

Well I have just finished reading Arbitrator Fishgold's Arbitration decision and I must say I am appalled at the Arbitrators complete disregard for his duties. It appears to me that he was simply too lazy to listen to the arguments from both sides and chose the easy way out. His job was to listen to the arguments and presentations from both sides and try to decide who was right. Instead he chose to do a Chicken Little impression. I do not believe that simply since the other three Unions agreed to some of the nonsense that was heaped upon them by the USPS brass that we as a group should have the same provisions forced upon us. Millions of dollars of the members' dues monies were spent doing studies and preparing for this Arbitration only to have the Arbitrator simply refuse to take any of it into consideration. Simply stated we have been screwed again by an Arbitrator who was I'm sure was very well compensated to do a job that he simply refused to do. We will never know if the "Association" was properly prepared or not.

I am simply ready to go on the clock and take my chances in the next round of Negotiations. The Evaluated pay system has served us well for many years but it is time for us to wake up and smell the coffee brewing. What we gained from the small percentage wage increases and COLA's will be more than be offset by the increase in our part of the Health Insurance costs and the loss of the COA time standards. I am sick to the bottom of my stomach however I am still proud to work in a Union shop. Just one look at what the USPS had proposed for us will show you what we would have received without any Union to represent us. It would be like working for Wal-mart only worse. I say we look at how the city boys and girls are compensated and work toward trying to obtain the same thing ourselves. The days of being able to run a rural route properly and go home early are soon to be a thing of the past.

Subjects such as mail count time frames were not even addressed. The increase in EMA is no where near sufficient and those of you who are providing your own route vehicles have my sympathy. I truly hope you can provide and maintain a safe route vehicle on such a small amount. The USPS itself says it costs about 90 cents per mile for them to provide a route vehicle and they don't pay taxes or buy insurance. How in the world do they expect us to be able to do it for less than they can?

I have not posted anything on here for quite awhile and I'll go back to lurking now but I simply could not resist stating the obvious. On a personal note I start my second postal career on Saturday on a very large 46K route after being on Worker's Comp for over 3 years. Please wish me luck and pray for me. I'm still trying to put my life back together after back surgery in July. I plan to go as far as I can.

Zipster (Merry Christmas Ya'll)