

**COLORADO**



LOCAL 321

**NATIONAL POSTAL MAIL HANDLERS UNION**

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

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**~~FOR YOUR INFORMATION~~**

March 15, 2006

**Mail Handlers' State Picnic Event**

This year's Local 321 Colorado picnic event will be something a bit different. We are moving it to **Lakeside Amusement Park**. Many Union members have requested something different, something more family oriented; so we are going to give it a try. This year's state picnic is scheduled for Saturday, July 22, 2006. Lakeside amusement park is open from noon to 11pm; *Union* provided food, drink and entertainment will wrap up around 6pm.

With the Union provided tickets, there is no cost to get in to the park. Reduced price all-day ride tickets will be available for mail handler Union members and family at the picnic area on July 22<sup>nd</sup> for only 10 dollars. The Mail Handlers will be set up near the children ride area on the race-track side of the park. We have reserved 2 pavilions where food and drink will be served. Additional details will be outlined in the upcoming newsletter and future postings. Please make plans to attend.

(particularly during emergencies), preserving collective bargaining, and other items. Additional information will be posted as it becomes available.

**Update: Mail Handlers Named as Primary Craft on Modified AFSM-100 Sorting Machines**

The USPS has issued its primary craft jurisdiction determinations for the enhanced AFSM100 flat sorting machines. It is a multifaceted victory for our craft awarding the majority of the AFSM100 work to the Mail Handler Craft. However, we fully expect the APWU to file a national-level dispute claiming jurisdiction over this work.

By letter dated Feb. 8, 2006, the USPS wrote (*in pertinent part*) that of the 534 AFSM-100s currently in operation, it is anticipated that 206 machines will receive both Automated Induction (AI) and Automated Tray Handling System (ATHS) enhancements. The deployment schedule has Denver receiving both AI & ATHS. As many of you know, the ATHS enhancements are being installed as we speak, and the AI deployment schedule is as follows:



AI Installation	Start	Finish
AFSM100 #2	5/27/06	6/10/06
AFSM100 #3	6/10/06	6/24/06
AFSM100 #4	6/24/06	7/7/06
AFSM100 #5	7/8/06	7/22/06
AFSM100 #6	7/22/06	8/5/06
AFSM100 #7	8/5/06	8/19/06
AFSM100 #8	8/19/06	9/2/06

AI will move most flat preparation duties to the AFSM100. Each machine will link 4 flat prep work stations to a loading/dumping station incorporated into live-run production. For the most part, Denver mail handlers will no longer prep flats in remote ad hoc locations. It will be done at ergonomically superior flat prep work stations on the AFSM100s. The AI upgrades will afford the mail handlers with an opportunity to change and improve on the antiquated flat prep methods currently employed.

**What Happened to Postal Reform?**

As we recently reported, the Senate and House have both passed postal reform legislation. The bills have been cleared for a House-Senate Conference Committee, which will smooth out differences. The Senate immediately named its conferees. The House has not yet done so. Consequently, the bill is in temporary limbo.

In the interim, staff for the various committees is meeting to see which differences can be resolved prior to a conference. The NPMHU is making the case on important issues such as the viability of single-piece parcels, maintaining workers' compensation benefits, flexibility in rate-making

When all is said and done, Denver is expected to be the largest ATHS/AI facility in the country. To make room for these modifications, one of Denver's AFSM100s has been moved to Colorado Springs. Denver's remaining machines will be repositioned to accommodate the AI enhancements. All mail handlers should be

looking forward to this improved flat preparation method.

### **Proper Staffing on the AFSM100's**

Assuming that Denver does receive both retrofits as expected, the issue of proper staffing will be a huge concern. Each machine has four flat prep work stations and a dump/ load position; that is a minimum of 5 mail handlers per machine per tour. Do the math, with 7 machines running 2 ½ tours per day, AI is worth about 100 positions with additional consideration to scheduled days off and vacation percentages. As of now, we are being told that the maintenance window will be on tour 2. That is why the machines will only be staffed for 2½ shifts per day.

The Union has not yet been briefed on management's plans to staff the new upgraded AFSM100 machines. It is an understatement to say they have a lot of things to consider. Many clerks will be impacted. Many mail handlers are also rightfully asking what will happen to those currently holding flat prep bids? It will all be worked out in the very near future.

The Local Union is doing everything possible to ensure proper mail handler staffing is in place to make certain the work is rightfully performed by the mail handler craft. Both Union's were invited to participate in a joint trip to Pittsburgh PA to visit a facility that is running AFSM100s with both ATHS and AI enhancements. Denver P&DC Branch President Cindy Hoehl-Rinker and I will participate, asses and argue proper AFSM100 staffing during and after this site review. Additional details will be posted as the information becomes available.

### **Join the Union, Join the Fight Campaign**

As you know, Local 321 augmented the NPMHU's membership drive by awarding one entry into a Local 321 drawing for each bounty check properly awarded under the NPMHU program. We are giving away a 27" TV/DVD/VCR. Our rules are consistent with the National Program; additional details can be found at [www.local321.org](http://www.local321.org).

The national program was extended to March 31, 2006. We have also extended our membership drive to end on March 31, 2006. We will draw the TV winner on May 26, 2006. There is still time to sign-up a non-member. See your Union representative or Branch President for details.

### **Local 321 Scholarship**

The Executive Board voted to continue funding our Local 321 scholarship for another year. In light of the tumultuous financial picture that looms ahead, this (and all major expenses) will be a case-by-case, year-by-year decision. We have approved 5 five-hundred dollar scholarships for the 2006-2007 school year. Applications are available on line at [www.local321.org](http://www.local321.org), and can be obtained from your Local Union representative. The application deadline is April 12, 2006.

### **LIUNA Election**

We are preceding with our LIUNA election responsibilities. We have selected 3 judges and one alternate. The Executive Board has voted to pay zero wages for the LIUNA Convention, but based on history and the reduced delegate allocation — this will not likely deter the need for an election.

We have a solid and experienced group of judges in place; I do not anticipate problems. I would like to thank the judges in advance for their time and efforts; many thanks to Don Mondragon, Larry Cambra, Gary Fritz and Ed Flagg. The LIUNA Convention delegate election details will be mailed to the membership on or about April 18, 2006.

### **\$457 To Be Added To Base Wages**

The seventh cost-of-living adjustment to be paid to all mail handlers under the 2000 National Agreement has been set at \$457, based on changes in the National Consumer Price Index for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers (CPI-W) for the period running from July 2005 through January 2006.

This COLA is being added to wages effective March 18, 2006, and will be reflected in paychecks on April 7, 2006. Updated wage charts will soon be posted on your facility bulletin boards. The next negotiate wage increase will be in September of 2006, when another cost-of-living adjustment will be added to your base salary.

### **Bargaining Proposals Still Being Accepted Until March 24**

If you have any proposals that you would like to have considered for the upcoming round of bargaining, now is the time to submit them to the National Office. All proposals should set forth the Article, Section, Paragraph, and/or Page of the National Agreement that you are suggesting should be changed; the specific language you would like to see added to, or deleted from, the current National Agreement; and your specific reasons for suggesting the change.

If you have supporting evidence or documentation, please submit those materials to the National Office along with your proposals. Proposals from any member (or group of members) should be submitted to the National Office by March 24, 2006, using the following address:

2006 Negotiations c/o National Postal Mail Handlers Union Suite 500 1101 Connecticut Avenue NW Washington, DC 20036
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In Unity, *Mike*

Michael J Hora President,  
NPMHU Local 321