

THE MAIL HANDLER

SPRING 2021

THE QUARTERLY PUBLICATION OF THE NATIONAL POSTAL MAIL HANDLERS UNION

CAN THE POSTAL SERVICE SURVIVE WITHOUT LEGISLATIVE REFORM?

4

PRESIDENT'S REPORT -
PMG DEJOY RELEASES
THE USPS TEN
YEAR PLAN

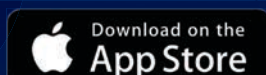
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VALLONE SCHOLARSHIP
AWARDS

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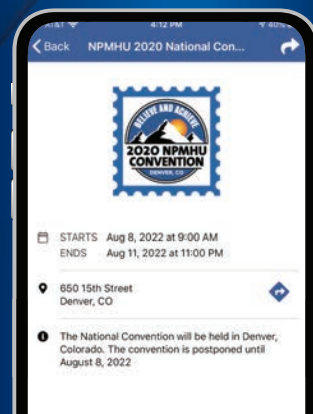
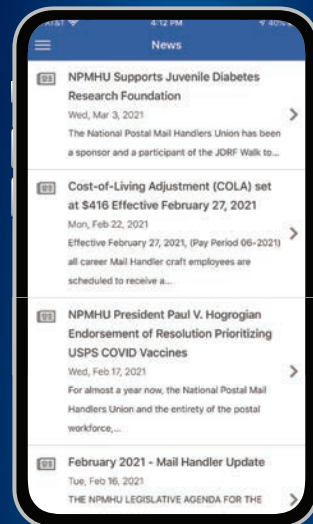
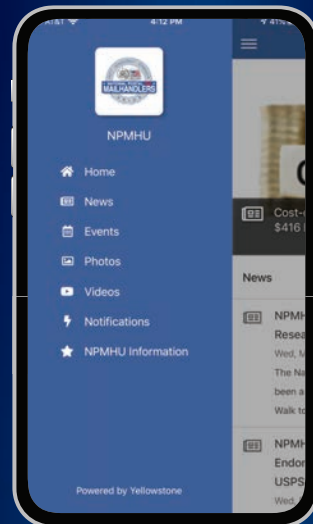
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- + NPMHU Women's Committee
- + Current Wage Charts
- + COVID-19 Resources





THE MAIL HANDLER

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ON THE COVER:

The NPMHU continues to champion fair legislation in pursuit of favorable postal reform.

THE QUARTERLY PUBLICATION OF THE
NATIONAL POSTAL MAIL HANDLERS UNION

PMG DEJOY RELEASES THE USPS TEN YEAR PLAN

Paul V. Hogrogian, National President



Dear Members:
Earlier this year, Postmaster General Louis DeJoy and the USPS Board of Governors released their long-awaited ten-year plan for the U.S. Postal Service, setting forth a series of strategies by which USPS management hopes to improve service and ensure financial stability. The plan reviews the massive changes in mail volume and mail mix over the past several decades and urges that a series of steps be adopted to deal with difficulties in processing and delivering mail, reducing employee turnover, and addressing long-term financial shortfalls.

As with all ambitious plans, its ultimate success is dependent on its details and its good-faith implementation. At this point, the NPMHU can be supportive of some aspects of the plan such as the emphasis on growing package volume, on using new sources of postal revenues, on the need for legislative Postal Reform, on the establishment of forty-six parcel annexes, and on the need to stabilize the non-career postal workforce by providing a clearer path to career status.

To the extent that the plan relies on the closing and consolidation of mail processing facilities, the NPMHU has serious concerns but is prepared to work with postal management to identify those changes that make sense, and more importantly identify those that do not make sense and are without foundation.

The Postal Service notified the NPMHU on April 27, 2021 regarding their planned implementation of secondary

mail moves for 18 mail processing facilities. These 18 sites previously had AMP studies conducted and most of the mail has already been moved in 2015 or before as part of Phase II of the USPS Network Consolidation Program. Twenty-four facilities underwent partial consolidations in 2015. The Postal Service notified the NPMHU that four of the facilities will have no further action taken at this time and two other facilities were “tabled” and will be reevaluated for possible future action.

exact number of Mail Handlers to be impacted is not known at this time as Impact Statements and supporting documentation are not scheduled to be provided to the Union until July. Final implementation is planned to include a November 6, 2021 move date.

The Postal Service also notified the Union of its plans to refresh AMP feasibility studies for 31 of the remaining 38 candidate sites from Phase II of the USPS Network Consolidation Program. The AMP studies for these 38 facilities

While we agree that because of the decline in flat and letter mail some consolidations may be justified, we certainly do not believe that the Postal Service can justify all of the 37 planned consolidations.

The secondary mail moves that are planned include destinating flats or letters, and in some facilities, both. Of those 18 facilities, there are 10 where Mail Handlers are currently working. These include: Bend CSMPC, Erie P&DF, Gainesville P&DC, Huntsville P&DF, Mid-Hudson P&DC, North Bay P&DC, Pocatello CSMPC, Seattle East DDC, Southern Connecticut P&DC, and Wausau P&DF. These installations are not proposed to be closed entirely as parcel processing and/or cross dock operations are slated to remain. The

were placed on hold in 2015. The Postal Service has also decided to “table” the AMP studies for 12 of these sites. The Postal Service has now decided to refresh AMP studies in 19 of the original sites. Of the 19, the Postal Service believes that the studies will support full consolidations in 12 of the sites and in another 7 sites the Postal Service believes the studies will support “mail moves,” but not complete consolidations. The remaining 7 sites will have their studies halted with no further action being taken at this time.

As with the 18 sites previously discussed, these installations are not proposed to be closed entirely, as parcel processing and/or cross dock operations are slated to remain. The exact number of Mail Handlers to be impacted is not known at this time as Impact Statements and supporting documentation for these AMP feasibility studies are not scheduled to be provided to the Union until October or November. Final implementation is planned to include a February 26, 2022 move date.

The NPMHU is concerned that the Postal Service's consolidation plans go too far. While we agree that because of the decline in flat and letter mail *some* consolidations may be justified, we certainly do not believe that the Postal Service can justify *all* of the 37 planned consolidations. Not only will these consolidations adversely affect the lives of many Mail Handlers and their families, but service will also suffer. The Postal Service has been claiming that they have not been able to meet their own service standards for the last 7 years. We do not believe it a coincidence that the failure to meet service standards began during the last round of consolidations conducted in 2013 through 2015. The previous round of consolidations did not produce the savings and results that the Postal Service anticipated, and service did indeed suffer. This should not be allowed to happen again.

This is an ongoing process that will not only involve local input, but hearings and other possible reactions from Congress, and procedures before the Postal Regulatory Commission. The NPMHU will continue to

challenge unnecessary consolidations to minimize any negative impact on Mail Handlers.

* * *

On Christmas Eve, the NPMHU and the USPS finalized a historic MOU that provided for additional Mail Handler staffing in 183 installations. As set forth in more detail in the MOU, the Postal Service agreed to convert 5,291 MHAs to career status in these 183 installations. The Postal Service also has committed to creating 5,291 Mail Handler positions in the listed installations. On March 22, 2021, a second MOU was finalized converting an additional 885 MHAs in 43 facilities by May 22, 2021 and creating an additional 885 Mail Handler positions in those facilities. These MOUs converted a combined 6,176 MHAs to Full-Time career status while increasing Mail Handler staffing in the listed installations. This is certainly a life changing event for 6,176 converted Mail Handlers who achieved the stability of a career appointment. The negotiation of these MOUs represents a major accomplishment in increasing the national Mail Handler complement.

* * *

The COVID-19 pandemic continues to have an effect on the Postal Service and all postal employees. Mail Handlers and postal workers from around the country continue to courageously perform essential federal service under the extraordinary circumstances created by the COVID-19 pandemic.

With the increased availability of the various COVID vaccines, there is now light at the end of the tunnel. The

CDC is relaxing its recommendations of face coverings. However, this is not the time to let our guard down. The latest numbers reflect that there are still approximately 3,700 postal employees who are infected with another approximately 1,800 in quarantine. Since the onset of the pandemic, approximately 4,700 Mail Handlers have tested positive for the COVID virus. There have been at least 192 confirmed COVID deaths of postal employees, including at least 30 Mail Handlers.

Although a vaccine is becoming more easily available, the COVID crisis is not yet over. We cannot allow ourselves to be lulled into a false sense of security. We must remain vigilant and continue to protect ourselves and our co-workers. We must continue to follow the protocols put in place. If you have not already done so, please get the vaccine at your earliest opportunity. The sooner everybody is vaccinated, the sooner we can get back to a sense of normalcy.

I remain confident that through the work of our Contract Administration Department and our legal representatives, and through the hard work of our Regional, Local, and Branch representatives, we can successfully meet all challenges that lie before us.

In these and other endeavors, the continuing support of all Mail Handlers is very much appreciated.

Faternally,



Paul V. Hogrogian
National President

If you have not already done so, please get the vaccine at your earliest opportunity. The sooner everybody is vaccinated, the sooner we can get back to a sense of normalcy.

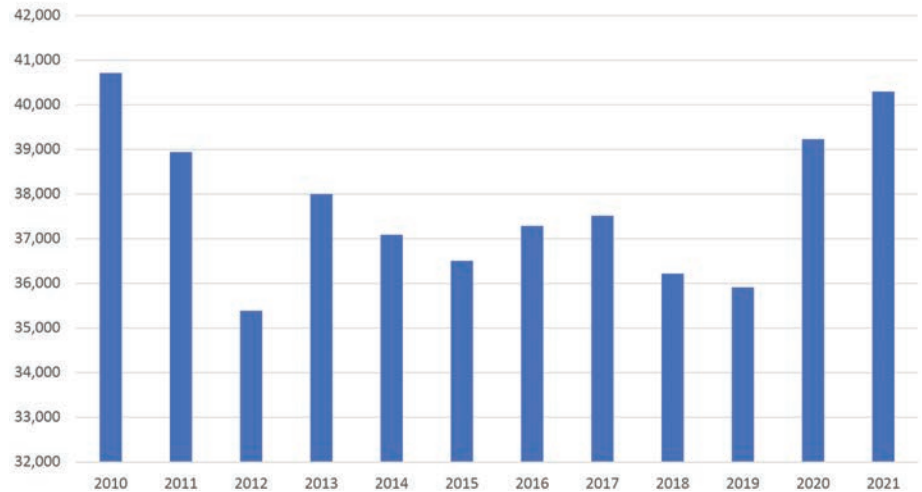
AN ANALYSIS OF MEMBERSHIP TRENDS AND OPPORTUNITIES

Michael J. Hora, National Secretary-Treasurer



The effects of the pandemic will be with us for a long time. There is no switch that will quickly return everything to a pre-pandemic normal, but conditions are improving. While in the grips of the pandemic, organizations were required to find ways to forgo face-to-face interactions. Most Local Unions converted to virtual meetings and embraced virtual training sessions. The NPMHU conducted two virtual SAMLU meetings on ZOOM® that included participants from nearly every Local in the country. In September 2021, the Laborers' International Union of North America (LIUNA) will conduct its International Convention virtually. On our convention front, the NPMHU postponed its 2020 quadrennial convention twice. These delays were all minor inconveniences in the bigger scheme of things. However, there was one pandemic related change that negatively impacted the NPMHU. The USPS unilaterally imposed virtual orientations beginning in early November and this continued through December impacting about 17,000 mail handlers.

MAIL HANDLERS DCO YEAR END MEMBERSHIP



It is said that you only get one chance to make a first impression and most Local Unions were denied the opportunity to meet with mail handlers hired in November and December 2020. The NPMHU was forced to conduct new-hire orientations for about 17,000 MHAs in a virtual setting, via ZOOM®. Having no choice, we did participate, but the impact was severe. This is a good news, bad news story. To the good, for the

first time since 2011, we have exceeded 40,000 mail handlers on the bi-weekly Dues Check Off (DCO) reports.

In addition, the NPMHU has negotiated contractual improvements that have produced a steady stream of conversions from Mail Handler Assistant (MHA) to full-time regular (FTR) status. To appreciate the magnitude of this progress, some background is in order. In 2013, the Fishgold arbitration decision created a new category of mail handlers known as MHAs. The Fishgold decision was issued on February 15, 2013 and the first MHA was converted to full-time regular in Pay Period 22 of 2013. During the first 49 Pay Periods that MHAs existed, or for nearly two years, the NPMHU averaged 50 conversions to FTR each Pay Period.

On August 17, 2015, the NPMHU entered a Memorandum of Understanding re: *Filling of Residual*

It is said that you only get one chance to make a first impression and most Local Unions were denied the opportunity to meet with mail handlers hired in November and December 2020.

I am asking you to have a conversation with your friend, your coworker, your work associate. Ask each and every one of them to join the National Postal Mail Handlers Union if they are not a member.

Vacancies with the USPS. This MOU improved procedures for filling residual vacancies and greatly accelerated opportunities for our MHAs to convert to FTR. After implementation of the residual vacancy MOU, the pace of conversions immediately improved, creating 1,244 conversions in the last 9 Pay Periods of 2015. Our Pay Period average increased from 50 to 138 conversions to FTR in 2015 after implementation of the residual vacancy MOU. It is interesting to note that the NPMHU maintained that pace of 138 conversions per Pay Period when averaged over 6 years. There have been some notable peaks, such as the conversion of 5,291 MHAs to FTR – negotiated in December 2020 – and the conversion of 885 MHAs to FTR – negotiated in March 2021. Notwithstanding these extraordinary peaks, there were understandable valleys or Pay Periods with very few conversions to FTR. An analysis of FTR conversions since signing the residual

vacancy MOU shows that our per Pay Period conversion average increased from 50 to 140. As of Pay Period 8 of 2021, we have secured 22,311 MHA conversions to full-time regular. That is very good news.

Last year, 2020, was the first holiday season without casual employees, as they were eliminated by virtue of the 2019 National Agreement. The elimination of casuals, pandemic challenges, parcel volume increases, and typical Christmas volume brought about a plethora of hiring in November and December 2020. The USPS reported that approximately 17,000 MHAs were hired in the last two months of 2020. As noted, nearly all of these MHAs received their initial USPS training and union orientation in a virtual setting. In previous years, the USPS was terminating holiday casuals and reducing part-time work hours after Christmas. In contrast, in December 2020, the

NPMHU and USPS signed a MOU converting 5,288 MHAs to career FTR.

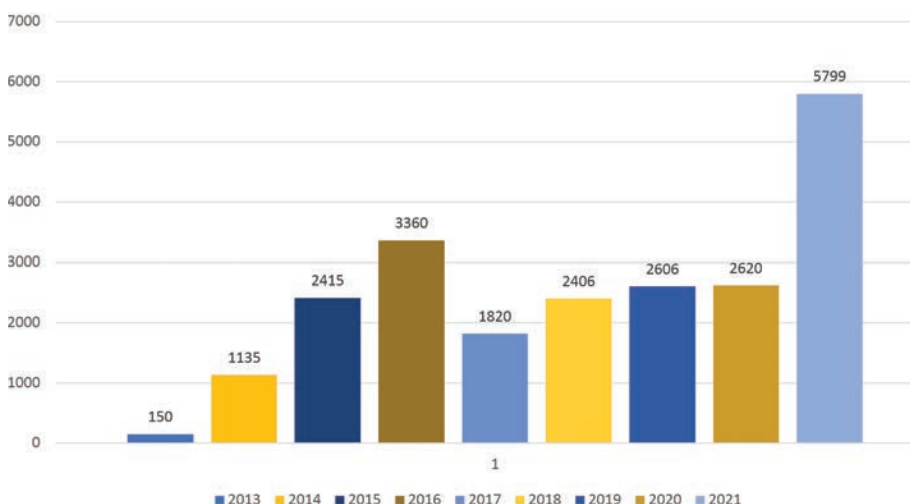
I said that this is a good news, bad news story. The bad news is that our non-member rate is unacceptable. While our regular membership is at a 12-year high, so is our union's percentage of non-members. Many MHAs hired during the Christmas 2020 crunch were only with us for a very short time. Some determined that the work was not their cup of tea and left after a short period of time. Others have stayed with the USPS and enjoy the negotiated benefits and representation rights afforded them by the National Agreement. I am asking you to have a conversation with your friend, your coworker, your work associate. Ask each and every one of them to join the National Postal Mail Handlers Union if they are not a member. The Mail Handlers Union fights to achieve and maintain improved wages and benefits. The compensation package and work rules protections are commendable and will improve over time, but there are significant costs to providing these services. If you know a mail handler non-member, please ask them to join the NPMHU. They are enjoying the benefits and protections negotiated by the Union; it is time for them to pay their fair share and join the NPMHU.

In Unity,



Michael J. Hora
National Secretary-Treasurer

YEARLY CONVERSION TRENDS



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GOLF UMBRELLA: **\$37.00**



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NATIONAL POSTAL MAILHANDLERS

REMEMBER THE

Fallen

In the absence of public gatherings to deal with our collective grief, we are forced to find non-traditional ways to memorialize those who have died from COVID-19. Perhaps the simplest, most essential gesture is to say their names. The following list includes Mail Handlers who have passed on because of COVID-19 since the pandemic began in February 2020. These individuals were wives and husbands, daughters and sons, mothers and fathers, friends, and co-workers. Please keep them and all their family members in your heart.

Jerry Grace

Local #318

William "Bill" Adams

Local 318

Johnny Sanchez

Local #318

John Kromer

Local #308

Marc Larracas

Local #300

Armando Munoz

Local #303

Richard Colon

Local #301

Ralph Wheeler Jr.

Local #305

Kenneth Andrews

Local #322

Johnny Chung

Local #303

Gary Terrell

Local #333

Timothy Bryant

Local #334

Alfredo Baltazar

Local #324

John Lively

Local #321

Tony Ngyuen

Local #321

Marvin Kennaugh

Local #305

James Johnson

Local #318

Kiwoong Kim

Local #307

Anthony Presotti

Local #301

Sandra Duggins

Local #305

LaShonna Briggans

Local #302

Panos Manias

Local #311

Nadir Tiliouine

Local #300

Ambrocio Rafael

Local #306

Roy Depalma

Local #301

Andrew Anothaiwongs

Local #303

Querubin "Sonny" Quitlong

Local #316

David Smithlin

Local #308

Alex Frazier

Local #300

Anthony Smith

Local #307



CONVENTION UPDATE

After several pauses, the Mail Handlers are gearing up for an actual in-person convention. Originally scheduled for August of 2020, the NPMHU quadrennial convention was initially postponed to March 2021. Because of a very persistent Coronavirus pandemic, the event was again rescheduled and is now set to occur in August 2022. The decision to postpone the NPMHU Convention twice was made with consideration for the health and safety of our members, guests, and staff. The state of the pandemic accelerated dramatically between Thanksgiving Day and New Year's Day last year. In August 2020, few believed that the pandemic would be worse in March of 2021. Everyone involved thought a seven-month delay would be sufficient to gain the upper hand; little did we know.

In August 2022, the NPMHU Convention will look different because of the two-year postponement. For one thing, there is no White House Election and Presidential endorsement to consider. Secondly, there is no need to conduct NPMHU officer elections; the regularly scheduled 2020 election was completed on October 28, 2020. Nonetheless, the traditional committees including Credentials, Constitution, Legislative and Political, Resolutions, and Rules still will be empaneled as Convention Delegates will have much work to accomplish on August 8–11, 2022, in Denver.

Throughout the summer of 2022, committees appointed by National President Paul Hogrogian will meet to review and establish a full agenda for the Denver Convention,

including possible constitutional amendments and resolutions that may be submitted for consideration by the delegates. In addition to the traditional Constitution and Resolution Committees — and in recognition of the increasing role that the NPMHU has played in ongoing legislative issues on Capitol Hill — President Hogrogian has once again established a separate Legislative Committee to review and recommend the adoption of resolutions concerning legislative and political matters. Members of the NPMHU who wish to submit proposals for consideration by the delegates at the 2020 National Convention must follow the requirements set forth in the NPMHU National Constitution.

PROPOSED CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS

As set forth in Article XII of the National Union Constitution, the delegates to the 2020 National Convention will consider and vote upon amendments to both the NPMHU National Constitution and the Uniform Local Union Constitution that governs all Local Unions affiliated with the NPMHU. As stated in Article XII, Section 10: “For proposed amendments to this Constitution to be considered by a National Convention, such amendments must be submitted in writing by Delegates, Local Unions or other subordinate bodies in good standing, or regular members in good standing to the National President no later than sixty (60) days prior to the opening of the National Convention. Such proposed amendments shall be referred by the National President to the

Constitution Committee for consideration and recommendation to the National Convention.” Although not required by the Constitution, it would greatly assist the Constitution Committee if submissions were formatted as follows: (1) List the current constitutional language; (2) List the new or changed language that you are proposing; and (3) Explain the reason for the proposed change.

PROPOSED RESOLUTIONS

In addition, the current National Constitution also sets forth the governing procedure for the consideration of resolutions, whether related to legislation or other topics of interest to mail handlers.

In particular, Article XII, Section 15 provides as follows: “Resolutions submitted for consideration of the National Convention must be received by the National President no later than sixty (60) days prior to the opening date of the National Convention. Such resolutions shall be referred to the Committee on Resolutions for consideration and recommendation to the Convention delegates for adoption, modification, or rejection thereof.”

Should you have any constitutional amendments or resolutions that you would like to propose, please be sure to follow the procedures set forth in Article XII of the National Constitution. Because the opening of the National Convention is set for Monday, August 8, 2022, all submissions must be received at the National Office no later than Friday, June 7, 2022, which is sixty days prior to the opening of the 2020 National Convention. The address for submitting any proposed amendments or resolutions is:

NPMHU 2020 National Convention

*815 16th Street NW, Suite 5100
Washington, DC 20006*

2024 NPMHU QUADRENNIAL CONVENTION

Another task routinely handled on the floor of the NPMHU Convention is selecting the site for the next convention. Given the logistics and extended planning required to facilitate a successful convention, it became necessary to conduct the site selection referendum for the 2024 NPMHU Convention by mail. Each delegate was provided with an opportunity to nominate a preferred city and state to host the 2024 NPMHU Convention. The three cities garnering the most nominations – Orlando, FL, Las Vegas, NV and Chicago, IL – were presented to delegates by mail, for a final site selection vote. The final vote determining the location of the 2024 Convention was weighted as if conducted on the floor of the convention. Each of the 340 delegate’s weighted vote value was previously

determined in accordance with Article XII, Sections 2 and 5 of the Constitution and was applied accordingly. The tabulation results are complete. Las Vegas will be the location for the 2024 NPMHU Convention.

2021 LIUNA INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION

The Mail Handlers Union is not the only organization scrambling to deal with an ill-timed convention. Preparations are now underway for the 2021 LIUNA International Convention. Due to the persistence of the COVID-19 pandemic, international border concerns, and financial penalties with the hotel, LIUNA’s General Executive Board has made the decision to hold the 2021 Convention remotely. There will be no in person participation. Registration will occur on September 20, 2021, in advance of two (2) four-hour sessions set for September 21–22, 2021.

For purposes of the 2021 LIUNA International Convention, each NPMHU Local Union must elect 1 delegate for each 300 members (based on the average number of dues paying members during 2020). There also are 13 NPMHU Local Unions that averaged fewer than 300 members last year. The NPMHU NEB has decided to combine all thirteen Local Unions with less than 300 members into one combined election. Together these combined Local Unions have a total membership of over 1,700 and have been authorized to elect a total of six delegates to the LIUNA 2021 Convention. The remaining twenty-four locals have membership sufficient to enjoy entitlement of one or more delegates to the LIUNA Convention. The National Postal Mail Handlers Union is entitled to 122 total delegates to the 2021 LIUNA Convention.

Each Local Union conducting a delegate election must hold a special meeting to be known as the “Nominations Meeting for the 2021 LIUNA Delegate Election” on or before May 21, 2021. The ballots must be mailed to all eligible voters on or before June 4, 2021. And the pre-established deadline for the receipt of ballots is on or before June 30, 2021. Results shall be promptly posted on the Local Union’s bulletin boards and forwarded to the NPMHU National Secretary-Treasurer at the National Office and to the LIUNA General Secretary-Treasurer at the International Office of LIUNA. As of this printing, it is confirmed that there were only four nominations from the smallest combined 13 Local Unions making a LiUNA Delegate Election unnecessary. There are several local unions that will be required to conduct delegate elections for the LiUNA convention, but as of press time, the exact number is not available. A complete list of delegates will be included in the summer edition of the Mail Handler magazine.

UNDERSTANDING THE AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT OF 2021 AND EMERGENCY FEDERAL EMPLOYEE LEAVE

Teresa Harmon, Manager, CAD



We have received numerous calls at the National Office since March wanting information on the Emergency Federal Employee Leave, so I decided to provide what we have received in this article.

On March 11, 2021, President Biden signed into law the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021. The Act included provisions authorizing emergency paid leave, also known as Emergency Federal Employee Leave (EFEL), for covered federal and postal employees in specified qualifying circumstances through a special fund. This fund, which contains \$570 million, is administered by the U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM). This fund applies to qualifying leave that is taken from March 11 through September 30, 2021 or until the fund is depleted.

EFEL is a separate leave entitlement used only at the employee's request. An employee is not required to exhaust other available paid leave, such as annual or sick leave, prior to being eligible for EFEL. An employee, including all career and non-career Mail Handlers, is eligible to use up to 600 hours or 15 weeks regardless of how long they have been employed. EFEL is paid at the same hourly rate as annual leave, unlike the extra leave provided under the previous Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA). At the same time, time on leave while on EFEL does not count towards creditable service time under retirement benefits.

The law identified eight qualifying circumstances under which you can use feel. These include when the employee is:

1. Subject to COVID-19 governmental quarantine or isolation order/advisory.
2. Advised by a health care provider to self-quarantine due to COVID-19 concerns.
3. Caring for an individual subject to (1) such order/advisory or (2) such advice.
4. Experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 and actively seeking (i.e., taking immediate steps to obtain) a medical diagnosis.
5. Caring for a child when required because, due to COVID-19 precautions, the child's school or place of care has been closed, or the child

is participating in virtual learning instruction, or the child's care provider is unavailable.

6. Experiencing any other substantially similar condition (as approved by OPM).
7. Caring for a family member (1) who has a "mental or physical disability"* or who is 55 years of age or older and (2) who is "incapable of self-care"*, without regard to whether another individual other than the employee is available to care for such family member, if the place of care for such family member is closed or the direct care provider is unavailable due to COVID-19 (*as those terms are defined in OPM guidance).
8. Obtaining immunization related to COVID-19 or recovering from any injury, disability, illness, or condition related to such immunization.

On March 12, 2021, the Postal Service issued interim instructions to employees while they were waiting for the official guidelines from OPM on this leave usage. The interim instructions stated that USPS employees would be able to use EFEL while the Postal Service was waiting for the official OPM guidelines by submitting a 3971 indicating one of the qualifying reasons for the leave and affirmatively stating that they are unable to work due to this qualifying reason. On March 18, 2021, the Postal Service sent out additional instructions to their managers stating that supervisors were only authorized to approve up to 80 hours of leave as they were not sure what OPM would require from them or the employees for approval and reimbursement of this leave from the fund. On March 30, April 14, and April 29, 2021, management again sent interim instructions while waiting on OPM to issue the official guidance.

Finally, on April 30, 2021, OPM issued its official guidelines for implementation of the use of the EFEL. As part of these guidelines, management sent out notification on April 30 that, effective immediately, employees requesting EFEL must provide the following per OPM for their request.

1. A completed 3971, Request for or Notification of Absence;

2. COVID-19 Emergency Federal Employee Leave (EFEL) Employee Notification and Leave Request Form and all documentation required by the specific qualifying circumstance, as indicated on the request form; and
3. A signed Employee Agreement in connection with Emergency Federal Employee Leave provided under Section 4001 of the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021. The Employee agreement is required for the first use of EFEL.

OPM also established what documentation is required for each of the eight circumstances. These include the following:

- To confirm eligibility for EPL for qualifying circumstance (1), an employee must provide to the agency the governmental quarantine or isolation order applicable to the employee.
- To confirm eligibility for EPL based on qualifying circumstance (2), an employee must provide to the agency the name of the health care provider who advised the employee to self-quarantine due to concerns related to COVID-19.
- To confirm eligibility for EPL based on qualifying circumstance (3), an employee must provide to the agency the same documentation described in paragraph b or c, as applicable.
- To confirm eligibility for EPL based on qualifying circumstance (4), an employee must provide to the agency a written self-certification that the employee is experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 and taking immediate steps to obtain a medical diagnosis.
- To confirm eligibility for EPL based on qualifying circumstance (5), an employee must provide to the agency—
 - a. *the name of the son or daughter being cared for;*
 - b. *the name of the school, place of care, or childcare provider and a brief description of the situation (i.e., closure, use of on-line instruction, unavailability of the child care provider); and*
 - c. *a written explanation regarding why the employee's circumstances (e.g., ages of children, number of children, special needs of children, lack of other adults in the home) make the employee unable to work (including telework) during the requested hours of leave.*
- To confirm eligibility for EPL based on qualifying circumstance (6), an employee must provide to the agency any documentation the Director of OPM requires or recommends with respect to a particular substantially similar condition.

- To confirm eligibility for EPL based on qualifying circumstance (7), an employee must provide to the agency documentation as follows—
 - a. *the name of the family member with a mental or physical disability and a written certification by the employee that the identified family member has a mental or physical disability (as defined in paragraph D.9.b), if applicable;*
 - b. *the name and age of the family member that is 55 years or older, if applicable;*
 - c. *a written certification by the employee that the identified family member is "incapable of self-care" (as defined in paragraph D.9.c);*
 - d. *the name of the place of care that is closed or the direct care provider that is unavailable and a written explanation of how the closure or unavailability is due to COVID-19; and*
 - e. *a written explanation regarding why the employee's care responsibilities make the employee unable to work (including telework) during the requested hours of leave.*
- To confirm eligibility for EPL based on qualifying circumstance (8), an employee must provide to the agency a written self-certification that the leave will be (or was) used to obtain immunization related to COVID-19 or to recover from any injury, disability, illness, or condition related to such immunization.

On May 5, 2021, the Postal Service sent notification to the Union that it was planning to send letters to all employees, on May 7, who had requested and were conditionally approved for EFEL from March 11 through May 3. The letters that were sent to each employee's address of record required each employee to provide the documentation that was mandated by OPM to support the need for EFEL and to sign an Employee Agreement.

The Employee Agreement, which is also mandated by OPM, shows that the employee is aware that the EFEL is conditional and subject to the availability of EFEL funds. It also makes the employee aware that, if the fund is exhausted before the reimbursement is received by the Postal Service for the use of the EFEL, the leave will be cancelled and the employee will be responsible for either using another form of paid leave or using leave without pay (LWOP). If LWOP is chosen, the employee will be responsible for paying the resulting debt from the leave used.

The Postal Service gave employees until May 21 to submit all required documentation to their supervisor. The letter stated if the documentation was not provided by that time, the EFEL would be cancelled and the employee would need

to elect another type of paid leave or LWOP. Letters were sent to approximately 77,000 employees.

After OPM released its guidelines, the Postal Service created a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQS) document which was released on May 7. This is a lengthy document that you can review either on the Coronavirus Employee Resources page on LiteBlue, under the EFEL tab, or at <https://www.npmhu.org/> where you can find most if not all of the information that I have included in this article.

After a review of these FAQs and recognizing that leave needs to be treated differently for many mail handlers working nights and other unusual hours, the NPMHU sent a letter to Kathleen McGettigan, Acting Director of the Office of Personnel Management requesting clarification on their guidelines for EFEL Qualifying Circumstance #5.

According to the OPM guidance, a covered employee is eligible for EPL if the employee certifies “that he or she is unable to work because of a qualifying circumstance.” One qualifying circumstance is “(5) Caring for employee’s child when required because, due to COVID-19 precautions, the child’s school or place of care has been closed, or the child is participating in virtual learning instruction, or the child’s care provider is unavailable.” The guidance goes on to state that “[t]his circumstance applies only when an employee needs to, and actually is, caring for the employee’s son or daughter and if the employee is unable to work (including telework) as a result of providing care.” Finally, the guidance directs federal agencies, including the Postal Service, “[t]o confirm eligibility for EPL based on qualifying circumstance (5)” by requiring “an employee [to] provide to the agency— (1) the name of the son or daughter being cared for; (2) the name of the school, place of care, or child care provider and a brief description of the situation (i.e., closure, use of on-line instruction, unavailability of the child care provider); and (3) a written explanation

regarding why the employee’s circumstances (e.g., ages of children, number of children, special needs of children, lack of other adults in the home) make the employee unable to work (including telework) during the requested hours of leave.”

After OPM guidance was issued, management at the Postal Service issued frequently asked questions (FAQs) to cover postal employees, including mail handlers. Those FAQs included in number 8 the following question and answer:

I work a tour that does not directly conflict with my child’s hours of virtual/hybrid schooling or my need to provide childcare as a result of the childcare provider’s unavailability. Am I eligible for EFEL under qualifying reason 5?

No. EFEL under qualifying reason 5 is available only for hours that an employee actually is providing childcare because of the qualifying reason.

As made clear by the Postal Service’s answer to this FAQ, postal management has taken the position that an employee is eligible only if the employee “actually is” providing childcare during the hours that the employee is scheduled to work. The NPMHU believes that this restriction is a misunderstanding or misinterpretation of OPM’s guidance, which simply states that to be eligible the employee “actually is” caring for a child and because the employee is providing such childcare the employee is “unable to work.” The NPMHU does not believe that the OPM guidance requires an absolute match between the hours providing childcare and the hours required or scheduled to work. As of the writing of this article, we have not yet received a response from OPM on our request.

If you have any additional questions, please ask your stewards for more information.



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NPMHU-MT-5-07-21



NPMHU Arthur S. Vallone SCHOLARSHIP

VALLONE SCHOLARS: REFLECTIONS OF A RESOLUTION



The NPMHU Scholarship Committee completed its task of evaluating many applications from well qualified NPMHU members and members of their immediate families. Fifteen applications were selected out of a total seventy-eight received by March 15th, 2021. After careful review and consideration, a new group of Vallone Scholars has been awarded a scholarship for the next 4 years.

The NPMHU National Scholarship was dedicated and named after Arthur S. Vallone after his untimely passing in 2005. Arthur S. Vallone served as the elected President of Local 309 headquartered in Buffalo, New York and represented approximately 1,500 Mail Handlers throughout upstate New York. Arthur S. Vallone also served 3 terms on the National Executive Board as the Northeast Region Vice President. Vallone's deep understanding of education and learning are just a handful of reasons why the National Postal Mail Handlers Union dedicated this legacy to Brother Arthur Vallone.

The Arthur S. Vallone Scholarship is now in its 21st year of existence. This award was designed to offer deserving Mail Handlers and members of their immediate families some relief from the financial burden of paying for higher education. With the COVID pandemic still lingering and fewer resources becoming available it can be quite the challenge for families to absorb the cost of higher education. As developing an education savings plan is often difficult for families, the NPMHU has dedicated such an award for deserving individuals.

Each NPMHU Region has been granted up to three scholarship awards in the amount of \$1,000 each, renewable by the recipient for up to four years or until the completion of the students undergraduate or trade school degree, whichever occurs first for a maximum of \$4,000 per recipient over four years.

The pandemic has taken a financial toll on Mail Handlers and their families. As we navigate through these unprecedented times, we recognize that Mail Handlers are providing an essential service under these extraordinary times. It is only fitting that we recognize the importance of the work being done. Whether you are heading to Community College, a traditional 4-year institution or trade school, the National Postal Mail Handlers Union want you to know that we are here for you and can assist in helping you to achieve your goals, this was Brother Vallone's legacy.

The Resolution to rename the NPMHU National Scholarship Program after Brother Vallone is a special document, one of its kind that hangs in the halls of the NPMNU National Office in Washington, DC. One resolution caught my eye as I was readding it for reference to this article. The Resolution states: *WHEREAS, Arthur S. Vallone repeatedly demonstrated his commitment to the membership of the NPMHU, by volunteering to serve on countless details and special projects to enhance the strength and effectiveness of the NPMHU, and to better the lives of all 50,000 Mail Handlers across the country.* It is this ideal that an individual gives

of him/herself to better the collective good of the organization. It is selfishness such as this that have been one of the predominant traits of Vallone Scholars of present and past.

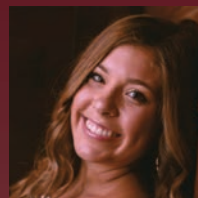
Many of the required essays from this group of Vallone Scholars were excellent; one however embraced the spirit and breadth of Brother Vallone. Siya Yadav wrote, "When I became more comfortable with school, I wanted to help struggling students like me. So, I became a tutor. It didn't take long for me to realize how important my 45-minutes were for students: I watched students blossom into more confident learners. Tutoring also helped me become a better leader, listener, and communicator, allowing me to grow as both a student and friend. It was nice to come full circle and be the mentor I never had.

"I was also able to impact my community while being president of the student government. Here I organized food and holiday gift drives, sponsoring several families to provide them with Thanksgiving meals as well as presents for the holidays. Reading the children's wish lists warms my heart and makes me recognize my privilege. Small contributions can be so meaningful."

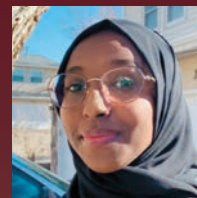
Sia Yadav's drive to help others and raise them up through peer support was exactly why Brother Vallone was such an effective trainer and volunteered for countless details and trainings.

A second Vallone Scholar, Merrill Joseph, also recently awarded with the scholarship spoke about her fathers' job as a Mail Handler and union member. Her essay exhibited the spirit of Brother Vallone showing the drive to understand others needs along with a desire to understand how unions work and why they are important for the members they represent. She wrote, "Despite the challenges faced, my father has expressed his gratitude for this Union's quickness to negotiate with management to obtain improved contracts and fight for employees rights. Since learning about the formation of unions during the labor movement in history class, I have believed in the significance of unionizing in order to protect worker's rights. With the ongoing crisis the Postal Services are facing currently, unions are important now more than ever".

Please take some time to recognize our new group of Vallone Scholar and recognize their accomplishments as they embark on the next chapter of their young lives.



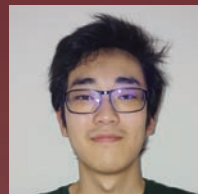
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MIA
ABEJA**



**Local 321
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MINNATALLAH**



**Local 323
JACOB
RYDEN**



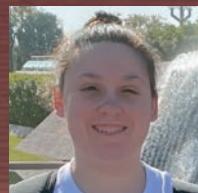
**Local 305
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DENISE
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**Local 308
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YADAV**



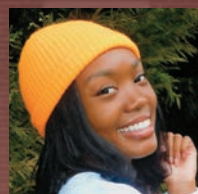
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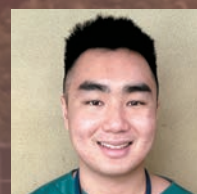
**Local 311
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**Local 303
STELLA
HONG**

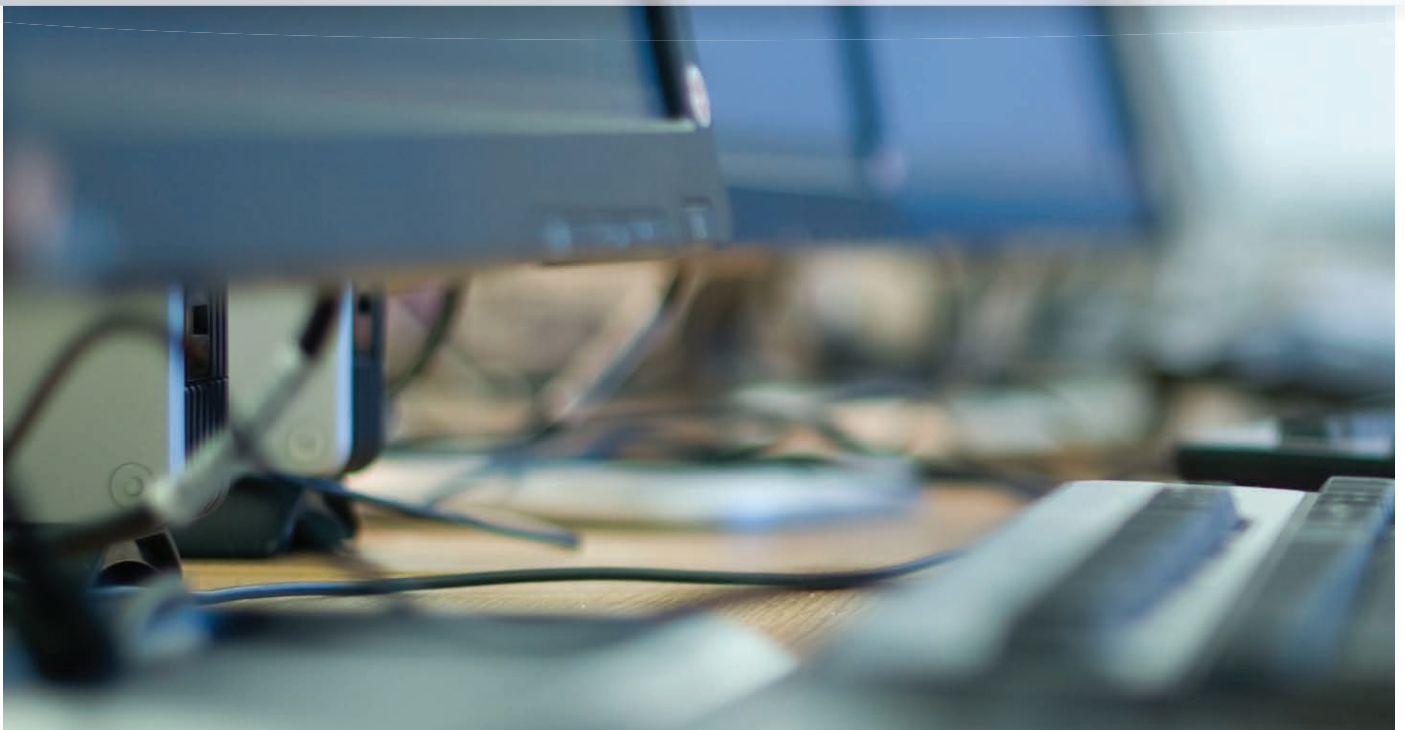


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HUMARANG**



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The Federal Retirement Thrift Investment Board (FRTIB) offers a variety of TSP training opportunities. Review the information below to learn which TSP training will be best for you.

INTRO TO TSP

This webinar provides an introduction to the Thrift Savings Plan for new employees and service members. TSP webinars are hosted by the FRTIB's Office of Communications and Education.

- **July 22, 2021 — 10:00 a.m.**
- **July 30, 2021 — 10:00 a.m.**

TSP CONTRIBUTIONS

This webinar provides an overview of the TSP contribution rules. TSP webinars are hosted by the FRTIB's Office of Communications and Education.

- **June 30, 2021 — 2:00 p.m.**
- **July 8, 2021 — 1:00 p.m.**
- **July 27, 2021 — 10:00 a.m.**

TSP DEATH BENEFITS

- **June 29, 2021 — 10:00 a.m.**
- **June 29, 2021 — 1:00 p.m.**
- **July 22, 2021 — 1:00 p.m.**

TSP IN-SERVICE WITHDRAWALS

This webinar provides an overview of the TSP in-service withdrawal options. TSP webinars are hosted by the FRTIB's Office of Communications and Education. This is a 1-hour webinar.

- **June 24, 2021 — 1:00 p.m.**
- **July 7, 2021 — 10:00 a.m.**
- **July 23, 2021 — 10:00 a.m.**

TSP INVESTMENT FUNDS

This webinar provides an overview of the TSP investment funds. TSP webinars are hosted by the FRTIB's Office of

Communications and Education. This is a 1-hour webinar.

- **June 22, 2021 — 1:00 p.m.**
- **July 8, 2021 — 10:00 a.m.**
- **July 15, 2021 — 10:00 a.m., 1:00 p.m.**

TSP LOANS

This webinar provides an overview of the TSP loan program. TSP webinars are hosted by the FRTIB's Office of Communications and Education. This is a 1-hour webinar.

- **June 24, 2021 — 10:00 a.m.**
- **July 6, 2021 — 1:00 p.m.**

TSP POST-SERVICE WITHDRAWALS

This webinar provides an overview of the TSP post-service withdrawal options. The information in this webinar is beneficial to TSP participants that are within 10 years or less of retirement and participants that have separated or retired. TSP webinars are hosted by the FRTIB's Office of Communications and Education. This is a 1-hour webinar.

- **July 9, 2021 — 10:00 a.m.**
- **July 20, 2021 — 10:00 a.m., 1:00 p.m.**
- **July 28, 2021 — 10:00 a.m.**

COURSES

TSP A TO Z

This course covers every aspect of TSP participation, and would be beneficial for a mixed group covering every stage of professional life. Topics include the benefits of savings, traditional vs. Roth contributions, investments, loans, and post-separation withdrawals.

- **July 1, 2021 — 10:00 a.m.**
- **July 29, 2021 — 12:00 p.m.**

TSP EARLY TO MID-CAREER (EMC)

- **July 6, 2021 — 9:00 a.m.**
- **July 10, 2021 — 10:00 a.m.**
- **July 28, 2021 — 1:00 p.m.**

TSP PRE-SEPARATION

This course is designed to give late-career employees and service members the tools they need to make smart decisions with their TSP savings as they prepare to retire. The agenda includes the TSP withdrawal options and death benefits, and provides several retirement scenarios to get attendees thinking about how to best turn their savings into income.

- **June 23, 2021 — 7:00 p.m.**
- **June 30, 2021 — 10:00 a.m.**
- **July 7, 2021 — 1:00 p.m.**
- **July 17, 2021 — 10:00 a.m.**
- **July 27, 2021 — 1:00 p.m.**

TSP TO RETIREMENT AND BEYOND

This two-part presentation is most relevant for employees within 5-10 years of their planned retirement. The focus is on determining how much someone needs to save in their TSP account so they can retire at their desired standard of living with a nest egg that will last for the rest of their lives.

Part I includes a discussion on estimating future income needs, assessing the impact of long-term risks, deciding when to retire, and prioritizing retirement savings goals.

Part II consists of a discussion of the risks faced by new retirees. We will discuss the concept of a systematic strategy and how it is applied throughout retirement and cover scenarios that illustrate issues participants face during the drawdown process. (4 hours with break)

- **July 21, 2021 — 11:00 a.m.**

PMG DEJOY RELEASES DELIVERING FOR AMERICA 10 YEAR PLAN

Katie Maddocks, Legislative and Political Director



A flurry of postal activity has been happening on Capitol Hill since the last edition of the *Mail Handler*. The USPS issued its ten-year plan as a means to provide fiscal stability; President Biden nominated and the Senate confirmed three new members to the Board of Governors; the House and Senate introduced, on a bipartisan basis, the Postal Reform Act of 2021 (H.R. 3076 and S. 1720), legislation supported by the NPMHU; and, the House introduced a separate bill, H.R. 3077, to address postal transparency, revenue growth, and expanding employee benefits.

President Hogrogian goes into greater detail on the pros and cons of the ten-year plan in his article, but Postmaster General DeJoy's support for postal reform legislation should be reiterated. In the ten-year plan, entitled *Delivering for America*, DeJoy and the Board of Governors called upon members of Congress to pass legislation that would repeal the 2006 mandate to prefund retiree healthcare benefits, while also requiring future retirees to enroll in Medicare when eligible. The mandate is the cause of an annual loss of \$5 billion over ten years and has been the primary cause of the Postal Service's financial deficits since 2013. Meanwhile, Medicare integration would take financial pressure off of the Postal Service Retirement Health Fund's unfunded liability. Postal employees have contributed over \$35 billion to Medicare over the past four decades, while not fully taking advantage of its benefits. Repeal and integration would save the USPS \$44 billion over eight years.

These actions are the mainstay of the bipartisan Postal Reform Act of 2021, H.R. 3076 and S. 1720.

After dedicated negotiations between House Committee on Oversight and Reform (COR) Chairwoman Carolyn Maloney (D-NY-12) and Ranking Member James Comer (R-KY-01), they introduced the bipartisan House bill on May 11. Their negotiations tried to take account of the needs of postal stakeholders, including the NPMHU and other unions. H.R. 3076 also addresses other items on the NPMHU legislative agenda. First, the bill allows for the Postal Service to enter agreements with state, local, or tribal governments to provide property and services on behalf of such agencies for non-commercial products and services, such as providing fishing and hunting licenses, thereby providing a source of

additional revenue growth for the Postal Service. Second, the bill codifies a six-day delivery standard, ensuring postal customers will receive first class mail and parcels to which they are accustomed.

NPMHU members are keenly aware of the issues caused from mail delays due to service standard changes last summer. Union members as well as postal customers saw significant delays that impacted the delivery of medications, caused late fees for bill payments, and generally undermined the reliability of the Postal Service. In order to reassure customers and provide greater transparency, H.R. 3076 calls for the creation of a public-facing dashboard website that informs USPS customers about delays. Furthermore, the bill calls for studies on the financial status of the Postal Service and would provide qualitative data on standards, providing necessary information on the performance of the Postal Service.

NPMHU members are keenly aware of the issues caused from mail delays due to service standard changes last summer.

H.R. 3076 quickly passed within the Committee with bipartisan support and now heads to both the House Committee on Ways and Means and the House Committee on Energy and Commerce, as both of these bodies have jurisdiction over Medicare issues. Ongoing discussions with these committee members have been promising, and they appear eager to move the bill forward. There is additional support for these bills from House Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-CA-12) and Democratic Leader Steny Hoyer (D-MD-05).

Upon its passage in COR, Chairwoman Maloney stated, "We have accomplished something historic today. We moved legislation to put the Postal Service on a more secure financial footing, enhance transparency, and improve service. I am proud that this bill to strengthen the Postal Service

was approved by the Oversight Committee on a strong bipartisan basis.”

Quickly following COR’s lead, the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee (HSGAC) Chairman Gary Peters (D-MI) and Ranking Member Rob Portman (R-OH) introduced identical language on May 19, bill number S. 1720. The Senate bill is also cosponsored by Senators Tina Smith (D-MN), Mike Rounds (R-SD), Roy Blunt (R-MO), Brian Schatz (D-HI), Josh Hawley (R-MO), Joe Manchin (D-WV), Dan Sullivan (D-AK), Ron Wyden (D-OR), Susan Collins (R-ME), Alex Padilla (D-CA), Steve Daines (R-MT), Jacky Rosen (D-NV), Shelly Capito (R-WV), Kyrsten Sinema (D-AZ), Thomas Tillis (R-NC), Maggie Hassan (D-NH), Richard Burr (R-NC), and Tom Carper (D-DE). With this amount of support, if S. 1720 were to come to the Senate floor for a vote, it would pass.

Upon the bill’s introduction, Chairman Peters commented, “This commonsense, bipartisan legislation would help put the Postal Service on a sustainable financial footing, ensure it is more transparent and accountable to the American people, and support hardworking postal workers who deliver rain or shine to communities all across the country. I am proud to lead this bipartisan effort in the Senate and stand ready to work with my colleagues to move this bill through Congress.”

With H.R. 3076 and S. 1720 heavily negotiated to ensure bipartisanship, the Postal Service Improvement Act, H.R. 3077, was introduced separately to address more contentious proposals, and was passed in COR along party lines. This bill initially contained language to provide ballot tracking for those participating in vote by mail and to guarantee paid parental leave for postal employees. The ballot tracking provision also appears in a stand-alone bill, H.R. 1307, the Vote by Mail Tracking Act, which calls for mail-in ballots to be barcoded by the Postal Service for tracking purposes. In a hearing before COR, PMG DeJoy testified in support of the H.R. 1307. H.R. 3077 also would extend paid parental leave to postal employees, providing for up to 12 weeks for the birth of a child, the adoption of a child, and the fostering of a child, a benefit that already is provided to the rest of the federal workforce.

During the mark-up session of H.R. 3077, amendments were added, including provisions that would fund an electric vehicle fleet for the Postal Service; restore service standards back to January 1, 2021 levels; require financial disclosures from

the Postmaster General and the Deputy Postmaster General before they assume duties; and guarantee access to all Members of Congress to enter any postal facility for the purpose of conducting oversight.

Along with these great steps towards postal reform, the NPMHU saw support for another legislative agenda item. Representative Jackie Speier (D-CA-14) and Senator Jeff Merkley (D-OR) introduced the bipartisan USPS Shipping Equity Act as H.R. 3287 and S. 1163. This legislation would allow for the Postal Service to ship alcohol, the same as their private carrier counterparts. Over the past five years, online sales of alcohol have grown by 12 percent, amounting to over \$1 billion. If the USPS had the same access to shipping alcohol, the Congressional Budget Office estimates an additional \$50 million a year in revenue for the Postal Service.

In addition to these legislative accomplishments, President Biden nominated three members to the Postal Board of Governors. On April 22, former Deputy PMG Ron Stroman, Vote at Home Institute CEO Amber McReynolds, and former APWU counsel Anton Hajjar testified before the Senate Committee on what they saw as impediments to the USPS mission and goals, and what they thought was necessary to improve the agency. All nominees commented that it is imperative to stabilize the Postal Service’s finances, and Stroman specifically called out the need for bipartisan support from Congress in order to develop postal reform that successfully addresses this. The nominees also spoke to the need for improving delivery and performance as the Postal Service is vital to residences and businesses alike in urban, rural, and suburban communities. The Senate confirmed Stroman, McReynolds, and Hajjar

on May 12, 13, and 28, respectively. The NPMHU looks forward to working with these new Board members.

A lot has happened in the months of April and May, and NPMHU expects more developments to come and quite possibly to come quickly. Please check back in at the NPMHU website for any updates.



Gary Peters (D-MI)



James Comer (R-KY-01)



Carolyn Maloney (D-NY-12)



Rob Portman (R-OH)

Postal Unions Educate

Ways & Means and Energy & Commerce Committees on Postal Reform

Following its passage within the House Committee on Oversight and Reform, the Postal Reform Act of 2021 (H.R. 3076) will be reviewed by the House Committee on Ways and Means as well as the House Committee on Energy and Commerce, as both of these committees have jurisdiction over Medicare issues. As prospective Medicare integration for future retirees is at the crux of this bill, they will have to review and approve of the bill in order for it to move forward.

NPMHU, along with the National Association of Letter Carriers, the American Postal Workers Union, and the National Rural Letter Carriers' Association, wrote to the Chairmen and Ranking Members of these committees to ensure they were fully aware the benefits of H.R. 3076 as it relates to Medicare integration.

Without imposing any costs on other federal employees or retirees, the bill will reduce USPS retiree health care costs under the Federal Employees

Health Benefits Plan (FEHBP) by creating postal-only plans within FEHBP and adopting rules for those plans that are standard practice among private sector health plans that offer retiree coverage. Specifically, the postal-only plans will require future annuitants to enroll in Medicare Parts A and B and take advantage of employer subsidies now provided under Medicare Part D to company plans that offer prescription drug benefits to their retirees.

Beginning January 1, 2023, the following will apply: Active postal employees under age 64 will be automatically enrolled in Medicare (Parts A and B) when they retire and become eligible for the program. Retired postal employees will have an option to remain in existing FEHBP or participate in new postal-only FEHBP plans that include enrollment in Medicare Parts A and B. Active postal employees 64 or older will have the same options when they retire.

Retirees over age 65 who have chosen in the past not to enroll in Medicare

Part B will be given a one-time opportunity to do so with no late-enrollment penalty by enrolling in a postal-only FEHBP plan. Annuitants who do not want to use this opportunity to enroll in Medicare will remain in their existing FEHBP (non-postal) plans.

For all future annuitants, the bill provides an exception to the requirement to enroll in Medicare Part B for those covered under other insurance arrangements (such as the VA) and for those who live in a place where there are not Medicare-participating providers. These retirees will be covered by non-postal FEHBP plans.

The letter concluded, "Postal employees and the Postal Service have paid into Medicare and should be allowed to maximize its value the same way private companies and their retirees do."

The entirety of the letter can be found on the NPMHU Legislative & Political Letters to Capitol Hill website, <https://www.npmhu.org/legislative/legislative-priorities/letters-from-npmhu>.



2021 PAC

INCENTIVE AWARDS



2021 PAC INCENTIVE AWARDS

LEVEL	DONATION	AWARD
Member	\$26 (\$1 per pay period)	PAC Pin
Sponsor	\$52 (\$2 per pay period)	PAC Power Pack
Activist	\$100	PAC Polo Shirt
Leader	\$250	PAC AA Mini Maglite and Leatherman
Ambassador	\$500	PAC Traveler Bag



YOU TOO CAN BECOME AN NPMHU POLITICAL ACTIVIST

There is a quick way for Mail Handlers to contribute to the NPMHU PAC. Simply call in to the PostalEASE system, or visit the PostalEASE option on the web at www.liteblue.usps.gov. Follow the instructions printed on page 24 of this magazine. Your PAC contribution will be made directly from your bi-weekly postal payroll. You also have the option of sending in a personal check or authorizing a credit card contribution. Your contributions will also be entered in to the incentive award program that entitles you to an award based on your contribution level. There are five distinct PAC membership levels and awards. Awards are distributed based on membership level and will be mailed after the end of the year; awards will vary year to year.



NOTICE CONCERNING CONTRIBUTIONS:

Contributions to the Mail Handlers PAC are not deductible as charitable contributions for purposes of federal income taxes. In addition, federal law requires that the Mail Handlers PAC report to the Federal Election Commission the name, mailing address, occupation, and name of employer for each individual whose contributions in any calendar year total in excess of \$200. Please also note that the Mail Handlers PAC has political purposes, and that all members have the right to refuse to contribute, and the right to revoke their authorization for any continuing contributions, without any reprisal.

PAC CONTRIBUTION BY PERSONAL CHECK, MONEY ORDER, OR CREDIT CARD:

You can contribute directly to the Mail Handlers PAC by filling out the following information and mailing it to:

Mail Handler PAC
P.O. Box 65171
Washington DC 20035

Please enclose your check or money order, or provide authorization to charge your credit card.



(Cut here and return to NPMHU PAC)



YOUR CONTRIBUTION HELPS PRESERVE POSTAL JOBS

This is to certify that I, _____, have voluntarily contributed the amount listed below, to the NPMHU PAC. I understand that this voluntary contribution is not a condition of membership in the union; I have the right to refuse to contribute without any reprisal; if specific contribution amounts are mentioned they are merely suggestions and I am free to contribute more or less; the Union will not favor or disadvantage me because of the amount of my contribution or my decision not to contribute; NPMHU PAC will use the money it receives to make Political expenditures and contributions in connection with federal elections; and only U.S. Citizens and lawful permanent U.S. residents are eligible to contribute.

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Contribution Amount: (Please check one):

- ☐ \$26 (Member) ☐ \$52 (Sponsor) ☐ \$100 (Activist) ☐ \$250 (Leader) ☐ \$500 (Ambassador)
☐ Other _____

Please enclose your check or money order, or authorization to charge your credit card.

☐ VISA ☐ MASTERCARD Acct.# _____

Signature _____ Expiration Date _____

Contributions to the NPMHU PAC are not deductible as charitable contributions for federal income purposes.

You also can make your PAC contribution by bi-weekly salary allotment through PostalEASE (access by phone or on the web):

PostalEASE by TELEPHONE:

1. Dial **1-877-4PS-EASE**—(877-477-3273) and follow the prompt for the Employee Services Main Menu.
2. When prompted, press **#1** for PostalEASE
3. When prompted, enter your eight-digit USPS employee identification number.
4. When prompted again, enter your USPS PIN number.
(This is the same as the PIN number you use for telephone bidding and/or other payroll allotments.)
5. When prompted, choose option **#2** (to select payroll allotments)
6. Then choose option **#1** (to select allotments)
7. When prompted, press **#2** to continue
8. When prompted, press **#3** to add the allotment
9. When prompted for the routing number, enter **054001220**
10. When prompted for the account number, enter the following:
11260001 ____—____—____ (the last nine digits of your account number is your social security number—this information will allow us to identify you as the PAC contributor).
11. Press **#1** if correct
12. When prompted, press **#1** for “checking”
13. When prompted, input the bi-weekly dollar amount of your PAC allotment.
14. Press **#1** if correct
15. When prompted, press **#1** to process
16. You will be provided a confirmation number as well as the start date for the salary allotment.
17. For your records:
 - Record the confirmation number
 - Record the start date of the salary allotment
18. Press **#1** to repeat, or press **#9** to end call

PostalEASE on the WEB:

To initiate your bi-weekly PAC contribution on the web, simply go to **www.liteblue.usps.gov**

1. Enter your eight-digit USPS Employee ID Number and your USPS PIN
2. Follow the link to PostalEASE—you will again be asked to enter your Employee ID Number and USPS PIN
3. Follow the link for PAYROLL – Allotments/NTB
4. Continue to the ALLOTMENTS section
5. Your ROUTING TRANSIT NUMBER is: **054001220**
6. Your ACCOUNT # will be: **11260001** ____—____—____ (the last nine digits of your account number is your social security number—this information will allow us to identify you as the PAC contributor).
7. For ACCOUNT TYPE—please select “CHECKING”
8. When prompted, please input the AMOUNT that you would like to contribute to the PAC each pay period.
9. To process your PAC allotment, you will need to select the VALIDATE button, and to finalize the transaction, please select SUBMIT. Be sure to print out a copy of the confirmation page for your records.

Secretary of Labor Marty Walsh

MEETS WITH KEY LABOR LEADERS

On April 26, 2021, President Biden issued an Executive Order creating the White House Task Force on Worker Organizing and Empowerment, chaired by Vice President Harris and Secretary of Labor Marty Walsh. Secretary Walsh addressed affiliate members of the AFL-CIO on what he hopes the Task Force will achieve to increase union membership and density across the country and how the Biden Administration and unions can work together to achieve this goal.

Speaking not only as the leader of the Department of Labor, but also as

a member of LiUNA, Secretary Walsh spoke to the value of union membership, as it has resulted in increased wages for workers, expanded benefits, and improved workplace safety. However, the ability to organize has been hindered by current laws and regulations. Walsh spoke to the need for AFL-CIO affiliate members to work with the Administration and elected officials to identify these barriers and how federal agencies and departments can work to promote organizing across the country.

Strengthening the ability to organize and form a union has been a long-time policy objective of President Biden.



During his recent speech to the April 28 Joint Session of Congress, Biden called upon Members of Congress to pass the Protecting the Right to Organize (PRO) Act, H.R. 842 and S. 420. This legislation provides employees with the freedom to organize; penalizes employers who retaliate against employees who organize; and protects workers from being replaced while striking. In a previous statement on the bill, Biden commented, "The middle class built this country, and unions built the middle class... Unions lift up workers, both union and non-union. They are critical to strengthening our economic competitiveness."

The NPMHU is currently working with the AFL-CIO, our affiliate brothers and sisters, and the Department of Labor on how to grow union membership and support the Task Force and the PRO Act.



PART HEALTH PLAN, PART SAVINGS ACCOUNT

MHBP CONSUMER OPTION

Federal and postal employees, regardless of what job you do in the service of the U.S. public, this plan is for you. The MHBP Consumer Option balances your needs and offers benefits catered to you.

Some of your plan benefits:

HSA contributions of
\$1,200 for self only and
\$2,400 for self plus 1
and self/family

No cost* MinuteClinic®
at CVS visits

No cost* for Telehealth
through Teladoc®

40 alternative care visits
per year for chiropractic
care and acupuncture

No out-of-pocket costs*
for maternity care

No cost* for
Lab Savings Program

*The calendar year deductible applies and must be met before benefits begin.

YOUR RATES

These rates do not apply to all Enrollees. If you are in a special enrollment category, please refer to the FEHB Program website or contact the agency or Tribal Employer which maintains your health benefits enrollment.

Plan Types	Federal Employees and Full Time Regular Mail Handlers	Mail Handlers Assistants (second term)	Annuitants (monthly)
Self Only CODE 481	\$72.76	\$166.04	\$157.65
Self Plus One CODE 483	\$161.02	\$323.08	\$348.88
Self and Family CODE 482	\$169.07	\$221.78	\$366.32

To learn more, get in touch with us at 800-410-7778
or visit [MHBP.com](https://www.MHBP.com).



Qualifying life events allow individuals the chance to change their plan selection if one of the following life events occurs: marriage, birth, adoption, divorce, loss of health coverage, etc. This is a summary of the features of the Mail Handlers Benefit Plan (MHBP). Before making a final decision, please read the official 2021 Plan Brochures (RI 71-007 or RI 71-016). All benefits are subject to the definitions, limitations and exclusions set forth in the official 2021 Plan Brochure. For more information about MHBP plans, please refer to www.MHBP.com.
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LOWERING YOUR CANCER RISK

HEALTHY LIVING FOR CANCER PREVENTION

Nina Gallauresi, Executive Director, MHBP

Most people know someone who's had cancer: a family member, a friend, a loved one. Who gets it can sometimes seem random. But there are many things you can do to reduce your risk.

Cancer can start almost anywhere in the body. Normally, your cells grow and divide to form new cells as the body needs them. When a cell is old or becomes damaged, it dies. Then a new cell takes its place.

But when cancer develops, this orderly process breaks down. Cancer cells divide without stopping. They can then spread into surrounding tissues or other parts of the body.

CAUSES OF CANCER

Cancer starts with damage to the genes that control the way cells function. Many things you're exposed to over your lifetime can damage genes. These include chemicals, radiation, tobacco, alcohol, and others. Your body has ways to repair the damage, but they don't always work perfectly.

As you age, your body has had more time to build up damage. And the normal aging process causes other changes in cells that help cancer develop. These factors make cancer more likely to appear as you age.

"Fortunately, most cancers do not develop as a result of a single exposure," explains NIH researcher Dr. Erikka Loftfield, who studies cancer prevention. "Typically, you don't have just one cause for a given cancer. And some potential risk factors, like cigarette smoking and diet, are changeable."

Because damage to your genes builds up slowly over time, there are many opportunities for prevention.

"Not smoking, maintaining a healthy weight, getting enough physical activity, limiting alcohol, and eating a nutritious diet are all intertwined in cancer prevention," Loftfield says. "These are all things that also help us live a healthy life."

QUIT TOBACCO

Tobacco use is the leading cause of cancer in the U.S. This includes smoking and use of other tobacco products, like chewing tobacco. Many chemicals in tobacco products can damage your genes.

"Smoking is one of the the most dangerous health behaviors there is," says Dr. Johannes Thrul, a tobacco researcher at Johns Hopkins University.

Using tobacco also increases your risk of heart attack, stroke, lung disease, and many other conditions. But it can be very hard to stop—even if you know the risks.

Tobacco products contain an addictive substance called nicotine. But there are medications that can help you quit. They can reduce nicotine withdrawal and cravings. Some are available by prescription. Others can be found over-the-counter, like nicotine replacement gums or patches. Using medications with counseling can be even more effective.

Thrul and others are looking for new ways to help people quit smoking. They're developing smartphone apps that track when smokers are close to

places that trigger nicotine cravings. The apps then send personalized support messages.

"We're trying to deliver support to smokers in these critical situations, in real time," he says.

These apps are still being tested. You can get free help now by visiting smokefree.gov, calling 1-800-QUIT-NOW (1-800-784-8669), or by texting QUIT to 47848.

"No matter how long you've smoked, no matter how old you are, quitting smoking will always benefit your health," Thrul says.

EAT SMART, KEEP MOVING

When it comes to cancer prevention, the saying "you are what you eat" applies, says NIH researcher Dr. Jill Reedy, who studies diet and cancer. But it's not just diet. Your overall lifestyle—including weight and physical activity—also matters.

"There's a lot of evidence that maintaining a healthy lifestyle has the potential to reduce cancer risk," Reedy says.

Diet and related factors can raise your risk in many ways. For example, excess weight can increase inflammation in the body, Reedy explains. Long-term inflammation is thought to increase cancer risk.

Excess weight can also cause the levels of certain hormones to rise. High levels of these hormones can raise the risk of some types of cancer, such as breast cancer.

How diet itself affects cancer risk is complicated, Reedy explains. What

we eat gets broken down and used by our cells to keep the body running. Chemicals in some foods—like highly processed meats—may raise the risk of cancer. But overall, there aren't many single foods to avoid.

Other chemicals in food may lower your risk. But no single food, nutrient, or vitamin alone can protect you from cancer. "It would be great if there was a magic bullet, but there isn't," she Reedy says.

"It's really about the overall quality of your diet. Choose fruits and vegetables, whole grains, lean proteins, and healthy oils. Limit alcohol, added sugars, saturated fats, and sodium," she explains.

You can learn more about healthy eating patterns from the Dietary Guidelines for Americans. Healthy eating appears to reduce cancer risk even if you have trouble losing weight, Loftfield explains. And the same seems to be true for physical activity.

"We've seen that physical activity lowers the risk of some types of cancers, independent of its effects on weight," she says. This may be because exercise can reduce inflammation, stress, and other things that can harm your cells.

Loftfield and Reedy are studying new ways to measure what happens in the body after eating different types of foods. This will help them learn more about how diet impacts cancer risk.

PREVENTION TIPS

There are other simple actions you can take to reduce your risk of specific cancers. To lower your chances of skin cancer, wear sunscreen and sun protective clothing, limit your time in the sun, and avoid tanning beds.

Certain vaccines can reduce your risk of cervical, liver, and other cancers. This is because some viruses, like human papillomavirus (HPV), can damage your genes in ways that lead to cancer.

"Getting vaccinated against HPV and other cancer-related viruses is a very

practical way to modify your cancer risk," Loftfield says.

Common screening tests can also reduce your risk. These let doctors find and remove small growths that may turn into cancer. A colonoscopy, which looks for growths in the colon and rectum, is one example. Cervical cancer screening is another. For tips on talking about your risk for cancers, see the Ask Your Doctor box.

ASK YOUR DOCTOR

Ask about reducing your cancer risk:

- What can you recommend to help me quit smoking?
- Have I had all the recommended vaccinations to prevent cancer?
- What cancer screening tests should I have at my age?
- What dietary changes can I make to help reduce my risk of cancer?
- How can I safely exercise to improve my health?
- Does my family medical history put me at higher risk for cancer?
- Is there anything else I should know about my cancer risk?

MHBP RESOURCES TO ASSIST YOU

Use your MHBP benefits to complete important health screenings. Screenings can help you find health problems early, when they are most treatable. Talk to your doctor about the best screening options for you. Some important prevention care options include:

- A mammogram once every year
- A Pap and/or HPV test every 3–5 years
- Colon cancer screening every year, or every 10 years, depending on the type of screening

For a full list of covered preventive services for adults and children, check Section 5(a) of the MHBP Plan

brochure for Standard Option and Value Plan information or Section 5 of the Consumer Option brochure.

- Routine screenings are covered at the time interval recommended below:
- Colorectal cancer screening, including: Fecal occult blood (stool) test — one per calendar year for members age 40 and older
- Screening sigmoidoscopy — one every two consecutive calendar years for members age 50 and older
- Individual counseling on prevention and reducing health risks
- Prostate cancer screening (PSA) — one per calendar year for men age 40 and older.

For help with Tobacco Cessation, MHBP offers a Lifestyle and Condition Coaching program to provide you or your covered dependents personalized support that helps manage existing conditions, learn new habits and stay on the path to better health. Our health coach will partner with you to transform your health goals into action. Your health coach will provide guidance, support and resources to help you overcome obstacles that may be keeping you from realizing optimal health. You can talk to a coach to help you quit tobacco use.

If you have any questions or would like more information about these programs, please call MHBP at 800-410-7778.

References:

- U.S. Preventive Services Taskforce <https://uspreventiveservicestaskforce.org/uspstf/>

Sources:

- National Institutes of Health: <https://newsinhealth.nih.gov/>
- MHBP.com



THANKFUL FOR YOU!

June Harris, Central Region Vice President,
Local 306 President, Women's Committee Chairperson

So much has happened since the pandemic began. Believe it or not, because many people are getting the COVID 19 vaccine, the numbers are improving. Hospitalizations are decreasing and so are deaths. We can only hope that things will continue to get better.

The atmosphere in our workplaces continues to be unstable. Many Mail Handlers and other employees are concerned about the probability of catching COVID. Maybe we are not worried as much as last year, but the reality is, it is still possible to get infected. Don't let your guard down. Continue to maintain social distancing, frequent hand washings, wipe down work areas, and wear gloves. You are not only protecting yourself, but others too. And of most importance, wear your face masks and get vaccinated.

NPMHU representatives are at work daily, putting themselves in the line of fire. We are protecting the vaccinated, as well as those who made a decision not to take the shot. This is a personal

decision. But our Union representatives are still working to ensure that our members' rights are not being violated. They face constant scrutiny by both management and our members, but they stay in the fight. Those who have been in the trenches the longest are really seeing the changes in the atmosphere. They are getting battle wounds, but they continue their commitment to protect our membership.

There are new rules constantly being enacted by the government and the Postal Service. Some good and others, not so good, but they affect our ability to carry out our daily lives. The implementation of these rule changes continuously create problems and at times cause mass confusion. Yet, the men and women of our Union maintain their positions. It would be so easy to take the easy way out, but they remain steadfast. They have pledged to uphold our contract and they do!

So, in this article, I honor my fellow representatives. You are great



Fathers, Mothers, Sisters, and Brothers. Throughout the years and through other natural disasters, you have taken a stand. You have remained true to your mission. I wish you all better and greater days ahead. Better days for your families, in both their health and anything else that you're hoping for. If you are contemplating retirement, great for you! If you're just starting your postal career and are feeling uneasy, that's okay too. Think about it and make the decision that makes you and your family happy. Know that the National Postal Mail Handlers Union and its hundreds of officers and representatives appreciate you. Brighter days are ahead and we look forward to sharing them with you.

Throughout the years and through other natural disasters, you have taken a stand. You have remained true to your mission. I wish you all better and greater days ahead. Better days for your families, in both their health and anything else that you're hoping for. If you are contemplating retirement, great for you!

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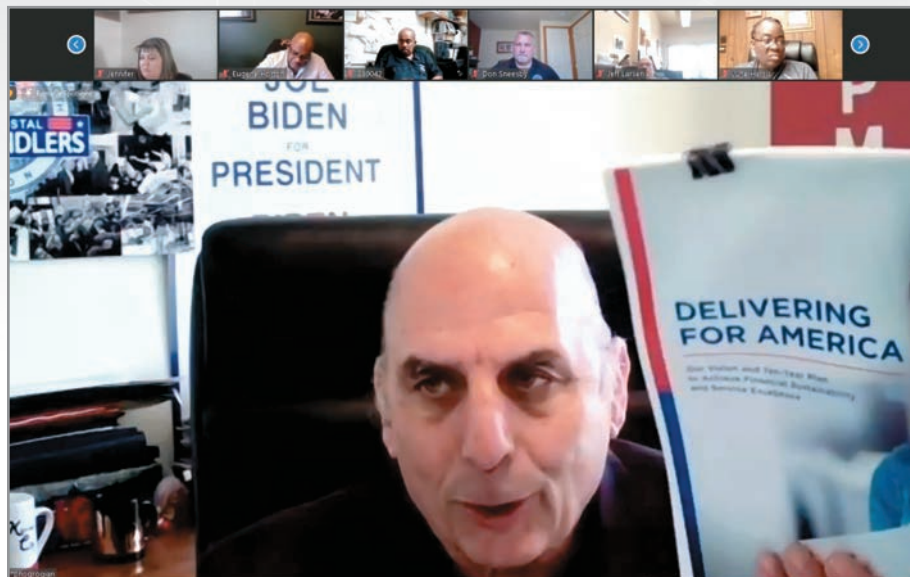
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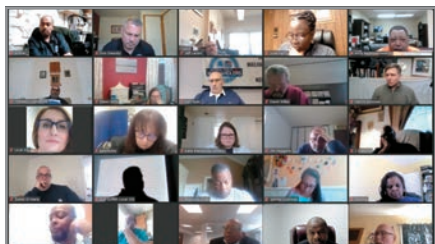
DEJOY AND THE USPS BOARD OF GOVERNORS RELEASE 10-YEAR PLAN

Postmaster General Louis DeJoy and the USPS Board of Governors recently released their long-awaited ten-year plan for the U.S. Postal Service, *Delivering for America*. The plan sets forth a series of strategies by which USPS management hopes to ensure financial stability and improve service. It reviews the massive changes in mail volume and mail mix over the past several decades and urges that a series of steps be adopted to deal with difficulties in processing and delivering mail, reducing employee turnover, and addressing long-term financial shortfalls. A copy of the plan was reviewed with all Local Presidents during a nationwide conference call on March 26, 2021.

As with all ambitious goals, the ultimate success of the 10-year plan is dependent on its details and its good-faith implementation. At this early point, however, the NPMHU can be only supportive on a few aspects: growth of package volume; expanding sources of revenue; congressional action that repeals the prefunding mandate and enrolls future retirees in Medicare; establishing forty-six parcel annexes;



Local Union Presidents from across the country joined President Hogrogian to discuss the pros and cons of the USPS 10 Year Plan, *Delivering for America*.



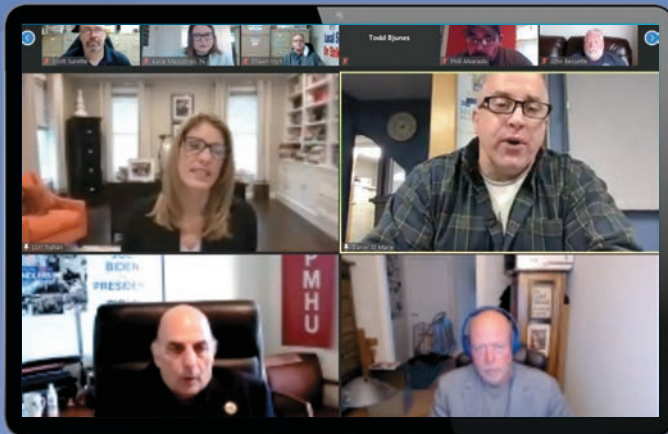
and stabilizing the non-career postal workforce by providing a clearer path to career status.

More concerning to the NPMHU is the call for the closing or consolidation of mail processing facilities.

The Union is prepared to work with USPS management to identify those changes that might be beneficial, if USPS management is prepared to admit error when its proposals are without foundation.

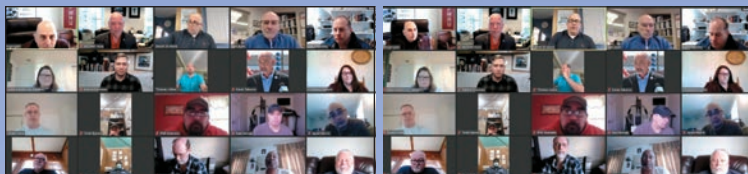
MAIL HANDLERS

ACROSS THE COUNTRY



LOCAL 301 COUNCIL UPDATE

In an effort to keep communications fluid Local 301 continues to use video conferencing tool ZOOM as a manner to continue close relations with local members and officers. Local 301 Council Updates regularly include National Officers such as National President Paul Hogrogian and National Secretary-Treasurer Michael Hora. From time-to-time special guests also attend the Council Updates. Most recently Massachusetts Congresswoman Lori Trahan (D-3) attended the meeting and discussed several postal topics and took questions from the attendees.



LOCAL 301 INSTALLATION OF OFFICERS

With Patrick Donovan being called up to the National Office to move into the Northeast Regional Director's position, Local 301 Branch President Christine Couture was elected to the Recording Secretary position at Local 301. Also sworn in was Portland, ME Branch President Scott Surette. National President Paul Hogrogian and National Secretary-Treasurer Michael Hora were on hand to perform the swearing in and offer congratulations to Local 301's new officers.



MAIL HANDLERS

ACROSS THE COUNTRY



LOCAL 300 COUNCIL UPDATE

Local 300 President Kevin Tabarus and his executive board continue to hold their council meetings over ZOOM. Over the past few months Local 300 has hosted a bevy of Congressional Representatives that fully support the Mail Handlers Union legislative and political agenda. Congresswoman Grace Meng (D-NY-06) who is always quick to co-sponsor any bill that impacts the Mail Handler craft guest starred at one of Local 300 meetings. Congressman Tom Suozzi (D-NY-03) also attended a Local 300 Council Update and mentioned his quick action in communicating with the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) on EFEL Leave issues. Both representatives were well received during their given forums with the Local 300 membership and received a warm thank you from the New York Mail Handlers on the call.

LOCAL 302 COUNCIL UPDATE

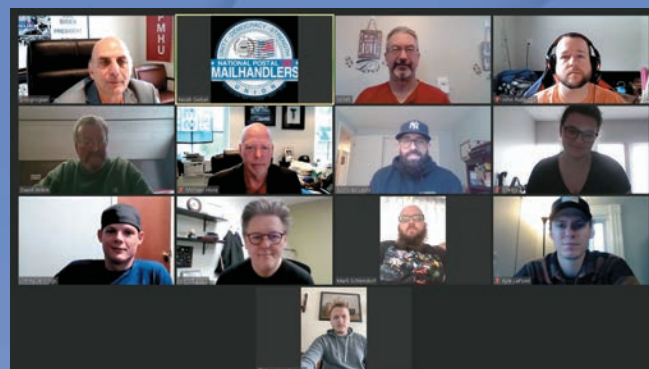
Local 302's Council Update was held over a ZOOM video call due to ongoing COVID restrictions. Local 302 President Anthony Coleman has been using the video conferencing tool to keep an open line of communication between the Local office and branches. Joining the Council meeting and offering updates on several subjects were: National President Paul Hogrogian, National Secretary-Treasurer Michael Hora and Western Region Vice President Don Sneesby. Although the meeting was held on St. Patrick's Day Local President Coleman kept an all-business agenda discussing national and Local matters important to his local.





LOCAL 322 LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

NPMHU Legislative and Political Director Katie Maddocks joined Local 322 President Kelly Dickey and her Local council for a legislative update. Over the course of the meeting Maddocks touched on several subjects concerning Mail Handlers and discussed current legislation concerning the Mail Handler craft.



LOCAL 309 STEWARD TRAINING

Local 309 conducted their Shop Steward Training over ZOOM. Local 309 President and Northeast Vice President David Wilkin along with Eastern Region Vice President and National Trainer John Gibson ran an organized meeting. Before the training got fully under way National President Paul Hogrogian and National Secretary-Treasurer Michael Hora updated the group on current happenings and issues involving Mail Handlers.



LOCAL 301 MEMBERS SUPPORT NURSES ASSOCIATION STRIKE

Branch 127 members, John Dion, Mike Falcone, LEEANNE RASKETT, Dan Skebos, join the picket line in support of the 800 striking nurses at St. Vincent's Hospital, Worcester, MA. The striking nurses are members of Massachusetts Nurses Association (MNA).



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- Coverage for a wide range of services — from preventive care to crowns, bridges and braces
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- Nearly 46,000 network-provider locations
- Allowance for prescription frames or contact lenses

To learn more, call us at
800-410-7778 or visit **MHBP.com**.



*Please refer to the chart on this website <https://mhbp.com/dental-plan/> so you can review how the basic services are better the longer you are in the plan.

MHBP Dental and Vision Plans are available to U.S. residents only. Dental and vision coverage provided by Aetna Life Insurance Company, Cambridge Life Insurance Company or Vision Service Plan, Inc. These benefits are neither offered nor guaranteed under contract with the FEHBP or FEDVIP, but are available to federal employees, retirees, and select members of the military and their covered family members as a voluntary offering. You cannot file a FEHBP disputed claim about them.

** You do not have to be enrolled in an MHBP medical plan to enroll in the MHBP Dental or Vision Plans. A single annual \$42 MHBP associate membership fee makes all MHBP plans available to you.

Before making a final decision, please read the official 2021 Plan Brochures (RI 71-007 or RI 71-016). All benefits are subject to the definitions, limitations and exclusions set forth in the official 2021 Plan Brochure. For more information about MHBP plans, please refer to www.MHBP.com.

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