



THE 308 POST

Volume 2, Issue 1

Summer 2014

THE POSTAL DISCONNECT

Network rationalization... excess capacity... breakthrough productivity initiative... economies of scale... operational efficiencies... unfunded leave liabilities...blah, blah, blah!

The mathematicians have taken over our Service, implementing the unimplementable, proposing unachievable operational efficiency models that cannot exist in the real Postal world.

This is the fatal management disconnect that may very well cripple our ability to survive as an entity. We have all witnessed versions of this disconnect over the years, albeit usually on a smaller scale. We have seen the proposed versions of staffing profiles constructed on the second or third floors of mail processing plants with little or no input from operations management. Abolishing and reposting jobs and excessing personnel from tour to tour relying on flawed throughput or man-hour assumptions without any real understanding of what it actually takes to move a piece of mail through a facility. Moving the Nation's mail is infinitely more complicated than throughput and man hours. It requires an understanding of people, of Postal people, an understanding that is not currently enjoyed by today's decision making manager.

The cataclysmic failure in Central Pennsylvania is a prime example of this disconnect on a huge, almost biblical, scale. You recall the Williamsport and Reading "rationalization", promising millions in savings, but instead costing tens of millions, in fact more than \$30 million over projection. These are the Service's own figures by the way. The folks working on the floors with carpet had it all figured out, all the commas were in the right place, the savings were calculated and recalculated and confirmed by the very best the Service has to offer. One slight

problem... they were wrong, and of course not one of them held accountable for their monumental mistake. Each level of the organization signed off on this fantasy, including the Plant Manager, Senior Plant Manager, District Manager, Area Manager and of course at the Headquarters level, the Vice President of Network Operations. And they are determined to wallow in this same dysfunction as they now resume the closings and consolidations across the country. Which brings us to the point; the United States Postal Service and those who run it have not demonstrated the skills, vision, or even justification to implement the sweeping changes they have proposed. Nor do they have the required abilities to implement new and innovative mechanisms to save the Service or ensure its relevance in the modern marketplace. There are hundreds of thousands of postal jobs and millions of related industry jobs at stake, and we are leaving it to those who are not qualified to take on that challenge. It has been proposed, and in our opinion this is the minimum that should be done, that the USPS should not implement any network or operational changes without external oversight, and apparently we need a lot of oversight. Those of the more cynical persuasion, who believe this blind run into the abyss by the disconnected within Postal management is by design, may be onto something. As the PMG and his fatalist minions promulgate the false narrative that we are losing billions, when in fact, without the onerous Retiree Health Benefit pre-payment, we are now making money, and his answer is to cripple the network and slash service, the lust to desecrate the Service and auction off its remains to private sector scavengers does appear, more and more, to be the end game. ~John Gibson

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AROUND THE LOCAL

Much has transpired since the distribution of our last newsletter, not the least of which was the announcement by the Postal Service to put on hold all excessing related to the Area Mail Processing events and then a few months later announce that it intended to resume the process. In a notice to National President John Hegarty dated February 24, 2014 the Postal Service wrote

"This letter serves as notice that Article 12 excessing related to Area Mail Processing (AMP) events has been placed on an indefinite hold. Therefore, the Postal Service is releasing the residual vacancies withheld for placement of employees who were potentially impacted by an AMP event."

Then on June 30th the Service notified the Unions that beginning in January of 2015 the AMP events would go forward and some 80+ facilities would see a reduction in operations and personnel. As many of you know, this will affect our Scranton and Lancaster installations. The Employer's bi-polar approach to its network "irrationalization" plan has exacerbated an already painful proposition within our Central PA District. When the Postal Service put on hold the AMP process in February they also released all facilities from the withholding of residual and vacant positions. Vacancies that once existed in our Harrisburg P & DC and elsewhere have been filled by voluntary reassignment and conversion of Mail Handler Assistants to career status. The Service has now just recently imposed withholding to preserve landing spots for potential impacts. Post Master General Donahoe, Postal Enemy # 1, attempts to justify his actions by claiming that

"The Postal Service has recorded substantial losses over the last three years and continues to see steep declines in First Class Mail volume and revenue. As a result, we find ourselves with excess capacity in the network and few alternatives to reduce costs. Our operating costs are continuing to increase, and our debt and other liabilities threaten our financial viability."

The facts tell a different story, particularly within the Central PA District where the AMP events that impacted our Reading and Williamsport plants created losses in the tens of millions as we have reported, and any "excess capacity", if it ever existed, no longer exists within our Harrisburg Plant. This "strategy" if you can call it that, will do nothing more than destroy the Service as we know it and our jobs with it. Within our Central PA District the challenge to the AMP action implemented in both the Reading and Williamsport facilities is ongoing as we still fight to retreat impacted mail handlers to those plants.

Within our South Jersey District the Union moved forward with its challenge to the employer's recalculation of the remedy process for the South Jersey relief mail handler case decided by Arbitrator Bello. Following months of joint calculation, the Service unilaterally determined to reduce the scope of remedy from sixty-one mail handlers to fifteen. This resulted in the scheduling of a third hearing before Ms. Bello on April 25, 2014 to resolve this dispute. Brothers Bahrle and Campellone joined the undersigned in Local Union Headquarters in preparation for what was to be the final hearing on the matter as Arbitrator Bello rejected the Postal Service's assertions and awarded remedy to all 61 Tour 2 impacted mail

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handlers. After a number of attempts by management to avoid making mail handlers whole and dragging it out as long as possible we anticipate payment shortly. In addition, Brother Campellone and I have met to discuss options as we move forward on the two outstanding grievances for Tours 1 and 3 on the same issue. Nick is currently pressing management on the process for remediating the affected mail handlers on Tour 1 and tour 3.

Within our Trenton facility we continue to pursue our day in court over the assignment of mail handler work to the clerks through a misguided court decision. Although now reversed and mail handlers properly assigned the work on the AFSM 100, we still seek remedy for the harm inflicted. This matter was further complicated by the decision of Arbitrator Owens to defer a remedy hearing pending the outcome of the national jurisdictional determination. Although our efforts to vacate Mr. Owens' decision in Federal Court was not successful, this matter is **NOT SETTLED OR DECIDED** and we will continue to push for justice no matter how long it takes.

The restructuring of the staffing profile within the South Jersey plant is, in part, due to a national initiative created to allegedly "right size" function one facilities. Brother Campellone has challenged the Service on a number of points during this process. The deconstruction of duty assignments within the South Jersey plant is the first within Local 308 to occur and, as stated, is due to a national initiative created to allegedly "right size" function one facilities. The function one scheduler is the latest reincarnation of management's labor scheduler as the employer continues its efforts to reduce craft staffing. Union headquarters will obviously assist all facilities faced with management's efforts to realign or reduce staffing. In addition, we have met with district level management within South Jersey, discussing issues of import affecting our craft, including staffing within our smaller offices and conversion of MHAs to career status.

The former Southeastern P & DC, now

the Norristown Installation, is expecting Delivery Unit Optimization (DUO) events which will result in the assignment of city carriers from the Wayne, Villanova, King of Prussia and Paoli Offices into Norristown. We have requested on a number of occasions to meet with District management to discuss the effect this may have on mail handler staffing. It is our preliminary belief that this could increase the mail handler need in the Norristown installation. As an ongoing process we continue to look for opportunities to increase the mail handler complement and although the facility name has changed, former Southeastern mail handlers eligible to retreat upon the availability of any residual vacancy retain that right even with the name change.

Recently we finally received confirmation of the approval of a \$325,000 settlement regarding a casual violation arbitrated and won by the Union. Brother Rick Vennera has been tasked with compiling a remedy list for payment.

The pains of tour restructuring felt by the South Jersey P &DC now afflicts the Philadelphia NDC as management takes steps to reduce staffing on Tour 2 and involuntarily reassign junior employees to Tours 1 and 3 allegedly to improve productivity. Branch President Zelenenki has held a number of meetings with management in an effort to reduce the impact of these staffing changes. In addition, management recently threatened involuntary reassignment from the installation during a "town hall" meeting with craft employees and stated they are reviewing that process. The current management leadership at the NDC is the embodiment of the disconnect between the bean counters in management and those who actually move the mail. Since taking over about a year ago, Plant Manager Terry Morrow has lead the NDC to near the bottom nationally among NDCs and mail handlers are now suffering for it.

Arbitration and Open Case Report

In addition to the South Jersey relief case mentioned earlier, the Union has also arbitrated a number of issues in each of the three districts under the Local's jurisdiction since our last report. Matters involving a variety of contractual transgressions as well as challenges to

disciplinary actions initiated by the employer have been advocated. I have personally argued a number of issues including the employment of casuals in our Lancaster facility as well as our Princeton Office along with providing technical support and guidance to our other advocates in the field. As reflected by our most recent open case report, Local 308's current docket sees approximately 130 cases pending arbitration. This is a significant reduction in our back log of pending cases as our aggressive approach to resolve or arbitrate has resulted in an accelerated grievance process.

The jurisdictional dispute that affected former Philadelphia L &DC mail handlers remains unresolved. As we have reported, that case must first be heard in front of a jurisdictional arbitrator and if we prevail on the jurisdictional issue would then go before an Article 15 arbitrator for remedy. We understand the frustration of this lengthy process, as the imperfect jurisdictional mechanism drags on, we look for opportunities to get our grievance heard. Since being appointed by our National Office to the Regional Dispute Resolution Committee for the Eastern Area in April of 2013, management has cancelled scheduled meetings on five separate occasions. I have referred this practice to the National Committee for resolution.



Top Row: Joseph Stancell-DE State Executive Board & Branch President, Steve Bahrle-Vice President & Trenton Branch President, Mike Rembelinsky-PA State Executive Board & Phila PDC Branch President, John Gibson-Local President, John Hegarty-National President, Paul Hogrogian-Northeast Regional Vice President, Shelby Root-Lancaster Branch President, Joe Zelenenki-Recording Secretary & Phila NDC Branch President, Brian Carson-Harrisburg Branch President, Bottom Row: Nick Campellone-NJ State Executive Board & South Jersey Branch President, Bob Glycener-Scranton Branch President, Sean Craig-Lehigh Valley Branch President, Mike Mohan-Local Treasurer, Mark Gardner National Secretary-Treasurer.

Administration

Since our last edition, the members have elected and re-elected officers to guide this Local over the next three years as we continue the progress we have made. In addition, I have attended Branch Meetings and conducted workroom floor tours across the width and breadth of Local 308. I encourage all members to attend their Branch Meetings and hear firsthand of your Union's activities. Please check your Union Bulletin Boards for meeting announcements.

Local Headquarters has developed its own MHA Conversion Grievance Guide which has just recently been distributed to the field as we take a proactive posture in our efforts to see our MHA Brothers and Sisters converted to career status. In addition, with the assistance of Brother Campellone we are working on a General Grievance Guide for distribution to all of 308's representatives.

We are also very proud to report that, and as approved by the Local's Executive Board, we have now paid off our mortgage entirely. After less than a year in our new home we are now mortgage free and own Local 308 Headquarters outright.

Local 308 has again requested that the \$1.00 increase in membership dues scheduled to occur with pay period 25-14 be waived by the National Office and that request has been approved. While most mail handlers across the

country will experience an increase of \$1.00 per pay period, those in Local 308 will not as we continue to realign our dues structure with most other mail handler locals.

Please take the time to visit us on line at www.npmhu308.org as we have updated our site and encourage input on how we can make it even better.

For those who have any specific questions or concerns about these or any other outstanding issues please do not hesitate to contact Union Headquarters at your convenience.

-John Gibson

Shop Steward's Training

A milestone of some description was achieved as we conducted our first steward's training in our new headquarters on January 16th, 2014, training eleven of our new representatives. Since then we have conducted steward's training for eighteen additional representatives over the two day period of May 28-29, 2014. Once again we are indebted to National Shop Steward Trainer Paul Hogrogian and National Contract Administration Department Representative Tim Dwyer for conducting the training sessions.



Buy Union Buy American



Mike Rembelinsky

I would like to take a minute to thank all of the Mail Handlers who took the time to vote and especially those from the Philadelphia P &DC and throughout the PA area who re-elected me to be your Branch President and Pennsylvania State Executive Board Member.

Brothers and Sisters we are all in this fight together, every time another Union goes under it weakens our bargaining strength. This is why it is imperative that we shop in Union stores like Acme and Shoprite and stay away from places like Wal-Mart, who drive wages and benefits down for all. As many of you know the owners of Wal-Mart are three of the top ten richest people in the United States; and how did they get there; on the Backs of Hard Working Americans who were paid less than a working wage with no benefits. By buying Union you are helping protect and grow America's Middle Class. When we spend money on Non-Union, foreign made goods and services, we all pay a price. Sometimes it's not easy to find these products, but if you take a little time you can find plenty of sites on the internet and they will help you, and in the long run it well help everyone. Buy Union Buy American!!!

-Mike Rembelinsky

2014 Family Picnic





HONORING OUR VETERANS

On May 23, 2014 Members of Local 308 attended and participated in the second annual Memorial Day Service held in the parking lot of the USPS South District Headquarters located in Bellmawr New Jersey. Mail Handler Dave Ruiz was instrumental in organizing this event.

Brother Ruiz is a US Army veteran and was the Master of Ceremonies for this Service. This event featured speeches from Honorary Veterans and Postal Officials. To the delight of the audience there was a team of soldiers who conducted organized drills with bayoneted rifles. With pinpoint precision these soldiers twirled their bayoneted rifles while also launching them in the air to each other. In a more somber event at the service a American flag folding exercise was conducted and a military bugler played Taps. In a real military funeral an honor detail consisting of Armed Forces members perform a ceremony that includes the folding and presenting of the American flag to the next of kin and the playing of Taps. Attending such a Service reminds all Americans of the ultimate sacrifice made by the Armed Forces members who gave their lives fighting for our great country.

On this day I was privileged to represent Local 308 in the presentation of a two hundred dollar contribution to the Active Heroes Organization. This Organization assists Veterans and their families dealing with PTSD and suicide. It also provides financial support for wounded veterans returning from war. Representing the Active Heroes Organization was Lieutenant Brian Poliafico from the Haddon NJ Fire Company. For more information you can visit Active Heroes. Org on the web. Memorial Day was first known as Decoration Day which was established in 1868, three years after the end to the Civil War. Decoration Day was a time to decorate the graves of Civil War soldiers and to be observed on May 30 each year. It is believed that this date was chosen because flowers would be in bloom all over the country. The first large observance was held that year at Arlington National Cemetery, across the Potomac River from Washington DC. Speeches were made and children from the Soldiers and Sailors Orphan Home along with members of the



VP Steve Bahrle & Brian Poliafico

Grand Army of the Republic made their way through the cemetery, strewing flowers on both Union and Confederate graves, reciting prayers and singing

hymns. It was not until after World War 1 that the day was expanded to honor those who have died in all American wars.

The most famous national cemeteries

are Gettysburg National Cemetery in Pennsylvania and Arlington National Cemetery, near Washington DC. In 1913 veterans of the United States and Confederates armies gathered in Gettysburg to commemorate the 50 years anniversary of the Civil War's bloodiest and most famous battle. The four day "Blue-Grey Reunion" featured parades, re-enactments, and speeches from a host of dignitaries, including President Woodrow Wilson, the first Southerner elected to the White House after the war. When I think about the Battle of Gettysburg I also remember my most favorite President, Abraham Lincoln who was assassinated shortly after the end of the Civil War. Lincoln's "Gettysburg Address" will forever stand as one of the most famous speeches in the history of our country. Edward Everett who also gave a speech on that November day in 1863 wrote a note to President Lincoln the following morning which said: "Permit me to express my admiration of the thoughts expressed by you with such eloquent simplicity and appurtenances at the consecration of the cemetery. I would be glad if I could flatter myself that I came as near the central idea of the occasion in two hours, as you did in two minutes." In the last sentence of the Gettysburg Address President Lincoln wrote:

"It is rather for us to be dedicated to the great task remaining before us -- that from these honored dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they gave the last full measure of devotion -- that we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain- that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom-- and that government of the people, by the people, and for the people, shall not perish from the earth."

The sacrifice of America's fallen heroes should never be forgotten and I hope our Memorial Day Service will continue and grow even bigger.

-Vice President Steve Bahrle



Event Organizer David Ruiz

Buy Union Buy American

The Union Boot Pro - www.theunionbootpro.com

All American Clothing - www.allamericanclothing.com

Justice Clothing - www.justiceclothing.com

Union Label - www.unionlabel.com

Union Label & Service Trades Department - www.unionlabel.org

American Rights at Work Union Shop- www.americanrightsatwork.org/blog/unionshop/

My Postal Uniforms: *You may be able to use your work clothes allowance on some of these products---some, but not all of these products are Union Made, or Made in the USA* - www.mypostaluniforms.com

www.workingperson.com

AFL-CIO Union Shop - www.aflcio.org/get-involved/the-union-shop

Powells Books - www.powells.com/?pid=31380

Other Resources:

<http://www.stillmadeinusa.com/>

<http://www.howtobuyamerican.com/content/db/b-db-american-union-made.shtml>

<http://abcnews.go.com/Business/MadeInAmerica/made-america-resource->

Work Clothes Allowance

Effective November 21, 2014 Article 26 of the National Agreement provides that eligible mail handlers receive an annual allowance of \$82 to obtain authorized work clothes from licensed vendors. In addition to some of the links above including **My Postal Uniforms & Working Person** visit

<https://liteblue.usps.gov>

And link to **MY HR** and then the Uniform Program for a listing of authorized vendors.

Don't let this valuable benefit go to waste, take advantage of your negotiated Work Clothes Allowance.

**ATTENTION LOCAL 308 MEMBERS
JOIN US ON LABOR DAY
CALL TO RESERVE 215 788 5308**

**27th ANNUAL TRI-STATE
LABOR DAY PARADE AND
FAMILY CELEBRATION
MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 1, 2014**



SHEET METAL WORKERS' LOCAL 19 UNION HALL
1301 S.COLUMBUS BLVD. AND WASHINGTON AVE.

- 8:30 A.M. TRI-STATE LABOR DAY PARADE GATHERING
- 9:15 A.M. Pre-Parade Kickoff Rally
- 10:00 A.M. PARADE TO PENN'S LANDING GREAT PLAZA
COLUMBUS BLVD. & MARKET ST.
- 11:00 A.M. - 2 P.M. PHILA. AFL-CIO FAMILY CELEBRATION,
FOOD, REFRESHMENTS, KIDS ACTIVITIES,
MAKE AND TAKE CRAFTS, AND LIVE MUSIC

Sponsored by the Philadelphia Council AFL-CIO and
The Tri-State Labor Day Parade Committee
215-665-9800

Bowling Night 2014





Members Only
Retirement Benefits Seminar
September 3rd & 4th, 2014
6:00 PM – 8:00 PM

Brothers and Sisters,

Local 308 is pleased to arrange this benefits seminar at no cost to our members.

This workshop will provide you with professional advice designed to help you better understand your Postal retirement benefits so that you can make informed decisions about this important subject.

In Union Solidarity,

John Gibson

Register by contacting Local Union Headquarters at **215 788 5308**.

YOU MUST REGISTER IN ADVANCE OR YOU WILL NOT BE ADMITTED, BUT

REGISTER EARLY AS SEATING WILL BE LIMITED!

Seminar Location:

The Lounge at Local 22

415 N. 5th St. Philadelphia, PA. 19123

Office 215-440-4414

Presentation Topics

- Preparing for retirement and understanding your benefits.
- Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS).
- Federal Employee Retirement System (FERS).
- Thrift Savings Plan.
- Federal Employee Group Life Insurance (FEGLI).
- Federal Employee Health Benefits (FEHB).

JOINING THE MAIL HANDLERS PAC

By Telephone

Dial 1-877-477-3273 and follow prompts.

When Prompted Press 1 for Postal Ease

When Prompted Enter your 8 digit employee ID #

When Prompted Enter your USPS PIN #

When Prompted Choose option #2 (Payroll Allotments)

When Prompted Choose Option #1 to select options

When Prompted Press #2 to continue

When Prompted Press # 3 to add allotment.

When Prompted Enter 054001220 (routing #)

Enter 11260001_____ (last 9 digits are your

SS# which allows us to identify you as the PAC contributor)

Press #1 if correct

When Prompted Press #1 for checking

When Prompted input bi-weekly dollar amount

Press # 1 if correct

When Prompted Press #1 to process

Record confirmation #

Record start date.

Postal Ease through the Internet

Got to www.liteblue.usps.gov

Enter your Employee Identification # and USPS PIN #

Follow the link to PostalEase

Re-enter your Employee Identification # and USPS PIN #

Follow the link to Payroll Allotments/NTB

Continue to the Allotments section

Your routing Transit No. 054001220

Your account #11260001_____ (last 9 digits are your

SS# which allows us to identify you as the PAC contributor)

Account type will be checking

Input the amount of the bi-weekly allotment.

Click the validate button

Click the submit

Print confirmation page.

Or Send a check directly to the

Mail Handlers PAC

PO Box 65171

Washington DC 20035



Mike Mohan

Spending Less is the Key to Success

After many years of financial instability, Local 308 is proud to announce that it is now operating in the black. While we still owe the

National and Laborers' our assets now far exceed our debt. Since taking office in 2011 this administration has taken the necessary financial steps to move this local forward. It was not rocket science, but a very simple formula; spend less than you take in. Prior to becoming the Local Treasurer I often wondered aloud why our local seemed to struggle paying its bills. After taking office it became apparent that what I always suspected was true. Waste and overspending was the primary cause for our financial woes coupled with some questionable disbursements. This being said lets move forward to our future and leave the past behind us.

2013 ended with the local moving from its location in the Frankford Arsenal to 117 Neshaminy Road, Croydon, Pa. We made settlement Oct. 1, 2013 and moved into our new headquarters Dec. 20th 2013. The purchase price of our new home was \$315,000.00 and we took out a mortgage with TD Bank for 20 years at 4.0% interest rate. Shortly after making settlement, the local reached a settlement with the Bond Co. for \$232,000.00 as payment for unexplained disbursements from a previous administration. This money arrived nine days after making settlement on the property.

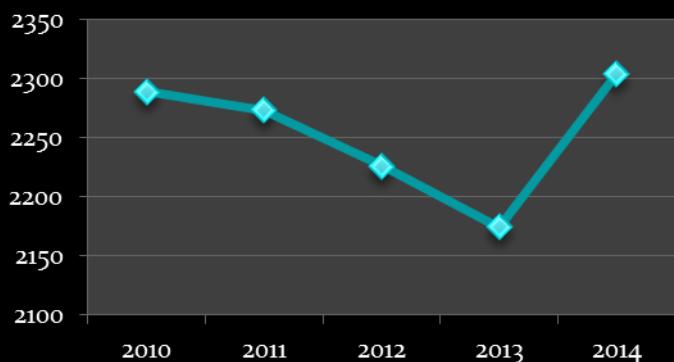
The local found itself in a favorable position of what to do with this money. As many of you may know interest rates are at a record low, and it is not very wise to let a large amount of cash sit in a savings account. After careful consideration by the E-Board it was decided to pay off the mortgage since it was set at 4.0%. A quick calculation determined that if we simply paid the mortgage payment for the next 20 years the local would have paid in excess of \$115,000 in interest payments. The money we owe the

National is paid with the interest set at .89% the decision was an easy one. So on May 13, 2014 we paid the mortgage off in its entirety. Local 308 now owns the building outright.

One last step we need to take is to get out of the debt owed to the National and right now we should accomplish that by Sept. 2015 if not sooner. At our last meeting, the Executive Board authorized an additional payment of \$1,000.00 per month towards our debt to the National. That will be our last and final step towards our financial recovery. The Executive Board has also approved the freezing of our dues until such time as we reach parity with all other Local Unions around the country.

As illustrated below, our membership has grown due to the hiring of Mail Handler Assistants. As many of you know we experienced a hiring freeze that lasted for several years and went through two Voluntary Early Retirements which placed our membership in a steady decline. Today we are in a period of growth and our membership has surpassed our previous years. This means we are in much better shape to represent our members regarding issues on the work room floor. After all, "revenue equals representation". -Mike Mohan

Dues Paying Members 2010-2014



The password for viewing the financial documents of this local on the website is



**NPMHU
Local 308
Financial Statement
Second Quarter 2014**



<u>Income</u>		<u>Expenses</u>	
Regular Membership Dues	356,364.00	Bank Service Chg.	95.25
Membership Per Capita Tax	(105,979.00)	Billing Expense	668.30
Loan Repayment	(5,899.00)	Computer Expense	316.92
Net Dues to Local	244,486.00	Employee Benefits	25,629.94
Federal Associate Dues	15,884.00	Equipment Rental	2,387.77
Federal Per Capita Tax	(3,769.99)	Insurance	2,151.00
Net Dues to Local	12,114.01	Internet	2,976.77
Supplemental Dues	420.00	Meeting Expense	3,148.56
Supplemental Per Capita Tax	(100.00)	Member Relations	2,828.53
Net Dues to Local	320.00	Office Expense	667.22
Postal Associate Dues	5,651.34	Office Supplies	3,219.73
Postal Assoc. Per Capita Tax	(770.10)	Postage	1,782.61
Net Dues to Local	4,881.24	Printing	691.60
Revenue Sharing	26,458.71	Utilities	1,869.78
Loan Repayment	(26,458.71)	Thrift Savings Plan	634.88
Net to Local	-	Professional Fees	31,594.67
Misc. Income	5,386.77	Taxes	10,000.00
JG Initiative	9,402.43	State Payroll Taxes	10,038.02
Total Net Dues to Local	276,590.45	Travel	5,030.71
Expenses	(477,274.75)	Telephones	2,842.87
Net Income	(200,684.30)	Payroll	111,381.06
<u>Long Term Liability</u>		<u>Fixed Asset</u>	
3/31/2013		117 Neshaminy Road	
National	\$ 175,495.51	Balance	\$ 248,531.94
Liuna	\$ 69,046.00	Principal	\$ (248,531.94)
Total	\$ 244,541.51		\$ -
Est. Int. \$404.13 based on .89%			

To review the Union's
Dept. of Labor LM-2 Report for 2012
go to
www.dol.gov/olms
Our file number is 091903



NPMHU Local 308
117 Neshaminy Rd.
Croydon, PA 19021

Volume 2, Issue 1

Local 308 Post

The History of Labor

With the official end of slavery less than two decades before, thousands of black laundresses went on strike for higher wages, respect for their work and control over how their work was organized. In summer 1881, the laundresses took on Atlanta's business and political establishment and gained so much support they threatened to call a general strike, which would have shut the city down. Atlanta in the early 1880s was just beginning to develop.. The city had primitive water and sewer systems, and unsanitary trash lined the unpaved streets. Atlanta's businessmen and politicians sought to paint a very different picture to lure northern businesses to the city, spotlighting it as the urban center of the New South with a large, subservient workforce. More than half of the city's black residents—and half of the black wage earners—were women. On average, women began working as domestics between age 10 and 16 and worked until age 65 or older. In the 1880s, more black women worked as laundresses than in any other type of domestic work. The city had more laundresses than male common laborers. Laundry work was the most difficult of domestic jobs, and industrialization made the chore even more dreadful. Laundresses worked long, tiring hours and their wages ranged from \$4 to \$8 a month. These wages changed little over time and laundresses would increase their earnings by adding on clients or getting help from their children.

In July 1881, 20 laundresses met to form a trade organization, the Washing Society. They sought higher pay, respect and autonomy over their work and established a uniform rate at \$1 per dozen pounds of wash. With the help of black ministers throughout the city, they held a mass meeting and called a strike to achieve higher pay at the uniform rate.

The Washing Society, or "Washing Amazons," as their opponents called them, established door-to-door canvassing to widen their membership, urging laundresses across the city to join or honor the strike. They also involved white laundresses, who were less than 2 percent of laundresses

in the city—an extraordinary sign of interracial solidarity for the time. In three weeks, the Washing Society grew from 20 to 3,000 strikers.

By August, municipal authorities were taking direct action, arresting strikers, fining members and making house visits. The laundresses were not deterred. But the white establishment was so agitated that city politicians got involved. The City Council proposed that members of any washerwoman's organization pay an annual fee of \$25 and then offered nonprofit tax status to businesses that wanted to start commercial laundries. Even though the \$25 fee would mean several months of wages, the strikers were not discouraged. They responded with a letter to the mayor, agreeing to pay the fees rather than be defeated. "We mean business...or no washing," the letter stated. The resolve of the striking laundresses—despite the arrests, fines and proposed fees—inspired other domestic workers. Cooks, maids and nurses began demanding higher wages. Hotel workers went on strike. Unlike past strikes, employers—aware of the magnitude of the black labor unrest—weren't confident they could find replacement workers. So the following week, the City Council rejected the proposed fees. The laundresses had prevailed. In the end, the strike not only raised wages—it, more importantly, established laundresses—and all black women workers—as instrumental to the New South's economy. The white establishment was forced to acknowledge that black women workers, who were former slaves, were not invisible.

Sources

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