

November 26, 2016

Fellow Members-

Let me start off by announcing two events coming up for our Branch. On Monday, 12/12, we will be holding a Branch Meeting at the Palace Restaurant. Details are posted on the blue paper on the bulletin boards. Secondly, the APWU and the NPMHU are having a retirement seminar for all of those interested members. Please see the announcement on the pink paper, more details will follow. For both events I need a headcount so please stop in the Union office and sign up. As a reminder, attending Branch Meetings increases your odds of winning a gift certificate for the holidays.

This is a reminder for anyone who is interested in running for a position in the Local Union. If you wish to run for the office of Branch President of the Lehigh Valley or any of the positions at the Local level (President, Vice-President, Treasurer, Recording Secretary, or PA State Rep), your nomination needs to be received at Union headquarters by December 9th or you can go to the nomination meeting on Saturday, December 10th. Details are posted on the Union boards.

This month I have been out of the office for quite a few days as I attended Workers' Comp training, attended the Local Council Meeting, and I was in Reading doing observations in an effort to get our excessed Mail Handlers back into their rightful jobs. After watching some of what goes on in that facility, it just cements in my mind why we need a Union to combat the stupid and egregious decisions made by Postal Mismanagement. I have submitted my observation report to President Gibson and after he collects reports from the other representatives of the Union who were on site there will be grievances and appeals filed.

On November 7th, I testified in arbitration about Winter Storm Jonas which closed the plant in January. While I am confident in the case that we built and in our case at the hearing, I am still weary because it was in front of an arbitrator who is notoriously tough on Act of God cases. We should hear an outcome of the case in early January.

It seems that Plant Manager Hotchkiss is going to continue to try and do more with less here, continue to allow employees to be harassed, force excessive amounts of employees on holidays, continue to excessively discipline the crap out of people, and continue to wonder why production levels aren't as high as they once were. Mr. Hotchkiss walked into a plant in need of a change and when he first got here it seemed

that it would be a change for the better. Productivity numbers went up and the building seemed like it was headed in the right direction. Suddenly though, it seemed that the new plant manager found the former plant manager's playbook on how to run a building into the ground in one of the desk drawers and he decided to start using some of her strategies, even bringing back one of her exiled sergeants and promoting another. The same old stories are repeating themselves; shuffle the bosses around, intimidate employees, PDI everything, walk employees out, force people on major holidays, fire casuals, and pass the blame onto each other and the unions constantly. The Plant Manager can walk right into one of the freshly painted bathrooms and look no further than the mirror to see where the problem has started and with whom the blame ends. The team is falling apart and the coach has lost the locker room.

The holiday season is upon us and it's going to start getting stressful and busy around here. There will be new faces and operational changes. And most of all there won't be a lot of help coming, and it seems when they do come that they don't last very long anymore. Just remember to always do what you're told to do and then see a shop steward if you think it was something worth grieving. We are already over our record high of grievances filed last year and we still have a month to go so this boss is good for business just like the last one. "Meet the new boss, same as the old boss."

The NMO room continues to be a gold mine for cross craft violations and the only thing Mail Handlers like more than free food is free money, speaking for myself of course but I'm sure many of you would agree. Every day there are violations being written up and grieved. Between those grievances and the discipline, the stewards are staying busy with paperwork. It is amusing to note that management played its old game of questioning the number of stewards after Labor Charges were filed against them. "It's the same old song and dance." I could actually use more stewards to try and track all of the stuff that goes on in here and file the grievances, but I stick to my contractual allotment.

I reiterate, make sure you hand in a witness statement if you witness clerks or supervisors performing Mail Handler work. There is a veritable treasure trove of grievance money on this work floor on every shift, especially since we are so short of people and management shows no willingness to push for more hiring or conversions and they rather just pay us grievance money, overtime, and the clerks extra to do our work. Be sure to include who was doing the work, what the work was, the time frame in which they were performing the work, and where they were performing the work. A good grievance starts with a good witness statement. Remember, it's not just about the money; the job you save may be your own.

To hear more about the above items and other topics such as grievance payouts, possible MHA conversions, AI start time changes, and new work in the building, be sure to attend the Union Meeting on December 12th.

Stay United, Stay Strong-

Sean