



The Good, the Bad & the Ugly



As the Postal Service begins to implement its ten year restructuring plan, the effects of this plan on Mail Handlers are at once good and bad, and may occasionally become ugly. The good in this equation is obviously the conversion of over 12,000 Mail Handler Assistants to full Career Mail Handler status in just over four months. Just short of a thousand alone within the jurisdiction of Local 308. This is very much a life changing event for those employees, providing them with full career benefits including total access to the Federal Employee Health Benefit plan of their choice and much, much more. We congratulate each and every converted Mail Handler Assistant on their promotion.

Along with this extraordinary increase in career Mail Handlers, great opportunities for all career Mail Handlers now exists to bid on hundreds of newly created duty assignments.

We also expect more jobs on the way as the employer intends to open an additional 46 Package Support Annexes (PSA's) across the country. Local 308 is slated to gain three attached to the Philadelphia NDC, the Lehigh Valley P&DC, and the Harrisburg P&DC, officially known as the LeGree S. Daniels P&DC. This surge is an effort toward gaining a greater share of the package market will also require the deployment of a wide variety of parcel processing equipment nationwide. All potentially good things Brothers and Sisters.

At the risk of taking some poetic license, the bad and the ugly may become one and the same. As the Service morphs into a package first entity changes in service standards and operational profiles will likely require changes in tour hours and bid duty assignments. We have already been notified that the NDC intends to restructure tour hours affecting the

Your Union at Work

Defending against the actions of management is difficult enough, but when they decide to renege on a signed agreement, things can get ugly fast. Case in point; as a result of the outstanding work of Brothers Gene Jones of the South Jersey P&DC and Brian Clark of the Delaware P&DC the Union prevailed on overtime grievances to the tune of over \$1.8 million. However, once the Postal big shots got wind of this settlement they requested that we "renegotiate" the terms, which we obviously refused to do. At this point, the employer began its usual stall tactics with your Union immediately initiating legal action to compel compliance with an agreement they had already signed. We are pleased to report that the settlements as originally intended have been submitted for payment and we again congratulate both Gene and Brian for their perseverance and hard work.—*John Gibson*

schedules of hundreds of Mail Handlers. While these changes may not require the reposting of encumbered duty assignments, their effect on the lives of Mail Handlers could be disruptive. (See Branch President Zelenenki's posting @ npmhu308.org)

Changes in duty assignments are controlled by the language contained within Article 12 of our National Agreement as well as portions of the Contract Interpretation Manual. Both of these documents are available at npmhu308.org under resources. You should know that if your start time is changed by more than one hour but less than four hours you can accept the new start time and keep the bid or decline the new start time and that job will then be posted for others to bid on. At that point you will become an unassigned regular and subject to placement by the employer. We do not recommend you decline but the choice is yours under the contract.

Brother Zelenenki is keeping a close eye on the actions of the employer and we can ensure all mail handlers that any deviation from the language of the Agreement will be challenged by this Union.

The changes proposed by the 10 year plan include, in many regions of the country, the closing and/or consolidation of facilities which could result in relocation of employees up to hundreds of miles away. This would certainly qualify as the ugliest aspect of the operational restructuring. However, there are no such actions proposed within the jurisdiction of Local 308 and we are committed to monitoring all of management's actions as they implement their new strategy. If you have any questions or concerns please do not hesitate to contact this office at your convenience.

In Solidarity,

— *John Gibson*

Management Interviews

On that, hopefully, rare occasion where you might be called in by local management, or some other malicious postal entity like a special agent from the Office of Inspector General or someone from the Inspection Service always, and we mean always, request Union representation before you start answering questions. This request is commonly referred to as your Weingarten Rights. (See Supreme Court in *NLRB V. J. Weingarten*) If the interview could result in a disciplinary action you have the right to a Union rep. The law enforcement arm of the USPS as well as the OIG are particularly pushy when it comes to these things but rest assured you are entitled to representation prior to being interviewed. This does not apply to a formal discussion as they are not considered discipline. Don't be bullied, or deceived,

DEMAND A UNION REP!