

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 ~ ~

June 5, 2008

Local 321 Election Results

On Wednesday, June 4, 2008 Local 321's Judges of Election checked and counted ballots in the presence of candidates and/or observers in accordance with Article VI; Section 4D of our Uniform Local Union Constitution.

With the completion of the process, Local 321's Judges of Election have certified the results of the election and have posted the official notice of results on the Local Union's bulletin boards at each Postal facility in which regular members of this Local Union are employed as required by our Uniform Local Union Constitution. Here is a summation of the results for the contested positions:

<u>Local President</u>		
HORA	GURULE	
299	67	
<u>Recording Secretary</u>		
FLAGG	BAILEY	
244	120	
<u>Denver BMC Branch President</u>		
LOFTHOUSE	RORICK	GURULE
67	50	7

The following positions were uncontested and the individuals are duly elected as certified by the Election Judges in accordance with the Uniform Local Union Constitution. Please join me in congratulating all new and returning Council and Executive Board members respectively.

Don Gonzales	Vice President
Jeff Morgan	Treasurer
John Meding	Colorado State Representative
Cindy Hoehl-Rinker	Denver P&DC Branch President
Ricardo Olivares	Colorado Springs P&DC Branch President
Phil Armendarez	Grand Junction Branch President

Please join me in thanking our Election Judges, Diana Leyba, Maria Sisneros, Bill Scroggin and Chief Judge Don Mondragon for a job well done. They conducted Local 321's nomination and election process with great professionalism, and they deserve the membership's gratitude.

Installation of Officers

The Constitution requires that all elected officers take the oath of office and be installed as promptly as practicable, not to exceed thirty (30) days, after the results of the election have been certified by the Judges of Election. The installation of Local 321's officers will occur on Friday, June 27, 2008 at 5pm at Local 321's Union hall. NPMHU National President John Hegarty is scheduled to conduct the installation ceremony. Food and light refreshments will be served. Local 321 members are invited to attend.

Colorado Mail Handlers Union Picnic: Lakeside Amusement Park, June 28, 2008

Local 321 cordially invites our members and their families from around the state to attend our annual picnic on Saturday June 28, 2008 at Lakeside Amusement Park located at I-70 and Sheridan Blvd. Food will be served from Noon until 6PM. The park is open from 11:30AM until at least 10PM.

Local 321 will be providing our usual array of hamburgers, bratwurst, hot dogs and Italian sausage. Additionally, drinks, chips and a dessert will be available. We are anticipating visitors from our NPMHU headquarters office, and the Mail Handler Benefit Plan. Additionally we have invited key political officials representing Colorado on Capitol Hill. We hope you make plans to attend this year's event.

Each member and guest will be required to show a ticket to get into Lakeside Amusement Park. The *Member Appreciation Day* tickets offer free park entry, and discounted *unlimited ride* wrist tags. Tickets have been distributed to each facility. Please see your Branch President or Union steward for tickets. You can also secure tickets at the Union hall; just give us a call or swing by. We look forward to seeing you at Lakeside Amusement Park (rain or shine). All members and their families are asked to register at the Lakeside welcome booth to receive their wrist tags for the food line.

OSHA Issues Fine to USPS Re: Sulfuric Acid Exposure

On May 6, 2008 an MPA battery charger overcharged a forklift battery to the point that the acid gel was boiling. These batteries are filled with sulfuric acid. The fumes filled the area and were evident throughout the facility. Despite repeated concerns raised by employees, no one was cleared out from the area. Many employees were told that

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the odor was the sewer; they were sent back to work with smug nonchalance.

As a general rule of thumb, the Union does not contact OSHA without first giving management the opportunity to rectify unsafe situations. We view OSHA as a secondary option reserved for serious incidents of disregard for one's health and safety. In this case, the Union decided that in light of the serious nature of the problem and management's lack of concern in the MPA, a call to OSHA was not an overreaction. We viewed the incident as one of a serious nature. OSHA did not disagree.

On May 27, 2008 OSHA did issue their citation and notification of penalty asserting that, *"the employer did not select and require employees to wear appropriate eye or face protection during removal of an overcharged 18 cell, sealed gel forklift battery located in the battery charging area. This condition exposed employees to eye injuries caused from sulfuric acid vapors leaking from the battery."* The Postal Service was fined \$1,125.00. OSHA also cited the USPS for violations relating to the lack of proper hand protection with respect to sulfuric acid exposure. Additionally, OSHA issued several other citations relative to electrical disconnect and electrical panel clearance violations in the MPA. The Union strives to ensure each employee enjoys a safe working environment.

Safety

The obligations to a safe workplace belong to everyone. This responsibility is not exclusive to the employees, the Union or management; we all must share in this liability. Having stated the obvious, I am not naive to the reactive mentality to accidents. When someone gets injured or has an accident, discipline normally follows; when this occurs, request Union representation immediately. Every incident of retaliatory or coercive discipline must be challenged. Contrary to what management may believe, just because an employee has an accident or injury; this does not mean s/he is deserving of disciplinary action.

A recent example belongs in *Ripley's Believe it or Not*, but believe it or not management has issued a Letter of Warning to an MPA mail handler for an unsafe act linked to an injury received while pulling a GPC from a trailer. This begs the question, how does one unload a GPC from the first row of a trailer without pulling? The Union has requested a demonstration. So far management has ignored our requests.

Another Case and point: In December of last year there were numerous incidents in which contracted drivers pulled trailers away from the dock while being actively loaded. Fortunately no one was injured.

The Postal Service conducted a serious accident investigation; Local 321 mail handlers and DMAL APWU participated. The USPS issued a watered-down report that lacked some basic facts acquired in the investigation. Both Union's jointly disagreed with the Investigative Board's final report and recommendations. Some good recommendations were not reduced to writing in the final report and one very good suggestion linking the red/green load/drive lights to the dock door was improperly implemented and largely unknown to most dock employees and drivers. That is... unknown until there was another pull-away incident. Once again... it was time to **react**.

In May of 2008 there was another repeat incident at the MPA in which a contract driver pulled away from the dock while the trailer was being actively loaded. No one was injured. This incident highlighted the fact that the previous incident recommendations had not been thoroughly or properly implemented. The red/green lights at each dock door have now been properly installed and stand-up talks are ongoing. This should eliminate these unsafe pull-aways.

If you are aware of an unsafe situation, please bring it to someone's attention immediately. It deserves a proactive response. Fill out a 1767 and submit it to your immediate supervisor. You can also identify the situation to a Union Safety Representative or Steward.

Postal Employee Rafting Day: June 22nd Sponsored by the Social Rec Committee

By Bradley Walker

The Denver Postal Employees Social and Recreation Committee are pleased to announce that this year's rafting trip has been scheduled.

Performance Tour Rafting located in Buena Vista Colorado has again offered us the following prices on full day rafting trips:

- Full day trip down Brown's Canyon (class III+ rapids) Discount price of \$66.00 includes lunch, wetsuits and booties. Meeting time is 0930 with departure at 1000.
- Full day trip down the Numbers (class V rapids)

Meeting time is 0900 with departure at 0930

The discount price of \$80.00 includes lunch, wetsuits and booties. To Reserve your trip please call 1-800-328-7238 be sure to mention that you are with the Postal Employees trip to get the above discounted price.

In Unity, *Mike*
Michael J Hora
President,
NPMHU Local 321