

RIGHT HERE! RIGHT NOW!



National President John Hegarty presides over the National Mailhandlers Convention in Orlando, FL.

Orlando, FL. 2008. On the hazy and hot summer days of Florida, an assembly of 37 Local Unions and approximately 360 delegates representing the Mailhandler craft from around the country gathered together to discuss issues that are important to Mailhandlers. Our National and Local Officers; Advocates and Stewards sat powerfully as National President Hegarty rose to the podium and declared the calling card (the theme) of this convention; *Right here! Right now!* thus declaring the Convention was now underway. Never have truer words been spoken or have resonated through a room; as President Hegarty gave (what one would call) the “State of the Union” address. *Right here! Right now!* we fight the Postal Service’s rapid pace towards becoming a more lucrative business and the possibility of privatization. Hegarty spoke about our successful arbitrations battles won against postal management. He spoke of how we beat back the hostile take-over attempts of the APWU when they tried to raid our Union. He spoke of how we are also winning the war against the APWU during RI-399 negotiations. And Hegarty spoke— of our powerful political muscle— and continuing talks with Congressional leaders (Democrats and Republicans alike) getting their attention regarding the aggressive attempts by the Service of sub-contracting out our jobs, consolidation/closing of postal facilities (such as Air Mail and Bulk Mail Centers across the Country) and the numerous feasibility studies being conducted of other postal installations. President Hegarty said, that although we have been successful in many areas and are weathering the storm in others; we must now put forth a more aggressive effort and campaign to survive as a craft; protect our jobs, and continue our political responsibility to protect the basic rights of others to unionize. Hegarty stated that our war with the Postal Service to protect our jobs is ongoing, and that we cannot rest for one minute about our future; as that we as delegates of this convention still have much work to do. *Right here! Right now! President Hegarty said; “Today we are respected by our political leaders and feared by our adversaries. “We must continue the fight for the rights of Mailhandlers and our future as Working Americans”.* Continued on page 2)



COMMITTEE & FINANCIAL REPORT

Committees, such as the Credentials Committee, the Resolutions Committee, the Legislative and Political Committee, all gave reports on their respective business meetings. Resolutions and rules of the Mail handler Constitution are formed to protect the interest and the business of our union; which are the principles that our organization lives by. All committee members worked diligently throughout the days on proposals, submitted by the Mailhandler membership. Also at the Convention Secretary Treasurer Mark Gardner gave a report on the financial status of our Union, and a projection of our financial future. The Secretary Treasurer said; *"That while we enjoy financial stability, we have to constantly press for financial gains so that we are ready to fight against the tyranny of this aggressive postal service"*. Gardner also spoke on the tremendous upgrades in software resources, searchable archives, PERF (Postal Employees Retirement Fund) and the Juvenile Diabetes Foundation.

THE GLOBAL FIGHT

Neil Anderson, UNI Postal Head of Dept. addressed the delegation and reported on the global impact the failing economy and the changes in the way the postal service does business internationally has taken the global community by storm. Many European postal facilities are already privatized and have been hurt by the constant assaults of downsizing, casual

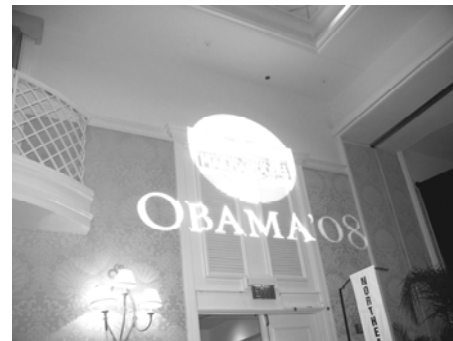
employment (where wages are as little as \$.6.75 per hour) and how companies like DHL (which is owned by Deutsche Bank) has literally stripped workers of union rights and give (new hires) less than fair wages. Mr. Anderson stated, that here in the United States the unions are weathering the

storm against the postal service and doing way better than our European counterparts. Anderson commended the Mail Handler Union for a job well done; but cautioned that the war on privatization (globally) is not over. Anderson went on to say, that *we* as citizens and consumers of the world need a workforce committed to making positive changes and that *we* as postal workers and union leaders must be included in and be part of the change.

Sidebar: UNI (Union Network International) are the interface of regional economic groupings such as the European Union, the African Union and many other global unions. It is up to the UNI regional organizations to insist that development has a social face; that trade agreements include respect of trade and union rights; and work to create the right social and political conditions in which unions can be developed. UNI consist of 15 million members in 900 unions.

RIGHT HERE, RIGHT NOW! A CHANGE FOR AMERICA

Many Congressional supporter (Democratic and Republican) spoke at this year's convention. Union friendly leaders such as, Chris Shays, ®-CT; Congressman Stephen Lynch D-Ma, (who comes from a postal family); Congressman Danny Davis D-Ill.; Congressman Debbie Wasserman-Schultz D-FL; Congressman Ileana Ros-Lehtinen R-Fl, and Congressman Henry Waxman D-Ca. (and sitting member of the Over site and Government Reform Cmte.) all spoke of how the Bush Administration has turned this country upside down financially and globally and has failed to lead the country in a positive direction. They all pledged to continue to fight for the rights of working Americans, and to aggressively work with our National Executive Board on Mailhandlers issues.



*"Politics didn't lead me to working folks;
working folks lead me to politics".*

This year's National Convention gave its official endorsement to presidential candidate, Senator Barack Obama. Legislative and Political Director Roger Blacklow, and Assistant Director Bob Losi, gave a detailed report on their coordinated grassroots and political efforts with other Unions and the AFL-CIO. They discussed the union's role in this years Presidential campaign and the lobbying efforts of many other political activist in support of Mail Handler issues. Mr. Blacklow further told the delegates that it is Obama that will bring our troops home; supports working families and union workers. It is Obama that will protect our jobs, retirement and health care; and that Obama is the one who has the better plan in turning America and our failing economy around.

Sidebar: Obama introduced the Veteran's Homeless Prevention Act and co-sponsored a Bill providing \$1.5 billion for Veterans' care. In 2007-Obama co-sponsored and voted for the Employee Free Choice Act in the Senate, and pledged to sign it as President to protect workers from harassment when they try to form a union. (H.R. 800)
Convention coverage by- Linda Yancey, Recording Secretary- Local 300

A ROOM WITH A VIEW

by, Yvette Johnson

Branch President - Brooklyn GMF



This is my third National Postal Mail Handlers Union Convention that I've had the honor of attending, and I must say for me this was the best one ever. The entire delegation came together with one mindset and that was to take care of the business of the Mailhandler and represent our members to the best of our ability.

Right here, Right now—sat the delegation responsible for bringing about change. From the many committees; Credentials, Rules, Election, and Constitution Committee; the Legislative and Political Committee and lastly the Resolutions Committee; I am proud to say that we were all able to be part of making an informed decision of protecting, strengthening and ratifying our Mail Handler National Constitution.

As a first time Branch President, and a woman; I believe that “*right here, and right now*” women need to be more involved and engaged with organized labor. At the Convention Sisters throughout the Locals were selected to be part of the governing Committees. The women selected to these Committees had taken part in what would be called (back in the day) man's work. Today the women in our Locals have made their mark in our union body and now are valued for their strong opinions and knowledge of the union process. The women who were on the Committees hold positions of Local Presidents, Vice Presidents, Recording Secretaries, Local Treasurers, Branch Presidents and Stewards. To see these women in the room front and center (for me) this was truly an inspiring time in my life.



Throughout the Convention we were blessed with the presence and the message from women of the political and union arenas. From the Executive Vice President of the AFL-CIO, Arlene Holt-Baker; who gave an emotional message of growing up with a strong family who told her she could be anything she wanted to be. To Congressman Debbie Wasserman-Schultz (D-FL) (who serves on the House Committee of Appropriations; and Congressman Ileana Ros-Lehtinen (R-FL) a member of the House Foreign Affairs Committee; all praised the Mail Handler Union for their commitment to the Postal Service and all pledged their support in protecting Mailhandler jobs and future benefits like social security and health insurance.

At the close of this convention I was left with a renewed sense of responsibility that “*Right here! Right now!* I represented every Mailhandler in every office across the country.

Deadline for voter registration: Connecticut: Tuesday, October 21st. New Jersey: Tuesday October 14th. New York: Friday, October 10th. Pennsylvania: Monday, October 6th. Go to: www.local300npmhu.org for more information.

111 John Street
Suite 710
New York City, NY 10038
www.local300npmhu.org

Linda Yancey
Chair / Editor

*“The members are our best
source of information”*

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CONVENTION ISSUE

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A Feminine Touch of Progress

LOCAL 300 WOMEN'S CAUCUS

DESTINY

Confucius said that—“A man who has committed a mistake and doesn't correct it is committing another mistake”. Well, if this is true then we had better stop making the mistake of not getting serious about the business of this Union. What was learned at the 2008 Mail Handlers Convention was that in this present and ever changing Postal environment; and for all intensive purposes— the Postal Service here (and internationally) will stop at nothing in becoming a viable global business. Revenue, greater technology, and the ‘numbers’— are what govern the life of this Service. In our life—in our destiny— will have to depend on our strength, and unity; and strong political pressure to our congressional leaders; if we are to survive as a craft and very importantly; keep the flame lit and pass the torch to next generation of Mailhandlers. This time is volatile. The storms are swirling and headed coast to coast. And like most hurricanes they start out as tropical depressions, and then pick up speed. Our storms of change are getting bigger and more aggressive by the moment. Make no mistake about it—our journey began long ago. It is our destiny that has to be determined. Change may be bound to happen, but for certain it can be controlled. Our National officers have proven that. Our National and Local Union officers have done their part in derailing many situations. At every step in our political talks with influential congressional people, their assistance has helped us win many hard fought battles. From the successful halt we put to the Postal Service's Bronx to Morgan consolidation plans; to making the Postal Service adhere to the proper performance of AMP studies; (regarding any changes in mail flow and facility consolidations) the Mail Handlers Union has been a major player when it comes to pressing the political pressure button. Now the time has come for more than just the heads of this Union to fight these battles. It's your turn. We need you to start flexing your political muscle, your union pride and your strength—and get into this game of destiny. Now is the time for us to get back to basics. Grassroots organization, rallies, marches, and very significantly (something people don't practice anymore) we need volunteerism. I truly believe that nothing changes without making some sacrifices.

If we are to keep a voice heard in the halls of congress; maintain the jobs we have now; and have input into the jobs of the future; Right here— Right now! we better get crackin'. You can't keep letting your fears and frustrations take over and freeze you to the point of doing nothing. I don't know about you, but for me; I gotta do something to make things right for me as a dedicated worker in this postal environment and as a working American. So how do we start to change our destiny you say? Well you can start by contacting your assembly person, your State Senators, and City Council people—who have interest in—and respects the working family and the professionalism of workers in the business of moving the mail. Let's start holding them responsible to the offices and the ideals we elected them to. This is how we gain strength in keeping the amenities we worked hard for and (for us as postal workers) get the attention we deserve for all the years of dedicated service we put into this postal business and helped craft the Postal Service into the success story they are today.

And one more thing to pay attention to. This is a time of destiny for America as well. For us as working families we are faced with some serious problems. Rising cost in health care, fuel and food; foreclosures; two wars (Afghanistan and Iraq); a huge deficit; a failing economy, jobs lost to oversees entities; and America's eroding standing in the world; has made this an election year of importance. So let's rise to our best ideals; restore America's future; and live up to the expectations of what unity means; as that we are at an epic moment both personally and professionally. Right here— Right now—let's unite as a solid membership with a solid purpose and start thinking about our destiny. *Linda Yancey, Chairperson-Women's Caucus.*