

September 2001



Alert!

Chapter 52 report

National IRS: Colleen Kelly on Secretaries.

As many of you know, NTEU convinced IRS to create a joint workgroup to look at the work secretaries need to do in the future and the impact on their grades. While it has taken longer than I wanted it to take in starting this group, they finally met at the beginning of the summer to begin its work. NTEU had representation from Little Rock, Greensboro, Baltimore and St. Louis and they were all secretaries in the various divisions. Frankly, the first meeting of the group was encouraging. Even the management member admitted that they often cannot hire the talent they need at the current salary levels. They finished their weeklong work meeting with a list of the duties that the typical secretary performs. Now the IRS position classifiers are reviewing their input and will soon return with a recommendation about how to structure the job and grade. Hopefully they will return with a recommendation for a GS-6 career ladder position for the secretaries. If not NTEU will continue to fight for higher grades.

BALANCED MEASURES

NTEU has invoked negotiations over balanced measures; Colleen stated because it came to her attention that the IRS is moving to further implement the Commissioner's May 17, 2001 memo entitled "Interim Guidance for Sharing of Balanced Measures Data" She has invoked negotiations over the entire area of balanced measures.

You as a Chapter member can help out on this by advising your steward if you see any changes flowing from the commissioner's memo. Stewards should ask local managers to withdraw the changes. If management does not cease please notify Bill Grace or Tom Jones, so we can notify the proper officials at NTEU.

The next chapter newsletter will include a grievance and arbitration update.

Chapter 52 has currently filed an institutional grievance against W/I the grievance was denied. Arbitration has been invoked. The issue is AWS for Taxpayer assistance centers employees.

FINALLY IT'S HERE! Maybe

Payout to Revenue Agents and other FLSA-exempt employees who temporarily performed customer service work.

Employees are scheduled to receive payments in September under the settlement of a national grievance over the improper payment of over time to Revenue Agents and others FLSA exempt employees who performed customer service work during 1998, 1999, and 2000 tax filing season.

Payments are going out to about 800 employees and total about \$1.5 million. Employees should receive printouts, in late August or early September. If you believe the IRS has incorrectly calculated your back pay you may request an explanation and correction under the procedures set forth in the letter you receive. **WATCH THE DEADLINES IN THIS.**

Yes it's TAXABLE. In the year you received it.

CONTRACTING OUT PITFALLS:

MELLON BANK the contractor for the IRS lost and possible destroyed more than 40,000 tax returns. The tax payment checks totaled \$810,000,000. Yes 810 million. Colleen called "shocking" Media articles about revelations from the Senate Finance committee that one of the nation's largest banking institutions cannot account for nearly \$1 billion in payments made by taxpayers.

"If an institution like Mellon Ban, which is a large, trusted and stable, cannot be counted on to perform a government contract appropriately," Kelly said, "it is truly frightening to think what else is going on in the world of federal contracting."

Suppose this was an IRS employee or employees that did the same. What do you think would happen? Mellon's contract was cancelled. No Criminal charges! What about repayment, of the taxes?

Bilingual Awards are out again this year some employees did not receive them. If you are one and it is not on your leave and earning statement by the next pay period let you union office know. We will again file a grievance on your behalf for the award.

Executive VP chapter 52 Roni Hernandez has accepted a position in Phoenix as a settlement officer. This leaves a vacancy on the chapters executive board. The chapter is accepting nominations through Sep14, 2001 for this position. The requirements to fill the position are you must be a member of the chapter, be stationed in the following POD's Bryan, Waco, Corpus Christi, Victoria, Austin Echelon or J.J Pickle Federal bldg. You may nominate yourself or another member. All individuals

nominated must accept the nomination to be considered. Send you nominations to NTEU Chapter 52 at Fax 210-706-5386.

The Next Chapter board meeting will be September 19, at 5:00PM in the Union office in Austin. The agenda will include selecting Roni's replacement as well as the chapter budget for the next fiscal year beginning Oct. 1,2001.

Thought for the day "Bureaucracy is a challenge to be conquered by a righteous attitude, a tolerance for stupidity and a bulldozer when necessary."

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Suppose you worked for the IRS. Assume also that in your position you were required to travel. This travel may be occasional or 2-3 weeks per month. But, you cannot travel on your own time, and be compensated for this travel. Thus you must travel during duty hours. Now suppose you are required to travel from your POD in City X to city Y. It is too far to drive. The only flight leaving is at 7:00AM that will get you to your meeting on time. This flight leaves anywhere from 30 minutes to an hour before your tour of duty starts. Considering you must check in at least an hour before the flight you must be at the airport at 6:00AM and it's a 30 minute drive to the airport. Now it 5:30 AM. Two to two and one half hours before your tour of duty starts. Do you take the early flight and give the agency this time gratis. Or do you take a flight that gets you to City Y two to three hours after the meeting starts.

WHAT TO DO ? It is your choice.

Now there is a program in the National office called MaxiFlex tour. This program allows you to work 80 hours at any time during your two week pay period. With this program you have a real choice. Travel on Sunday the number of hours it takes to be at the meeting at the Monday meeting, Leave on the early flight. All on duty time.

Suppose you leave on Sunday and it takes 5 hours to travel. You travel the hours on Sunday and are off the rest of that day. Your meeting or training starts at 12:30PM on Monday you are off Monday morning. You attend the following days Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday AM your meeting or training ends at 11:30AM on Friday. Assuming your tour of duty starts at 8:00AM you have now put in 36 hours thus far. You decide to spend the afternoon in City Y and leave the following morning for the return flight and travel time of 5 hours. Friday afternoon is off time. You now have 41 hours of work time in week one. The next week you only need 39 hours of work. You have the right to select the hours that week to work so you work 10 hours on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and 9 hours on Thursday. Now you have your 80 hours in for the two week period., And you also are off on Friday. Think of the Possibilities and true flexibility this would give you. Maxiflex tour would not have to be limited to travel only suppose you have children in school or day care., or any number of other possibilities. Is this PIE in the SKY? Probably but.....

EXTENDED

Chapter 52 is initiating a membership drive in conjunction with National NTEU.

If you are a chapter member you are eligible for a bounty on each new member you recruit. The new member must already be on the IRS roles not a temporary hire or a seasonal or a new hire. For each new member you recruit you will receive \$15.00. At the bottom of the form 1187 (the NTEU membership form) write "recruited by (your name, stop number and SSN)." Fax, mail or drop off at the SANW union office at (210) 706-5376.

NEW DATE SEP 30, 2001

This campaign began on May 1st and ends August 30, 2001. All 1187's received before 12:30 PM on September 28, 2001 are eligible for the bounty. Forms are available at your union office, from your steward or on Chapter 52's web page <http://nteu52.hypermart.net>

SIGN UP A NEW MEMBER TODAY



The **Chapter 52 Alert!** can also be found on our Chapter Web Page at <http://nteu52.hypermart.net>. You can e-mail any Chapter officer, staff member or steward from the page.

*Chapter 52 President, Tom Jones
Chief Steward, Bill Grace
Asst. Chief Steward, Mick Eskew*

*Send comments and/or articles to
1700SANW or fax 210-706-5376,
attention Alert! Editor Susan Ryan*