



The Three Twenty Times

Serving Arizona

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Fall 2011



National President Swears in Newly Elected Officers

On September 19, National President John Hegarty swore into office the Local 320 Executive Council. (Front row l-r) Madelyn Puricelli-Vice President, Susanna Paniagua-Recording Secretary, Laurie Hernandez-Treasurer, (Back row) Dave Cano-Phoenix Branch President, John Hegarty, Rudy Santos-President, Ace Balderrama-State Representative, Ray Santoro- Tucson Branch President.

Condolences

The Officers and Members of Local 320 wish to extend to the following our deepest sympathy on the recent loss of their loved ones.

LOSS OF UNION BROTHER

Richard Abril Sr.

LOSS OF FATHER

Cheyenne Sotelo

LOSS OF MOTHER

Eliud Flores

LOSS OF WIFE

Paul Barreras

LOSS OF MOTHER-IN-LAW

Jimmie Fentress

LOSS OF UNCLE

Hayden Wilkinson
Angel Moreno
Susanna Paniagua

A Short Course in Human Relations

The six most important words: I admit that I was wrong. The five most important words: You did a great job. The four most important words: What do you think? The three most important words: Could you please. . . The two most important words: Thank you. The most important word: We. The least important word: I.

The Three Twenty Times

**NPMHU Local 320
P.O. Box 64081
Phoenix, AZ 85082
www.npmhu320.org**

Executive Council

**President.....Rudy Santos
Vice President.....Madelyn Puricelli
Treasurer..... Laurie Hernandez
Secretary.....Susanna Paniagua
State Rep.....Ace Balderrama**

Branch Presidents

**Phoenix..... Dave Cano
TucsonRay Santoro**

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President's Report

By Rudy Santos

I would like to start by congratulating the Officers who were re-elected to their positions, Susanna Paniagua; Recording Secretary, Laurie Hernandez; Treasurer, David Cano; Phoenix Branch President and also to welcome the new Officers, Madelyn Puricelli; Vice-President, Ace Balderrama; State Representative, and Ray Santoro; Tucson Branch President. I also want to thank outgoing Tucson Branch President Felipe Ruiz for the service he provided to the membership while he was in office. Felipe will honor Ray Santoro's request to remain as a steward for four three.

TUCSON

On September 14, 2011 the Union was notified that the USPS was going to conduct an AMP study of the Tucson Plant to determine if certain operations or the whole Plant would be absorbed by the Phoenix Installation. The Union will be monitoring the situation and report to the membership with any updates.

The Tucson Branch Picnic will be held on Sunday October 16th.

CONTRACT NEGOTIATIONS

On August 30, 2011 the USPS and the NPMHU started Contract Negotiations. The negotiations usually start ninety (90) days prior to the expiration of the National Contract. The parties will continue negotiations until a settlement is reach or if no agreement is reach then the parties go to Arbitration and have an arbitrator decide the outcome. Normally, the parties would rather come to an agreement without a third party (Arbitrator) making the decision. The National President has called a meeting of all the Local Presidents on November 30, 2011 to discuss the outcome of the negotiations.

DIRECTOR OF CONTRACT ADMINISTRATION

I have appointed Shawn Garey to be the Director of Contract Administration for Local 320. As the Director of Contract Administration he will be responsible to work and assist the Local President to supervise stewards, to conduct stewards training, to review cases for Arbitration, and to deal with any contractual issues. Shawn has shown tremendous ability to work with contractual issues and has been an invaluable asset in the preparation and presentation of arbitration cases.

LOCAL 320 ANNUAL MEETING

Local 320 will be having its Annual Membership Meeting on Saturday March 31, 2012. National Officers will be present to provide updates.

Wealth is not his that has it, but his who enjoys it.

Benjamin Franklin

Vice Presidents Report

By Madelyn Puricelli

I want to thank the Mail Handlers who supported me during our election. I was also very happy to see that many of you voted. Almost 67% of our Mail Handlers voted. I want to encourage everyone to get involved in the Save our Service (SOS) campaign. We need to work together in this as well as any issue that has a direct affect on our jobs. I wanted to explain why cases that are scheduled for Arbitration take some time to be heard.

Listed below is language in our National Contract/CIM. Basically, disciplinary actions go to the front of a docket once it is appealed. This is prior to a contractual grievance. The Local union receives scheduling letters of cases which have been appealed to arbitration. These cases are scheduled on a on a first-in, first-out (FIFO) basis. The scheduling letter lists approximately 5 cases. One is the scheduled case four are back-up cases. Our Union Reps meet with the Postal Service and try to Pre-Arb cases (which means make a settlement that they feel is the best deal they could get for employees and that they could not do any better by going to Arbitration). If the first case is settled then they go on until the Union and management cannot agree on a settlement and that is the case that goes to Arbitration. The cases that are left on the docket go back to be rescheduled. However, the next scheduling of cases has already been determined and these cases get rescheduled. We have cases from the Tucson and the Phoenix Installation (GMF & West Valley). As you all know management excels in violating the contract so many cases are not settled prior to being scheduled for Arbitration

CONTRACT LANGUAGE

Time limits for appeal to Regional-level arbitration are discussed under Section 15.2 Step 3(d). The union at the National level designates representatives who have the authority to appeal cases to Regional level arbitration.

A3 All grievances appealed to arbitration will be placed on the appropriate pending arbitration list(s) in the order in which appealed. Cases are placed on those lists in their order of appeal. To assure that cases appealed to arbitration are heard as quickly as possible, back-up cases are to be scheduled for each hearing date. The date of appeal of the grievance to arbitration determines its placement on the particular District docket. Scheduling of cases from each of the three District dockets is accomplished on a first-in, first-out (FIFO) basis, unless the parties agree otherwise.

B2c The primary case(s) assigned for each arbitration date will be listed on the scheduling letter. If multiple cases exist at the primary location, the cases will be heard in order of appeal date, unless otherwise mutually agreed by the parties. The primary cases will be backed up with three (3) additional cases from the same District and Union geographic area. The primary case(s) and the back-up cases will appear in the scheduling letter to the arbitrator and the parties, which will be submitted no later than forty-five (45) days prior to the scheduled hearing date, unless the parties at the

B2d If all cases at the primary location are resolved or withdrawn, the first back-up case shall become the scheduled case. If the first back-up case is resolved or withdrawn, additional back-up cases will consist of any open cases. The scheduling of these cases at the first back-up location shall go in order of appeal date to arbitration unless otherwise agreed at the Area/Regional level. If all cases at the first back-up location are resolved or withdrawn, the second back-up case shall become the scheduled case. If that case is resolved or withdrawn, any open cases (see Section 4B2a for priority scheduling) at the second back-up location will be scheduled as above, first-in, first-out. If all cases at the second back-up location are resolved or withdrawn, the third back-up case shall become the scheduled case, and the same procedures shall apply for scheduling additional cases at that location.

B4 Cases appealed or referred to arbitration, which involve removals or suspensions for more than 30 days, shall be scheduled from the appropriate District Regular Discipline docket for hearing at the Regional Level at the earliest possible date in the order in which appealed by the Union or referred.

No matter how you feel, get up, dress up and show up!!!

Enjoy every moment of every day

Tucson Branch Report

By Felipe Ruiz

I would like to apologize to the Mail Handlers in Tucson for not getting my portion of the newsletter out in time last quarter.

First and foremost, I would like to wish our condolences to brothers Ray Santoro, Norman Monteverde, Paul Barreras, Ellud Flores and Cheyenne Sotelo. Ray's father, Rocco Santoro passed away Friday December 3, 2010. He was 81 years young. Norm's mother, Socorro Monteverde passed away Wednesday, March 9, 2011. She was 57 years young. Ellud's mother, Virginia R. Flores passed away August 23, 2011. She was 88 years young. Cheyenne's father, Adrian Sotelo passed away August 30, 2011. He was 88 years young.

Late Congratulations are sent out to Tour 1 Mail Handler, William "Bill" Mee and Tour 1 Mail Handler Quinn Lim. Bill retired in February 2011 with almost 25 years in the Postal Service. Quinn retired in August 2011 with 25 years in the Postal Service. Both of them received their check for \$300.00 dollars and a retirement watch from State President Rudy Santos. Take care and enjoy your retirement. Congratulations to Tour 3 Mail Handler Robena Shaffer who retired on September 30, 2011 with 12 years of Postal service. Take care and enjoy your retirement.

The Tucson P&DC Mail Handlers have gotten hit pretty hard with staffing shortages. We have lost Mail Handlers through attrition. We lost mail handlers to retirement, conversions to other crafts, station staffing and resignations and most recently to termination. We currently have 69 full-time mail handlers at the plant, which includes four mail handlers at the stations. We have nine (9) PTFs. We recently had our last three PTRs converted to PTF through successful grievance settlements at step 3 and at step 2. Management is utilizing four mail handlers as 204Bs including one PTF, which cuts our staffing even more. Management has recently hired six new casual mail handlers in addition t

to the two we have on board. By the mailing of this newsletter our nine (9) PTFs will be converted to full-time regular due to the removal of the withholding status at the Tucson P&DC. Congratulations, the nine of you have been waiting a long time for this.

There were one hundred seventy three grievances filed in 2010. We currently have seventy-eight grievances filed in 2011. Most have been settled at step 1 or step 2. We have two grievances at step 2 and fifteen grievances at step 3, the majority dealing with cross-craft and bid job reversions. I will post more information on our Union information board referencing these grievances.

This is the last newsletter I will be writing for as Branch President. Tour 2 Mail Handler, Raymond Santoro was voted in as Tucson Branch President on September 7, 2011 and was sworn in on September 19, 2011. Let us all show our support and help him represent this great Union. I thank all of you who have supported me these last three years. I will show my appreciation for your support by representing you as your Shop Steward on Tour 3.

Please do not hesitate to ask for union time to ask questions or resolve issues. It is your contractual right to be represented on any contractual issue that could be resolved through the grievance process. Management cannot deny this right. Your Union representatives, Steve Montgomery – Tour 1, Ray Santoro – Tour 2, Ed Skowronski – Stations and Alternate and I are available to answer your questions and help resolve any contractual issue you might have.

Our Annual Picnic is scheduled for October 16, 2011. Clear your calendar and think of ways you can make this picnic fun and successful.

Strength and Unity

Felipe M. Ruiz

Tucson Branch President

September 22, 2008 thru September 19, 2011



Phoenix Branch President's Report

By Dave Cano

First and foremost, I would like to thank each and every mail handler who participated by voting in this year's Local 320 elections for your Local Officers. Secondly, thank you to all the mail handlers who voted for me to represent you as Phoenix Branch President for a second term. Believe you me, the position of Phoenix Branch President is one of the most difficult positions in our Local as the responsibilities are many. I feel I learned from the first three years and can only get stronger through experience. Thank you for that opportunity.

While the majority of us in the Phoenix Installation do not feel the everyday pinch the USPS as a whole is putting on its employees, we were not immune to the changes that are happening locally. We lost the RecSite, the Buckeye address for processing flats, the NVDDC moved into the WVSTC Facility, the EVDDC mail handlers were excessed into the Phoenix Installation and mail processing to the P&DC, closure of mail processing in Flagstaff and possibly mail processing in Tucson will meet the same fate depending on the upcoming AMP study. Stations are being consolidated in order to save money. Where will it all end?

But, if I looked into my crystal ball and saw the future for the mail handlers in the Phoenix Installation, I would see a positive future. We will have enough vol-

ume to sustain us. While the housing market killed the economy locally, Arizona is still a high growth state. People will be back. Ironically, I have been hearing that the Postal Service was going to close since I got hired in 1985. Never did I even remotely believe that. After all, we are a cherished institution, and not your run of the mill government entity. Crikey, Benjamin Franklin was our CEO! That has got to mean something! But here it is 2011, and the ranking Congress is running us into the ground. They belittle us as postal workers. We work hard and have earned our hard fought for wages. They are poisoning the American public with slanderous untruths about us being under worked and overpaid. OK, we have lost untold billions of pieces of mail volume, but we still process billions of pieces of mail with a lot less staffing than before.

Locally, at the WVSTC, the conversion from an SPBS to an APBS has been completed. There will be no keyers needed with the exception of one to work rejects. The mail handler craft was lobbying for that position to be manned by mail handlers, but was rejected by the Postal Service. This determination has been challenged at the National Level by NPMHU. There are quite a few issues' pending RI-399 which have importance to us on the floor. One is in the FSM/FSS operation.

This is in regards to the clerks loading tubs of flats onto the LCTS from hand trucks and/or GPMC's. The mail handlers used to do this work but somehow (LaValarie FootRacer) got upper management to change their position. Labor Relations has referred this case to RI-399 and grievances are being filed bi-weekly on all three tours. Documentation is ammunition so if you see this happening, help out your steward. Hopefully, this fool hardy action will be very expensive. Who can't see that this is obvious mail handler work? In addition, clerks are transporting this mail to the LCTS from the staging area. This is the subject of an additional grievance and will be paid (with proper statements). Remember, we have to prove everything we allege, thus the reliance on documentation (statements).

The second major issue we have been facing is the clerks/MVS/anybody else craft performing mail han-

dler work in the flat repairs. Management sent everybody there initially without any regards to contractual provisions. We filed on all of those non-mail handlers who worked there. The majority of these violations occurred on Tour 1, FSM operation. The parties at step 3 denied our grievances and we selected 1 to serve as the representative grievance for arbitration. As you know, the majority of the overtime in the Phoenix Installation has occurred to support the FSS operation. Nevertheless, the stewards of these areas (PL 109, 209, 309) have been diligent in documenting and filing many OT bypass grievances over the last year for our members. Without my calculator handy, the total numbers are in the tens of thousands. We would rather see management assign the OT properly, but they are on notice that we will not hesitate to make the members whole in every way. Until next time, thank you!

The Whole World Stinks

Wise men and philosophers throughout the ages have disagreed on many things, but many are in unanimous agreement on one point: "We become what we think about." Ralph Waldo Emerson said, "A man is what he thinks about all day long." The Roman emperor Marcus Aurelius put it this way: "A man's life is what his thoughts make of it." In the Bible we find: "As a man thinks in his heart, so is he."

One Sunday afternoon, a cranky grandfather was visiting his family. As he lay down to take a nap, his grandson decided to have a little fun by putting Limburger cheese on Grandfather's mustache. Soon, grandpa awoke with a snort and charged out of the bedroom saying, "This room stinks." Through the house he went, finding every room smelling the same. Desperately he made his way outside only to find that "the whole world stinks!"

So it is when we fill our minds with negativism. Everything we experience and everybody we encounter will carry the scent we hold in our mind.

Tucson Branch Presidents Report

By Ray Santoro

The elections are over and I want to thank everyone who voted for me to be elected as Tucson Branch President. I also want to give thanks to my two opponents, Felipe Ruiz and Mike Szymanski for being on the ballot and giving the Tucson voters a choice. I don't believe in candidates running unopposed. Elections with only one candidate are held in such places as Cuba, North Korea and Iran. This was Tucson's first contested election in twelve years and the results were very close.

I want to give Felipe a special thanks for his three years as Tucson Branch President. I know some members have been critical of Felipe, but he took on the responsibilities of Branch President when no one else would step up to the plate. Branch President is not by any means an easy job, and Felipe was still a relatively new employee when he shouldered the responsibility. Thanks again Felipe.

One of my first changes will be to inform the membership and keep them "in-the-loop" as to what the Tucson stewards are doing. Starting in October, I will be posting a monthly list of grievances filed the previous month. This is YOUR union and we work for YOU. You have every right to know what we are doing and to hold us accountable.

As we are all painfully aware, Clyde Jones came to the plant on September 15 and informed us that Tucson was on a list for possible closure and that an AMP study would be undertaken to determine whether or not this is feasible. The study is to take 90 days. If and when any information comes forth from postal management, I will be sure to inform the members.

A quarterly branch meeting will be held on Saturday, October 15 at the IBEW union hall on Tucson Blvd. at 9:00am. The annual picnic will be held the following day at Reid Park, Ramada 22 (off Country Club Blvd). Please come and attend these functions. Show your support to your fellow Mail Handlers!

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Recording Secretary's Report By Susanna Paniagua

The War on Postal Workers

The media is being fed anti-worker and anti-postal manipulations that point a dirty finger at postal workers as the true cause of the postal service's plight. I will give you some fictions and truths so you may let your friends and neighbors become aware.

They say that 80% of USPS expenditures are attributed to labor cost. The truth is that personnel compensation and benefits are about 76% of operating costs of which 56% are for the salaries of management.

People say that the USPS is taxpayer funded and wants a bailout. The truth is that the USPS is a self-funding agency of the federal government. While it does have budget challenges, they are not caused by the workers or their unions.

The deficit shortfalls have been the result of the 2006 Postal Accountability and Enhancement Act requiring prefunding of future retirees health benefits instead of "pay as you go" like other agencies. Another fiction that is put out by the media is that the postal service is and will remain broke because of electronic diversion of mail and the decline in mail volume. The truth is that without the burden of prefunding imposed by PAEA, the USPS would not have had a deficit up until 2009, and thereafter had a very small deficit if at all.

Some experts claim USPS actually made a profit of several million dollars until it had to pay the prefunding, this again I repeat, no other agency has to prefund. Some people think that postal workers are prohibited from campaigning for or against changes in mail services. The truth is, despite the prohibition found in ELM 667.12, through participation in their Union, postal workers can defend and protect their interests. Even 667.12 declare that prohibitions do not infringe on the rights of postal workers to participate in labor organizations. Members, we must mobilize! We have the members, we have the numbers, and we have the power, BUT DO WE HAVE THE WILL!!!!!!