

Fellow Union Members-

Congratulations to all of the MHAs who are being converted this weekend!! Don't forget to bid in the round of bids that close on Monday, February 18th.

To everyone who is going to bid in this monumental round of 61 bids, please make sure to read the cover letter that is posted on the bid board in the hallway. There are jobs that have some changes and typo errors on them and there are jobs that were posted in error. Please consult the board prior to bidding because the board has the correct job descriptions, not the computer. The computer and phone systems will be shutting down Saturday-Monday, so if you need to bid then it will have to be done on a manual bid card.

The unprecedented and mass conversions and creation of new jobs is a testament to the work that the Mail Handlers here are doing and that we have been doing while grossly understaffed. While I am a huge critic of the Function 1 Scheduler and its employment as a staffing tool, like I stated previously in one of these postings, we should not look a gift horse in the mouth. Keep doing the work that you guys and girls do and keep up with all of the scanning.

Two side effects of this weekend's conversions will be that this holiday weekend there will be a lot of people forced in because of the lack of flexible work force and that there will be a decline in the overtime at some point in the future. Hopefully by next holiday, management will have all of the workers that they need in order to staff the operations on holidays without forcing. As for the overtime, we are approaching the slow time of year so the OT will dry up as usual anyway, but it should dry up considerably more because of the staffing gain. I'm sure it will return once the fall mailing season rolls around. I'd like to reiterate that the creation and protection of jobs is a keystone of what the Union does, so this influx of jobs is a big plus for the Mail Handler craft. Remember; just because we hire more people it doesn't mean that all of these supervisors learned how to manage people overnight, so more likely than not there will still be OT.

Now for a couple of important points about personal behavior and activity in the discipline/grievance process.

Firstly, you are not entitled to a shop steward for a discussion. By definition, discussions "shall be held in private between the employee and the supervisor. Such discussions are not considered discipline and are not grievable." Management also does not have to have a steward present in order to issue you a piece of discipline, but you should ask to see one immediately after receiving that discipline. There are some supervisors that I understand you wouldn't want to be in a room alone with and I am going to try and address a solution to that problem with management at an upcoming labor-management meeting.

I write this next one every posting: if you feel that you have a grievance or witness a grievable offense, ask to see a shop steward and come into the office to write a statement or talk to a steward about the issue. Management has two hours to grant you time with a steward after you ask your supervisor to see one. It is another grievance if they do not grant you that time.

If you are issued discipline, either in the mail or in person, you must bring it to the Union if you want a grievance filed on it. Management does not inform us when they are issuing it to you and has no obligation to tell us that they did so. If you do not bring it to the Union to grieve in a timely fashion, then that discipline stays on your file for two years and can be cited in future actions against you. The Union has to appeal the case within 14 days of you being issued the letter, so be sure to ask for a steward immediately. Recently some employees did not inform us of discipline and now they are stuck with it; don't be the person that has it happen to you too. Learn from the mistakes of others.

Unsurprisingly, the administrative leave slips for the George H.W. Bush day of mourning have a mistake on them. The slips say that they must be used by May 5th. The memorandum between the USPS and the Union states that the day "must be granted and used within six months of the National Day of Observance or by the end of the Fiscal Year, whichever is later." The end of the fiscal year is in September, so you have until then to use the leave. If anyone in management has an issue with this, please refer them to myself or a steward.

Management has been deciding to take people's A/L or sick leave when you call off for admin or WOP. Management cannot take your A/L in lieu of sick leave or administrative leave or WOP. Use of your leave is at your discretion, not management's. That being said, if you sign a slip that management puts in front of you and it has what they want instead of what you want, then we can't grieve it if you signed it. Read 3971s that management gives you before signing them. If you disagree with the leave that is

check-marked then do not sign the slip. Fill out your own slip and submit it. Also remember this; when you hand in a slip for incidental A/L, hand in three copies and get the first copy back with the date/time on it you submitted the slip into a supervisor. If you have questions, get a hold of a steward or me.

We held our first attempt at a bowling event on January 26th and I would deem it a success and I look forward to having another one. There were 40 attendees including three of our brothers from the LeGree Daniels P&DC in Harrisburg. Tim Kraftician put up a good effort against the Harrisburg Mail Handlers and wound up in what was declared a controversial tie on the very last frame. Next time maybe we will have to dust off some other bowlers to step up to the challenge of taking the title away from the LeGree team. Thanks to Branch President Brian Carson for bringing his troops east and to President Gibson for attending and throwing a few games. The food and drinks were good and I believe everyone had a fun time. Chelsea Laudenslager won the drawing for the TV.

A few parting shots: time is running out to sign up the two non-members for a bounty, the picnic is scheduled for September 14th, congrats to Amber Wintermute, and sorry if I offended any Hogwarts alumni.

Stay United, Stay Strong

Sean

