [www.NationalVoterRegistrationDay.org](http://www.NationalVoterRegistrationDay.org)



**Please Post!!**

September 2014