

President’s Report



EXCESSING UPDATE

I went to Tampa’s Suncoast District Office on May 13, 2009 for the latest update on excessing. This was the 3rd meeting of the year that I have attended in Tampa. Here is the update:

**Lakeland** - Finished on 4/11/09. All 10 excessed employees were senior volunteers in lieu of an impacted employee. **A new impact letter was sent out on 5/7/09 approving an additional 40 employees to be excessed.**

**Tampa** - Finished on 5/9/09. 54 clerks were excessed. 11 of the 54 were volunteers in lieu of.

**St. Petersburg** - Finished with 10 clerks excessed. **A new impact letter was sent out on 4/1/09 approving an additional 40 employees to be excessed.**

**Clearwater** - Original impact of 12 clerks. They have lost 7 through attrition. This leaves 5 clerks to be excessed. They are currently going through bid realignment which may reduce their OT and work hours and possibly their impact. Have 2 clerks interested in voluntary reassignment to PTF city carriers within the installation.

**Naples** - Original impact of 9 clerks. Have lost 5 employees through attrition, leaving 4 to be excessed. They are currently going through bid realignment which may reduce their OT and work hours and possibly their impact. Management now looking at excessing 2 clerks. **I spoke with management about the current grievances at steps 2 and 3 concerning management and carriers doing clerk work in Naples. They agreed to look into this further. We may be safe in Naples, but I’m still working on it.**

**Venice** - Original impact of 6 clerks. They have lost 3 through attrition, leaving 3 left to be excessed. They are looking to reduce PTF work hours and OT. This may eliminate the need to excess any employees. **Tarpon Springs** - Original impact of 1 employee. The office needs to reduce the work hours of PTFs in

order to excess the 1 employee.

**New Port Richey** - Original impact of 5 employees. They have lost 1 employee through attrition, leaving 4 to be excessed. They are currently going through bid realignment which may reduce their OT and work hours and possibly their impact. PTFs hours need to be reduced significantly for management to be able to excess any employee.

**Sarasota** - Original impact of 7 clerks. They have lost 3 through attrition, leaving 4 to be excessed. The have a couple of residuals within the installation. If any excessing occurs, it will be within the installation.

**Bartow** - Original impact of 3 clerks. They have lost 1 employee through attrition. They have 2 employees who will be retiring which will close this excessing event.

**Port Richey** - Original impact of 4 clerks. They have lost 1 through attrition, leaving 3 to be excessed. They are currently going through bid realignment which may reduce their OT and work hours and possibly their impact. They need to significantly reduce the amount of PTF work hours to be able to excess.

**Punta Gorda / Pt. Charlotte** - Original impact of 4 clerks. They have lost 3 through attrition, leaving 1 to be excessed. They need to significantly reduce PTF work hours and overtime to be able to excess. **Management believes that no excessing will be needed.**

**Manasota** - The original letter has been completed. **A new impact letter was sent out on 5/11/09 approving an additional 41 employees to be excessed.**

**Brooksville, Ft. Myers P&DC, Largo, Plant City, Ruskin and Tampa Express Mail Clerks** - All these letters have been officially completed and withholding lifted. **NOTE: This does not mean a new letter will not be issued just as Lakeland, Manasota and St. Petersburg has seen. As you read this, we may be back under withholding. Check our website.**

**The current order that management want to excess is:**  
1)Sarasota  
2)Naples & Clearwater  
3)St. Petersburg

June 2009		The Eagle's Eye		Volume 19, Number 6	
		<i>SWFL/APWU 11000 Metro Parkway, Unit 8 Fort Myers, FL 33966 Address Service Requested</i>			
Serving Alva, Bokelia, Bonita Springs, Captiva, Chokoloskee, Estero, Ft. Myers, Ft. Myers Beach, Immokalee, Labelle, Lehigh Acres, Marco Island, Naples, Placida, Punta Gorda, St. James City, and Sanibel				Non-Profit Org. U.S. Postage PAID Ft. Myers, FL Permit No. 139	

4)Lakeland  
5)Manasota

Our APWU members in Southwest Florida have been fortunate so far when it comes to excessing. Not one person has been excessed and we intend to fight to keep things that way. We may end up having excessed employees in the near future, but I intend to keep it to a minimum. At the last meeting in Tampa, the Ft. Myers P&DC was not discussed, meaning that our employees are safe for at least another 90 days.

NATIONAL REASSESSMENT  
PROCESS

Management is currently working to force those employees who have reached Maximum Medical Improvement (MMI) out of the U.S. Postal Service by claiming there is no work available (NWA). If you are one of these employees, please make sure that you update your medical records immediately. If you receive notification of a meeting with management, contact the union office immediately so that I can send an NRP Steward. Joyce Kelly, Felicia Gluhareff, Lynne Cram and Anna Johnson are the only union stewards who are trained in this area.

**NOTE: There is a lot of new information concerning NRP on our website: <http://www.swfloridaapwu.org>**

RI-399 UPDATE

As of the time of writing this article, there is nothing new on the RI-399 front. Our last meeting scheduled on May 5, 2009 was canceled by management due to a family emergency. The meeting was rescheduled for May 20, 2009. Our local is prepared and ready to face the mail handler’s union. Once again, I would like to thank Dawn Hofer and Paul McAvoy for all of their hard work. If you get a chance, please tell them thank you.

Sam Wood  
President

Looking for a way to track how well you’re doing in meeting your retirement savings goal?

The Office of Personnel Management developed the Federal Ballpark Estimate - a savings goal worksheet - just for that purpose. It’s available at: <http://www.opm.gov/benefits/ballpark/menu.asp>

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<p><i>Southwest Florida Area Local, APWU</i> 11000 Metro Pkwy, Unit 8 Fort Myers, FL 33966 239-275-1007 800-793-2798 Open 9-3, Mon-Fri.</p> <p><b>PRESIDENT</b></p> <p>Sam Wood 823-APWU SWoodFla@aol.com</p> <p><b>VICE-PRESIDENT</b></p> <p>Joyce Kelly VPSWFAL@aol.com 239-281-4223</p> <p><b>SECRETARY-TREASURER</b></p> <p>Felicia Gluhareff SecTreaSWFAL@aol.com</p> <p><b>CLERK CRAFT DIRECTOR</b></p> <p>Dawn Hofer ClerkCraftSWFAL@aol.com 239-470-8931</p> <p><b>MAINTENANCE CRAFT DIRECTOR</b></p> <p>Keith McGee Maintdirswfal@aol.com 239-834-2900</p> <p><b>EDITOR</b></p> <p>Lynne Cram Ed SWFAL@aol.com</p> <p><b>MOTOR VEHICLE CRAFT DIRECTOR</b></p> <p>Jim Sommers</p> <p><b>TRUSTEES</b></p> <p>Pat Fraser Helen Brillhart Skinner Isaac Yost</p> <p><b>SAFETY &amp; HEALTH COMMITTEE</b></p> <p>David Grant Wendy Skaff</p> <p><b>CONSTITUTION COMMITTEE</b></p> <p>Cathy Cobb Mark Hamilton Darla Howard Anna Johnson Joyce Kelly Wendy Skaff</p> <p><b>WEBSITE ADDRESS</b></p> <p>www.swfloridaapwu.org</p> <p><b>Nat’l Mailing Address:</b> Per Capita Section APWU, AFL-CIO 1300 L Street NW Washington DC 20005</p> <p><b>For the FL Postal Worker:</b> The Florida Postal Worker P.O. Box 8363 Fort Lauderdale FL 33310</p>	<p><b>Secretary-Treasurer’s Report</b> <b>by</b> <b>Felicia Gluhareff</b></p>			
	5/17/2009			
	<b>Call To Order:</b>			
	Time: 9:30 a.m. There were 23 members in attendance.		to work mail coming down the no read line. If this is witnessed, a statement also needs to be written. Jim Sommers spoke on issues in the motor vehicle craft. Discussed was a new computer for Karen, our wonderful office secretary. Dan Gray submitted an article last month for the Eagle’s Eye that was lost in cyber space. Since Lynne Cram claims it was her fault she made a motion that Dan get credit for his article. The motion passed.	<b>Update of Grievances:</b>  None
	<b>Pledge of Allegiance:</b>			
	The pledge of allegiance was led by Dale Eller.			<b>Old Business:</b>  Sam says he can’t thank Dawn Hofer and Paul McAvoy enough for all their RI-399 work. They are helping us save our jobs. If we can’t get our work back that was previously signed off on, we need to line up and file grievances.
	<b>Roll Call of Officers:</b>			<b>New Business:</b>  Tom Hervey from AFLAC came in and spoke about a cancer and an accident insurance policy that is offered to the members. Theresa from Costco came in and talked about a special deal for union members. You can get 2 membership cards, one for yourself and one for someone in your household for \$50 a year. The deal they are making for us is that we get a \$10 gift card back when we sign up. There is also an offer that if you sign up a friend, you and your friend both get a \$10 gift card. She requests that you call the store and ask for her before you come in to sign up. Sam has the phone number to reach her. Grievances are being filed on level 7 jobs being abolished. The union feels that the use of clickers at the station to count packages is a good idea and may help to save our jobs. If you are a window clerk and forced to rate a fellow clerk, give them 100% , why not? Dawn Hofer would like to submit a resolution to national in the name of our local for the upcoming contract negotiations. Her idea is that if you work overtime you are given the choice of overtime pay or annual. Just like we do when we work holidays. Sam asked if anyone has ideas, let him know and he will help write a resolution to be presented to the membership to be voted on.
	The roll call of officers was performed by Felicia Gluhareff. Present were Sam Wood, Joyce Kelly, Felicia Gluhareff, Lynne, Cram, Dawn Hofer and James Sommers. A motion was made to excuse Keith McGee due to his being on annual leave. The motion passed.	<b>Secretary-Treasurer’s Report:</b>		
	<b>MAP Report:</b>			
	Sam led a moment of silence to honor Charles Glennon.	Joyce Kelly made a motion to accept the secretary-treasurer’s report as printed in last month’s Eagle’s Eye. Felicia Gluhareff read the treasurer’s report. I was also very impressed with the amount of VOE surveys we received. Contrary to Dorinda’s speech, the union IS NOT on board with filling out the VOE survey. Management has ALWAYS turned those around and used them against us. Even though management tries intimidation tactics, you ARE NOT required to fill them out. Give them to your union steward and we will send you a check for \$5 or better yet, donate your \$5 to COPA.		
	<b>New Members:</b>			
	None			
	<b>Executive Board Report:</b>			
	Felicia Gluhareff read the executive board minutes. Sam Wood went to Tampa last week to attend a meeting on excessing. Tampa excessed 54 people and did it wrong. St. Pete excessed 10 then got another excessing letter for 40. Manasota got another letter for 41 clerks. Lakeland excessed 10 or 11 clerks and just got a letter for another 40. Punta Gorda got a letter for 5 clerks to be excessed but there probably won’t be any due to PTF overtime. Naples started off with 9 clerks to be excessed; now it is down to 2. There are over 2 grievances filed out of Naples due to supervisors and injured letter carriers doing clerk work so we hope to get the excessing number down to 0. There are three offices that have bids that need filling, Labelle, Lehigh and Estero, possibly by excessing. At the prior meeting in Tampa, the P&DC was the 3 <sup>rd</sup> on the list for excessing. This time we weren’t even mentioned in the top five. To preserve our jobs, we need to file grievances every time mailhandlers spread mail by zones because that is considered distribution work. Mailhandlers are also not supposed	<b>Report / Selection of Committees:</b>		
		None		
	<b>Report of Convention Delegates:</b>			
	None			
	<b>Report of Trustees:</b>			
	None			
	<b>Communications:</b>			
	Sam Wood read through this month’s correspondence. All are invited to do so as well. We received a card from Lindy saying thank you. She will be back around the end of May. We received a thank you card from Kathy Hartman. Letter from Bill Nelson regarding the Employee Free Choice Act. Letter from Sue Carney about organizing baskets for our troops. Reposts at Naples. More abolishments at plant. Excessing and redoing bids all over Florida.			
		<b>Labor / Management:</b>		
		Management wants to meet with the union about bid abolishments. RI-399 meeting on Wednesday.		
		<b>Good and Welfare:</b>		
		The winner of the COPA 50/50 drawing was Joe Fracek who won \$56. The total netted was \$112. The winner of the of the attendance		

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Secretary-Treasurer’s Report

(continued from page 2)

award of \$20 was Vivianne Finley. The name drawn for the member’s incentive award was Sam Wood. He donated his \$70 winnings to COPA. The pot at the next GMM will start over again at \$50. We also raffled off leftover food that Theresa from Costco brought to us. Dale Eller won the pastry platter and Joe Fracek won the muffin platter.

Election of Officers / Delegates:

None

Leftovers:

None

Roll Call of Officers:

Felicia Gluhareff performed the roll call of officers. The results were recorded.

Next Meeting:

Joyce Kelly moved to have the next meeting on 6/21/09 at the union hall at 9:30 a.m. She then rescinded the motion to change the date only to 6/28/09. The motion passed.

Adjournment:

Joyce Kelly moved to adjourn at 11:12 a.m.

In House Or Contractor (Who Is Really Cheaper?)

In a recent comparison of the cost for the VMF mechanics to do transmission or engine replacements, the contractor proved cheaper for engine replacement and the VMF barely proved cheaper for transmission replacement for both the LLV and the FFV. Why, you ask? How could this happen when our labor rate is lower than the contractor? These are the facts. Some technicians are claiming more time on the jobs than what is authorized.

Management allows this practice to continue because it goes with their agenda. Prove that the technicians are more expensive and contract as much work as they want with the blessing of an honest evaluation. Some technicians feel they have a secure paycheck for the rest of their life. I do not.

What I have learned through 22 years in the military is that congress makes the laws and they come back and change them. So what you think you have today, you may not have tomorrow. I suggest that all workers look inside themselves and ask if they are doing everything they could to secure everyone’s jobs, not just their own.

James M. Sommers  
MVS Shop Steward and  
Craft Director

Employee Surveys

Several employees have asked if the union has changed their position on the use of the employee surveys. Apparently, management had told them that the union was turning around on the issue.

Let me make it perfectly clear that the union’s position has not changed. We voted at the national and local level to boycott the employee surveys. Don’t let management tell you differently.

If management tells you that the union has changed their position, ask them to show you this in writing. Of course they will not have anything in writing because we have not changed our position.

The local still pays a \$5.00 bounty for the surveys. You have the option of donating the \$5.00 to COPA in your name, or having it sent directly to you. If you decide to donate to COPA, your name will be added to the web page under members who have donated to COPA.

We are approaching the slow season. With that, management seems to take more disciplinary actions. Watch your attendance closely as management will be. I cannot stress enough how important it is to check your 3971s prior to signing them. If you requested FMLA, make sure that it is annotated on the 3971.

If you find an error on your 3971, you have 2 options. The first option is to insist that management correct it. The second option is that you create your own 3971. You are not required to sign the slip they generated. You have every right to create your own.

If you call in sick for more than one day, make sure your 3971 reflects this. The only day that would be unscheduled would be the first day. The remaining days should be marked scheduled. If management refuses to correct them, don’t sign the 3971. Ask to see your steward.

I hope all of you have had the opportunity to check out our web site. If you haven’t, you really should. Sam has done a fantastic job on the web site and it continues to improve. Sam has added so many new things. This page really makes it easy for the employee. Everything you need is right there at your fingertips.

You no longer need to have

all the web addresses saved. You just go to the web site and click where you want to go. Postal ease - click - there you are. The National APWU web site - click - there you are. It is just fantastic! Sam, great job as usual.

Sam has been busy getting employee discounts as well. He is working hard for the members to give added incentives for being a union member. Besides having the best representation, there are added bonuses for you, the members. Now is the time for every non-member to join. United we stand. Divided we fall!

Hats off to Dawn Hofer, Dan Gray, Sam Wood and Paul McAvoy for their active attack to preserve clerk craft work. I can’t tell you how important this is to the craft. They all are doing a fantastic job. We need to consistently and actively preserve our work. If you see a mail handler or a supervisor performing craft work, ask to see your steward. Write a statement.

For those of you who work in the stations, this is an important issue for you as well. Don’t let other craft employees perform our duties. Don’t let management perform our duties. Write a statement and the union will take care of the rest.

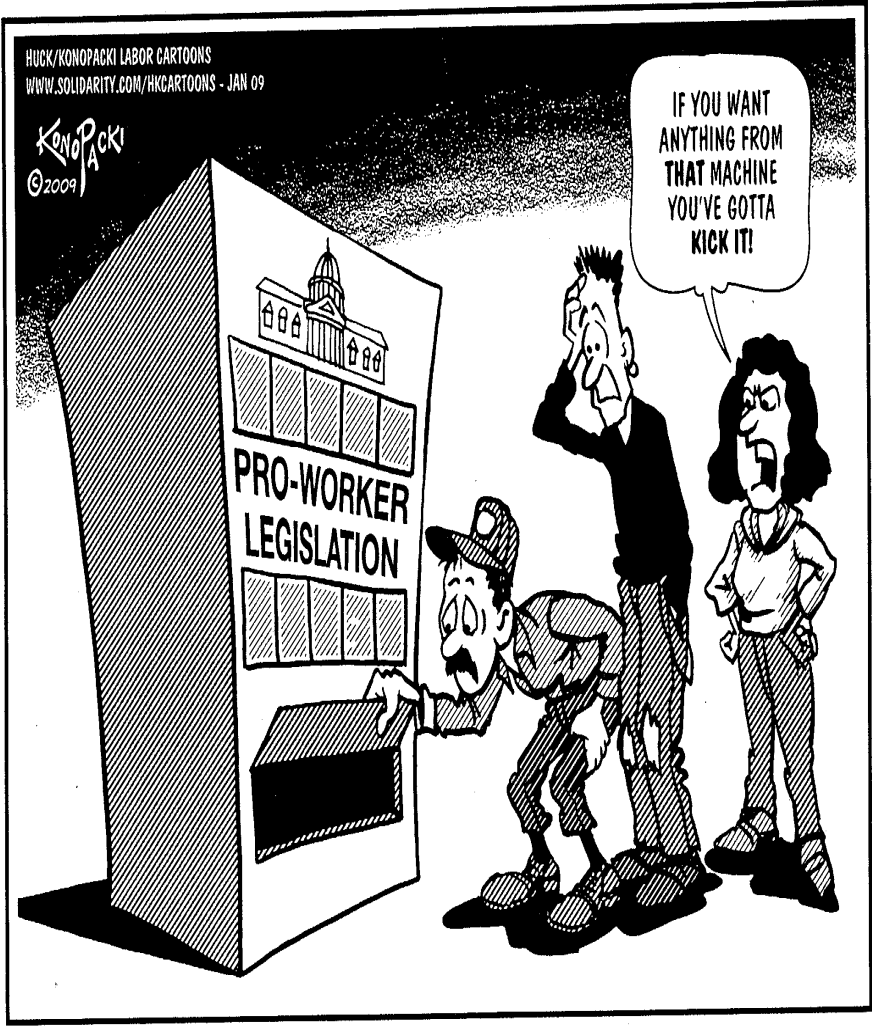
We need to know what work they were performing and the amount of time they performed the task. This is not limited to the clerk craft. Maintenance as well as motor vehicle are affected.

Management should not be performing craft work. Protect our work. It is up to every one of us to protect our work and our jobs. Please do your part. Document the incident and report it to the union so we can file the necessary grievances. The job you save may be your own.

During these uncertain times, it is more important than ever that we stand together. We are in for some changes that are going to affect all of us. Don’t believe everything management tells you. Ask to see it in writing.

As usual, if you have any questions or concerns ask to see your steward or you can call on me.

Joyce Kelly  
Vice President



APWU Website

Last month, Sam created a website to keep our members informed and give easy access to websites our members would find useful. Sam did an excellent job with the website. He spent days learning how to create it and was very successful in the end.

The website was up and running April 25, 2009. The first month it had 17,069 hits. We are halfway through the month of May, and May has had 27,882 hits. The website has had a total of 44,951 hits as of May 17<sup>th</sup>. Not too bad for a new site.

If you haven’t visited this website, I encourage you to do so. The web address is [www.swfloridaapwu.org](http://www.swfloridaapwu.org). On this website, you can see who your stewards are in your station or branch, find out your benefits as a union member, print out FMLA forms, learn how to file an EEO, get information on the APWU health plan, read up on the latest postal news and much, much more.

If you have any questions about your job, this is the first place you should look. I can’t think of a question that can’t be answered with the information on this site. It is user friendly and has links to everything you need. You can find links to the CBA, handbooks and manuals and the JCIM.

Most clerks do not have access to this information. With this website, it is at the tip of your fingers. If you click on the link for the CBA, it sends you to the national APWU website. Click on the CBA and you can find

answers to any contractual issues you might have.

It is so easy to use. For instance, if you have a question on overtime, hold the control key and the “f” key. It brings up a search box. In the box type in “overtime.” It will stop at the word “overtime” every time it appears in the document. This website allows everyone to become knowledgeable on issues in our contract.

Many of our union members are being threatened with the National Reassessment Process (NRP) and excessing. On the front page of the website, both of these issues have links to give you more information. There are 3 separate links for the NRP program.

The information provided on these links is very useful for anyone who is affected by NRP.

Excessing is the topic of conversation in all post offices nationwide. Everyone wonders if excessing will affect their facility and how it will affect them as individuals if it does. The excessing link on the front page will offer answers to the top 29 questions involving excessing.

I use this website on a daily basis. It is nice to have the contracts available at anytime. If I get an email or a phone call with contract questions, I can easily find the answers at home. Visit this website. You will be surprised and impressed at how professional it is.

Dawn Hofer  
Clerk Craft Director

Important Legislative Information

Pass HR 676.  
Make Health Care a Human  
Right!

Workers, our families and our unions are waging a difficult struggle to win or to keep good health care coverage. There is a better way. Congressman John Conyers, Jr. (D-MI) has introduced HR 676, national single payer legislation. The single-payer financing in HR 676 saves the money to improve coverage for all of us as we expand care to those who have been left out. The bill restores free choice of physicians to patients. HR 676 would cover every person in the U. S. for all necessary medical care including prescription drugs and dental. HR 676 ends deductibles and co-payments and saves hundreds of billions by eliminating the private health insurance industry with its high overhead and profits.

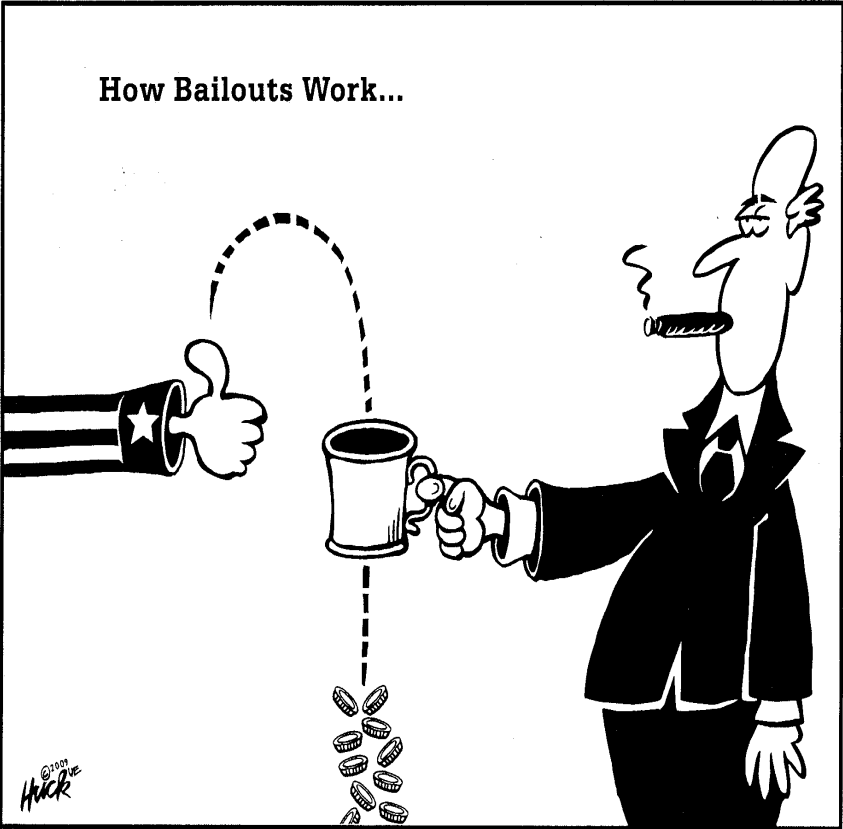
FMLA  
We all know about HR 2161, the FMLA Restoration Act which seeks to restore prior regulations. How many have heard of the FMLA Inclusion Act that seeks to include care for adult children, siblings, domestic partner, parent in-law and grandparents who have serious health conditions? We need to encourage our own union to support this important legislation. Thanks to John Clark for bringing this to my attention.

Inclusion Act  
<http://www.govtrack.us/congress/bill.xpd?bill=h111-2132>  
Restoration Act  
<http://www.govtrack.us/congress/bill.xpd?bill=h111-2161>

Thank you,  
Linda J. Turney,  
National Business Agent  
(312) 663-0975  
“All that harms labor  
is treason to America” A.Lincoln

Bill Would Extend Federal  
Benefits to Domestic Partners

A bipartisan measure introduced May 20 would—if signed into law—give same-sex domestic partners of federal employees the same benefits as the spouses of federal employees. Sens. Joe Lieberman, I-Conn., Susan Collins, R-Maine, and Reps. Tammy Baldwin, D-Wis., and Ileana Ros-Lehtinen, R-Fla., sponsored the Domestic Partners Benefits and Obligations Act of 2009, identical to legislation introduced in the last Congress by Lieberman. Under the legislation, same-sex domestic partners of federal employees living together in a committed relationship would be eligible for health benefits, long-term care, federal retirement benefits, family and medical leave, and other benefits. The domestic partners of federal employees also would be subject to the same responsibilities that apply to the spouses of federal employees, such as anti-nepotism rules and financial disclosure requirements, the sponsors said. According to the Williams Institute at the University of California-Los Angeles, more than 30,000 federal workers live in committed relationships with same-sex domestic partners who are not federal employees. “Extending benefits to the domestic partners of federal employees is more than a matter of fairness,” said Baldwin, co-chair of the congressional Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgendered Equality Caucus. “As a majority of Fortune 500 companies have already demonstrated, equality and diversity in the workplace boost productivity and help attract and keep the most qualified employees.” To see more, go to: <http://hsgac.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?>



For those of you who do not work at the plant and haven’t heard, we had a small flood around SPBS. It amazes me that management does not have a clue as to why a valve will not close properly. Maybe as I stated in last month’s letter, we need to perform all of the maintenance correctly and completely.

Talking about all of the maintenance, I have been receiving information from my colleagues and finding out that maintenance isn’t being performed at all on some equipment. As we find the information, I am asking management where the maintenance is at and getting a deer in the headlights look. Then management tells me that we will start to implement the checks. Some of the equipment hasn’t been done since we installed it.

I have been helping some of the BEMs perform maintenance on the number four and five towers. Management had a company come and give an estimate prior to us cleaning the towers and were amazed at the cost it would take to bring all four systems up to a standard that is acceptable.

The mineral content of tower five is way too high even after we cleaned the media. Hopefully, we will receive the motors that are needed to get tower four operational before it really gets hot outside. Then we will be able to move onto towers 1A/1B and tower three.

I heard that some people came down from Tampa to perform an inspection on the grounds in Naples. They found out that their records were a little short of what the actual measurements were. Hopefully, we will be able to receive the proper manpower to perform the maintenance correctly. With some luck, we may even have them calculate the dimensions of the facilities in Fort Myers and Cape Coral.

Well, on to the really good news. It appears that Steve Krankowski’s and Denise Chase’s jobs are going to be combined. The bad news is we will either have one of them as the new MPAA (supervisor of the MOS clerks and Technical Advisor) or we will get someone else who is just as bad.

In any case, we will lose a valued manager from the number 3 plant in the nation (oh wait a second - we are now at the

bottom). Doug is moving back into his old office in the maintenance wing. I guess he is trying to distance himself from the operations side of the house due to the rumor being his job is on the chopping block also.

Congratulations goes out to the people (Rene Belloga and Mark Hamilton) who have recently been advanced and to those who were able to move to positions that they desired. It is too bad that they won’t post the positions that are still vacant or move some of the clerks or mail handlers over as custodians so that we can have a full augment of personnel.

Management’s reasoning is that we are in Article 12. The bad news is that we are short handed and if Washington figures we can do more with less, then why put people in positions that are not needed? Back to the statement I made last month, “put down the amount of hours that you performed the task, not the hours management thinks it takes to accomplish it.”

Well, my rambling is done for another month. If you see me in the lounge or in the cafeteria and want to chat, stop me. I can always use some good information for next month.

Keith McGee  
Maintenance Craft Director

Things are going smoothly in Lehigh Acres, despite the fact that we are so short-handed, don’t have enough scheme clerks, and almost half of the crew has some type of limitation.

It helps that we try to stick together at all times. We have a great team of clerks.

I work parcels in the A.M. Today a letter was on the top of the parcels that were in a hamper (1046 hamper). The letter was addressed to a clerk who lives in Lehigh. The letter was from a supervisor from the plant.

The letter was certified and had delivery confirmation on it! Unbelievable. Management doesn’t even know how our postal forms work. You can not use delivery confirmation on a letter unless you use priority.

How are you supposed to have respect for your boss when they show their ignorance?

By not knowing the basics of the postal service products, I think the supervisor thought they could just make up their own rules, cause “I’m the boss” is the only thing they can say.

On a happier note summer is here, and so are vacations. It’s nice to take a break and enjoy life outside the Post Office every once and a while. Till next time,

Marcia Bennett  
Lehigh Acres Steward

Sales Service Associates are now being described as sales people, not just window clerks. Our mission is to sell the high end postal brand of delivery services (Express and Priority mail) and to sell reoccurring revenue generating payments (Post Office Box rentals) despite the economy.

Another task is to always be vigilant with revenue protection because of short paid postage on customers’ mailing(s).

Our SWFAL-APWU clerks who have bid into these positions are implementing these strategies and are getting results that increase the bottom line for our perspective job locations.

We are educating our customers while acting as Lobby Directors. Supervisors are aware this area is worked by the clerk craft. We do a professional job at interacting with our window customers.

Our winter residents are leaving until the fall, but our locals are here. So let’s continue to be thankful for them and all our customers.

HAPPY AND A JOY FILLED  
SPRING SEASON  
  
Your Union Sister  
Vivianne Finley

### Employee Free Choice Act

Business special interest groups have launched a massive PR campaign to derail reform of the nation’s broken labor law system by cranking out misleading propaganda. Here are the facts to refute the opposition’s fiction about the Employee Free Choice Act.

Fiction: The “legislation would end the rights of employees to secret ballot elections.” – Center for Union Facts

FACT: The Employee Free Choice Act does not abolish elections. Under the proposed legislation, workers get to choose the union formation process—elections or majority sign-up. What the Employee Free Choice Act does prevent is an employer manipulating the flawed system to influence the election outcome. When faced with organizing campaigns: 25 percent of employers illegally fire pro-union workers; 51 percent of employers illegally threaten to close down worksites if the union prevails; and 34 percent of employers coerce workers into opposing the union with bribes and favoritism.

Fiction: “Legal recognition of a union has traditionally been achieved through secret ballot elections...just like how a person votes for a senator or congressman.” – Center for Union Facts

FACT: Current union elections involving secret ballots bear no resemblance to political elections. Workers’ free speech rights are squelched, employers practice various forms of economic coercion, and labor law allows employers to indefinitely delay recognition through drawn-out appeals. Says University of Oregon political scientist Gordon Lafer, “The presence of secret ballots can’t overcome the corrupt nature of NLRB elections.”

Fiction: NLRB elections are “the only way to guarantee worker protection from coercion and intimidation.” – Coalition for a Democratic Workplace

FACT: Workers are more susceptible to coercion in NLRB elections than majority sign-up. Workers in NLRB elections are twice as likely (46 percent vs. 23 percent) as those in majority sign-up campaigns to report that management coerced them to oppose the union. Further, less than one in 20 workers (4.6 percent) who signed a card with a union organizer reported that the presence of the organizer made them feel pressured to sign the card.

For additional resources and facts about the Employee Free Choice Act, visit: [www.americanrightsatwork.org](http://www.americanrightsatwork.org).



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Hi from Mid Cape!	Six Mile News	Information Requests	Dear Miss Management	
<p>I am on the safety committee in our office. We were having a meeting every month until the rural carrier count came in February. Now no one wants to be on the committee. Two of the members have had accidents and did not feel that management cared about their safety.</p> <p>Many of the agenda items have not been fixed because of the economy. It all seems so useless. Remember, safety first, as long as it doesn’t involve money. Some things are just plain stupid!</p> <p>On a different note, I have seen the February issue of the Postal Supervisor, the monthly membership publication of the National Association of Postal Supervisors (NAPS). It is interesting to see that managers don’t like their bosses any better then we do. A constant theme was that management isn’t listening to its own managers.</p> <p>The Secretary/Treasurer writes, “When things aren’t working, are you going to keep telling your employees to do it the same, failing way? Are you going to do just what you are told, even when you know there is a better way to get the task accomplished? Or are you going to suggest an alternative?”</p> <p>The Capitol-Atlantic Area Vice President writes, “Professionally state your concerns to your boss about whatever issues you’re having. Be persistent! Force the dialogue if he or she tries to ignore you or won’t respond to your calls or e-mails.”</p> <p>This just shows how divided management is within its own house. I can see that my manager is sometimes as frustrated with his boss as I am with him.</p> <p>The decrease in mail volume has everyone uneasy. This is why all APWU members must be united and strong. We have to do all that we can to protect our jobs. Until next month,</p> <p>Kathy Hartman Mid Cape Steward</p>	<p>Six Mile Cypress Carrier Annex has finally gotten a lifter. This was new to us all. Of course we had to be trained to use it. The lifter is supposed to help with cages and hampers, developed in mind to reduce stress on the back. Since Six Mile is separated into 2 sections, 33908 and 33912/67, the machine can only be utilized in one section at a time. I asked the clerks how they felt about the lifter and this is what they told me.</p> <p>The clerks who work the 33908 section don’t really care to use it right now. The size of the area they work in is limited and they feel that it would hinder more than help them. The 33912/67 clerks use the lifter all the time. They like the fact that it is less stressful on their backs. I’ll be looking forward to getting the 33908 clerks’ opinion when the station is re-arranged and the lifter will also be at their disposal. Kudos to the union for pushing ergonomics.</p> <p>An NRP update. It looks like management has had a change of heart and are seriously trying to find work for the clerks affected by this program. I don’t know if it has been the grievances filed or EEOs, but hopefully they’ve realized that the clerks who have been performing modified duties within their restrictions for years need to continue those duties until they are ready to retire of their own free will as all employees do. They need to remember that these people did not go out and get hurt to be put in the position they are in today. I’m sure we all know of someone who has had a serious injury or medical problem.</p> <p>Dealing with the simple things we all take for granted like taking a shower, washing your hair, cooking, cleaning, etc., can be some of the most difficult tasks to perform when in pain. This forceful attempt by management to get rid of employees needs to stop and with the union on your side, I trust we will win the fight. Until next month,</p> <p>Anna Johnson Six Mile Steward</p>	<p>Management is required to furnish information upon request to the union. Articles 17 and 31 of the National Agreement state that management will make available to the APWU information relevant to collective bargaining agreement or for the enforcement, administration or interpretation of such agreement.</p> <p>Last month, a Tour 1 steward (Lynne Cram) put in a request for information she needed for a meeting she was having regarding the NRP (National Reassessment Process). She asked for form 50s of employees involved. Not an unusual or difficult request. The meetings were to take place in 5 to 6 days from time request was sent to the plant manager. She did not receive the information back until 12 days after it was submitted. That is a week after the NRP meetings.</p> <p>Management, according to a memo sent out to district managers, should return requests normally in 3 days. If they cannot, they are supposed to notify the union and tell them when the request will be returned.</p> <p>Not only was the information returned untimely, it was also incomplete. The plant manager’s secretary sent a note saying she could not access the form 50s and employees could access that info themselves via the internet and lite blue.</p> <p>Lynne and I filed a grievance. I stated not everyone has the internet and human resources could access them. I have received form 50s from them before. The grievance was eventually settled and management agreed to return information timely and provide the form 50s ASAP. Lynne received them 2 days later.</p> <p>Management can’t tell you that you have to get your own info off the internet. Things were so much simpler when we had a personnel office at the plant.</p> <p>Paul Mcavoy Tour 1 Steward</p>	<p>Summer is here. School’s out. Are you thinking beaches? That’s great, but make sure you use your sunblock. I see all the tanned (and burned) faces at work and I just want to tell them to WAKE UP!</p> <p>Last November, my daughter was diagnosed with skin cancer. They said they got it all. Then I went for a skin check too. They found a cancerous spot on me too. Luckily, both my daughter and I only had to go through surgery to get rid of it. It’s only because the cancers were discovered early.</p> <p>Most of my readers live in Florida. That automatically puts you at risk. Luckily, as postal workers, we have health insurance. Please, get a check up. My daughter is only 24 years old. Get your children checked too.</p> <p>The spot I had was not painful. It was just pink. I never thought anything of it, because it didn’t hurt, change size, nothing. For more information and what to look for, go to cancer.org.</p> <p>I’ve found a few fun websites in Bottom Line Personal magazine. One is <a href="http://www.census-online.us">www.census-online.us</a>. It tells you how many people in the United States share your name. You can click and see what city they live in and their ages. If you want anything more, you’ll have to pay.</p> <p>You can find free wifi hot spots at <a href="http://www.wififreespot.com">www.wififreespot.com</a>. There is information about all kinds of holidays on <a href="http://www.holidays.net">www.holidays.net</a>. You can get free public domain audio books on the internet at <a href="http://librivox.org">librivox.org</a>. Most are over 75 years old in order to be public domain. You can get most of the classics. When I checked, there were over 1900 books to choose from. You can even volunteer to read them and have your name and voice available for anyone who wants to hear the book you read!</p> <p><b>Priority Used to be a Priority!</b></p> <p>Three days during the week of May 23rd, lots of mail was missing. The small AOs and the FGCU mail never came on the 4:00 trucks. You can’t tell me there was absolutely no Priority mail for Florida Gulf Coast University, Alva, Bokeelia, Boca Grande, and numerous other small offices.</p> <p>I asked the Tampa truck driver and he said the machine was not even pulled down. Right after Tampa excessed many clerks. We had mail 3 days old from Tampa that week. Just on tour one, we get a minimum of 6 trucks daily. I understand the need to cut back on costs, but intentionally delaying the mail is NOT an acceptable way to cut costs.</p> <p>Lynne Cram Editor</p>	

The great bailouts continue. More money needed here, more help there. The auto industry has one CEO forced out, another facing bankruptcy has a unique restructuring, wherein the UAW employees own part of the company, a situation which has got to lead to some wild negotiations come contract time, with the union sitting on both sides of the table.

Demands are made on the auto industries while the Wall Street elite go blissfully on their way in a business as usual mode. Their stress test was little more than a routine exam to determine how much of our money they were going to need to correct the stupid mistakes that they themselves had made.

On credit cards, several major banks, to show their contempt for both the government and to the people of this country whose money was given them, without their being consulted; late fees were changed from set fees to percentages that will enslave debtors for years to come.

They want to get what they can before implementation of federal rules scheduled to take place in July 2110 that would forbid such practices. They are vigorously applying new rules to garnish as much loot as possible before the government makes them play nice. A pox on both houses. The government for allowing, and the banking houses for their greed.

Let your elected LEADERS (?) know that you are unhappy with the way **YOUR** money is being used. Politicians all too soon forget that they represent the will, the needs and the aspirations of their constituents. They bend to any force of the moment that will ensure their keeping their seat.

We are facing a new contract in 2110. If the economy doesn’t make a quick turnaround, we are in for one hell of a fight just to keep what we already have. As I have said before, management has the edge. It’s their court and their ball, and everything is paid for by the USPS.

For us, it’s an away game. We have to pay our own expenses. The money needed to fight for our rights and income comes from our dues. To be more precise, the benefits for all comes from those who are willing to pay for it with their dues. A

question comes to mind. Has any non-member ever thanked any one of you for your getting them a pay raise or a financial settlement?

In the contract negotiations, the USPS is going to go after all they can get back. The UAW at Chrysler gave back a number of things in an effort to save their company. One of the items was no overtime until after 40 hours. I am sure that with this precedent set, the USPS already has this on their wish list.

They are going to go after leave time, regular and sick leave, with I am sure tighter restrictions on the use of sick leave, citing falling revenues. Plus a realignment of FTR, PTF, PTR and even transitional employment, if forced to keep the entire work force. Sunday premium will be hit, as will night deferential.

Night differential, by the way, is in no way a gift, unless you are a bat or a lemur. Being up all night wreaks havoc with the body. They’ll want to add some measures to allow management to enforce their idea of discipline, and to make Article 3 the law of the land.

There are currently 460 printed pages in the contract. They can argue every line on every page. Remember, they have no money worries. Our side is the one that has to make do with the MEMBERS’ dues.

One entering the plant might just be struck with the idea that they were entering a huge circus tent. Billowing gently overhead is a silvery white expanse of plastic, acres of plastic. We were told that we would be having workmen on the premises, with the purpose of repairing the roof.

The acres of plastic, taped, shaped, and at a least one place cut away, to be replaced with clear plastic for a light fixture. All this material, together with its installation, is not without cost, big cost. Comes now a question, what was all this for?

Management has always had a problem letting employees know what things are for, for what reason an action has been taken, what is being planned, and what the Big Picture is. I have even been told by a past supervisor of great power and standing that we (the employee) had no business knowing what was being planned until it was in fact implemented.

This tradition lives on. It is no longer much of a surprise to

come through the doors to find another ridiculous policy implemented, a machine gone, or a work area moved, all without rhyme, reason, or real forethought.

So again the tent. The roof is being repaired, big time. Our side of the roof, the ceiling, is a corrugated type of metal. Is the tent to catch anything that works its way through from the outer roof?

The tent in effect lowers the ceiling, cutting down on the overall work area volume of the building, which would decrease the amount of heating and cooling required.

The lower closer ceiling, a silver-white, would reflect the new lighting making the work area brighter. All good reasons to hang these acres of plastic. There is however, a fly in the ointment. The fire sprinklers are above the plastic, and are heat activated.

The plastic in large letters say FIRE RETARDANT. How much would it retard both the fire and its heat? Scenario: fire breaks through at one point activating sprinklers, what happens to water coming down on the unbreached areas?

Another scenario: Fire overcomes the retardant ability of the material. Are we then going to have globs of molten, perhaps flaming, plastic dropping on us? All questions that a caring management would find answers to, and would let their employees have the facts, pro and con.

I miss all the good stuff. I was off the night of ‘The Red Water,’ so everything I write is hearsay. This is what I heard from several sources. From the roof area, through the plastic tenting comes Red Water. It keeps coming and coming.

Maintenance is called, custodians with their mops and buckets are called. The water keeps coming. It keeps spreading. They bring up weirs to contain the flow. Maintenance says that the water is from the cooling system and that the red is from dye added to detect leaks.

Finally, a professional clean-up service was called and they took care of the spill. The Plant Manager herself was on the scene handing out face masks. While this was happening, manual letters and flats were moved to the far side of the building, after some delay. Part of the delay it seems was to determine if the spill was hazardous.

Now I get to take a shot at them. When liquid of any color or hue begins to pour from the sky, you get the employees out. There comes a time when clearing mail comes second. You might just need those employees tomorrow.

Why was there a tracer dye in the system? Did we already have a problem? If we did, why were the employees not informed? Ah, we mushroom people. There are so many nut cases running loose in society who do things, no matter how stupid, or damaging, just to show that they can do it. From planting viruses on the internet to disrupt the lives of people they don’t even know, to sending anthrax through our mail to protest some injustice, real or perceived.

You turn off the air conditioning immediately. You do not wait to see if it is a hazard. The manufacturer of the trace dye says that the dye is not harmful unless you drink it or bathe in it. Okay, but think of the peanut, a harmless staple. To most of us it is known that, ‘Man can not live by bread alone, you need a little Peanut Butter,’ but there are a few to whom a peanut butter sandwich would be a death sentence.

So a word to anyone who was there that night who felt ill, had a sore throat, or some other reaction. Document it, the date and time (remember, it’s ‘on or about, at approximately,’) what happened, who else was there, even a statement if you can. Remember that mesothelioma takes years to show up.

Another great move by the Penny Wise and the Pound Foolish, a flyer appeared, telling the employees that hence forth, to save paper, announcements would appear at only **FIVE** places in the plant. Come on people. If you want to save paper, do away with the phony Employee Recognition Day flyers.

It has become a joke of the first water, deemed as an insult by most employees, and by this time it is an insult to our intelligence. Does management have any clue as to how much paper is torn from mail handling equipment - just torn away and thrown into the trash every day? Has anyone in management ever thought about permanent placards on equipment to be returned to point of origin?

Ever tried to get something changed by management? You talk to them, put in a formal suggestion, only to be totally ignored, or even chastised. Don’t feel put upon, it’s

## Time To Step Up To The Plate

He says this as if it's a BAD thing! Please, contact him and let him know your feelings. It's easy if you go to [apwu.org](http://apwu.org). See page 5 for more info regarding erroneous claims about this bill eliminating the secret ballot.