



## *National Weather Service Employees Organization*

### **News from the NWSEO 35<sup>th</sup> Annual National Convention**

(October 12, 2010) NWSEO President Dan Sobien called the 35<sup>th</sup> Annual National Convention to order and welcomed attendees. Vice President Bill Hopkins gave the initial address and reviewed the work of NWSEO leadership over the past year, including the following events.

- AMS Conference in Atlanta
- Endorsed the National Climate Service roll out
- Members of DOC National Labor Forum,
- Stopped consolidation of CWSUs,
- Won appeal to bargain for increase the staffing at WFO in Anchorage
- Grievance nets back pay for nearly 200 employees, Spring Council Meeting – Presented the NWSEO vision to Deputy Undersecretary Mary Glackin, NWSEO President signs DOC Labor Management Forum Charter
- Grievance nets pay out for 247 MITs, NWSEO looks to diversify representation on National Teams, Wallops Island Satellite Issues – 26 jobs are in jeopardy due to the plan to move polar satellites to Svalbard Island off the coast of Norway
- NWS recognizes work to promote aviation safety through the CWSUs

#### **On-Going Issues**

##### **ASA Grades**

Earlier this year, NWSEO sent a request to NOAA Deputy Undersecretary Mary Glackin requesting a review of ASA grades after several conversations with various NOAA and NWS management officials on the subject. NOAA has completed an informal desk audit to identify the problems. NWSEO continues to work with the NWS on the proper roles and grades of ASAs. The National Labor Council chartered a team to look specifically at ASA retention issues. NWSEO members on the team are Delyne Kirkham and Lisa Frantz.

##### **DOC Pilot Project - Labor Management Forum**

President Sobien was elected co-chair of the Labor Management Forum by all DOC unions. He represents the Labor side of the Department of Commerce. NWSEO Vice President Bill Hopkins, Treasurer Marguerite Matera, and NESDIS Vice President Hugh Sharkey are also members. DOC Chief Financial Officer Scott Quehl co-chairs the Labor Management Forum, representing Management.

Andy Winer, NOAA Director of External Affairs attended the convention and explained that the purpose of the forum is to elevate ideas to a department level and get past the bureaucracy. "It's significant that Dan sits on this level and it's significant who he works with," Winer said.

While many other forums are trying to get their charter signed, the Labor Management Forum has already started tackling their first project. The B1 Travel Project is designed to empower employees who travel for work to find cheaper transportation instead of taking the “government required” airline. The intent is to save money and add convenience for the traveler. NWSEO.org will keep you posted as work on the travel project continues.

### **Management Problems-**

NWSEO often tackles problems repeatedly from the same managers. President Dan Sobien and Vice President Bill Hopkins are discussing the possibility of developing a color coded map to identify and inform members of potential problem managers. The map can be used to warn members of the possible implications to their career and morale if they bid on these offices.

Another idea is to ask the NWS to allow branch stewards to have direct input to the regional directors, division chiefs and the NCEP director on their local supervisor’s GWPAS.

### **AWIPS 2**

There was a brief discussion on AWIPS-2. Vice President Hopkins said NWSEO will not allow it in the field without proper testing.

There was a discussion on the use of technology and the best way to disseminate warnings.

A news clip “Open Mike” was played, showing a news anchor complaining about the weather warnings on Weather Radio asking NWS to use text messaging. It was suggested that the NWS could use Twitter for the warnings. This would be a way to reach a greater audience, as more people use their personal technology and social media much more often than weather radios. One person said that he gets his weather warnings as an Android app.

President Dan Sobien said he’d like to have a contest among members to develop innovative ways to disseminate weather warnings, such as creating an app. A brainstorming session followed.

### **Financial Report**

NWSEO Secretary/Treasurer Marguerite Matera presented the financial report. The new budget year begins on January 1. NWSEO is required to file a report with the IRS and the Department of Labor. Those reports are already completed. The auditor review is also complete.

The two types of funds that NWSEO invests come from dues and income from investments. Over the years, NWSEO has been making the change from stocks and mutual funds to more stable CDs. The mutual funds that are making money are staying. The CDs are used to stabilize investments.

### **Recruitment Offer**

In an effort to recruit more members, NWSEO will pay the travel and hotel room expenses to NWSEO 2011 National Convention for any member who recruits at least two new members between October 10, 2010 and July 31, 2011. Any member who recruits at least two new members between August 1, 2011 and July 31, 2012 will be eligible for the same offer for NWSEO’s 2012 National Convention. In

order to be eligible for these offers, new members must sign up by SF 1187 and identify you on the form as the person who recruited them.

### **NWSEO on Facebook**

NWSEO Facebook is one more communication tool the union is using to reach its members. The page is fast becoming a place where members can discuss upcoming events and issues that NWSEO is working on or find answers to questions they may have. We hope you'll become a Facebook NWSEO member today!

There's much more news ahead from the NWSEO 35<sup>th</sup> National Convention, including an address from NWS Director Jack Hayes. Please check back to NWSEO.org this week for follow up articles from the convention.