



April 2011

MAIL HANDLER NEWS

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President's Report

By John Savala, Local President

Congratulations to the newly elected and re-elected officers of Local 297.

I would like to take this opportunity to convey my thanks for having been given the opportunity to serve you for these many years—from being appointed a shop steward in 1992 to Local President for the past six years. It is truly an honor for which I am very appreciative. I am indebted to my faithful supporters over the years. I am just sorry I couldn't give them more.

I have many fond memories of my time in office and the many great relationships I made along the way. I always tried to be respectful of the members and I greatly appreciate the respect you showed me.

Being Local 297 President is one of the greatest experiences of my life. What made it so special were the other Union representatives with whom I worked—both locally and nationally. They were some of the most outstanding men and women I have ever been around in my life, with their professionalism, their activism, and their passion. I have high expectations for the future generation of NPMHU leaders and wish them nothing but the best.

In his last letter before being put to death, Apostle Paul wrote *'For I am already being poured out like a drink offering, and the time has come for my departure. I have fought the good fight. I have finished the race. I have kept the faith.'* Paul is reflecting upon his life. He is satisfied that he has done what he was called to do. It is not about achievement and it is not about perfection. It is about Paul knowing he did his best to do what was expected of him. I loved my work and I too always did my best. I am far from perfect and am the first to admit that mistakes were made. But I fought the good fight. I finished the race. I kept the faith.

There's no doubt that we've had our share of ups and downs over the last six years—but that is true in anything in life. Victories come ever so seldom, and are to be enjoyed when they do. Defeats, which come far too often, can not be allowed to hinder our efforts to improve the workplace, and the lives of our members.

I knew there would be defeats along the way. They upset me, but I never got angry. I always kept it business and didn't take it personally. So don't take my lack of visible emotion as a sign that I don't care—I just choose not to let them see me sweat.

I believe strongly in the importance of the Union, what it stands for, and the security it provides its members.

I was elected to make a difference. I hope I did that. Any successes I had were a result of good training and education—whether it came from a classroom or by baptism of fire. A judgment will be made on my presidency and in the end that is for you, the members, to make. But looking back, I have no regrets over anything I did, or decision I made as your Local President.

This is a great Union we belong to. It has been an honor to serve it. I am now ready to embark on a new chapter in my life, whatever that may be. Thank you Local 297 Mail Handlers and God bless you.



Around the Local

LOCAL 297 OFFICERS AND BRANCH PRESIDENTS

I am very pleased to announce the new Officers and Branch Presidents of Local 297.

Local President Beverly Henderson
 Vice President Chris Bentley
 Treasurer Nathaniel Campbell
 Recording Secretary Marie Williams
 MO Exec. Board. Mbr. Pam Collins
 KS Exec. Board. Mbr. Greg Halda
 KCMO BP Brad Capps
 NDC BP Rick Bradfield
 Springfield BP Chris Bentley
 Topeka P&DF BP Robert Smith
 Topeka LPC BP Dan Appelhanz
 Wichita BP Gary Gonzales

ECONOMIC STATUS OF THE USPS

The current state of USPS finances remains extremely poor, although the economic results directly attributable to mail processing and delivery is improving. During the 2010 fiscal year, mail volume continued to decrease, and the end of year deficit was \$8.5 billion. But that deficit was primarily caused by (a) the required annual payment to the Retiree Health Benefits Fund, which was imposed on the USPS by the budget deficit reduction provisions of the 2006 Postal Accountability and Enhancement Act and (b) a large increase in the costs attributable to workers' compensation programs.

The financial situation is not expected to improve significantly during the current 2011 fiscal year. Once again, the Postal Service is projecting a huge deficit in the neighborhood of \$7 billion. Mail Volume continues to fall,

and future volume is dependent on the general state of the American economy. At the same time, the actual mail processing and delivery operations of the Postal Service are producing a break-even or even a surplus situation, and it is mostly payments to the RHBFB that are causing the deficit.

To deal with this financial crisis, the Postal Service has implemented and/or proposed a series of operational and financial actions, some of which are supported by the NPMHU, and some of which are opposed by the NPMHU. For example, the NPMHU supported the Postal Service proposal for an above-inflation increase in postal rates, but that increase has been rejected by the Postal Regulatory Commission. Not supported by the NPMHU, the Postal Service also is proposing to stop residential deliveries on most Saturdays, which the Postal Service claims will save \$2.5 to \$3 billion per year. This proposal also has been reviewed by the PRC, recently resulting in a split advisory opinion, and now the five-day delivery decision can only be implemented if approved by Congress. Third, the Postal Service continues its efforts to close or consolidate existing USPS facilities. These efforts undoubtedly will continue for the foreseeable future. And the Postal Service continues to adopt cost-cutting programs, including a hiring freeze on craft employees and an expected downsizing in management and supervisory ranks.

The NPMHU not only must deal with each of these issues directly, but also with their indirect impact on mail handlers. It must deal with issues arising as a result of excessing, in the mail handler craft and in other crafts. Other issues include the impact to the craft due to implementation of the FSS, as well as potential future changes such as more upgrades to the AFCS, more efforts by the mailing industry to reduce the use of plastic straps and plastic wrap, and more equipment upgrades such as the Automated Letter Movement System (ALMS) and the Automated Parcel Bundle Sorter (APBS).

Another result of USPS downsizing is its

impact on all levels of the Union. On one side, constant management actions requiring implementation of Article 12 place additional stress on mail handlers and additional burdens on the stewards and officers who represent them. This forces the Union, at both the National and Local levels, to devote available resources to deal with the constant movement, reassignment, dislocation, and inconvenience that are being imposed on the membership.

At the same time, because of the Postal Service's downsizing, the Union has been losing members, and there is virtually no USPS hiring. Thus, at precisely the time when the Union must marshal its resources, the financial resources of the Union are becoming more limited. That is why it is important to continue organizing new members, both current long-time non-members and postal employees from other crafts who become mail handlers.

UNIONS ARE GOOD FOR YOU AND YOUR FAMILY

- Union members earn more money than workers who don't belong to unions.
- Unions safeguard against unfair/abusive treatment.
- Job security is a top concern of Unions.
- Unions enforce seniority-which cuts down on favoritism.
- Unions battle for your needs in Congress.
- Unions protect your safety on the job.

JOIN THE UNION-JOIN THE FIGHT

ENROLLMENT DIRECTIONS FOR PAC CONTRIBUTIONS

Dial 1-877-4PS-EASE-(877-477-3273) and follow the prompt for the Employee Services Main Menu.

When prompted Press #1 for PostalEase.

When prompted, enter your eight-digit USPS employee Identification number.

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).

When prompted, Choose Option #2 (to select payroll allotments). Then Choose Option #1 (to select allotments)

When prompted, Press #2 to continue.

When prompted, Press #3 to add the allotment.

When prompted for the routing number, enter **054001220**.

When prompted for the account number, enter the following: **11260001**____-____-____
____ (the last nine digits of your account number is your SSN—this information will allow us to identify you as the PAC contributor).

Press #1 if correct.

When prompted, Press #1 for **CHECKING**.

When prompted, input the bi-weekly dollar amount of your PAC allotment.

Press #1 if correct.

When prompted, press #1 to process.

You will be provided a confirmation number as well as the start date for the salary allotment.

For your records:

Record the confirmation number_____.

Record the start date of the salary allotment_____.

Press #1 to repeat, or Press #9 to end call.

Retain this form for your records.

The Postal Service will not process the allotment request without the above information. Please make sure all information is correct and **THANK YOU for your contribution to the Mail Handlers PAC.**

To initiate your bi-weekly PAC contribution on the web, simply go to www.liteblue.usps.gov
Enter your eight-digit USPS Employee ID Number and your USPS PIN.

Follow the link to PostalEase—you will again be asked to enter your Employee ID Number and your USPS PIN.

Follow the link to PAYROLL - Allotments/NTB .
Continue to the ALLOTMENTS section.

Your ROUTING TRANSIT NUMBER is:
054001220.

Your ACCOUNT # will be:

11260001____-____-____ (the last nine digits of your account number is your SSN—this information will allow us to identify you as the PAC contributor).

For ACCOUNT TYPE - please select "CHECKING".

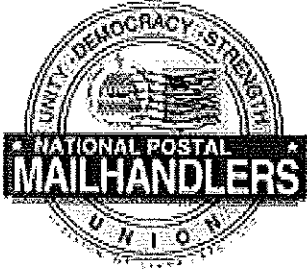
When prompted, please input the AMOUNT that you would like to contribute to the PAC each period.

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.

Don't know your USPS PIN?

To obtain a PIN:

1. Call PostalEASE at 1-877-4PS-EASE (1-877-477-3273)
2. Press 1 for PostalEASE.
3. When prompted, enter your eight-digit USPS Employee Identification Number.
4. When prompted for your USPS PIN, pause, then press 2.
5. Your USPS PIN will be mailed to your address of record the next business day.



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In This Issue...

President's Farewell, New Officers and Branch Presidents, Economic Status of USPS, Importance of Unions

LOCAL 297 CHANGE OF ADDRESS FORM

Name: _____ Facility: _____

Address: _____ City: _____

State: _____ Zip Code: _____ Date: _____

Give this form to a Union Steward, Fax to 816-753-8284, Call 816-753-6030 or Mail to:

NPMHU Local 297, 9429 E. 63rd Street, Raytown, MO 64133

