

Hat's Off

There are too many times through our lives that we neglect to acknowledge other people. These can include husbands, wives, children, family members, and even co-workers. My previous articles seemed kind of "aggressive". This time however, I'd like to show recognition to a group of workers that we all see everyday yet sometimes, don't really notice them there. These are the PTF's or Subs.

The life of a Sub isn't an easy one. I'm sure we all look back at our times as a Sub and sometimes wonder how come we didn't quit. You hear stories of how some of the older Brothers and Sisters of our Union subbed for seven years while some only subbed for three days. I'm not entirely sure of what life as a Sub was decades ago, but I can definitely reflect on my three years. The pressure of making my ninety days was enormous. Between having to make your street times, carrying off of other routes, skipping breaks, lunches (early on), learning routes and streets, all the carrier terminology, and best of all...working fifty-six to sixty hours each week.

You hear many people say "It was like that when I was a Sub". When you're a Regular it is kind of fun to say that, but as a PTF, hearing that just made you crazy. Many times that meant something wasn't going to go your way. I remember many times thinking "it wasn't fair". "It" being anything from carrying off a terrible route to having to always come in on holidays to case on routes. But I made it. How many times did you wonder what number you are to making regular? How long would you be a PTF? When would you become Regular!? Those questions weighed on your mind until you received the glorious letter saying "You made it." Now, the cycle starts all over with a new group of PTF's. Now as Regular you cross over from being on the top of the list to the bottom.

I know that life as a Sub isn't easy. Regular's tease the PTF's every once in awhile, but that right of passage will soon be passed on. I would like to give each PTF who reads this a pat on the back and a thank you! Thanks for carrying the lousiest parts of our routes, or even worse, the lousiest routes in the city. Thanks for being dedicated to a job that the Nation depends on. And lastly, Thank You for being a Union member.

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