

What has the Union done for us!

In the fourteen plus years I have worked for the Postal Service I have heard over and over from non-members "What has the Union done for me?"

Well I would like to tell you just some of the things the Union has done for you recently. Your Union negotiates your contract and stands up for the rights of all rural carriers.

We as rural carriers received pay increases, COLAs (Cost of Living Adjustments) and many new benefits in this last contract agreement. Every rural carrier and former rural carrier received an award for the violations that occurred in multiple mail counts this last Association year.

In Washington State, through the grievance process, the Union has helped rural carriers recover more than \$20,000 in monies owed them. The totals recovered were for both regular carriers and RCAs.

Our Union is often blamed for the misdeeds of the Postal Service. There are some who would attempt to blame the Union when the Postal Service arbitrarily implements changes in established policy and procedure. But, the Union has nothing to do with these changes or misdeeds and, when possible addresses the propriety of the changes through nationally filed grievances. The Union provides its members with the knowledge of what management can and cannot do when changing policies. The Union, when it hears of upcoming changes, gets the information out to the membership, usually before local management is told to make these changes, and advises carriers on what to look for and what to do if a violation occurs.

Managers are quick to tell you to do this or do that but they will not tell you that what they are instructing you to do violates the contract. It is up to each and every one of us to know what we are required to do and recognize when what we are being asked to do is above what we are compensated for in our evaluation. You will not receive this information from management; you WILL receive this information from the Union.

So, the next time you think "what does the Union do for me?" first take a look at your paycheck, then look at what you have done to gain the knowledge to better protect yourself and your position as a rural carrier, then join the Union and tell others what the Union can do for them and give them a form, to join the Union and make the commitment with you to gain the knowledge we all need to protect our rights as rural carriers.

Respectfully submitted,
Renee' Cowan
District 2 Representative