

7/15/23

Fellow Members-

Did you ever ask yourself why you're paying Union dues or did anyone ever ask you why you are a Union member? Let's go over a couple of things that have gone down here recently that your Union is engaged in at the front lines.

First off, the new National Agreement was negotiated this year. The CBA may not have featured any over-the-top raises, but it did provide steady raises, a no-layoff clause, retention of the current premiums and COLA's, and basically no give-backs to management. MHA's and newer employees also made out pretty well in the new Agreement with the elimination of the lower step and the addition of a second MHA step, among other gains. The Post Office would not just graciously bestow these gains upon us out of the kindness of their hearts; these gains were achieved through the negotiating power of the Union.

As a spinoff of the CBA negotiations, we here at the Lehigh Valley renegotiated our Local Memorandum of Understanding for the first time in 25 years. While most of the LMOU was just reducing the past practices of the past quarter century to writing, there were other new additions to our Local. You are now guaranteed your birthday off as long as you use your own leave and request it a month ahead of time. There are also higher book limits for certain days that aren't considered holidays, but that are important to some people. There's also language incorporating MHA's and many other additions clarifying many of our day-to-day happenings like movement, breaks, and higher level. The LMOU is definitely worth a read so that you know what rights you have here. Please stop in the Union office and pick up your copy of the LMOU and the National Constitution today!

With all of PMG DeJoy's upcoming shifts and movements, closures and consolidations, who do you think will be out ahead of the situations? Who do you think is trying to minimize the impact to our workforce and limit the dislocation and inconvenience? If you answered your Union, then you are correct. The Union will be working with management where applicable and fighting with management when necessary to try and lessen the stress and impact on our employees. We will be keeping in communication with the employees and with our higher-ups in the chain of command to assure that the proper processes are being followed and that we do everything that we can to lessen the strain. Here in the Valley, we are currently working with management to try and

create the jobs necessary for all of the impacted APBS and Annex employees to flow into so that we can keep jobs cycling and so that we can get them all filled. Rest assured knowing that you have some experienced reps here in Local 308 and this building who have dealt with excessing issues before and who will train those that haven't in how to properly handle what will be a trying time for some.

Next up, this week your Union and management agreed to a \$900k payout for clerks sweeping on the APBS for the past few years; the agreement results in some form of compensation to the majority of Mail Handlers in here. Floyd Steinmetz deserves the lion's share of praise for filing these grievances every pay period and sifting through clock rings for years. Honorable mention also goes to Harvey George, Brian Odums, Luis Anaya, Shandra Fallen, Josh Snyder, and James DeVore for their contributions, observations, and collections of names over the course of this exhausting process. We held management's feet to the fire and eventually they admitted they were wrong in how they assigned the work; they danced the dance, now it's time to pay the piper. If you see Floyd or any of the other stewards, be sure to thank them.

While we are on the subject of that payout, let me just say some other words. Whether you get \$5 or \$5000, remember that none of you wrote a statement, or filed a grievance, or basically even cared about this violation enough to put a pen to paper about it, but all of you profit it from it now; it's free money. Please don't come in the office questioning your amount or thinking that you deserved more. These years of cases were all an example of what your Union does for you. The Union identified the violation, tracked the violation, compiled the data, filed the grievances, and fought the fights all in the name of protecting our work; now everyone gets to reap the rewards of those fights...and of course the machine will be taken out. The Union reps can't witness every violation though, so you need to contribute and write witness statements too and then we will do our part to get you remedy.

There is just a little snap-shot of what your Union has been doing for you lately, not to mention a Branch Meetings and breakfasts, a visit to Tours 1 & 3 from Local President Gibson, jackets, bowling/baseball/hockey/water park events, and of course the planning of our Lehigh Valley/Scranton Picnic scheduled for September 9th. As President Gibson and Treasurer Rembelinsky have stated at meetings, we are in great financial shape to take our battles to arbitration if necessary and to train our representatives to continue to wage those battles.

I also want to recognize Thema Dwyer-Barnett, Carlton Baker, and Peter Valcourt who will be attending steward training class on July 26th. These individuals have decided to

step up and to join the frontline fray as representatives on Tour 3. Thanks to them for getting involved. I look forward to them working on our team to represent our members, to protect our jobs and our rights, and to uphold our CBA.

I don't need to continue to extol the virtues of the Union to most of you; to the overwhelming majority of you, I'm just preaching to the choir. I am proud that our building has such a high membership percentage, but there are still some non-subscribers to the Union belief. Next time one of the freeloaders tries to ask why it's worth it, just point to the paragraphs above and ask them to stop being deadbeats and to pull their weight too. You get all of this, and the t-shirt and a hamburger! Join the Union, join the fight!

Picnic is September 9th!!

There has never been a better time to Stay United, Stay Strong!

Sean