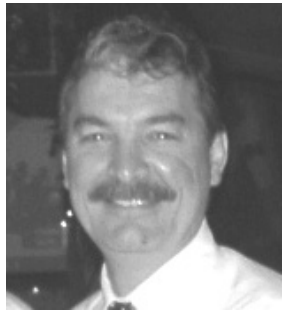


President's Report



EXCESSING & INTERESTING STUFF

As I write this article, I have not been given an update on the amount of employees who have announced their retirement. I do know that many have shown an interest in taking the early retirement. Every person who takes the early retirement offer reduces the number for excessing. We should know more sometime this month concerning excessing and what the number is down to.

As far as 340 time goes, management has been sending employees to the training room to just sit for up to eight (8) hours doing nothing. It is amazing that this is being done when there is work to be done. Management is only trying to justify excessing employees.

I received a phone call last month from a reporter for NBC-2 in Ft. Myers. She had just finished interviewing a spokesperson for the USPS in Tampa concerning 340 time and asked if I could be available to speak on the issue. I knew that management would try pushing the blame on employees so I agreed to speak to them. These are a few bullet points that the Postal Service was telling the media:

1) Management is following our Collective Bargaining Agreement when it comes to standby time. They say that standby is a part of our contractual language. **(I went online and showed the press though the electronic search of our contract that this was false).**

2) Management claimed that standby time was needed because the APWU has a no lay-off clause. **(I stated that the management using the no lay-off claim was not completely accurate due to the fact in Ft. Myers and around the country there were still casual and other non protected employees working and that management has decided not to lay them off. I also pointed out the wording that employees had to have 6 years seniority to reach this protection.)**

3) Management claims that the while volume is down, the number of employees remained the same. **(I showed the media a spreadsheet that I sent to many of you showing the loss of over 15% career craft employees including 30% in the clerk craft.)**

Am I always happy with the way the media addresses our concerns? Definitely not. Was I misquoted on this interview? Yes. If you read the story online, you will see that the reporter changed my quote to more adequately state what was said. As far as what I was saying about layoffs, I was addressing our no layoff clause and how it was not an issue due to the fact that the postal service had not laid off any employees even though they could if they wanted to. The editor simply edited out the first part of my comment and the last part.


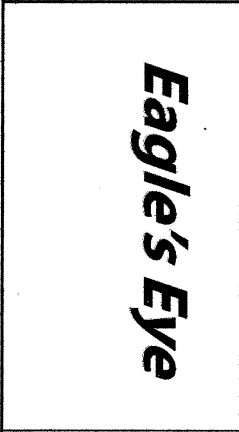

I spent a lot of time discussing other issues like station consolidations, falsification of standby time, CFS consolidation and actual work that was there to be done instead of employees being on standby time. I also told them that management had recently hired 5 casual employees to work while the career employees were on standby time.

Do I think they would have made us look even worse if I said nothing? Absolutely. Let's face it. This standby issue is a dumb management decision. Maybe it does hurt the Postal Service and its employee's reputation by getting on television. Think about this though. Where are we headed as an organization? When do we hit bottom as far as our membership goes?

Is it a fact that we will be losing thousands more in membership over the next couple of months due to employees taking the early retirement? The clerk craft lost 30% of its employees from 2000 - 2008. Check out these statistics:

USPS EMPLOYEE STATISTICS FROM 2000 - 2008

USPS Headquarters 2279, 2892 +21%
 USPS Field Support 5566, 4429 -20%
 Inspection Service (Field) 4190, 2890 -31%
 Inspector General 664, 1159 +42%

	SNFAL/APWU 11000 Metro Parkway, Unit 8 Fort Myers, FL 33966 Address Service Requested	October 2009
Serving Alva, Bokeria, Bonita Springs, Capiva, Chokoloskee, Estero, Ft. Myers, Ft. Myers Beach, Immokalee, Labelle, Lehigh Acres, Marco Island, Naples, Placida, Punta Gorda, St. James City, and Sanibel		The Eagle's Eye
		Volume 19, Number 10
	Non-Profit Org. U.S. Postage PAID Ft. Myers, FL Permit No. 139	

USPS HEADQUARTERS

TOTALS 12699, 11370 -10.50%

Postmasters (Installation Heads) 26121, 25250 -3%
 Supervisors / Managers 38797, 31787 -18%

USPS SUPERVISORY

TOTALS 64918, 57037 -12.14%

Tech Personal 9959, 8010 -20%
 Clerks 281956, 194773 -31%
 Nurses 191, 134 -30%
 Mail Handlers 60851, 55812 -8%
 City Carriers 241079, 211661 -12%
 Motor Vehicle 9347, 8558 -5%
 Rural Carriers 57111, 68900 +17%
 Maintenance 42284, 40248 -5%
 Vehicle Maintenance 5546, 5419 -2%

USPS CAREER CRAFT

EMPLOYEES TOTALS 708324 593515 -16.21%

As you can see, the only gain in staffing within the USPS has been at USPS Headquarters (+21%), USPS inspector general (+42%), and rural carriers (+17%). While the rest of the USPS employee staffing shrunk by 19%, headquarters grew by 21%. Does this seem odd to anyone else that

the highest paid group of employees in the USPS grew in numbers, while overall staffing declined? These numbers come from the USPS's own website. Check it out.

<http://www.usps.com/history/anrpt01/financial/opstats1.htm>
http://www.usps.com/history/anrpt07/opstats_001.htm
<http://www.usps.com/financials/anrpt08/pg64.htm>

After the NBC-2 interview, I was called by FOX news in New York and asked to be on Fox & Friends Live concerning the standby time issue. I was asked not to go on by APWU Headquarters and so I did not. I decided that this should be an issue addressed by APWU Headquarters on national television, not by a local president.

As long as I am president of this local, I will be fighting for the membership in whatever way I believe is necessary. As one of our local union T-shirts once said, "We do not roll over, we do not play dead." I have not and will not give up on our members. As you all remember back in the mid 1990s, the Ft. Myers P&DC was called the "Lights Out Facility." I am proud to say in 2009, our lights are still on and I plan on helping keep it that way.

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 Joyce Kelly
 Kathy Moyer
 Wendy Skaff

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 1300 L Street NW
 Washington DC 20005

For the FL Postal Worker:

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 P.O. Box 8363
 Fort Lauderdale FL 33310

Secretary-Treasurer's Report

by
Felicia Gluhareff

9/20/2009

CALL TO ORDER:

Time: 9:30 a.m.
 There were 22 members in attendance.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Eddie Hardiman

ROLL CALL OF OFFICERS:

Felicia Gluhareff performed the roll call of officers. Present were Sam Wood, Joyce Kelly, Felicia Gluhareff, Lynne Cram, Dawn Hofer, Keith McGee and James Sommers.

MAP REPORT:

A moment of silence was observed in the honor of Charles Glennon.

NEW MEMBERS:

Rose Kalika and Tina White.

EXECUTIVE BOARD REPORT:

We discussed our local's website. Sam has now added form 1187 for non-members to sign up.

We have too many stewards on tour 1 in ratio to the number of lead stewards. Lynne Cram has volunteered to step down as lead steward.

A letter was received from Tampa saying that they are looking into consolidating the Tampa and Fort Myers CFS. Sam would like to get a petition going to try to keep the jobs in S.W. Florida. He will also be doing a petition for the stations that are being considered for closing. You can find these petitions on the local's web site and all are encouraged to print them and get some signatures. Stations that are being considered for closing are: Vanderbilt, Golden Gate finance, Downtown Naples, Murdock, Port Charlotte Annex and Miracle Mile.

We also discussed the All Craft Conference.

Sam Wood told Keith McGee that he did a great job on the \$16,000 maintenance award.

Francis Covelesky and Dan Esber have quit the union.

We got our name in the Child Advocacy Center newsletter for

donations from our members. Lynne Cram who brought this fund-raiser to our attention let us know that on February 27th 2009 the Child Advocacy Center will also be holding a Beach Ball fund raiser. At the very least we would like to raise \$100 to purchase a half page ad.

SECRETARY-TREASURER'S REPORT:

Joyce Kelly made a motion to accept the Secretary-Treasurer's report as printed in the Eagle's Eye. The motion passed. Felicia Gluhareff read the treasurer's report. For the August GMM, our membership raised \$312 for COPA. I ordered 15 bibles @ \$30.95 each. There was an audit performed by the trustees on 9/17/2009.

REPORT / SELECTION OF COMMITTEES:

None

REPORT OF CONVENTION DELEGATES:

None

REPORT OF TRUSTEES:

Helen Skinner read the trustee's report. Sam Wood expressed his appreciation to the trustees for doing a great job and being able to complete the audit in one day. Sam also thanked Felicia Gluhareff.

COMMUNICATIONS:

Sam Wood read through this month's correspondence. All are invited to read through this month's correspondence. Some of the communications discussed were: Letter from the plant concerning reversion of a bid.

OSHA came to the plant for an individual's complaint. Falsification in Bokeelia was presented to the OIG.

Sam sent a letter to the postmaster regarding information on MS47s. Letter explaining ABA benefits, which is also listed on our local's website.

Letter from a steward requesting to step down.

On December 2nd case for mailhandlers doing clerk work.

Letter from Jackie Barton thanking Karen.

2 letters from the NLRB (National Labor Relations Board) about charges filed by Sam against Linda Mungin.

Supposed RI-399 grievances being held in November.

UPDATE OF GRIEVANCES:

5 NRP clerks lost their modified duty positions.

OLD BUSINESS:

Joyce discussed the NRP grievances.

NEW BUSINESS:

So far our members have donated \$1,900 to COPA this year. Last year we had a total of \$2,800 donated. Sam read over some interesting statistics which he will be including in his article regarding the number of people in the Postal workforce this year versus 2000. Lynne Cram suggested ordering some of the free catalogs on the back of the Catalog Publications pamphlets Charles Glennon used to hand out to help boost mail volume. Joyce suggested purchasing stamps from the stations that the Post Office is considering closing.

LABOR / MANAGEMENT:

RI-399 hopefully in November.

GOOD AND WELFARE:

The winner of the COPA 50/50 drawing was Dave Grant who won \$50.50. The total netted was \$101.00. The winner of the attendance award of \$20 was Sam Wood. The name drawn for the member's incentive award was Wendy Skaff. She won \$70. The pot will go back to \$50 at the next meeting.

Sam Wood donated his \$20 winnings to COPA. Dave Grant donated \$20 of his winnings back to COPA.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS / DELEGATES:

None.

LEFTOVERS:

Robert Nowall asked about why
 (continued on page 3)

Secretary-Treasurer's Report

(continued from page 2)

some clerks did not receive their paychecks a couple weeks back. They were supposedly found in an SCF tray at the P&DC a week later.

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 October 25th 2009 at the union hall at 9:30 a.m. The motion passed.

ADJOURNMENT:

Joyce Kelly moved to adjourn at 11:10 a.m.

President's Report

(continued from page 1)

RI-399

We should be closer to a resolve on the RI-399 issues at the Fort Myers P&DC. Our APWU regional RI-399 expert, Billy Woods, has begun to intervene. We hope to get things moving again. Thanks to the help of Billy Woods and our Regional Coordinator Bill Sullivan, we have seen some movement in this process.

CFS

Management informed me last month that they are seeking to move our Fort Myers CFS operation to Tampa and St. Petersburg next summer. I am asking for the membership's help in contacting local leaders and having family members and citizens sign petitions to keep our work here in Southwest Florida.

We also want to do the same thing to keep our stations and branches open for business. Please look on our website www.swfloridaapwu.org to download the form or call the union office to have some sent to you.

Sam Wood
President

Steward Rules

Recently, there was a huge blow-up regarding the protection that stewards have during excessing. This is the language directly from the JCIM (Joint Contract Interpretation Manual), Article 12, page 8:

STEWARDS – SUPERSENIORITY

When it is proposed to reassign a steward or a chief steward, the employee will not be involuntarily transferred to another tour, station, or branch of the particular post office or to another independent post office or installation unless there is no job for which that employee is qualified on such tour, or in such station or branch, or post office. Following excessing, stewards maintain this "super seniority" for the purpose of bidding on initial vacancies over excessed employees wishing to exercise their retreat rights.

Let me give you the history on this steward. Originally, Felicia was the certified steward for Tour 3 CFS. Due to her secretarial duties and her personal health, she was not regular in attendance and employees wanted an alternate steward. Felicia personally asked for volunteers to step up and be a steward. Sam and I also have been asking for volunteers.

Every member has been given the opportunity to volunteer to be a steward but we did not have anyone volunteer. Gail Miller however volunteered to become a steward. She was added as an alternate steward.

When Gail became a steward, she did not have super seniority. For those of you who thought she became a steward solely for that protection, you are wrong. Gail did not get super seniority until she was made a chief steward. Gail had no way of knowing that Felicia would step down as steward when she volunteered to become a steward.

Once Felicia stepped down, the executive board made Gail a chief steward. Until that time, she did not have super seniority. Gail stepped up to be a steward not to protect herself, but to protect each of you when needed. Gail is doing a great job and should be praised for her hard work and dedication.

Gail attends the union meeting to keep herself up to date

on all local issues. Gail has gone, at her own expense, to the spring seminar as well as local training sessions. Every month following the union meeting, I have held a training seminar and Gail is always present. Gail has spent numerous hours reading the contract and JCIM in order to become familiar with the contract.

Gail has been since day one actively pursuing all training available and giving of her own personal time to learn. Gail is a little dynamo. Gail is very dedicated and takes the job of steward very seriously. She is an asset to this local and to you, the membership. Gail is dedicated and enthusiastic and I am very impressed with her efforts. Gail is not alone. You have a great team of stewards working hard for you. Take the time to thank them for their efforts.

As a result of all the early outs and just bad planning, several employees have exhausted their annual leave balances. Management has begun notifying employees that their leave selection has been cancelled as a result of insufficient leave balances. Employees are upset and wish to file a grievance because the 3971 states "I understand that the annual leave authorized in excess of amount available to me during the leave year will be changed to LWOP." This unfortunately does not give you a contractual guarantee for this leave.

It is every employee's responsibility to manage their annual leave so as to have sufficient leave for your annual leave selections. The approval of LWOP is solely at management's discretion. If management cancels your leave selection due to insufficient leave balance, you can re-submit for LWOP but it still must be approved.

If an employee who has an annual leave balance wants that leave, they are contractually entitled to it prior to your request for LWOP. Christmas and Thanksgiving are the most popular choice leave selections.

Unfortunately by the time they come around, several employees have exhausted their leave balance and do not have the leave available for their CVP. Again, it is up to each of us to manage our leave balances so we ensure we have sufficient leave to cover our selections.

Some employees have already entered a negative leave

balance. The negative balance will be deducted from your advanced leave in January which is going to reduce the amount of leave you have next year.

I know that early outs are inviting, but they come at a dear price. Every time a full time employee reaches 80 hours of LWOP, they lose annual leave. You will not earn your sick leave increment either. How much annual you lose is dependent upon what you earn in a pay period. If you have any questions regarding this issue, ask to see your steward who can clarify the issue for you.

There have been misunderstandings regarding dependent care. Here is the MOU language for your convenience.

Re: Sick Leave for Dependent Care

The parties agree that, during the term of the 2006 National Agreement, sick leave may be used by an employee to give care or otherwise attend to a family member having an illness, injury or other condition which, if an employee had such condition, would justify the use of sick leave by that employee. Family members shall include son or daughter, parent and spouse as defined in ELM Section 515.2. Up to 80 hours of sick leave may be used for dependent care in any leave year. Approval of sick leave for dependent care will be subject to normal procedures for leave approval.

If you use dependent care, it is subject to the same rules governing leave usage. The misconception is that the absence is automatically protected. It is not. Dependent care just gives us the right to use 80 hours of sick leave to care for a family member.

You may also be entitled to FMLA for dependent care. If you properly request and provide FMLA certification and it is accepted, your leave will then be protected.

You may use up to 12 weeks of leave per year under FMLA for dependent care. You do not get an additional 12 weeks for your family member. It is 12 weeks total. I hope this clears up this issue.

Until next month,

Joyce Kelly
Vice President

**A Fair Day's Work
for a Fair Day's Pay**

With excessing approaching, management will expect more for less. They believe the work can be done in the same amount of time with fewer employees and most likely will be working most machines with one clerk. The union will be fighting this when and if it happens, but everyone must join the fight.

I know most clerks go above and beyond to clear the mail every day and will work harder than they should to get it out. This is what management is hoping will happen.

If you are required to work one to a machine, there are safety requirements you must follow. These requirements were made by management and they cannot hold it against you if you follow them.

When you are required to work alone, feed for 30 minutes and then shut the machine down and sweep for 30 minutes. Sometimes it is nice to work alone. I have done it many times myself and usually enjoy it but everyone needs to think of what will happen to you physically in the long run.

I don't know about you, but I feel the physical effects of working alone even after doing it for only one day. My shoulders hurt and my back aches. None of us are getting any younger and being required to work one to a machine day after day will eventually break your body down.

You will eventually suffer injuries that could require surgery and affect you for the rest of your life. If we continue to work one to a machine day after day without a fight, don't think management won't use it against us.

They will change the standards of machine operations and one to a machine will become the norm. Do you really want to be required to work alone every day? Allow management to do it now and it could affect you the rest of your postal career.

Dawn Hofer
Clerk Craft Director

Next Union Meeting

**Sunday,
October 25, 2009
9:30 a.m.
At the Union Hall**

**Make Sure You Get
Paid the Right Level**

There have been a few of our brothers and sisters who have opted to take the \$15,000 offer that the Post Office is giving. Those of us who are left wish you well and hope that you enjoy the rest of your lives.

In the past month, some of the stewards have been speaking with the NBAs trying to figure out what work should be done by custodians. If management tells you to move cases or replace ceiling tiles, inform them that this job is higher level work and ensure that the supervisor pays you for the work accomplished. If you are unsure of the task, please feel free to call me.

Bruce Gregory, a mechanic/custodian, retired last month from the Naples facility. Management is trying to rescind his bid. The problem with this is that the mechanic/custodian position for Naples is needed and the MS-47 states that the position is needed.

Once again, management is clueless. Ed McCall is trying to get management in Naples to assign routes properly. Over the past few years, Ed has filed grievance after grievance. Management still does not abide by the CBA.

Talking about the MS-47, some of the stewards are working diligently to ensure that the time that was not performed on routes for this past fiscal year are paid to us. There will be a few grievances being sent up to management so that they can deny them and not resolve in good faith. Management continues to deny grievances that are blatant contract violations. Then they complain that they are losing money.

At the plant, I am trying to get management to start/restart routes that are not being accomplished. If you happen to know of any routes, please write them down and place it in my holdout or hand me the paper. We need to perform all the maintenance, not just the ones that management feels we should do.

There are a lot of Article 32s (management decides that craft employees cannot perform tasks) being sent to the union. When you hear about these jobs that you know we used to do, please let the union know so we can file a grievance.

Keith McGee
Maintenance Craft Director

Will They Ever Get It Right ?

This month, I will talk some on standby time. No matter how many times we tell management how it has to be done, they continue to screw it up. According to Handbook M-32, standby time is not to be a predetermined event. It is supposed to be done on a day to day basis determined by mail volume. What does management do? They decide all the impacted employees would be placed on 340 regardless of mail volume.

I interviewed two supervisors (Mike Zalesak and Ken McMullen) for grievances being filed on improper use of 340 standby time. Ken McMullen told me that he was given a direct order to put all the impacted clerks on tour 3 on 340 by MDO Bob Deslauriers. Mike Zalesak told me that he was told to put people on standby time to see if they could clear the mail without them. That is totally predetermined. The proper grievances have been filed.

On one occasion, an impacted clerk was denied her right to see a steward because her steward was on the DBCS. I told him you have 7 people on stand by time you could use to replace her. Steward Sue Johnson was one of them. That is when he told me he was given a direct order from Mr. Deslauriers not to take anyone out of standby for any reason!

Another night, management changed operations numbers to clear as to not show delayed mail while at least 7 clerks were on standby. On two other occasions, I was pulled out of the union area to the workroom floor when they had people on standby who obviously could be on the floor working.

When I asked MDO Deslauriers why there were people on standby when there was so much work to be done, he was

very cold and angry. He told me those people could not be taken out for any reason because they are being impacted.

Management is also violating the Mail Processing Memorandum of Understanding. This is the memorandum that gives clerks day to day seniority. When management takes you out of your principal assignment area as listed on your bid, they must do so by moving the junior clerks first.

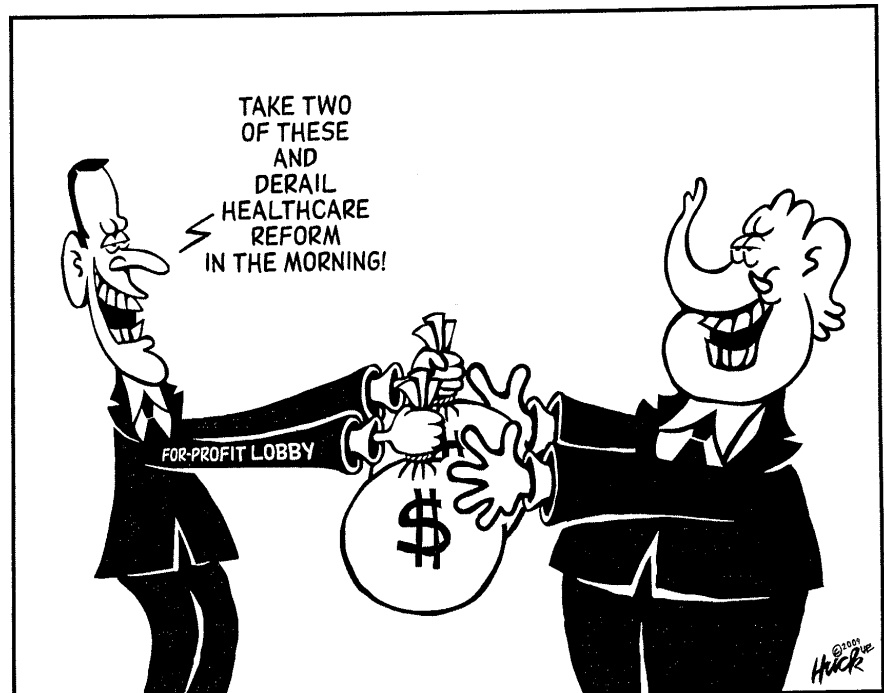
On tour 3, management is using flat sorter clerks to do break reliefs in lieu of 340 clerks with principal assignment area of DBCS. They are being displaced every time this is done. When you become aware of this, please ask to see your steward and file a grievance.

When tour 1 clerks start at 10:00 p.m., they just take the junior people who are impacted beyond the 2 to a machine required for operational needs. There are junior clerks who have clocked in and are working at a DBCS in lieu of senior clerks on standby. That is another violation that is happening regularly. Mdo Harris has been informed of this and continues to do nothing about it.

Management was making clerks see postal videos while on standby time. This is another violation. These clerks should be on 781 (training).

That is only some of what is going on. We are doing everything we can to make sure management goes by the contract, but unfortunately the grievance procedure is a slow process. Until next month.

Paul McAvoy
Tour 1 Steward



Hi from Mid Cape!

Has all that money that the Postal Service paid out in advertisement helped us? We seem to have more packages, but I'm sure that the profits are eaten up by the cost of advertisement.

Now all parcels with any scannable barcode on them must be scanned by a clerk as "arrived at unit." This makes working parcels more time consuming. The carriers have to scan the items when they deliver them, so why do the clerks have to scan everything? I can only guess that it will come back to be used against some postal employee at a later date. It's too early to tell.

At Mid Cape, two of our truck drivers were fired this month. We were sad to see them go. Hopefully, we will get drivers as good as the ones who left.

I would like to thank our custodial staff at Mid Cape, Pierce and Dave, for their excellent job. Several employees and their family members have had the flu. Pierce and Dave have been doing their best to keep our work place germ free. They are truly a pleasure to have around.

Our first alternate steward, Carol, filed her first grievance this month. Managers in a carrier office do not know how our clerk grievance procedure works. It's a shame that we have to train them about the grievance procedure.

Even after presenting a grievance, the acting manager wanted to talk with a supervisor and the grievant for input. The paperwork was filed. He could talk to his supervisor, but the steward and grievant already went that route to no avail, hence the grievance. I know that our acting manager has our Collecting Bargaining Agreement. Too bad he doesn't read Article 15, the grievance procedure.

Working today at the post office reminds me of the fable, "The Tortoise and the Hare." Management will continue to play their manipulation games. They will be running around changing the way the mail is worked, how it comes into each office, and how it is worked at each office. We must continue to do our best at what we know best. We must be the hare, slow and steady. Continue to be vigilant and we will prevail. Don't let the tortoise get you down! Until next month,

Kathy Hartman
Mid Cape Steward

Management Tools

The postal service has been making some drastic changes in how they operate and do business. From our standpoint, it looks like they want us to fail and privatize. The management tool they are using is one that has been around for over a decade called Six Sigma. Motorola used this first and then other fortune five hundred companies started adopting the process.

If you remember, a lot of companies have downsized and started outsourcing work to other companies or put part of their operations in foreign countries. We had massive layoffs across the nation all in the name of greedy corporate CEOs. They reduced benefits to their employees and gave huge incentives to the managers. Sound familiar?

If you look in most of the manager's offices, you will see books on Six Sigma. They go to classes to learn this process. Most disturbing of all are the rankings you get as you learn and implement this process. They have green belts, black belts, and master black belt.

It sounds like management is trying to pick a fight with labor and that we are looked upon as a disruptive force. Look Six Sigma up on the internet and you will plainly see that what they are doing. This company is in line for doing more and more with less. They are giving themselves a big fat paycheck while they are taking it away from us.

Get your co-workers on board with the union and sign people up. If we are to survive as a union, we need to stop arguing amongst ourselves and pointing fingers at each other for all the woes that have gone on here.

Remember, management is the one making all the changes. The union is trying to keep us all working and trying to save our benefits.

David Grant
Tour 2 Steward

**Welcome
New Members**

*Rose Kalika
Tina White*

**Scanning Box Section
Prior to Completion is
Falsification**

Last issue, I told you about the Bokeelia Postmaster directing me to delay First Class Mail.

This month, scanning the box section prior to completion has occurred at Bokeelia. Our Southwest Florida Area Local website, swfloridaapwu.org gives us guidance regarding scanning the box section prior to completion.

If you see management scan the box section prior to completion, or if you are instructed to scan the box section prior to completion, we encourage you to call the OIG Hotline immediately. There is no excuse for scanning the box section prior to completion - this is falsification of USPS records.

Recently, I received a statement regarding the Postmaster falsifying the box scan. The day after the holiday, Bokeelia was short two out of three clerks. Evidently, the Postmaster stopped boxing mail, scanned it as complete at 10:00 to meet the "box up" deadline, and then went back to boxing mail for an additional 30 minutes.

This is a double problem. First, it's falsifying USPS records. Second, it helps management to document that the work can get done with only one clerk - which is not true! I appreciate and applaud this clerk for stepping up to the plate.

In this case, I contacted OIG by email to notify them of this situation, and like last time, I also copied Sam Wood and Joyce Kelly on the email so they were aware of this report to the OIG.

If you are instructed to falsify the box section scan or see management doing it, you are encouraged to contact the OIG but remember, you can also always ask to speak to a steward for assistance in this kind of situation.

There are several ways to contact the OIG:

OIG Hotline: 1-888-877-7644
Email: hotline@usps.oig.gov
Fax: 866-756-6741
Mail: 1735 N. Lynn Street,
Arlington, VA 22209-2020

Kathy Moyer
Bokeelia Steward

**Dear Miss
Management**

During a recent APWU training session, the instructor told us not to sign any USPS training record forms. When asked why, she said the only reason management would have you sign them is so they could use it against you for future discipline.

The trainer keeps records of who has been trained and when. I'd hate to have someone try to discipline me for not remembering some video I may or may not have seen a couple of years ago. As it is, they selectively enforce training video information.

There is only one form you should sign. A 3971, request for leave. When you need to take unscheduled leave, as soon as you get back, fill out your 3971. That way there's no question that you actually requested it.

Several members have told me they received old 3971s that had "employee refused to sign" written in the employee signature block. The employees who showed me them have NEVER refused to sign these forms.

Whoever did this has furnished false information on an official government document. This action could result in a fine of not more than \$10,000 or imprisonment of not more than 5 years, or both. This is printed on the bottom right of all the 3971s.

I can't imagine what would possess anyone to do this. Maybe it was just a coincidence that this happened right before the fiscal year ended. Who knows? Whatever the reason was, I hope it was worth it.

The trustees have submitted their report from the September audit. If any member wishes to read it, call the union hall.

Lynne Cram
Editor

Smile

**You're on Candid
Camera!**

Just a warning. The new camera system is working.

I've been told if you're reading a book in your car, management can tell what page you're on. So if you want privacy, you can figure out what to do.

What America Stands For

Steward Release

Health Care Tidbits

Everything is peaceful in the VMF so I thought I would remind people what America stands for.

JFK'S Secretary of State, Dean Rusk, was in France in the early 60s when DeGaulle decided to pull out of NATO. DeGaulle said he wanted all US military out of France as soon as possible. Rusk responded "Does that include those who are buried here?"

DeGualle did not respond. You could have heard a pin drop

When in England, at a fairly large conference, Colin Powell was asked by the Archbishop of Canterbury if our plans for Iraq were just an example of empire building by George Bush.

He answered by saying, 'Over the years, the United States has sent many of its fine young men and women into great peril to fight for freedom beyond our borders. The only amount of land we have ever asked for in return is enough to bury those that did not return.'

You could have heard a pin drop.

There was a conference in France where a number of international engineers were taking part, including French and American. During a break, one of the French engineers came back into the room saying 'Have you heard the latest dumb stunt Bush has done? He has sent an aircraft carrier to Indonesia to help the tsunami victims. What does he intended to do, bomb them?' A Boeing engineer stood up and replied quietly: 'Our carriers have three hospitals on board that can treat several hundred people; they are nuclear powered and can supply emergency electrical power to shore facilities. They have three cafeterias with the capacity to feed 3,000 people three meals a day. They can produce several thousand gallons of fresh water from sea water each day, and they carry half a dozen helicopters for use in transporting victims and injured to and from their flight deck. We have eleven such ships; how many does France have?'

You could have heard a pin drop.

A U.S. Navy Admiral was attending a naval conference that included Admirals from the U.S., English, Canadian, Australian and French Navies. At a cocktail reception, he found himself standing with a large group of officers that included personnel

from most of those countries. Everyone was chatting away in English as they sipped their drinks but a French admiral suddenly complained that, whereas Europeans learn many languages, Americans learn only English. He then asked, 'Why is it that we always have to speak English in these conferences rather than speaking French?'

Without hesitating, the American Admiral replied, 'Maybe it's because the Brits, Canadians, Aussies and Americans arranged it so you wouldn't have to speak German.'

You could have heard a pin drop. AND THIS STORY FITS RIGHT IN WITH THE ABOVE...

Robert Whiting, an elderly gentleman of 83, arrived in Paris by plane. At French Customs, he took a few minutes to locate his passport in his carry on. "You have been to France before, monsieur?" the customs officer asked sarcastically..

Mr. Whiting admitted that he had been to France previously. "Then you should know enough to have your passport ready."

The American said, "The last time I was here, I didn't have to show it."

"Impossible. Americans always have to show your passports on arrival in France!"

The American senior gave the Frenchman a long hard look. Then he quietly explained, "Well, when I came ashore at Omaha Beach on D-Day in 1944 to help liberate this country, I couldn't find a single Frenchmen to show a passport to."

You could have heard a pin drop.

James Sommers
MVS Shop Steward & Motor Vehicle Craft Director

Our labor unions are not narrow, self-seeking groups. They have raised wages, shortened hours, and provided supplemental benefits. Through collective bargaining and grievance procedures, they have brought justice and democracy to the shop floor.

President John F. Kennedy, 1962

There have been recent issues involving steward release mostly on Tour 3. There should be no delay in releasing you to see your steward if there are clerks on 340 time. As per the JCIM, the following applies when time for the immediate or continued release of the steward is not possible:

-The supervisor must inform the steward of the reasons for the delay and when time will be available.

-The steward must request the time or additional time needed and provide reasons for that request. All such instances must be dealt with on an individual basis. Such requests cannot be unreasonably denied.

-When a request by an employee for a steward must be delayed, the supervisor should inform the employee of the reasons for the delay and the time when the steward should be available.

-A steward will not be unreasonably required to return to his/her assignment once released to perform union duties.

It is pretty hard for management to claim they are short handed when there are 7 or more clerks on 340 time. Yet this has been occurring on tour 3 due to the tour 3 MDO giving tour 3 floor supervisors direct orders that no one on 340 is to be moved for any reason.

This is wrong and was addressed with USPS District labor and hopefully corrected by the time you read this article. If you are still experiencing issues with steward release, notify your steward so they can rectify the issue. A labor charge will be filed if management continues to violate this issue.

Remember you have a right to file a grievance. Management does not determine if you have one. Only the union can determine if it is a legitimate grievance. Not your supervisor. Do not be bullied or bullsh@#%ed into thinking you do not have a grievance by management.

Daniel M. Gray
Tour One Steward

Step up and get your tidbits, right here! We've got hot heath-care tidbits for you. The bruhaha over health care reform has produced a generous serving of tidbits – little oddities, facts, and perverse twists that give a glimpse into some of the realities that don't get much coverage.

For example, insurance corporations are infamous for denying coverage to anyone with a pre-existing condition – things like cancer, or that ingrown toenail you had 20 years ago. The National Women's Law Center, however, recently revealed another "condition" that can preclude coverage: domestic violence. Yes, eight states allow insurance giants to categorize "getting beat up by your spouse" as a pre-existing condition!

Then there are those mythological Obama "death panels" that Republicans have screamed about. While they never did exist in Obama's reform plan – guess where they do exist? In that Republican-led, state of Texas! The Texas Futile Care Law allows a corporate hospital committee to overrule families and pull the plug on granny if the hospital deems any more treatment to be "futile." It was signed into law by – guess who? – Governor George W. Bush.

And now, three quickies from the Washington Money Game. First, how much clout do health industry lobbyists have in this reform fight? So much that they got a copy of Sen. Max Baucus' draft legislation even before President Obama did. Second, just hours after Speaker Nancy Pelosi announced she would no longer demand the "public option" that health insurers vehemently opposed, an insurance lobbyist announced a \$5,000 per-firm fundraiser for her in his Washington home. And finally, Rep, Joe "You lie!" Wilson, who loudly opposes Obama's reform, has pocketed \$240,000 in campaign funds from the industry. Sometimes, the real story is in the tidbits.

Jim Hightower
www.jimhightower.com

You Can't Make This Stuff Up

Norma Rae died on the September 15 2009. She was 57. In the 70s, Norma was working at a J P Stevens plant for \$2.36 an hour. Textile plants and the like would find poverty pockets in the South. They would build plants, hire the money poor locals, and pay them just enough that it would keep them coming back to work. It was then the supervisor's jobs to keep things running.

Norma Rae did indeed write the word STRIKE on a piece of cardboard, climb on a machine and utter the forbidden word. She was promptly arrested and dragged from the plant, never to work there again. The plant eventually went union.

Norma Rae worked as a motel maid, a union organizer, and finally as an LPN. Norma's actions post-dated the postal service going union, but her actions deserve recognition from us in the same manner that the union movement owes those who died at Haymarket, in the coal fields from Pennsylvania, and West Virginia to Colorado, and to the lone man in the Polish shipyard who also stood up and said strike.

Anyone who earns a decent wage owes them both directly and indirectly. Those who profit and do not support their union dishonor their memories. To those who sacrificed for the rest of us, 'Thank You!'

The financial houses go on making money hand over fist, taking risks that if they pay off are brilliant strokes, and where's my bonus. If they don't, it's 'Hey Washington, it's bailout time!'

France and Germany want to put caps on their financial institutions, lest a bank gets big enough to blackmail a government. While there are bailouts and stimulus plans, still not a word about helping out the Postal Service, and why not? We're as poorly run as any outfit on Wall Street. Now that just plain hurts.

The Cash-4-Clunkers program is over and is being heralded as a great success. The government has not as yet sent me my bill as to what my cost is for buying someone I do not know a new car, but I am basking in the glow of knowing that my unselfish act is making the air just a little cleaner.

So what if the two greatest polluters in the world say that they have no intention to

retard their emissions?

There is a high point. A GM plant was able to rehire some 1,300 workers due to units sold. The low point is that the majority of cars sold were Asian. The reason for buying their cars? They make the best cars. This from people who probably heard it from others, or saw a TV commercial telling them that. Forget that on any given day one can find on TV three or more cars that are the number one car in America! Who knows how many of these informed consumers and all knowing car buyers are the same ones who are convinced that the carburetor on their fuel injected engine requires tuning. Or they believe that the compression ratio is found on the door post. Then they tell you that the tires on the front and back require different pressure.

American cars were an American dream. They were big and bad muscle cars, drag racers and stock cars. Movies, TV, and songs were all about the American car and freedom. We never heard anyone singing, "I'm going to save my nickels and save my dimes, cause I'm going to buy me a Civic!"

I, like I am sure others, are a bit upset that the government is stepping in to help the housing industry, who from greed, fueled by the shenanigans of the financial houses, over-built and now can't sell are getting help from the federal government with \$8,000 giveaways to get people to buy what they could not otherwise sell.

Note to the government. I have bought 4 houses that qualify as first time buyer under your 3 year rule. So you owe me \$32,000. I do take checks.

Those at the plant, I am sure, have noticed once again the lack of equipment of all types, the very equipment that is needed to process the mail in the plant and to dispatch it to the stations on time. I was helping Barbara Carr gather up enough containers to set up the Priority Section. It is not as if this is a new operation and she was setting it up for the first time. It's an old established operation.

I am sure management knows of its existence and of its need for a set amount of equipment each and every day. Each operation within the plant has a predictable daily need for so much equipment, and one would think that management would have been able to get it through their

heads by this time that one, that amount of equipment should be available for that Tour, and two, that failing that, members of that Tour would be forced to scavenge for equipment, not go and pick it up from a designated area, but to scavenge because the equipment needed is spread around haphazardly wherever the person who last touched it felt like leaving it.

Management, as you can see, has only the vaguest clue as to just what managing is. So I believe that I should give them at least a little hint; time spent searching for pieces of equipment is time not spent running the mail. But back to Barbara Carr and our search.

During the equipment search, I encountered a mail handler that I trust. I asked him where had all the equipment gone. He gave me an answer that was so ludicrous that anywhere but in the USPS I would have thought of as a joke. Being where we are, and seeing our management in action, I tend to believe that it could be true.

The reason that we are short of equipment? Mail is down 50% so we only need half as much equipment! To management another hint. The mail is down, but currently we have the same number of stations. If you have ten tubs of mail or five tubs of mail, you still need something to put it into. I have a few candidates as to who would think up the 50% plan.

After day two with the Postal Service, you realize that their whole world is numbers. Employees and supervisors counting the same mail, time and time again. That is all that matters. Ask, or for that matter just listen, and you will hear of those who made their careers on false numbers, running good mail more than once to up the counter, or to

run standard mail a day ahead to pad the numbers book.

Now a question that upper management should be asking (but never will). What is more important? Numbers or quality output? I have some big questions that I needs be must save until next month.

As of 15 September, a DBCS machine had been removed, because it was not needed and three more, it is said, are going for the same reason. The reason? Lowered mail volume. But where are they going? Mail volume is down everywhere, so a DBCS machine would be entering a glut on the market, that is unless they were being sent to say Tampa, to let Tampa take our mail, to ensure their being considered as an indispensable unit of the Postal engine. This was done earlier on with Priority Mail, to show the stupid, yes, but it kept Tampa's numbers high.

I do not know if the postal planners read the news or not, but Port Charlotte is listed as the best place to retire, and real people do read these things. The season (that's our local season) is about to begin and George and Ethel are going to be coming down here, look at all the empty houses and call back home to tell the neighbors that they had to get down here and grab one before the realtors try to manipulate the prices again. The volume may never go up again to what it was, but it is going to increase.

The Milinda Twotrees Award goes to the tour I MDO who observing the mail coming down on the No-Read Line, said "That's a case of bad label hygiene," a line I have been saying for 8 years. And then did nothing about it.

Isaac Yost



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Union Matters

One by one by one, reports filter in that indicate that the United States Government is not interested in maintaining the historic mandate of the United States Postal Service. We are no longer considered a branch of the Federal Government, although the general public considers us to be so. The American populace still expects us to be there for them, while the Federal Government continues to chip away at our ability to serve.

Case in point: GSA (General Service Administration) has just awarded a multi-million dollar contract to UPS to deliver supplies to governmental agencies nationwide. To wit, our federal government is lauding the contracting out of the delivery services of federal supplies, not only to a private entity, but one also in direct competition to our Service. What this means is that the bulk of supplies being shipped to the Armed Services, as well as many local, state and Federal agencies will be delivered by UPS instead of the USPS.

Allow me to offer another example of the disregard we are facing: The OIG has recently published a report stating that their recent investigations indicate that much custodial labor is redundant and unnecessary and huge monies can be recovered by revising frequencies of custodial cleaning routes. Interestingly, this report surfaces after a huge payout by the USPS in regards to the continued understaffing of the Custodial Craft. Also keep in mind that this report was issued almost concurrently with an accelerating pandemic flu situation, as well as being subsequent to the 2001

anthrax incident in which a Florida postal employee paid the ultimate sacrifice...his life, for his dedication to the Service.

It is becoming more evident with each passing day that the USPS craft employees are an expendable commodity, regardless of your years of service and dedication to our communities and our nation. In reality, the more years of service craft workers have accrued, the more likely it is that the Service is intent on booting you off the payroll. Reference the National Reassessment Program (NRP). The Service has already succeeded in sluffing off employees injured *on the job* by opining that they have no more work available for these injured employees.

Let us address, as well, the Voluntary Early Retirement Program (VER). The intent of VER is to dangle a pittance of an incentive to older employees in an attempt to induce them to retire and reduce the craft worker payroll.

Meanwhile, EAS employees undergoing their own reduction program (RIF) have, for the most part, either been promoted, or at the very least have been reassigned to positions they desired in lateral moves or "saved grade" situations. Upon reviewing the Suncoast District RIF results, it should strike you as apparent that very few EAS employees were relocated more than 20 miles from the original site of their employment. Most were promoted to higher level positions at the installations to which they were already assigned.

As a maintenance craft

employee considered non-essential to the movement of the mail, I take particular umbrage at this system that protects the number crunchers at the expense of the craft employees who ensure the maintenance of the equipment that actually gets the mail processed for delivery everyday.

We should all be incensed that custodial employees are being given short shrift in their ability to provide us a safe working environment. We should all be outraged that the building equipment mechanics' work is being contracted out under the guise of the immediacy of the work needed to be done rather the Service addressing the issue of the gross understaffing of the BEM labor force. The USPS is required by the Contract to provide the personnel and the training needed to accomplish tasks under the purview of the various job descriptions inherent in our individual crafts.

The USPS has failed us miserably. It has failed us and it has failed the American public to the extent that we are now in the precarious situation of facing our own demise. One has to ask; "whom do EAS employees believe they will have left to manage," once craft workers have been designated as injured, obsolete, or unnecessary? I leave you with Maintenance Manger Doug Diaz' email tag line: "*E Pluribus Unum.*" Out of many, one. Interpret it as you will. Solidarity, Prosperity, Peace

Mickey S.
Maintenance Steward

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 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.

H.R. 22 Included in Stopgap Spending Bill

APWU Web News Article #118-09, Sept. 25, 2009

A House-Senate panel included the provisions of H.R. 22, which would provide temporary financial relief to the Postal Service, in a stopgap funding bill that would keep the federal government afloat for a month after the new fiscal year starts next week.

The House, which approved H.R. 22 as an independent measure on Sept. 15, voted in favor of the combined spending legislation (H. Con. Res. 191) on Sept. 25 by a vote of 217 to 190. The Senate is expected to take action on the bill early next week.

The provisions of H.R. 22 permit the Postal Service to reduce its payment to the retiree healthcare fund by \$4 billion for Fiscal Year 2009.

"APWU members can be proud of the role they played in helping to advance this important legislation," APWU President William Burrus said. "I commend our union activists for their hard work."