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THE OFFICIAL NEWSPAPER FOR ALL MEMBERS OF THE SOUTHWEST FLORIDA AREA LOCAL AMERICAN POSTAL WORKERS UNION

Questions Arising In Many USPS Stations And Branches About Proper Postal Procedures



Sam Wood
President
SWFAL APWU

QUESTIONS ABOUT PROPER PROCEDURES

Recently, there have been many questions concerning proper Postal procedures. Management in nearly every USPS station and branch are issuing orders that may not seem proper. Although most of these orders may not be grievable, they may need to be addressed by District Postal Officials. I have asked our members to send me an e-mail of what orders are being give to them so that I can forward the information to the appropriate officials.

I am not looking to have our members inundate me with lots of e-mails. I am looking for those issues where the APWU could lose work, employees could be disciplined, or customers may be harmed because of such orders.

LOBBY DIRECTOR WORK

We have been winning cases where employees document supervisors or other craft employees are performing what management calls as "Lobby Sweeps". The term "Lobby Sweep" is simply that management works in the lobby for short periods of time (usually from 1-10 minutes at a time) to reduce the length of the lines.

The problem is, these supervisors are directed to stay in the lobby for longer periods of time. When they are in the lobby for longer periods, this had been determined by arbitrators to become Lobby Director work and Clerk Craft employees must be compensated (usually at the overtime rate for the time they spent performing that function).

Here is the problem however; employees are not properly documenting the exact times and what supervisor is performing that work. This allows management to get away with performing those duties without a monetary award.

I constantly hear our members complaining as to how employees at certain stations and branches receive monetary awards while other do not (even though similar grievances were filed). The answer is very simple. More often than not, those offices where money is awarded, it will be found that those cases had employees who documented their cases thoroughly.

Employee statements are the key to every case. Many believe that a Step 1 Union Steward is the key to winning a case. The fact is that it is the statement from the grievant or

witnesses that are the key to proving a contract violation or winning a discipline case. Too many times I hear of employees wanting to pick and choose who will represent them. The fact is that they have the power in their statement to win that grievance.

This issue has been written about in many articles in this paper yet we continue to get complaints about why some offices are not created equally. If you begin writing statements that prove violations are occurring in your office, other offices will be wondering why your office is always winning cases.

SMALL OFFICE STEWARDS

Sometimes you get those members who write good statements to become APWU Shop Stewards. Two of those small office members who do such a great job are Kathy Moyer (Bokeelia) and Julio Mayo (Marco Island). These two individuals have been instrumental in making their Postmasters accountable and insuring that proper procedures are being followed.

SWFAL-APWU RI-399 LAWSUIT

It appears that USPS officials in Washington DC are at least talking about our case more than ever now that our lawyers have filed court documents. As of the writing of this article, USPS officials have been issued a subpoena and notified what Judge has been assigned our case. We are confident that the reason our case is being discussed more now is because of our attorney's legal action.

Dan Gray, Paul McAvoy and I have been very busy as the amount owed to our membership ultimately has to be documented in as many ways as we can.

See: Questions Arising About Proper Postal Procedures

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Secretary-Treasurer's Report Felicia Gluhareff



**SECRETARY-
TREASURER'S REPORT**

Felicia Gluhareff

March 16, 2014

CALL TO ORDER:

Time 9:30 a.m. There were 17 members in attendance.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

The pledge of allegiance was led by Patricia Fraser.

ROLL CALL OF OFFICERS:

Felicia Gluhareff performed the roll call of officers. Present were Sam Wood, Dan Gray, Felicia Gluhareff, Paul McAvoy and Kathy Moyer. Paul McAvoy made a motion to excuse Mickey Szymonik due to illness in the family. The motion passed.

MAP:

Barbara Carr told a joke in honor of Charles Glennon.

NEW MEMBERS:

Welcome Beverly Mann, Maureen Casciani, Karina Rider, Halat Tinsley, Patrick Miller, Evelyn Leonardo, Stephanie Kruvelis, Mark Zbieranowski and Annette Vivona.

**EXECUTIVE BOARD
MINUTES:**

Sam Wood is looking into ways to save money on our business landlines for the plant and the union hall. Lisa Griswold resigned as steward. Issue regarding scanning mail that is too big to fit into P.O. Boxes as "delivered". Sam will be asking the NBAs what the proper procedure is. Latest Postmaster video addresses the issue of incorrectly scanning parcels as delivered. Grievances in Naples discussed. Management feels they do not need to use progressive discipline on PSEs. Our local is challenging this. The executive board would like to endorse Jim Demauro as State Education Director and Joe Paul as State Clerk Craft Director. They have both been very helpful to our local and the state of Florida. We will bring a vote up to the membership for a local endorsement.

**SECRETARY-
TREASURER'S REPORT:**

Paul McAvoy made a motion to accept the minutes as printed in last month's Eagle's Eye. The motion passed. Our QuickBooks has been sent to Myers, Brettholtz & Company, PA for

completion of our 990 and LM3 forms. Sam and I sent a letter to National about 3 weeks ago to have our local's dues deposited into our Local's new TPCU account but they are still being deposited into our Wells Fargo business account. I will make a follow up phone call to National this week.

**REPORT / SELECTION OF
COMMITTEES:**

None

**REPORT OF CONVENTION
COMMITTEES:**

None

REPORT OF TRUSTEES:

Grace Baer reported that they would like to schedule an audit in May.

COMMUNICATIONS:

Letter from national explaining benefits of ABA. All members in our local are automatically enrolled in the low coverage plan. Each member may purchase higher coverage. The Punta Gorda, Pt. Charlotte area will be converting one NTFT bid to a FTR bid. Sam Wood read a letter from Sue Johnson who is transferring to Ohio at the end of March. She will be missed! March 22 - May 22 National will be having an organizational drive. Florida AFL-CIO sent a letter encouraging members to get involved in Working Families Army Corps. Letter from Karen Walker regarding Lean Mail Processing. This will minimally, if at all, affect us.

UPDATE OF GRIEVANCES:

Management not making every effort to find work for injured letter carriers in their own craft. Scanning issues in Bokeelia and Tice. Management is instructing clerks to do improper scans. Sam will be checking into the correct procedure. Please send Sam a detailed email if you are experiencing this at your station as well.

OLD BUSINESS:

Patricia Fraser spoke about supervisors doing clerk work at the plant. Clerks need to ask to see their union steward and write a statement if you see this happening. We have been assigned a judge for our RI-399 lawsuit. Management is now hinting that they would have been willing to settle without our lawyers but our local gave them every effort to open up communication with us

before hiring a lawyer and they did not respond. Our lawyer has issued the PO a subpoena for documents pertinent to our lawsuit. As an indicator that management has no intentions of abiding by the arbitration award, they have posted 5 newly created AI bids for mailhandlers. As of yet there is no court date scheduled.

NEW BUSINESS:

Our wireless router at plant is getting bogged down and has to be reset often. Sam has changed the router 4 times and we are still having issues. That router is for dues paying members only. Members should not be giving the password out to non-members. The extra traffic of non-members could possibly be adding to the WiFi performance issues. Please to not take it upon yourself to reset the WiFi in the union area, ask your steward to do it for you.

LABOR / MANAGEMENT:

None

GOOD AND WELFARE:

The winner of the COPA 50/50 drawing was Patricia Fraser who won \$36.00. The total netted was \$72.00. Pat donated \$20 of her winnings back to COPA. The name drawn for the member's incentive award was Brendon Taylor. He would have won \$50.00 had he been present at this month's GMM. The pot will be \$60.00 at next month's meeting.

**ELECTION OF OFFICERS
AND DELEGATES:**

None

LEFTOVERS:

Dan Gray made a motion to endorse Jim Demauro for State Education Director and Joe Paul as State Clerk Craft Director. The motion passed.

ROLL CALL OF OFFICERS:

Felicia Gluhareff performed the roll call of officers. The results were recorded.

NEXT MEETING:

Robert Nowall moved to have the next meeting on April 13, 2014 at 9:30 a.m. at the union hall. The motion passed.

ADJOURNMENT:

Robert Nowall moved to adjourn at 10:49 a.m. The motion passed.

The F-1 Scheduler, Fact Finding Meetings, Deception, Assumptions And A Crystal Ball

This has been a very active month for grievances.



Paul McAvoy
Clerk Craft Director
SWFAL APWU

During late February, an employee working in the PARS area decided it would be funny to put an obscenity on mail that was sent out to mailers. The mailers who received this were quite upset, as I would be if I received this on my mail.

I would like to add a disclaimer before I continue. I and the APWU in no way condone this behavior. We have all fought and worked too hard to keep the P&DC open. When we all were hired we had to take an oath to protect the sanctity of the mail. This type of action is inexcusable.

Now on to the witch hunt. Management decided they would talk to all the employees who were either in PARS or on operation number 560 at the time the obscenity was placed on mail pieces and run on the machine. Management decided to call them fact finding missions or fact finding meetings.

Management decided to bring an array of guests/interviewers to perform these fishing trips for the truth. Postmasters Leroy Middleton and Richard Barber came in to show the seriousness of this action.

When Richard Barber started to ask questions Tour 3 Steward Danny Carinci asked, "Are you asking questions?" Barber answered, "Yes". Danny then said, "Then this is an investigative interview".

Management insisted that this was not an II and it was strictly a meeting to get insight and would not be used for discipline. (Yeah, and I have a bridge to sell you too).

I was the steward for one of these fact finding fishing trips on Tour 1 with MDO Kirk Charles and a Tour 1 manual clerk.

The clerk happened to be on overtime for manual on the night in question when Supervisor Priscilla asked her to clock on 560 and label some trays. This was also done by at least two other clerks; I explained this to MDO Kirk and asked him to simply interview his supervisor and ask her about the three employees in question. In that way, we would not have to take 3 clerks, a steward (myself) and the Tour 1 MDO off the floor to do something that was a total

waste of everyone's time.

MDO Kirk Charles checked with the powers that be and was told No, absolutely not, these fact finding meetings must be done.

So, Kirk, myself and an employee go to a room to have this so called fact finding meeting. I tell Kirk this has all the earmarks of an investigative interview. He insists it is not an investigative interview and proceeds with this opening statement: This is a fact finding meeting only in order for us to gain some insight on how the issue of defacing of mail (RTS machine bopping profanity) may have happened and by whom, considering the negative effect this can have on our company.

According to the ELM 665.3 (cooperation in investigations) employees must cooperate in any postal investigation, including Office of Inspector General investigations.

I then jumped in and said this is an investigative interview. You are asking questions and in your above statement said it was an investigation.

Kirk then told us, no it isn't, we are calling it a fact finding meeting. I replied, "You can call it a walk on the beach if you want, but your conducting an interview and an investigation, hence an investigative interview. Let's get this over with. Can you tell me where in the contract I can find anything on Fact Finding meetings?" I was answered with a shake of, and then scratching of, his head.

Now is where it goes from ridiculous to idiotic. Below are excerpts from the interview.

Kirk: Were you working on 2/21/14?

Employee: Yes.

Kirk: Were you working in PARS area on 2/21/14?

Employee: No, I was working on the Flat Sorter/AI because it had broken down.

Kirk: What operation were you working on between 2015 and 2115 on 2/21/14?

Employee: Priscilla asked us to clock over to 560 and label flat sorter.

Kirk: Were you working in manual PARS or on a PARS machine operation?

Employee: No.

PAUL: Kirk, she has pretty much explained everything. I don't think we need to go any further with this

ridiculousness.

Kirk: I was told I have to ask the rest of these questions.

Paul: But the remaining questions have already been answered.

Kirk: Let's go on. What machine were you working on?

Employee: I already told you that I was working on the flat sorter.

Kirk: Were you assigned to CIOSS 53 at any time frame on 2/21/14?

Employee: No, I am a manual clerk and hardly ever work in automation.

Kirk: Do you remember who was assigned to CIOSS 53 on 2/21/14?

Employee: No, I was in the back of the building and in manual all night.

Kirk: Do you remember anything about CIOSS 53 on 2/21/14?

Employee: No, As far as I know those are tour 3 Machines. I don't even know which machine is #53.

I could go through the other 8 useless questions that were asked, but I think you got the idea.

As of the writing of this article management has still not found the person who intentionally defaced the mail. They are determined to discipline someone - anyone - for this incident. Judging by past history, management will probably use deception, assumptions and severely discipline an employee without proof (burden of proof is on management with discipline cases) and probably the wrong employee at that.

BID REVERSION

Management in February reverted the bid of a long time scab who had retired. The reason on the reversion notice read as follows:

Management is currently reviewing bids under the F-1 Scheduler and has no plans to repost until we make a determination on the need for bids.

Now I, being the non-believing sort when it comes to management, submitted an information request for the F-1 Scheduler.

I received a note back from Acting Plant Manager Karen Walker that stated in part: There is no F-1 scheduler to provide. It is a system where a lot of data was gathered and inputted, but nothing that can be printed and given to the union.

At that point I sent another information request asking for the infor-

mation and data that was gathered and inputted.

I then received the following answer: This is a computer based program where we put in data like volume, mail arrival profile, transportation, etc. There is nothing printable to provide the union.

HUH? How can you put information in a program and not be able to either print it or send to the union for review?

I, of course, then information requested the volume reports, the mail arrival profile, transportation reports and any other reports or information, that was inputted into the F-1 scheduler.

I then received a note from Ms. Walker that said in part: Nothing further can be provided on this request.

So, then I ask for any and all impact statements for F-1 scheduler or labor scheduler that was used to revert the manual bid.

The answer I received was that the bid was reverted because we do not have a need for the bid.

This was totally inconsistent with the original reason given on the reversion notice. I guess, the F-1 scheduler, is like a crystal ball that magically tells management what bids to revert, because there is no information available to review. We have grieved and appealed to step 2 grievances on both the reversion and failure to provide information.

In closing, I would like to congratulate new mail handler branch president Chris Strang on his election win. I hope we can work harmoniously together in fighting management and their total disregard for our CBA's, and not each other.



Management Improperly Staffing DBCS Machines And A Reminder Of USPS Employee Rights

At the Fort Myers P&DC we are currently dealing with safety concerns regarding the proper staffing of the DBCS machines.



Daniel M. Gray
Vice President
SWFAL APWU

Management continues to fail to meet the staffing requirements for the DBCS machines as set forth in the JCIM and as outlined in the On-The-Job Safety Review/Analysis (JSA).

This has been the past practice (2 employees to a DBCS) since the introduction of the DBCS machines at the Fort Myers P&DC.

Tour One MDO Kirk Charles stated managements rational for the reducing of staffing on the DBCS is that they are over budget and need to cut work hours.

Management is also claiming the decreased BPI is another reason for management's justification for forcing employees to work one to a DBCS.

Supervisors are also stating that they are being directed to even understaff more DBCSs than they already have. Management is now understaffing five (5) to eleven (11) DBCSs a night on Tour One.

Management is in violation of the National Agreement, their own instructions and staffing requirements by requiring one clerk to work on the DBCS. Article 37 OCR-BCS-DBCS Staffing clearly states two Mail Processing clerks as "normal staffing".

Management failed to properly staff the operation by not utilizing the available OTDL clerks. DBCS's were improperly staffed with one clerk by management.

IT is ergonomically unsound and unsafe for management to require one clerk to run the DBCS alone where a proper sweeping and feeding rotation is impossible to maintain. Management is forcing these employees to work alone at an increased risk of repetitive motion injuries.

The JSA for both "sweeping" and "feeding" of DBCS states, "Rotate job function with feeder every half hour to 45 minutes to prevent cumulative trauma disorders".

The JSA which is established by both management and the Union also listed under "Potential Hazard or Accident" states "Repetitive motion injuries". This is almost impossible to do and properly dis-

patch the mail on time (if proper rotation is followed).

In the October 2007 OSHA Report from the Denver Processing & Distribution Center it states "The DBCS machines continue to be an area of significant concern because musculoskeletal disorder (MSD)-related injuries/illnesses continue to occur."

Page 22 of the NIOSH Health Hazard Evaluation Report 92-073-2337 states concerning all automated Mail Processing machines:

1. Assign additional sweeper to the machines (particularly the DBCS).
2. Limit the time spent working on machines (particularly the DBCS). This control measure could require identification of lighter duty work activities for workers rotating out of the feeder and sweeper positions.
3. Provide additional rest breaks for employees working on machines (particularly the DBCS). One way to increase rest time is to process more mail in the way that zones are run: sort mail in smaller lots so that the machines are periodically shut down, with both the feeder and sweeper clearing out the stackers, and then allowed on or both to leave the work area to return empty mail carriers in exchange for filled ones.

Management continues to turn a blind eye to safety and is only concerned with numbers.

Management has continually reverted bids and because of this fact does not have an adequate number of job bids in Automation to staff the DBCS machines on a nightly basis.

Management also doesn't properly utilize the new class of employee "PSE" to help in staffing issues. The only concern that management has is their own numbers, and nothing more.

Management is only attempting to increase their own BPI with no regards to the safety of the employees or proper staffing of the DBCSs as outlined in the National Agreement, handbooks, and manuals, NIOSH Report or OSHA Report.

If you are being required to work on a DBCS by yourself ask to see

**See: A Reminder of USPS
Employee Rights**

Continued on Page 5

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Management continues to turn a blind eye to safety and is only concerned with numbers.

Our Next Union Meeting

AMERICAN POSTAL
APWU
WORKERS UNION AFL-CIO

Sunday, April 13, 2014

9:30 am

11000 Metro Parkway, Unit 8

Fort Myers, FL 33966

A Reminder Of USPS Employee Rights

Continued from Page 4

a Union Steward and file a grievance. You have the right to do this every time management fails to give you a partner and requires you to work alone.

I have called OSHA and filed a complaint on this issue of improper staffing and the ergonomic issues involved. Hopefully some resolution will come for this issue by the time this article is published.

The following rights can be exercised during an investigation by the Postal Inspection Service or the Office of Inspector General (OIG). They are your Weingarten Rights, Miranda Rights, Garrity Rights and Kalkines Warning which are explained in the following paragraphs.

Weingarten Rights

A 1975 Supreme Court ruling: 420 US 251 (NLRB vs. J. Weingarten, Inc.) provides that a union-represented employee has the right to a steward when facing an investigatory interview. The important thing to remember about your "Weingarten Rights" is that management does not have to notify you of this right. The employee is responsible for being aware of the right to request representation.

Under the Weingarten decision, the employee can request union representation before or at any time during the interview. The employer then has three options:

- (1) Grant the request and delay questioning until the union representative arrives;
- (2) Deny the request and immediately end the interview; or
- (3) Give the employee a choice of ending the interview or continuing the interview without representation.

If the employer denies the request for representation, the employee can simply refuse to answer questions. If the interview is given by a supervisor or manager and the request for a Union Steward is denied and the supervisor continues to ask questions, he or she commits an unfair labor practice and the employee has the right to refuse to answer.

The supervisor cannot discipline the employee for such a refusal. Remember you must ask for a union steward and exercise your Weingarten Rights; management does not have to ask you if you would like a Union Representative present.

Miranda Rights

You have the right to remain silent.



A Supreme Court ruling (Miranda vs. Arizona, 1966) holds that not only must a law enforcement officer advise an individual of certain rights, the officer must be sure that these rights are understood.

Before being questioned by a postal inspector or OIG agent, you should be told;

- (1) you have the right to remain silent;
- (2) anything you say can be used against you in court;
- (3) you have the right to talk to a lawyer before being asked any questions, and to have a lawyer with you during questioning (and if you cannot afford a lawyer, one will be appointed);
- (4) even if you chose to answer questions without a lawyer present, you have the right to stop at any time.

Garrity Rights

The Fifth Amendment provides that no one in a criminal case can be forced to be a witness against him or herself. Information obtained through coercion is not admissible in court.

In addition to these basic Fifth Amendment rights, Postal Service employees have additional rights because of their "public sector" status.

In the public sector, the government acts as both law enforcement agency and employer. The Garrity Rights were developed through a series of Supreme Court rulings dating back nearly 40 years. In a 1967 ruling (Garrity vs. New Jersey), several New Jersey police officers, who were targeted in a ticket-fixing investigation, were told to respond to questions or face discharge for insubordination. To save their jobs, the officers complied and their statements were then used in criminal prosecutions against them.

The highest court overturned the convictions, citing a violation of the Fifth Amendment rights.

This case now stands for the principle that using the threat of discharge or other substantial economic penalty against public-sector (Postal Employees) is coercive - that any consequent disclosure is inadmissible in a criminal trial.

Kalkines Warning

The Garrity decision does not, however, mean that the government may never threaten an employee with discipline for refusing to give a statement about potentially criminal acts.

In Garner vs. Broderick (1968), the U.S. Supreme Court noted that the government could discipline an employee if it does not force the employee to give up his Fifth Amendment rights, such as by giving the employee prosecutorial immunity (a guarantee that the information disclosed will not be used against the employee in a criminal prosecution).

In Kalkines vs. United States (1973), the U.S. Court of Claims elaborated on the Supreme Court's holdings, finding that an employee can be asked to "answer pertinent questions about the performance of an employee's duties when that employee is duly advised of his options to answer under the immunity granted or remain silent and face dismissal."

In other words, if an employee is given immunity, but decides not to answer questions, the government may discipline the employee for not answering the questions.

In the Postal Service, any such discipline is, of course, subject to the grievance procedure. The Kalkines ruling is an attempt to balance the Fifth Amendment's rights against self-incrimination with the Supreme Court's holding that the government has the right to have its employees answer questions about the performance of their official duties.

In getting this information from employees, according to Kalkines, the Fifth Amendment is not violated so long as the government also grants the employee immunity from prosecution based upon that information.

Kalkines trumps Garrity if the employee is given immunity. The employee must get the immunity offer in writing before answering any questions. Remember never allow yourself to be questioned alone, always demand a union representative.

Supervisors often state that the only role of a Union representative at an investigative interview is to observe the discussion and to be a silent witness. The Supreme Court, however, clearly acknowledged a union representative's right to assist and counsel workers during the interview.

- (1) When the union representative arrives, the supervisor must inform the representative of the subject matter of the interview, i.e., the type of conduct for which discipline is being considered (attendance, theft, conduct, etc.).
- (2) The union representative must be allowed to take the employee aside for a private pre-interview conference before questioning begins or during the interview if the steward determines the need.
- (3) The union representative must be allowed to speak during the interview. The union representative, however, does not have the right to bargain over the purpose of the interview.
- (4) The union representative can request that the supervisor clarify a question so the employee can understand what is being asked.
- (5) After a question is asked, the union representative can give advice on how to answer.
- (6) When the questioning ends, the union representative can provide information to the supervisor.

If for any reason you are asked questions by your supervisor or manager which you believe can lead to disciplinary action immediately ask for a Union Representative, and politely refuse to answer any questions until a Union steward is granted.

Once again it is the employee's responsibility to request Union Representation and management is under no obligation to tell you this. Remember if you have any questions or concerns ask to see your Union Steward.

Addressing Your Safety Concerns

Postal employees face hazardous work conditions daily and should take appropriate action to abate the risk of serious injury or death.



Grace Baer
T2 & T3 Steward
Ft. Myers P&DC
SWFAL APWU

Knowing what action to take will prevent you and your coworkers from unsafe working conditions.

Below is a list of commonly asked questions concerning safety and health issues.

1. Why should I contact the APWU about safety issues? What are they going to do?

RESPONSE: The APWU acts as your exclusive bargaining agent and is experienced in negotiating and addressing safety and health concerns with

management. Your union representatives can determine whether to work cooperatively with management to resolve hazardous conditions, file a complaint with OSHA, or take the issue through the grievance process. The union also helps protect you from unlawful retaliation by management for taking action.

2. Why is it important to fill out PS Form 1767? Management won't respond anyway, will they?

RESPONSE: PS Form 1767 Report of Hazard, Unsafe Condition or Practice serves as your written notice to the Postal Service of an unsafe working condition. Management is required to investigate the alleged hazard during the same tour of duty in which it was reported. Management must take action to eliminate the hazard or make recommendation for corrective action if immediate abatement is not possible. Keep the blue copy for your

records; it should be returned by your supervisor before you end tour.

3. When should I call OSHA?

RESPONSE: Contact OSHA if unsafe working conditions place you or your coworkers in imminent danger of serious risk for injury or death and the Postal Service refuses to fix the dangerous condition leaving you with no reasonable alternative. If you or your coworkers are not at risk of imminent danger and you have filed written notice of the problem with no resolve, you may file a complaint with OSHA.

4. What alternatives do I have to calling OSHA?

RESPONSE: Work with your stewards and safety committee to make the Postal Service aware of your safety and health concerns and allow an appropriate response time. Sometimes the mere mention of an OSHA inspection is enough to get management

to correct a problem.

5. Are all safety concerns investigated, even if I'm not sure that an issue exists because I lack training or expertise?

RESPONSE: If you have contacted a steward or safety committee member or have filed PS Form 1767, your issue will be addressed. Some safety issues are complex and require extensive training; maintenance issues pertaining to the Electrical Work Plan and Lockout / Tagout are two examples. Trained safety representatives can recognize deficiencies and take action to correct them.

Remember, the Postal Service has a legal responsibility to keep your workplace safe and healthful. Ask to see a steward if you need assistance with safety and health issues.

Yours in solidarity.

How Far Postal Management Must Progress To Get To The 21st Century

There was a recent news story on the outcome of the vote by employees for representation by the United Automobile Workers (UAW) at a VW plant in Chattanooga, Tennessee. The final vote was close, but the bid by the UAW to represent the employees at the plant was defeated 712 - 626.

Political commentators have put their spin on the outcome, however there is an important dose of reality in this story; cooperation by management with the union is a

Questions Arising About Proper Postal Procedures

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Together, we have many different documents at our disposal and we have and will continue to pour through those documents in order to help our attorney's make a great case for our membership in court.

The SWFAL-APWU Executive Board will continue to look out for what is best for our membership and do everything necessary to ensure that they are properly compensated. It is equally important to fight to get the work back that was taken away from our Clerk Craft and is properly our work.

superior business model.

In Time Magazine's March 3, 2014 issue in the Commentary / The Curious Capitalist column, Rana Foroohar offered a number of insightful comments that went beyond the "who won, who lost", aspect of the story.

Regarding the vote, Ms. Foroohar states, "It's a complicated tale that says a lot about how business works in the U.S. compared with places like Germany. There, big companies are not only unionized but also have works councils in which management and workers collaborate on things like schedules, furloughs, pay, expansion plans or which product lines a factory might make. The idea is for management and labor to work together on issues before they become problems. It's a system that has made Germany into the export powerhouse that it is, and one that VW, the most profitable automaker in the world, has been desperate to implement in the U.S."

Imagine - a company that practices cooperation with unions as a way of moving the company forward. There is a huge lesson here for USPS management, at least for those that care about improving the USPS and its bottom line.

How many times do we see, or hear, or read about the antics of

some in USPS management, and ask ourselves - where do they get these people?

We wonder why so many USPS managers are willing to allow, or engage in, conduct that wastes so much time and resources for their organization.

And one hopes that when the next level of supervision becomes involved in an issue, that you get a reasonable and responsible individual during the grievance process or EEO process that possesses the wherewithal to make the proper decisions to actually solve problems.

Some USPS managers bully and harass their workers. Some employees are singled out and targeted for all kinds of abusive conduct.

The grievances and EEOs filed at Bokeelia over the years detail the level of supervisory abilities (or lack thereof) possessed by various Postmasters and OIC's. In numerous cases, management is simply incapable of cooperating, or even communicating, with employees.

Unfortunately, supervisory mismanagement is not limited to a few locations. There are too many accounts from other employees about the same kinds of things.

Meanwhile, our USPS manage-

ment sees itself as moving forward when no managers or supervisors are held accountable, and any and all necessary excuses are used to ignore or misplace blame for the problems affecting the workplace. These tactics solve nothing, and insure that management misconduct continues. The cost to the USPS of all these management shenanigans must be staggering.

It is encouraging to observe a company, such as VW, that recognizes the value of employee unions, and collective bargaining.

Instead of promoting efficient and effective operations, management in the USPS resorts to playing games, trickery and subterfuge with its employees. The numerous CBA violations alone prove that many USPS managers are confrontational and uncooperative when it comes to working with their employees. These kinds of management attitudes and abuses are costly in real dollars to the USPS.

The top management of the USPS say they want the USPS to be a 21st century organization, and that changes need to be made to modernize. However, all of the resizing, data crunching and efficiency recommendations in the world will not help an organization that will not, or cannot, find a way to correct the serious management flaws which so obviously exist.

Kathy Moyer, Editor



PROCLAMATION

"The United States Postal Service shall be operated as a basic and fundamental service provided to the people by the Government of the United States, authorized by the Constitution, created by Act of Congress, and supported by the people. The Postal Service shall have as its basic function the obligation to provide postal services to bind the Nation together... It shall provide prompt, reliable, and efficient services to patrons in all areas and shall render postal services to all communities."

— POSTAL REORGANIZATION ACT, AS AMENDED

A POSTAL UNION ALLIANCE

The U.S. Postal Service is under unprecedented attack. A congressionally-manufactured financial crisis drains the USPS of vital resources. Six-day delivery is under constant threat of elimination. The reduction of service standards and the elimination of half of the nation's mail processing centers has slowed service and wiped out tens of thousands of good jobs. Post offices in cities and small towns are being sold or closed or having their hours cut back. Corporate privatizers seek to gain control over larger segments of postal operations – and to get their hands on the Postal Service's \$65 billion of annual revenue. The Postmaster General's policies of subcontracting and degrading service are fueling the privatization drive.

The four postal unions stand together to end the attack. We stand for a *public* Postal Service, enhancement and expansion of service, and protection of good union jobs in our communities. We stand with the people of our country in defense of their right to a universal postal service operated in the public interest.

We commit to work together to:

- Maintain six-day and home delivery.
- Protect and restore service standards and mail processing facilities.
- Maintain full-time, full-service public post offices in every community.
- Oppose the subcontracting of work and privatization of services.
- Expand postal services to include basic banking, notary, check-cashing and other services.
- End the corporate welfare of excessive pre-sort discounts.
- Form a common front in the fight for genuine postal reform legislation.
- Organize joint actions and speak in a united voice.
- Unite with other labor unions in defense of the rights of postal workers and all workers.
- Encourage joint efforts of our union members at the local level.
- Support maximum cooperation in the next round of contract negotiations.
- Build an alliance with the American people in defense of the public postal service.

WE STAND UNITED TO PROTECT AMERICA'S POSTAL SERVICE!



Fredric Rolando
President, National Association of Letter Carriers



Mark Dimondstein
President, American Postal Workers Union



John Hegarty
President, National Postal Mail Handlers Union



Jeanette Dwyer
President, National Rural Letter Carriers Association



Your Elected Officials

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Our members live in several different districts. For your representative's information, go to www.congress.org. Enter your zip code and the web site does the rest. You can e-mail most of your representatives at once with a click of your mouse at this web site. Their voting records are also available here. Check it out! Let them know how you feel, it's your DUTY!

THE EAGLE'S EYE EDITORIAL POLICY

The Eagle's Eye is the official publication of the Southwest Florida Area Local, APWU, AFL-CIO. The editor has the right to determine whether the material submitted shall be printed, and has the right to edit as needed. It is the policy of this newsletter to disallow any attacks on individuals. Opinions expressed are those of the writers, and not necessarily those of the Executive Board. The deadline for submission of all articles is the day of the monthly membership meeting. You must be an APWU member to submit an article. Name may be withheld upon request. All articles may be reprinted with proper credit given. Captions/cartoons may only be reprinted upon written permission of the editor.

Southwest Florida Area Local Membership News

We wish to extend our welcome to all new employees coming on board at the United States Postal Service by inviting you to our next SWFAL APWU meeting on April 13, 2014, at the Union Hall located at 11000 Metro Parkway, Unit 8, in Fort Myers.

Meetings are held once a month on Sunday at 9:30am. Be united, protect your job and discover the many benefits of becoming a member of the SWFAL APWU.

Join us at our next local meeting - united we can make a positive difference in our workplaces. We look forward to seeing you there!

For those of you that have recently retired who wish to continue receiving *The Eagle's Eye* newspaper, please email the Editor at Edswfal@aol.com or call Karen at our SWFAL APWU office at 239-275-1007.

We want to encourage our mem-



bers to email information to the editor regarding marriages, graduations, special events or achievements of our employees, or their families, at Edswfal@aol.com. We will be pleased to include as many member announcements as possible.

Jacob Williamson Wins Lee County Scripps Spelling Bee

We would like to extend our congratulations to long time union member Dan Williamson and his son, Jacob Williamson.

Jacob recently won the Lee County Scripps Spelling Bee and will be going to Washington, D.C., in May to compete for the National Spelling Bee Championship. We are sure Jacob's family is quite proud of his academic achievement and so is our APWU family.

This year's Scripps Spelling Bee for the Lee County School District was held at the Three Oaks Middle School in Fort Myers on Thursday March 6, 2014, and marked Lee County's 17th annual event.

Jacob won the 2014 Spelling Bee by correctly spelling the word, "factorial".

As the winner of this year's event, Jacob will receive a trophy, a U.S. Savings Bond, and a trip to Washington D.C. to compete in the Scripps National Spelling Bee.

The previous Scripps National Spelling Bee Championship in Washington, D.C. in 2013 included a total of 281 spellers from all 50 U.S. states, and the District of Columbia, American Samoa, Guam, Puerto Rico, U.S. Virgin Islands and Department of Defense Dependents Schools in Europe; as well as the Bahamas, Canada, China, Ghana, Jamaica, Japan and South Korea.

We want to take this opportunity to wish Jacob the very best of luck for the upcoming Spelling Bee Event in Washington, D.C.



Jacob Williamson, Lee County Scripps Spelling Bee winner for 2014

Sending Our Best Wishes To Suzi Johnson!

We recently received a short letter at our Union Hall from Suzi Johnson as follows:

Karen, Sam & E Board,

As I'm sure you are aware, I will be leaving to move back to Ohio the end of March. I would like to say Thank You for everything I have learned from you all! I will miss you all, but am excited to move forward with the next phase of my life! I will see you at the March meeting to say goodbye!! Maybe with "breakfastes" for Dan!!

Suzi Johnson



L to R: Sandee Beckler, Suzi Johnson, Eileen DiMase and Karen Rock share memories at our recent General Membership Meeting. Suzi will be transferring to a new position in Ohio in the near future.



Long time union member Suzi Johnson will be saying "Good-bye" to her many APWU friends when transferring to her new position in Ohio.

For those of you who would like to stay in touch with Suzi, you can contact her at her new address:

Susan Johnson
1088 N. Pasadena Ave.
Elyria, OH 44035

Best wishes, Suzi! Your APWU family in Florida will miss you!