



2014

Our Work Continues



As another year breaks on the United States Postal Service, the fiscal crisis that has loomed over us for more than five years, continues to dominate the discussion. As most of you know, the Postal Regulatory Commission has authorized an exigent rate increase of 4.3% across the board. This is an increase that was originally requested more than three years ago but was denied due to the Service's failure to adequately document the need and will result in the increase of a first class stamp to 49 cents. Although granting the rate increase, the PRC still did not accept the Postal Service's explanation of the cause of its financial condition nor the degree of the damage created by the downturn in the economy. As reported by our National Office, "Importantly, the Commission held open the question of how long this 4.3% increase may remain in effect, and ordered the Postal Service to report to it by May 1, 2014 with a plan to phase out this 4.3% rate increase once the rate increase has produced the revenues necessary to make up for the losses due to the Great Recession. The NPMHU will continue to monitor these proceedings and intervene or comment as necessary." The significance of this action cannot be overstated as we await Postal Reform legislation that could affect us in many ways, including already proposed

closings and consolidations as well as the continued existence of the United States Postal Service as we know it. Obviously rank and file engagement with the legislative process is a critical component in our efforts to sway opinion on Capitol Hill.

In matters closer to home and as reported during recent branch meetings, the proposed movement of operations and personnel from both the Lancaster and Scranton facilities has been delayed beyond the original target date of February 2014. The Service has not provided any indication when this action will actually occur and we will certainly keep you informed as this situation evolves. The grievances challenging staffing within the Williamsport and Reading facilities continue and we expect to conduct additional visits to both those facilities in the coming weeks and months in our ongoing effort to return mail handlers. Recently I have fielded some inquiries from former Southeastern mail handlers regarding rumors of an imminent settlement of an outstanding casual usage violation. Following a favorable decision from Arbitrator Owens regarding the use of casuals in the Southeastern facility the remedy portion of that award was remanded to the parties to resolve. Although Branch President Vennera continues discussions with management, thus far no agree-

ment has been reached. With each passing week it becomes more and more likely that we will again go before Mr. Owens to resolve the remedy portion. As details of the remedy hearing or a breakthrough in negotiations occur we will notify those affected. Within the South Jersey facility we are further along in the process of remedy for those Tour 2 mail handlers entitled to out of schedule premium in accordance with Arbitrator Bello's award. The final calculations have been submitted and work their way through management's internal process. Contractually, the time period for issuing actual checks is 60 days following submission of the final package. The failure of management to meet this deadline will result in additional action from this Union. The process for remediating the affected mail handlers on Tour 1 and tour 3 has begun but we anticipate obstruction at every turn from management. Again, we will keep those affected informed as developments occur. As you might expect there are obviously many active and outstanding issues across a Local as large as 308, so we encourage you to contact your installation representatives or this office directly with any questions or concerns.

In Solidarity,
John Gibson

MEMBERSHIP DRIVE IS ON!

In conjunction with the National Membership Drive the Local will also conduct its *MEMBERSHIP DRIVE* beginning January 1, 2014 and running through March 15, 2014. Therefore, any member who signs up a non-member hired prior to September 1, 2013 will not only be entitled to the \$50 dollar National bounty, they will also be entitled to the \$25 Local bounty.

It is time for those who are not members of this Union to get on board with the collective strength and commitment of member-

ship. If not for this Union, who then, would fight against workplace injustice? Imagine a Postal Service without the Union protections we have fought so very hard for. For those of you I proudly call my Brothers and Sisters and who understand that the non-union alternative is not an acceptable option, I urge you to share your understanding of a Union's strength with those who do not yet see this truth.

JOIN THE UNION, JOIN THE FIGHT! IT'S A CAREER DECISION!

NEW UNION HEADQUARTERS

The keys to Building 6 of the Frankford Arsenal were turned over on December 31, 2013 and we can now officially begin the next chapter in the resurgence of Local 308. The moment we have discussed frequently over the last year has finally arrived and we have moved into a headquarters we can call our very own. While we continue to unpack and arrange our new home, please take note of the new address and contact information. We are planning an open house in the coming weeks and we hope to see you in YOUR new Local 308 Union Headquarters.

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2014-2015 Arthur S. Vallone Scholarship

Many members of Local 308 have benefited from this Union sponsored program and as described by our National Office *"This scholarship program has been providing assistance to deserving recipients since 2001. In February 2005, the program was renamed in honor of Arthur S. Vallone. Arthur had served the NPMHU with distinction for over twenty-five years at his untimely passing in January 2005. Arthur was a true believer in the Union Movement, and a tireless advocate for Mail Handlers and all working people. His list of accomplishments and contributions to the NPMHU is lengthy. The National Postal Mail Handlers Union is proud to honor the legacy that Brother Vallone has left behind."*

The downloadable scholarship application available at npmhu.org contains all of the eligibility and application requirements. The deadline for submission of completed applications is March 15, 2014.

In addition, don't forget to take advantage of the Union Plus Scholarship Program which is offered through the Union Plus Education Foundation sponsored by Union Privilege. Applications must be received before 12:00 pm Friday January 31, 2014 Information regarding this application is available through www.npmhu.org

Criteria includes "academic ability, social awareness, financial need and appreciation of labor. A GPA of 3.0 or higher is recommended."

*NPMHU, Local 308
President's Report
December 2013*