

Razorback Scheme

American Postal Workers Union • Northwest Arkansas Area Local

November 2021

From the President

Bidding Procedures

by Ike Mills

I have chosen to write my article on **bidding procedures** — especially for unencumbered employees. The first important fact is how we bid. The 2020 JCIM in Article 37, question 5, says that we must use computer or telephone bidding. If you are having issues with either of those methods, then you must contact your supervisor or a Union steward or officer to submit a manual bid and let them know that you are having problems with the system. On the last two postings we have had 5 jobs that have gone residual, and with 19 unencumbered employees that should not have happened, if the contract was followed. Article 37.4.C.5.a says “*Employees not encumbered in bid duty assignments shall bid on duty assignments posted for bid*”.

So, you should be placing a bid on all jobs posted for bid in order of your preferences for all of the positions. After the last two bid cycles we still have 7 unassigned regulars which should not be the case. I understand that some positions are not as desirable as others but you will be able to bid other positions in the future. Remember, if you don’t bid the maximum number of jobs, then you will be assigned to whatever is left over in seniority order. If you read in the 2020 JCIM Article 37 questions 260, 264, and 267, it will explain how you are assigned to residual vacancies. Also, the above contract reference is applicable. Please with all of the new employees that have been converted, if you have any questions, please contact one of us to help you until you get comfortable with the process.



Andrew Heyd retires after serving 21 years as Union Steward in Louisiana & Arkansas.

Local President Ike Mills hands him a check & cake at the September 2021 Meeting.

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NEXT UNION MEETING:

Sunday, Nov. 7, 2021 – 1:00 pm
 Foghorn's, 1100 48th Place, Springdale AR
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“Sense of Urgency!”

Loren Adams, Editor

During the course of your postal life, how many times have you heard supervisors / managers lecture employees with the phrase, “**You need to show that SENSE OF URGENCY about your work. Get your ass in gear!**”

Of course, that’s before Louis DeJoy came along gumming up the works, slowing the mail to a snail’s pace, and charging more for worse service. But still — we the pawns are supposed to continue to have that “sense of urgency” about our work.

Yes, now we discover they couldn’t care less about meeting deadlines, only about making big bucks for outsourced industries owned by the ones writing the no-bid contracts. Conflicts of interest? You bet! Big time. Do they face accountability for cheating the Post Office and the customer? No, justice is based on one’s wealth rather than what’s right & wrong

So, corporate cronies are dismantling the service before our eyes and it seems nobody is doing anything about it, not even our elected officials who we put there to straighten things out.

I’m disgusted; how about you? Do you think Benjamin Franklin would have been pleased with his Post Office slowed to a crawl, then outsourced to crooked cronies? Where’s the outrage?

As it now stands — We need to carry that **SENSE OF URGENCY** about our own best interests and prepare for what’s coming. I don’t mean to be a Debbie Downer, but I still believe it behooves all of us to be good Boy & Girl Scouts and prepare like hell.

Sympathies to Sharon Wilson for the loss of her niece and to Leigh Buckmaster on the loss of her husband.



UNION MEETING!

Sun., Nov. 7th, 1 p.m.

Foghorn’s Restaurant
1100 48th Place, Springdale
 (Take Exit 72 off I-49, turn east 1 block to 48th St signal light, turn L to Foghorn’s.)

You could win \$150 door prize!

More Young Workers Are Getting Involved!

By Darrell “Barney” Barnes, Siloam Springs Steward

The first thing I need to say is “Thank You All” for allowing me to attend the State APWU meeting in Jonesboro. It was a business meeting; so, a lot of what was done was what is required by federal law for unions to do each year. (Boring!)

But I was so proud of NWA Local 667 because we had several new people who stepped up and got involved in various committees. Axel got on the Rules Committee with Thomas Henry (the State Maintenance Director) to help us all do things the right way. Enrique and several others were on the Resolutions Committee, and they came up with several very good resolutions to be sent on up to National to be voted on and hopefully worked into the new Contract. (I’ll let one of them tell the details, but they were great ideas to protect us ALL from mis-management.)

People, you should be very thankful and proud of these new stewards. They stepped up. They weren’t sure what they were getting into, but they all did great. I really hope these people stick with it, because we need great folks like them to represent us and help make management treat us all like humans and not push us around like some of them seem to enjoy doing.

We did also get some training from Dan Skemp (our Clerk Craft National Business Agent out of Kansas City). Don’s main points were about protecting Clerk work in small offices. But a lot of his training will help with all grievances in every office.

If you are reading this, I’m saying it again. **Get involved with the Union; learn the Contract.** Don’t let yourself be mistreated. Management has to follow rules that have been agreed to by their bosses in the Contract. But we all know there are some who don’t. Step up. Hold them accountable.

If you are reading this, I’m saying it again. Get involved with the Union. Learn the Contract!

If you know the Contract and can remind them of it, most will back up and follow it just so they don’t get in trouble. You don’t need to be mean or confrontational about it. Most supervisors I’ve dealt with will follow the Contract if you remind them.

Some think they are God and you’re an ant. What they don’t realize is they have the yelling backwards. **Enough ants working together will win against even the biggest dog.**



WEINGARTEN: It's Your Right — Do It Right!

– by Axel Ambrocio, Financial Secretary –

Exercising your rights to get effective representation is the most important weapon you have in order to fight back against a unjustified disciplinary action. The *Weingarten Rights* not only are your rights to representation guaranteed by law, but they are also addressed in our CBA (the Contract or the “Collective Bargaining Agreement”).

Remember that Management is not required to inform you of your Weingarten Rights at any time. You are required to know and invoke these rights on your own.

You have the right to request union representation whenever you reasonably believe a meeting may lead to discipline. Your steward cannot request it on your behalf. You must request it.

If your supervisor tells you in advance that the meeting is an “Official Discussion” that involves any suggestion the questioning may lead to future discipline or when management is actually handing you that discipline (Letter of Warning”, “Notice of Suspension,” etc.), that’s when your *Weingarten Rights* are triggered. You should make haste to insist your Union rep be present for any such hearing, especially one loaded with questions. An “Official Discussion” does not trigger Weingarten IF management asks no questions. But the second a question is asked that may involve future discipline, you should invoke *Weingarten* and ask immediately that your steward be present.

In cases dealing with a disciplinary action, you have the right to meet in private prior to the start of the meeting with your supervisor. The rights also allow your steward to participate in the meeting and to ask clarifying questions and help you. ***“The employee has the right to a steward’s assistance, not just a silent presence, during an interview covered by the Weingarten Rule.”***

When called into a meeting with your supervisor, you should first ask “Can this meeting lead to my being disciplined?” If they answer “Yes,” you need to request representation. Immediately.

Don’t forget that you have the right to meet with your steward during work time – on-the-clock – in order to discuss contract violations and possible grievances, as well as the actual steward filing and meeting on grievances. It is not the Union or steward’s responsibility to see every violation and act on it. When you see a violation, you should request “union time” from your supervisor or manager. They are required to grant you time with a steward. It is management’s responsibility to arrange this time

Get involved; let’s make the Union stronger!

References. Collective Bargaining Agreement.
(CBA) APWU AFL-CIO -USPS 09/21/2018- 09/21/2021
Joint Contract Interpretation Manual (JCIM 2020)
APWU AFL-CIO –USPS December 2020
Zimmerman, Vince – Know Your Weingarten Rights
(Article 2017)

WEINGARTEN RIGHTS

(This is what you should say when approached by a supervisor or manager directing you to attend a “discussion”. Either memorize this statement or cut it out to have handy in case such a situation occurs.)

“If this discussion could in any way lead to my being disciplined or terminated, or affect my personal working conditions, I respectfully request my union representative or steward be present at the meeting. Without representation, I choose not to answer any questions.”