

Fellow Union Members;

Happy retirement to Lola Daggres!! She officially called it a career at around 2PM today. We wish Lola health and happiness as she begins the next phase of her life.

It was announced today that Kenneth Hanson has officially been named the Plant Manager of the Lehigh Valley P&DC. It will be interesting to see what Mr. Hanson's vision for the facility is now that he has been given the keys to the castle. From working with him over the last few months, I don't expect a rocky transition or any surprises. He seems much more level-headed and even-keeled than our last two plant managers, but we all know that people can change. Let's be optimistic.

This past Tuesday we held our Branch Meeting for the first half of the year. A group of 22 Mail Handlers gathered for the breakfast event at the Palace Restaurant. I want to thank everyone who showed up. I believe this was the biggest meeting turnout I've had as Branch President, so again thank you. There is no union without "u".

I spoke first about the state of our facility. I covered topics such as: the issuance of work gloves, the impending time changes, the fight to convert MHAs to regular, the Function 1 scheduler results, the 4th of July holiday, the upcoming bids, the blood drive in August, a food drive in November, and our picnic in September. If you want more details on any of my topics of discussion then you should have attended the meeting, just kidding, you can come and ask me in the office.

Local President John Gibson then addressed the room and covered a variety of issues while delivering his state of the local address. He spoke about the implementation of our new CBA, the legislative agenda of our National Union, the calendar of training events for our representatives, the distribution of information to our members, our variety of member events, our grievance case loads, and the Function 1 schedulers from around the Local and their possible impacts on our facility. One highlight from John's portion included the fact that despite our dues being increased due to the contractual increase, our dues were only raised fifty cents and they are now the lowest in the country. John also stated that the Central PA district has been aggressive and productive in our pursuit of MHA conversions through the Vacancy MOU of our contract. President Gibson also informed us that the grievance that resulted from the Reading observations in November is at Step 3 of the grievance process and awaiting adjudication there. We will keep everyone informed on the process.

The floor was then turned over to Treasurer Mike Mohan who spoke about the economic and financial state of our Local. As has been the case since John and Mike took office, we are in great shape and making a profit to help run our Union. Although he didn't say it at this meeting, John always says, "Revenue equals representation". We are able to send more cases to arbitration, get our representatives more training, and to defend our rights more vigorously than ever. I cannot stress enough what a fantastic job the leaders of this Local have done turning around the financial mess that we were in when they arrived on the scene. Also, Mike said that if you notice an overpayment of your Union dues please bring it to my attention promptly. Finally, Mike stated that our Plant has a 98.7% membership rate, so I thank all of you for your support in our fight against management's misbehavior and misguided misinterpretation of the rules.

The final portion of the meeting was a touching and appropriate tribute to our fallen brother Bill Smith. Retired members Tom Kase, Gary Dreher, and Steve Simmons each offered some thoughts, stories, and memories about Bill. After sharing their sentiments, Tom distributed a small bottle of Bill's favorite beverage, Dr. Pepper, to each of us and a toast was offered. It was fitting that our retired Union brothers honored their fallen comrade whom they shared many work nights with. I thank Tom, Gary, and Steve for their attendance at the Branch Meeting and for their representation of the Union and their friendship at Bill's memorial service.

I want to remind everyone that the 2nd Annual Lehigh-Scranton Union Family Picnic will be held on Saturday, September 9th at the Bethlehem Township Community Center Pavilion #1. The start time is tentatively scheduled for 1PM. There will be lots of food, beverages, games for the adults and kids, and prizes. It will be free to all members and retired members. There will be a nominal fee for guests. More information will be circulated in the coming months.

Finally, I want to remind you that if you witness a contractual violation please be sure to ask to see a shop steward and/or fill out a witness form. Our 3rd Chief Steward Joy Carlino has printed out forms that even ask for all of the pertinent information that we need to file a quality grievance on your behalf. Also, if you feel that you have been slighted, aggrieved, or mistreated by a member of management in some regard, please ask to see a shop steward. There are some bosses in here, and I can think of some just off the top of my head, who don't know how to talk to or treat people. The condescending attitudes, the snide comments, the raised voices, the harassment, the gossiping, and any other misbehavior by these supposed leaders should not be expected nor tolerated by the work force. We have the right to a safe and hostility free work

environment. That sentence doesn't just apply to our coworkers. Our supervisors need to be held to the same standards, if not more stringent ones since they are supposedly in a position of authority and are seeking our respect. Do not just blow it off and let them continue to behave the way they are. Hold them accountable. Respect is earned. Tell them to respect us and our contract and they will receive reciprocation, cooperation, and production. Mail Handlers, protect your jobs and your rights!! Join the fight!

Stay United, Stay Strong-

Sean

"Quality work doesn't come cheap." Bill Smith