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

## Lean Six Sigma – The USPS’s DOJO



Sam Wood  
President  
SWFAL APWU

### CONGRATULATIONS TO THE CLASS OF 2014

I would like to congratulate all of our Southwest Florida Graduating Class of 2014. I would encourage all members who have children going to college to apply for all scholarships that are awarded by the State of Florida and National APWU.

### NEW CAREER EMPLOYEES

Congratulations to our PSEs who were converted to career employees last month.

By the time you read this article, all issues of seniority should be corrected. We also have grievances pending to get more PSEs converted.

### MANAGEMENT ATTEMPTING TO DO MORE WITH LESS

Management will continue to cut staffing in the hopes that employees will work even harder and faster in order to get the job done.

It is important to know that if you work unsafe or get injured, it is you and/or your family members who will suffer. Just because management reduces staffing does not mean you have to run around, work unsafe, or even work off the clock. Remember to continue working at a safe and reasonable pace. If the work does not get completed as it did in the past, it will be due to management not staffing properly, not because of your work ethic.

Also, I must warn you, if you are scanning the box mail as being completed when it is not, you could be fired. It will be difficult to win these cases in arbitration if you are falsifying records. Even if management gives you a direct order to scan the box when it has not been completed, get the direct order in writing or call the Postal Inspection Service.

### E-MAIL LIST

I occasionally send information out via e-mail. If you would like to be on my e-mail list, please feel free to contact me and I will add you.

### LEAN SIX SIGMA - USPS's DOJO

The Motorola Corporation created a program that creates a hierarchy of so called experts that pretend to know how to do everyone else's job better than they. This technique was named the "Six Sigma Program". Managers are awarded "belts" (as you would receive in Karate class) depending upon their knowledge of the program techniques. These "belted" man-

agers receive power needed to run around the office like some bully in a "Karate Kid" movie, wielding or bragging about their color of belt while instructing others how to do their jobs.

According to Forbes Magazine, of all large companies who announced using these Six Sigma Programs, a whopping 91% trailed the S&P 500 since implementing them. It is the consulting firms who are making money on programs like Six Sigma by payments they receive from companies paying a "Six Sigma Tax". The companies utilizing these Six Sigma Programs actually believe they work enough that they not only pay to use the program but also hire those who are already Six Sigma belted.

Prior to 2008, the USPS Senior Management Team began running its own DOJO of sorts and handing out these belts to their staffers. The USPS utilizes the "Lean Six Sigma Program". They post job opportunities on web sites like "Linkedin" specifically seeking those holding specific belts such as "Master Black Belts" with starting salaries ranging from \$65,000.00 - \$126,300.00. (See Link) <http://www.linkedin.com/jobs/2/view/9897339>

Most of these belted managers in USPS's DOJO are not seeking to actually improve the USPS, they seek to reduce employees who they believe are the problem. Simply look at the reduction of USPS career employees over the last 10 years and you see how the Lean Six Sigma Program has affected staffing. Lean Six Sigma believes that customer service is not about employees, it's more about the process. Window Clerks should understand this more than anyone as their staffing levels have suffered and are tasked daily with asking the same questions to every customer regardless of the situation.

**See: Lean Six Sigma**  
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## Secretary-Treasurer's Report Felicia Gluhareff



**May 18, 2014**

**CALL TO ORDER:**

Time 9:30 a.m. There were 16 members in attendance.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:**

The pledge of allegiance was led by John Franze.

**ROLL CALL OF OFFICERS:**

Felicia Gluhareff performed the roll call of officers. Present were Sam Wood, Felicia Gluhareff, Paul McAvoy, Mickey Szymonik and Kathy Moyer. Paul McAvoy made a motion to excuse Dan Gray who was on annual leave. The motion passed.

**MAP:**

Barbara Carr told jokes in honor of Charles Glennon.

**EXECUTIVE BOARD  
MINUTES:**

Jim Edwards requested to be the maintenance steward for Naples. The executive board approved his request. We are happy to have him onboard. The RI-399 lawsuit was discussed. The acting postmaster and Dorinda Kohlun want to cut overtime and PSE hours and possibly reduce the number of PSEs. They are expecting clerks to do more with less help. The PSE seniority list was discussed. There is an active Form 50 PSE grievance. An issue regarding safety (PPE equipment) was discussed. There is an active VOE survey grievance. Remember that VOE surveys are YOUR first class mail piece. Management cannot stop you from keeping it in your possession and intimidation tactics will not be tolerated. You are not required to fill it in and give it back to management. If turned into the union, a \$5 COPA donation will be made in your name in lieu of a bounty.

**SECRETARY-TREASURER'S  
REPORT:**

Paul McAvoy made a motion to accept the minutes as reported in last month's Eagle's Eye. The motion passed. Finances were discussed and financial report was provided.

**REPORT / SELECTION OF  
COMMITTEES:**

None

**REPORT OF CONVENTION  
COMMITTEES:**

Danny Carinci said the State Convention was an eye opening experience and our local was very well represented. Those that are on Sam Wood's

email list received his report on the convention. Anyone who did not receive the report and would like to, please contact him and he will send it to you. All of the candidates that our local supported for the state elections were successful. Dave Grant will be attending the National convention courtesy of the State APWU.

**REPORT OF TRUSTEES:**

An audit is scheduled for May 23, 2014.

**COMMUNICATIONS:**

Sam Wood was invited to a Tabletop BDS exercise by management. Letter from Robert Burton requesting all of our documents for a step one grievance. Sam sent a letter back stating that Mr. Burton has access to all the documents he requested from our local so there is no need for us to provide them to him. He was also informed that the union is not obligated to share our documents until step two of the grievance process. Letter from APWU President Mark Dimondstein informing our local that there are full time job opportunities for PTF's on E-Reassign. Thank you card from Karen D'Angelo thanking the membership for recognizing her on Administrative Assistant's Day. Letter from Jim DeMauro thanking us for representing him in the state elections. If anyone is interested in becoming an APWU Health Plan representative contact Sam Wood.

**UPDATE OF GRIEVANCES:**

Scott Wisner is requesting support and information regarding a BBM who was walked off the floor last week due to a safety issue. The task in question has been performed safely for years without the requirement of a "safety suit". The PSE conversion grievance addressing the 25 PSE's who were made regular then "unconverted" within 24 hours will be met on this week. Management is requesting that we drop the grievance since they converted 14 at a later date. The local is refusing to settle for anything less than all 25 being converted. We are also asking for hours lost due to the NTFT positions the 14 were placed into instead of the 40 hour positions they were originally offered. Management has expedited the arbitration of our RI-399 grievance to August. Our lawyer said that he would be willing to represent our local at this arbitration as long as our

local has no issues with it. He is looking forward to going up against management regarding this issue on our behalf. Sandee Beckler discussed ongoing grievances in Tice.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

In Marco management is trying to change lunch lengths for FTR. The clerk is entitled to guaranteed time for "lunch" hours beyond what is stated in his bid. He is also entitled to overtime pay for any hours worked beyond the end tour stated on his bid. PSE issues at stations discussed. Do not, do not, DO NOT scan box mail as being done if it has not been. Do not EVER falsify information. If your supervisor instructs you to do so make sure you get a direct order IN WRITING. Falsifying information could lead to removal. Sandee Beckler spoke about the importance of not holding your break at stations. Breaks are addressed in our LMOU's which can be found on the local's website. The union has not gotten an official notice stating the date of the Mid-Cape closing. Nor have we gotten a solid non-official date.

**LABOR / MANAGEMENT:**

None

**GOOD AND WELFARE:**

The winner of the COPA 50/50 drawing was John Franze who won \$31. The total netted for COPA was \$62. John donated \$5 of his winnings back to COPA. The name drawn for the member's incentive award was Eileen DiMase. She won \$50. The pot will remain at \$50 at the next general membership meeting.

**ELECTION OF OFFICERS  
AND DELEGATES:**

None

**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 June 22, 2014 at 9:30 a.m. at the union hall. The motion passed.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

Robert Nowall moved to adjourn at 10:58 a.m. The motion passed.

# Management Is Playing The Shell Game

The good old shell game (not so good in this case).



**Paul McAvoy**  
Clerk Craft Director  
SWFAL APWU

For those of you who may not know, the shell game is where you have three half shells and a ball under one of them. The person controlling the shells moves them real fast and you have to figure out which shell the ball is under.

Sounds easy, doesn't it? There is a catch; unscrupulous and dishonest people will have a little trap door that drops the ball, so there is no way you can get the right shell. Sort of a now you see it now you don't.

Management developed a new version of the shell game using PSEs. On April 18 they sent 25 PSEs express letters converting them to regular, 40 hour per week jobs at the Fort Myers P & DC.

The letters stated:

CONGRATULATIONS! This is notification that you are being converted from PSE clerk to a career position of Full Time Regular. Effective April 19, 2014, you will become an unassigned regular with the temporary work schedule shown below (different hours on different tours all adding up to 40 hours per week).

A few hours later, these same PSEs received another letter (which I refer to as the F U letter - and no, they did not get accepted into Florida University) which stated the following:

This is notification that we are rescinding the previous letter you received regarding your conversion to a career position effective April 19, 2014. Remember - this was a matter of hours after the first letter. What could have happened in that amount of time to so drastically change 25 people's lives?

So it is bad enough that management dropped the shell out from under them and you would figure management's game is over.

No, not so fast. Management found other ways to harass these newly converted employees.

On April 19, 2014, management cut form 50's making them all regular. They also cut RTR (Retirement, Thrift and RIF) reports for these 25 PSEs. These procedures can only be done by shared services when someone is converted.

Management claims form 50's rule all changes in employee status and use it when grievances are filed concerning employees status. These forms were on the PSEs, eOPF on Lite Blue. That should be proof enough that these PSE's were actually converted.

Now you figure management is

done with this.

Nope - seven to ten days later, management sent out their benefit packages to all the PSEs.

On the second page it says congratulations on your conversion to career employee. This is reiterated a number of times during the approximately 300 page book. So, now management is offering benefits to these people they supposedly didn't convert or make regular.

Ok, so now I guess management done messing with these people.

No, not so fast. Management has more shell games to play. When they did this whole process management took all their leave they had accrued. Most of these clerks had 20 to 60 hours of leave and it was gone. It is assumed it was taken in order to pay them when they give them their annual for the rest of the year for being converted.

Sam Wood has been working tirelessly on these issues, having meetings with Dorinda and Labor specialist Keith Stanton. Grievances have been filed asking for make whole remedy (Conversions backdated to April 19, 2014, full benefits. out of schedule pay and FTR salary from that date).

Sam has stated we will not drop grievances for the benefit of a few. I would personally like to thank

Sam for his many hours worked on correcting this situation.

Management this week, (effective May 17, 2014) CONVERTED 14 Fort Myers Bid Installation PSEs to NTFT Jobs working 30 hours a week. We (Sam, the Executive Board and stewards) find this action unacceptable and the remedy asked for in grievances will be to pay them the other ten hours along with the original going back to April 19, 2014.

Let's find the ball under the shell and end this nonsense for good.

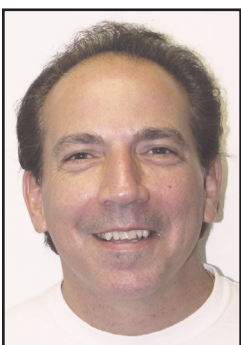
The PSE's in stations and branches should not feel left out as this is just the first part of the conversion process. APWU National President Mark Dimondstein has vowed to convert as many PSEs, (if not all) as soon as possible.

In closing, I would like to implore all employees to check their eOPF often. It is very easily accessible through Lite Blue. It shows your entire history with USPS. If some PSEs hadn't checked this and let the union know, we would have had no way of knowing everything management did in this situation.

You are the only one with access to this info. If something is wrong or doesn't belong in it, please ask to see your steward so we can have it corrected. Management has been known to leave discipline in your eOPF file long after it should have been pulled.

## Education

In my first few articles I tried to cover how important it is to the Union for each of us to do our part in insuring our local stays strong, starting with ourselves. Our own health and awareness is the foundation we must build on.



**Danny Carinci**  
T2 & T3 Steward  
Ft. Myers P&DC  
SWFAL APWU

So now that we have that covered, "it's time to get Schooled". Ever since I became a Steward I have realized how blind I have been through all these years. Not understanding or realizing how much of a role each of us needs to play every day to ensure that our rights not be violated and the contract respected. A firm understanding of your contractual rights is essential and one can easily obtain information about this and other issues by simply visiting our local website at swfloridaapwu.org.

I have to give our local President Sam Wood credit - the man put together one hell of a site. Anything you need to know is there, links to the Contract, FMLA forms, PSE info, Veterans info, you name it, it's there or a link to get you there. A quick visit to the site can answer many questions you might have and arm you with the knowledge needed.

Recently I had the privilege to represent our local at the Biennial State Convention along with our local President Sam Wood, Vice President Dan Gray and Business Agent Dave Grant. It was a great learning experience for me, for like many of us I did not know exactly what occurred at these conventions. Basically it was non-stop voting from 9 to 5 on our constitution and proposed resolutions for the National Agreement. In other words bringing forth problems that we face with wordage in the contract and proposals to bring to the National Convention on how to change them.

For example; there are no negoti-

ated provisions in Article 8 of the CBA for PSEs to receive Sunday premium pay. A proposal was voted on and passed to resolve Article 8 of the APWU Agreement so that PSEs will receive Sunday premium pay.

This went on all day; every day, and I could not have been more proud being a part of it. For me to say our local had representation would be an understatement. "The Boys were on it" and Sam was wearing the podium out! They went over every proposal with a fine toothed comb and ensured our local's voice was heard.

I only wish every one of our local members could see the relentless dedication I am surrounded with and witness every day. Working alongside Sam, Dan, Paul, Grace, Felicia, Mickey and Scott is nothing less than inspiring. I have learned so much and continue to learn by simply getting involved and by taking the time to educate myself on the rights that our Union has fought so hard for.

And so, I ask of you all. Take the time and visit our website, ask questions, get involved and "COME TO A MEETING". I promise you will learn and become stronger at protecting the rights YOU HAVE FOUGHT FOR. See you there!

*"You have to learn the rules of the game. And then you have to play better than anyone else."*

Albert Einstein



# Several Issues Of Concern For USPS Employees

I will once again address the Voice of the Employee Survey (VOE) since it continues to rear its ugly head.



**Daniel M. Gray**  
Vice President  
SWFAL APWU

I will continue to do this on a monthly basis, because it seems members are not paying attention.

Remember all employees will be participating in the VOE one time each year. Once every quarter the VOE is given to a group of employees. This now includes non-career employees (PSEs, CCAs and MHAs).

The APWU at all levels is asking members to boycott the VOE. National, State and local APWU does not support participation in the VOE.

Our own National Officers both past and present have repeatedly spoken out against anyone's participation in this program.

Management can make claims and paint a picture however they like that the VOE is a good program and is helping you and your work environment.

First question you should ask – So what has it helped or changed? The answer is - nothing.

Now our Plant Manager at the Fort Myers P&DC is taking employees either one on one or in small groups in an attempt to what I call "bullying" employees into participation.

When you are on the clock and being compensated to listen, you cannot be required to participate and fill out or return your VOE. This is your first class mail sent to you, so I recommend that you politely decline to participate and take your VOE with you.

Managers want you to simply check a box and mail it back right there. By simply checking the box and mailing it back, this now counts as participating. So obviously you see how little they care.

Once again it is your mail, not theirs. The Union is donating \$5.00 to COPA in the member's name, for any member who turns their VOE in to their Union steward.

We have contacted our National Officers on this new process of the Plant Manager isolating employees for a VOE meeting. The National Officers have referred this information to APWU legal depart-

ment for guidance. Hopefully by the time you are reading this article we will have further information for you.

Management recently converted twenty-five (25) PSEs within the Fort Myers Bid Installation to full time career effective April 19th and then unconverted them back to PSE the next day. Management issued letters, PS Form 50s and benefits packages to the twenty-five (25) PSEs and then went, Oops, didn't mean it.

I used to tell employees, "Don't believe it until you see it in writing". Now, even that has been proven wrong by Postal Service managers. One thing is for certain, if you don't think something can be screwed up by Postal Service management, they will eventually prove they can.

This PSE conversion issue has been grieved by the Union and our position is, as of April 19th the Twenty-five (25) affected PSEs are now career full-time employees.

We will be seeking restoration of all benefits and back pay to the date April 19, plus out of schedule pay based on the hours that management had assigned the employees until management properly places them in full time career positions.

The USPS converted and unconverted PSEs all over the state of Florida. There are some Plants where management left their PSEs in full time status and did the right thing.

At Fort Myers, effective May 17, management converted fourteen (14) of the twenty-five (25) PSEs to NTFT (Non-traditional Full Time) positions of thirty (30) hours a week. Now granted most of these employees have been working forty (40) plus hours a week, so once again, this is typical stupidity on the part of management. One good thing for the non-OTDL employees within the Fort Myers Plant, function one and all tours management cannot give non-list overtime outside an emergency when NTFT positions are utilized. High mail volume and Christmas mail volume in no way constitutes an emergency. Here are some of the rules concerning overtime and NTFTs:

**NTFT's-Overtime Rules:**

**QUESTION:** If, on a particular day, two hours of additional work is necessary, who should be scheduled when the 2 clerks available within the section are: a) qualified non-OTDL NTFT employee (five – 6 hour days ending tour at 3:00 PM) for 2 hours of out-of-schedule premium; or b) qualified OTDL tra-

ditional schedule FTR ending at 3:00 PM for 2 hour of overtime?

**ANSWER:** b) qualified OTDL traditional schedule FTR ending tour at 3:00 PM for 2 hours of overtime. Absent an emergency, a non-OTDL NTFT employee should not be worked beyond their normal daily schedule.

**QUESTION:** Are NTFT Clerks guaranteed the number of hours in their bid duty assignment?

**ANSWER:** Yes. The NTFT clerk's bid duty assignment establishes their minimum daily and weekly guarantee.

**QUESTION:** When a NTFT employee is routinely scheduled to work additional hours (compensated at the out-of-scheduled rate) each week, must the assignment be reposted?

**ANSWER:** NTFT employees will normally work the number of hours (daily and/or weekly) identified in their bid assignment, except in an emergency.

**QUESTION:** Can a NTFT Clerk Craft employee, who is not on the OTDL, be required to work one or more of their scheduled off days?

**ANSWER:** Effective six months from the signing date of the 2010 CBA (November 23, 2011), full time career clerk craft and motor vehicle employees who are not on the Overtime Desired List and are in an installation with employees working in NTFT duty assignments in the same Functional area, will not be required to work overtime except in an emergency. Article 3.F provides the parties' mutual understanding of what constitutes an emergency situation: an unforeseen circumstance or a combination of circumstances which calls for immediate action in a situation which is not expected to be of a recurring nature. In the Motor Vehicle craft, employees may also be required to work overtime in the event of unforeseeable circumstances (e.g., PVS drivers stuck in traffic, weather conditions).

**QUESTION:** May NTFT OTDL employees be required to work more than 8 hours on any non-schedule day?

**ANSWER:** Yes. They are subject to the normal overtime rules in Article 8 and the LMOU (including penalty overtime).

**QUESTION:** May management by-pass a senior holiday volunteer because that employee would be scheduled for their normally scheduled 8 hours on the designated holiday and require a junior non-volunteer to work their desig-

nated holiday because they are available for only their regularly scheduled 6 hours on that day?

**ANSWER:** The LMOU pecking order must be followed. If the LMOU, for example requires full-time holiday volunteers to be scheduled by seniority, all qualified and available full-time employees (both traditional and NTFT) would be scheduled in seniority order.

**QUESTION:** Will full-time employees occupying NTFT duty assignments have their annual leave advanced at the beginning of the leave year?

**ANSWER:** Yes.

There are more rules that apply in regards to NTFT positions and usage, so please ask to see your steward if your question was not answered above.

We continually hear about BPI, which stands for Breakthrough Productivity Initiative. This was started by the USPS in 2001. It was supposed to be used to increase, improve and drive productivity gains throughout the USPS.

Allegedly BPI uses comparative monitoring and performance ranking in operating units across the country. Management is supposed to set targets to drive performance toward the goals they want. BPI is also a factor in management bonuses, and that is the real reason BPI is so important.

Remember managers are awarded monetary awards when they meet or surpass performance measures based on work hour savings and productivity goals. So, now we hear how much our BPI sucks and how we need to work faster with less employees.

Remember it is a "fair days' work for a fair days pay". There are no required numbers in which you are required to meet.

I would love to see our Plant Manager come out and work by herself on a double zone machine for an eight hour shift. The Union would not file a grievance for performing bargaining unit work for this night, but I doubt the challenge will be taken. I don't think the Plant Manager could do this for one night much less six days in a row as many of our employees are doing on a regular basis.

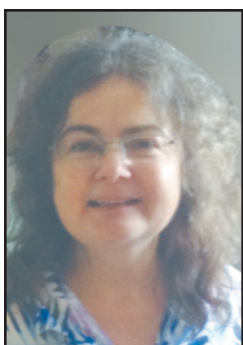
Management is continually attempting to staff more and more Automation machines with only one employee. Remember you are

**See: Several Issues of Concern**

*Continued on Page 5*

# Union Matters

Maintenance employees have been barraged by new safety requirements under the Electric Work Plan (EWP). This plan was put into effect after the USPS was fined by OSHA for electrical safety violations. The Service was threatened by OSHA for non-compliance to the tune of millions of dollars. The Service decided to act - or rather, overreact.



**Mickey Szymonik**  
Maintenance Craft  
Director  
SWFAL APWU

Lest I seem soft on safety, let me give an example of overkill. Management at the Fort Myers P&DC is having all of the Maintenance Support Clerks collect all the \$200 plus volt meters,

the top-of-the-line, good quality and accurate meters that our Maintenance employees were already issued, and replace them with \$90 meters.

It's cheaper to distribute these cheaper volt meters yearly and then throw them away, than it is to have the more expensive volt meters tested for re-calibration.

According to the Maintenance employees who actually have to use these meters, it is much safer to use the more expensive equipment and train Maintenance personnel in the certification of the yearly calibration of these meters, than it is to just collect the cheaper version yearly and throw them away.

As for the Postal Service's complaint, that we are continually bleeding money - duh, yeah. But I digress.

Recently we had an employee walked out and put on emergency leave in a non-pay status for an alleged violation of this new EWP protocol. Specifically, management alleges that the employee was performing work on an energized panel without first donning the newly required Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).

Again, I am in no way condoning any laxity in safety by management or craft workers. The Union stands foremost in the fight to ensure safe working conditions for all employees.

Here's the thing: While the employee worked as instructed on the energized equipment panel to ensure the continued movement of the mail, three of our supervisors stood on and watched without intervening to prevent or protect the employee from possible harm.

Indeed, one of the supervisors requested that the employee use the not yet confiscated, top-of-the-line volt meter, to ascertain what level of PPE was required to work on the downed equipment.

It seems to me that accident prevention should be every supervisor's goal. It certainly is with the APWU and its members. It was not until the Maintenance Manager arrived on the scene that anyone decided to take any action. And taking someone out of the building seems too extreme a measure when one considers all of the facts

surrounding the incident.

If the USPS is indeed intent on ensuring the safety of its employees, wouldn't you think that all these EAS employees would have intervened immediately to protect an employee working in an unsafe manner? Or better yet, how about at least one of the three supervisors mentioning to the employee, before the unsafe situation developed, that they wear the required equipment. Accident prevention makes more sense to me than walking someone off the floor.

Sorry to say, but I am left with the impression that USPS Management is more concerned with avoiding more OSHA fines than it is with the actual safety of their employees.

On a related note, the day after the Plant Manager gathered all of the maintenance personnel together to again stress the importance of working safely, a couple of Building Equipment Mechanics were instructed to remove the filter containers from our water fountains at the Plant.

When asked why they were removing the cartridges, a BEM responded that "the Plant Manager doesn't want to pay to replace the filters. So much for the prior day's exhortation that "Our employees are our most valued assets"!

Solidarity, Prosperity, Peace

## Several Issues of Concern

*Continued from Page 4*

supposed to rotate between the feeder and sweeper position approximately every thirty (30) minutes, even if you are alone, as the Job Safety Analysis signed by both management and the Union states.

Managers, supervisors and labor representatives for the USPS are claiming that no employee is being forced not to rotate as required every thirty (30) minutes (to prevent repetitive motion injuries) and are blaming the employees for failing to do so in responses to grievances filed by the Union at all levels.

One thing we need to do is clock to the proper operation we are working. If you are on a DBCS, please clock to that operation and do not stay on a manual operation. This is important in grievance processing and in identifying where you are actually working.

This does in fact make a difference in BPI, and being on the wrong operation, greatly affects the BPI numbers and does not show where proper staffing is needed. This greatly affects management claims that there are needs for bids or that we are overstaffed.

I recently attended the Florida APWU State Convention in Orlando. Representing our local at the state convention were Sam Wood, Danny Carinci, Dave Grant and myself. At the State convention we voted for changes to the State Constitution, National Constitution and resolutions were voted on to address issues during

the next contractual negotiations which will be occurring soon.

Remember our present contract is up for renegotiation in 2015. The National APWU Convention is in Chicago this July. These resolutions brought forth by all the states delegates will be addressed to all the delegates at national and voted on. Sam Wood has sent out updates via email to most of you on what was discussed and voted on during the state convention so most should be up to date for any members who would like to be on Sam's email list please contact him.

Many National Officers were present and all addressed the delegates. One main topic addressed was the Postal Contract stations in Staples. This can have a dramatic impact on window clerk positions nationwide. The USPS has plans on expanding these contract stations into more Staples nationwide.

We need to tell all of our family and friends to boycott Staples. One way to stop this is to hurt Staples in their pocketbook and buy all of your office supplies elsewhere. In addition, The National Officers addressed issues of grievance backlogs and RI 399 issues.

This was the first time I met our new National President Mark Dimondstein and was very impressed. He was very down to earth and listened to the members who spoke with him about their concerns.

Remember if you have any questions or concerns please ask to see your Union Steward.

Remember your health, family and friends always come first.

**Our Next Union Meeting**

**AMERICAN POSTAL**  
**WORKERS UNION AFL-CIO**

**Sunday, June 22, 2014**

**9:30 am**

**11000 Metro Parkway, Unit 8**

**Fort Myers, FL 33966**

## Don't Take Shortcuts

In case you don't know by now: One of our maintenance co-workers was walked out on May 8, 2014 and (as of this writing) has not been allowed back to work.



**Scott J. Wiser**  
Tour 1 Maintenance  
Steward  
Fort Myers P&DC  
SWFAL APWU

The reason stated is there was a safety violation of the EWP (Electrical Work Plan). It is alleged that our co-worker was working on energized equipment without proper PPE (Personal Protective Equipment) affectionately known as the Zuit Suit.

Our co-worker was classified as being unsafe to their self as well as to others. This is known as emergency placement. This person will remain in a non-pay status until management decides what they will do. There is no time limit. It is a very real possibility that this co-worker could lose their job. We

have been told that this has happened in Atlanta and in Tampa for the same reason.

The main message that everyone in Maintenance needs to know is don't take any shortcuts. Put on your gear. As much of a pain-in-the-butt that it is, it may save your life and it will definitely save your job. Nobody can say that you have on too much protection.

Be aware that management is on the look-out and if they are true to their word, there is no second chance. It is true that we have worked safely for many years without the EWP. The reality now is we must abide by the EWP. We can complain all we want, but the fact is that a task that you have performed safely and effectively for many years without the EWP is now unsafe unless you follow the EWP.

There is no logic to this reasoning - only the reality that you will lose your job if you don't abide by the EWP. I hope that this is clear.

Here are three examples:

"Three statisticians go deer hunting. They creep out through the brush and find a good place to hunker down. Soon, a big buck walks up, the first statistician hops up and shoots, missing 10 feet to the right. The second statistician hops up and shoots, missing 10 feet to the left! The third statistician jumps up and yells, "We got him!"

"How many Six Sigma Black Belts does it take to screw in a light bulb? One, but they'll need 3-6 months and a cross functional team to do the actual work."

A man is walking across a foggy field, when he hears a voice calling from above. Looking up, he sees another man, in a basket suspended below a balloon.

The man in the basket says, "Excuse me, but I told a friend I'd meet him about half an hour from now, but I seem to be lost. Could you tell me, where am I?"

The guy below replies, "You are in a basket, suspended below a balloon, floating roughly 30 yards, above the ground. You are approximately 32.45 degrees north latitude and 87.11 degrees west longitude".

Basket-man answers, "You must be a statistician, right?"

"How did you know?" answers the man on the ground.

Basket-man explains, "Well, you gave me an answer which is technically correct but doesn't actually

## Thinking Of PEG

A few weeks prior to the Safety and Health Program Evaluation Guide (PEG) one of the supervisors was cooking the books, ie. filling out paperwork that should have been performed during the year so that when our records were audited they would be correct.

Another supervisor decided that during the PEG certain hazardous waste (that should have been sent for proper disposal) should be removed from the facility by placing it into one of the maintenance vehicles and the vehicle stored over at VMF.

During PEG a machine was placed out of service because there are no current route sheets on it. A supervisor explained to a craft employee that when Supervisor Ed Morgan (he retired about ten years ago) was here route sheets were made, but never implemented. The craft employee stated that it sounds like a managerial problem. She (the supervisor) had the gall to state that he (the craft employee) shouldn't be so condescending.

Directly after the PEG audit, a craft employee went to speak with the Safety Supervisor. During the conversation it was stated that

tell me anything. You've put me even farther behind schedule and I doubt now that I'll meet my friend in time. Frankly, I'd have been better off if I hadn't even stopped to talk to you."

"Well, you must be in management," says the man on the ground."

"How did you know that???" asks Basket-man.

"Well", says the guy on the ground, "You have reached a high place, mostly as the result of a lot of hot air. You've made a promise that you have no idea how to keep. I've given you exactly the information you asked for and I tried to be helpful, but now you are blaming me for your problems!"

If you speak to managers at the local level, most will complain about being overworked, no overtime pay, and having to attend many meetings and conference calls. These same managers complain that they are being paid at minimum wage levels, due to the amount of time they spend working without additional pay. Local managers say these meetings are basically a waste of time and money. Senior Belted Management officials would cringe if they heard of these complaints and would probably cut more jobs.

management manipulated the audit (the above three paragraphs). From the apparent lack of investigation by the Safety Supervisor it appears that he doesn't care either.

MS Walker (the acting Plant Manager during PEG) was kind enough to have a little get together (buying things out of her own pocket) for the administration personnel (supervision and specific Clerks) to congratulate them on a job well done. MS Walker, thank you for caring.

I had the luxury of having a private meeting with the Plant Manager a couple of weeks ago about my annual Voice of the Employee (VOE). She was very informative on what she thought the problems were while she was on detail, but could not explain why people still had bad feelings about their specific supervisor. I tried to explain to her that you are supposed to praise your personnel in public but correct them in private.

It was a nice hour break from work, but I don't think she was listening to anything I was saying. Hooray the VOE is definitely working (NOT).

Keith McGee

Now I understand that a few individuals may disagree with this article by touting that one positive from the Lean Six Sigma Program.

But, look at the facts. Just this month, the Postmaster General Patrick Donahoe announced that the USPS continues to run a deficit. Really? Shouldn't the techniques learned utilizing the Lean Six Sigma Program be working by now? It seems obvious that programs such as Lean Six Sigma that have been utilized by this Postmaster General have not been working.

Problem solving is the essence of what true leaders do. They must create and sustain momentum for the organization they run and the people they serve. It's not about a color of belt you've earned, it's what you have accomplished for the organization that is key. A true leader sees more than others, farther than others, and opportunities before others. The true leaders in our American history have approached problems through a lens of opportunity, not through a poor or non-existent vision of the future.

The USPS's DOJO mentality is not and has not been working under the leadership of the current Postmaster General Patrick Donahoe.

It's time to find a new Sensei.

## Lean Six Sigma

*Continued from Page 1*

These Senior Managers in the Lean Six Sigma program often brag or even post their "Belt Color" on social media, in their business profile, or in news articles for all to see. (See Links Below)

<http://www.postalreporternews.net/2011/05/18/rucker-named-usps-acting-vice-president-of-sales/>

<http://www.linkedin.com/pub/bill-sampson/6/122/629>

<http://www.linkedin.com/in/aylinthomas>

They want to show just how smart they think they are compared to everyone else. Now to be fair, I have to admit that these Lean Six Sigma managers sat through countless meetings, watching their "Sensei's" attempt to create new ideas that don't really improve the USPS. They see their "Sensei" as someone who can change their belt color, improve their own status, and their pay grade. Now who wouldn't want to earn a "Karate Kid" belt without having to sweat or get physically beat up?

The Belt Colors for Lean Six Sigma are: Yellow Belt, Orange Belt, Green Belt, Black Belt, Master Black Belt.

These Senior Managers are very serious about Lean Six Sigma, but they do have fun during the meetings. In fact, they research or think of jokes to tell during their classes.

# You Can't Make This Stuff Up

Since I first arrived at the Ft. Myers P & D C, I have personally felt and seen some of the most selfish, petty, stupid, arrogant, totally uncaring, and unfeeling bone-headed actions, but management has now totally out done themselves. To give, to send letters of congratulations to the PSEs, that you are now a FTR and then later to say "Oops", is beyond the pale!

Going regular means a level of security, a chance to bid on a desired job, and a raise in pay, a raise enough to buy a new car if needed, to buy an item for self or a loved one which was out of reach, and then to snatch it away is out right evil. And then the Plant Manager jumps on the Acting Plant Manager for submitting bad BPI numbers. Comes now the question - were these numbers erroneous, or numbers that they did not want submitted?

Since the above was written a number of the PSEs have been converted to Non Traditional Full Time, NTFT, which from what I hear is basically the same as a PTR. Not all have been converted, and many are being called back from the stations.

Was a bit shocked by the Plant Manager even thinking that we would have a deliberate slow down, it seems like a case of I thought it, and YOU did not make it so. Last year when the Plant Manager worked a few weeks on Tour 1, I showed (did not say, showed) her four (4) things which were slowing down our production, she took action on NONE! Randy, when he was here for that short period of time, when I showed him what was causing the loss of hours in machine time, had it corrected the next day.

One operator for a DPCS, they have been trying to creep that in for years, citing light machines, and never setting a figure for light, could be run by one person. I have no idea how often it happened, but on a night in early May, there were five (5) machines in the entire building with two (2) persons. I felt so bad that "I" volunteered to help on a machine, and I hate the damn things. The Denver studies showed them to be slow motion safety hazards. The idea of killing myself for an unfeeling management, is not in my game plan, if I have to prove I'm a hero, I'll wear my medals to work.

One must ask if the Chair of the Plant Manager, Fort Myers P&DC is a promotion, a punishment, or a permanent seat in a wild Postal game of musical chairs. Sit here, get your ticket punched, add another line to your resume', and up the ladder you go. Our latest fill in Plant Manager was a Human Resource Manager from Texas, an HR Manager, a head paper push-

er, with how much operational experience? I am not totally against unknowing, even clueless people being put into jobs. If there is a purpose other than puffing up that resume' for the next rung up the ladder, often the 'new blood' will have ideas unencumbered by traditional thinking.

One of my favorite cavalry commanders, of the Civil War and later; Benjamin Grierson, (whose raid through Mississippi was used as the basis for the John Wayne picture, 'The Horse Soldiers') was a music teacher, who hated horses. But remember dear heart, we are at the mercy of a bureaucracy, so we have to take what they shove on us and hope for the best. To add a personal observation, that perhaps the manager in question tried to understand our operations. I arrived one night to find said manager, with a group of supervisors and staff wienies, who were in the process of explaining the 010 operation; you could not hand pick a worse collection to explain anything to anybody.

To those of you who do not understand the ways of bureaucrats, another reference to movie stars from the past. Earl Flynn, (The 'Robin Hood!'), wrote in his biography, about his youth as the son of a veterinarian in Tasmania. Earl feeding the ducks one day notice that pork fat passed almost instantly through the duck. In one of his, the devil made me do it, moments, He wondered what would happen if he tied the piece of pork fat to a long string, and again fed it to the duck, same outcome, and then feed it to another duck, and then another, etc, etc. His father coming home put an end to the noble experiment, with dire consequences for Earl.

But the question about the workings of a bureaucracy were answered, a good bureaucrat follows blindly the bureaucrat ahead (senior to) it, and since the view is restricted, when the duck ahead bops it's head yes, so then does the next, and the next, again etc.. Hence nothing new is seen, nothing new is considered, but the bonuses will be paid, because as a good duck they had eaten . . . !

A good example of being a GOOD bureaucrat, and not letting common sense get in the way. A couple of years ago, at the peak of the Christmas season, a large orange hamper of priority mail arrived for Boca Grande, all having street addresses, Boca has only box delivery. I took a common sense approach and sent it on, the season, goodwill to all, you work the boxes, the names stick in your mind, you take your marker and you put the box number on them. The next day they all came back, they couldn't find the box numbers, but they could find their BOX DELIVERY ONLY stamp. I am sure that when a package was returned to Michigan, or Idaho, the first thing the sender did was call Boca and ask for the box number. Oh yeah, it was more like, "Hello, FEDEX." I am sure that those who did all this got, 'Good and Faithful Servants,' awards.

A week ago I had never heard of Six Sigma. Now that I have heard and read, I'm almost afraid of it. It is another 'Big Brain', big brains train other big brains to be bigger brains and to get higher ranked belts, yep belts right out of your KARATE class. See Sam's article about it, seems that the USPS has been using it for six (6) years, another you don't have to know anything about a job to tell someone else how to do it, if you have a big brain, and you can get 125K a year to think. My little brain sees them coming up with say a STAPLES mailing scheme, paring down the work force, until if squeals, and then go a couple of more notches. It's the darling theory of the decade.

I cannot in good faith any longer work for the management of this plant, given the way that I and others have been treated, and have been exposed to their pettiness, their favoritism, their ignorance, and downright stupidity. Hence forth my loyalties and allegiance is to those inscribed on the back of my pay stub: From Our Customers. They trust us, we owe it to them.

Comes now a question - on an AFSM 100, how many maintenance men does it take to change

the light bulb of a Feed On/Off switch? Stumped? It's a trick question, we don't know. It has been burned out for 3 months now, and we can't get it fixed. Do maintenance supervisors get bonuses for saving on parts?

The Melinda Twotrees Award for the month goes to THE LEAD DUCK, our own PMG Donahoe for the service he has rendered, for his stance on the STAPLES deal, and what got my attention on April 30, at 0600, (the curse of sleep patterns screwed, from working nights for 17 years) in a newscast about two young men, from the west coast, who had come up with an innovative way of delivering FCM.

They were called to THE PLAZA. There, they saw the VP of Innovation, who told them their ideas would never fly, and then off to see the PMG, who according to the two young men, went so far as to tell them that he was not that interested in FCM, that the mail boxes filling of junk mail (not his words) were our bread and butter and our future. Mister PMG if we take the business mail (ads, offers, the "what's on sale" items) from a firm and place in the hands of a customer, then we are simply a business ourself, and we deserve nothing from the government. But we are not.

Mr. PMG, read our title, we are the UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE, tasked to connect every mailbox in the U S of A to every other mailbox in the U S of A; by order of the Continental Congress and every other congress to this date. That sir is what makes it possible for a Grandmother in Marathon Key to send a birthday card to her grandson in Nome, Alaska for \$.49, that's the created service that makes your business angle possible. Maybe if you and yours stressed our security, how mail payments are for less likely to be 'hacked', how our lost items rate is so much lower than the other biggies. The next time Representative Issa calls you to the hill, let him know that we offer one hell of a service!

Isaac Yost

**The American Labor Movement has consistently demonstrated it's devotion to the public interest.**

**It is, and has been, good for all America.**

**John F. Kennedy**

**35th President of The United States of America  
1961-1963**

## Your Elected Officials

President Barack Obama

Web Site:

[www.whitehouse.gov](http://www.whitehouse.gov)

E-mail:

[president@whitehouse.gov](mailto:president@whitehouse.gov)

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Fax: 202-456-2461

Capital Address:

1600 Pennsylvania Ave. NW  
Washington, DC 20500

Senator Bill Nelson

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Senator Marco Rubio

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## 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 June 22, 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](mailto:Edswfal@aol.com) or call Karen at our SWFAL APWU office at 239-275-1007.



We welcome John Franze from Lancaster, Pennsylvania, to the Southwest Florida Area Local APWU! We had the pleasure of meeting John when he attended the May General Membership Meeting. John worked automation on "DB's Tour I" in Lancaster. John brings APWU experience along with him, having previously served as Trustee at his local in Lancaster! He is now working at Tice and is a SSA/Scheme Clerk.

Congratulations to Ashley Wisner, daughter of Scott and Melanie Wisner! Ashley is the 5th Grade Spelling Bee Champ of Treeline Elementary School in Fort Myers, Florida!

*The Eagle's Eye* wishes to extend our congratulations to our 2014 graduates! Good luck to each of you as you pursue your dreams!

Amber Bonham, daughter of Paul McAvoy and Lori Bonham, graduated from the 8th grade at Lexington Middle School. Amber is a 3 year Honor Student. Amber will be attending South Fort Myers High next fall.



**Chandler Gray  
Class of 2014**

Chandler Gray, daughter of Daniel and Tammy Gray, has graduated from Cape Coral High School. Chandler has been accepted at Florida Gulf Coast University and will be attending in the fall.

## National Day of Action in Fort Myers

On April 24, the SWFAL APWU participated in the National Day of Action along with fellow union brothers and sisters at 56 locations in 27 states across the country in a united effort to Stop Staples and USPS management in their attempt to privatize window clerk operations.

In addition, the APWU National Executive Board has now voted to increase the pressure on the office-supply chain by officially calling for a "Don't Buy" campaign for all products sold by Staples. Other union members from across the country are being called upon to join in the boycott.



**Postal Workers and their supporters unite at the Stop Staples campaign in Fort Myers**

In Fort Myers, Sam Wood, President of the Southwest Florida Area Local APWU, led a group comprised of USPS Clerks, Mail Handlers and other supporters of the Stop Staples campaign.

"Staples employees receive minimal training, and the company's low pay results in high employee turnover," President Wood said. "With all the concern about privacy and identity theft, that's just not the right way to handle the U.S. mail. Mail should be handled by highly-trained, experienced postal employees, who swear an oath to protect your letters and packages and who are accountable to the American people. This program is compromising service to our customers, and taking away good, stable jobs and replacing them with low-wage jobs," President Wood stated.

In a show of solidarity, Florida AFL-CIO Field Staff Representative Michelle Guerin was also on hand to support the campaign.



**APWU NBA Mike Sullivan in Fort Myers to Stop Staples**

Kathy Moyer, Editor