

COLORADO



LOCAL 321

NATIONAL POSTAL MAIL HANDLERS UNION

Division of the Laborer's International Union of North America,
AFL-CIO

1833 WEST ELK PLACE - DENVER, COLORADO 80211

Office 1-303-455-6400 Fax 1-303-455-5810 Watts 1-800-521-5094 TDD 1-303-455-6400



~~FOR YOUR INFORMATION~~

July 10, 2009

Mosquitoes at the MPA

It's that time of year again and employees at the MPA are experiencing major mosquito problems. Management has hired ECOLAB to spray the area around the MPA. On 6-27-2009 at 1745 hrs they put out 100 bricks of floating (sustained release) larvicide for mosquito control (25 in each area of water on the property). The company also performed the same treatment on 5-21-09. ECOLAB remains on stand-by and will repeat the treatments monthly or as needed. The union has inquired as to whether management is willing to purchase mosquito spray for individual use also. That request is still under consideration.

Ludlow Massacre Memorial

On Saturday June 28, the site of the Ludlow Massacre was designated a National Historical Monument. Union officials and local dignitaries from across the state were on hand for the dedication ceremonies. Additionally, Local 321 representatives, along with other Union officials attended a weekend Labor Workshop on civic involvement and labor history. CO Springs Mail Handler Richard Lairscey worked closely with the Colorado Springs Area Labor Council to memorialize the site and help organize the event.

Ludlow played an important part in the Labor movement in the early 1900's. The coal miner's went on strike for many things we take for granted today; better and safer working conditions, reasonable hours and pay and company compliance with state laws. Unfortunately, as history bears, the mining company ended up using hired militia to overcome the workers. Gunfire erupted and the miner's tent colony was burned down. The end result was many killed, including women and children. The attention this tragedy brought to the surface resulted in eventual legislation designed to assist the working men and women in this great nation.

If you ever get a chance to visit Ludlow, it is a beautiful memorial and well worth a few minutes of your time. The memorial is located about 12 miles north of Trinidad off I-25. I would like to thank Brother Lairscey for his work on this project.

More Scholarship Winners

Local 321 is proud to announce that GMF employee **Chuong Pham**, was awarded one of the Arthur S. Vallone scholarships from our National Postal Mail Handlers Union. Additionally, **Joanna Kim-Dover**, (wife of Brighton Mail Handler Terry Dover) received a Union Plus Scholarship. Congratulations to all.

Picnic

If you haven't heard, the 2009 picnic is Saturday July 18 at Lakeside Amusement Park. The picnic is always on—rain or shine. You must have a ticket to gain admission without paying. You can get your tickets from the union office or call the hall and we will mail you some. Unfortunately the big roller coaster is down for repairs, but there are plenty of other rides. Additionally, we'll be serving food and drinks to Local 321 members and their families. Hope to see you there.

Address Updates

If you read your most recent newsletter (page 2), you know that the Local Union can no longer maintain our own address database. This is (in part) due to new Postal regulations and permit mailing requirements. Therefore, anytime you move, you should update your address through the USPS. The Postal Service forwards all updates to our National. Local 321 will secure an updated database from Washington D.C. before each local mailing goes out.

The ELM states under Chapter 665 (Postal Service Standards of Conduct):

665.5 Furnishing Address

Employees must keep the installation head informed of their current mailing addresses. Any change in mailing addresses must be reported to the installation head on PS Form 1216, Employee's Current Mailing Address, through "Self Service" on the Postal Service Blue Page, or through USPS approved methods including PostalEase.

Please keep the USPS apprised of any address changes you have. Please understand that there is no method for the Union to notify the USPS of your new address.

Union Notified of Study on 5 day Delivery

The Union was recently notified that the USPS is conducting a study of the impact of switching to 5 day delivery. The USPS plans to complete the study within 60 days.

The notification claims that the USPS has reached out to major stakeholders for input from interested parties. The study will examine the impact of no business or residential delivery or collections on Saturday. The Union was asked to provide a response within 9 days.

It seems clear that the Postal Service is trying to move very quickly on this issue. The NPMHU has responded to the notification. Nothing moves quickly on Capitol Hill. It will be interesting to see how fast this issue makes it to the law-makers floor agenda. Additional details will be posted.

Union Notified of Possible Discontinuance of 15 Stations and Branches in District

You may have seen recent news reports of the Postal Service's plans to close 3300 stations across the country. On July 9, 2008 the Local Union received our first official notification of the impact to Colorado employees.

Specifically, management wrote to inform the Union that *the Postal Service will conduct a discontinuance study on the following stations and branches within the Colorado/Wyoming:*

*Denver-Thornton Branch;
Denver-Wellshire Station;
Denver-Alcott Station;
Denver-Stockyards Station;
Denver-South Denver Station;
Aurora-Fletched Station;
Aurora-Altura Stations;
Aurora- Hoffman Heights Station;
Colorado Springs- West End Station;
Colorado Springs- North End Station;
Pueblo- Belmont Station;
Boulder- Main Office Station;
Boulder- HiMar Station;
Ft. Collins- Ole Town Station;
Loveland-Valentine Station; and
Westminster- Harris Park Station*

The notification attributes the necessity of the study to declining mail volume and window activity. The study could result in the termination of facility leases and/or the movement of operations to include possible reassignments pursuant to the provisions of Article 12.

The notification claims the USPS will consider such factors as the impact on employees, service standards, cost savings, customer access, environmental impact, real estate values and the long-term needs of the service.

We have mail handlers in 3 of the listed facilities. Additional information will be shared as this agency's *discontinuance study* proceeds.

MPA Safety Issues an Ongoing Concern

It seems that all hell was breaking loose at the Denver Mail Processing Annex last Monday afternoon (July 6, 2009). Northeast Aurora was under a tornado watch, the area was experiencing high winds with severe rain and hail.

As all MPA employees know, the roof has been leaking since the spring snow storm on April 17th. With Monday's severe weather, water poured into the facility from more holes that anyone cares to count. Electrical panels were soaked; the fire alarm went off and the Aurora Fire Department responded to the facility.

At first, employees were directed to leave the facility. People were sent outside into the rain and hail during a tornado watch. There was no fire. Once it was determined that the alarm system was screaming because it shorted out due to rainwater, employees were redirected to assembly areas within the MPA.

The Union has many concerns about the way Monday's events were handled. Management failed to gain control of the situation. For one thing, the facility's Weather Alert Radio was locked up in a supervisor's office. Sending people outside into hail and rain during a tornado alert makes no sense.

Secondly, the manager was more concerned about operations than the emergency situation at hand. Rather than deal with the emergency at hand, one supervisor was loading an SPBS conveyor. The Union has reached out to management and requested that several issues be addressed.

The leaking roof must be addressed. The USPS is in a battle with the landlord over liability under the terms of their lease agreement. I can understand that it does take some time to work through these legal matters, but these matters deserve expedited handling.

It is time to fix the roof. The leaking water creates an unsafe working climate. On Monday, there was water on the floor in numerous areas, water under the APPS, water on electrical panels, and water shorted out the MPA fire alarm system.

In addition, the insulation panels on the inside of the roof were saturated with water. Many of these panels need to be removed and replaced.

We also plan to address the overall handling of events on Monday. When in an emergency situation such as that on Monday 7/6, operations must come second to employee safety. That did not happen, and this must be corrected. In the summer, the weather alert radio needs to be in a place where it can be monitored at all times.

I can tell you that the USPS has come to agreement with the landlord on costs, deductibles and repairs. The repair bid is submitted and approved for payment. I expect that the schedule for external roof repairs will be provided to the USPS and Union shortly. The internal roof insulation replacement has not been finalized or approved.

Wiretainers & 84Cs

The Local Union is challenging a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) issued by the Postal Service that addresses handling methods for wiretainers and 84Cs.

The Union believes that it is unsafe to transport full, stacked 84Cs on the workroom floor. The Denver Bulk Mail Center has banned this practice. The Union seeks to impose a similar ban in all Colorado facilities. The Union is also addressing other problems specific to wiretainers/84Cs. As an equipment operator, it is your option to unstack full 84Cs when in transit in the plant. Please consider this when working safely.


Employee Free Choice Act

With Al Franken now officially the Junior Senator from Minnesota, we are closer than ever before to passing the Employee Free Choice Act. Still, easing the pressure is not an option. In fact, we must do just the opposite and keep going strong.

Please make sure Senators Bennet and Udall hear your voice this week on the Employee Free Choice Act!

* * *

Call 1-866-207-2060 to connect with them on the issue that matters most right now to the working class.

In Unity, 
Michael J Hora
President,
NPMHU Local 321