

# The Local Line

"A PPA Award Winning Publication"

The Official Voice of the  
Northwest Illinois Area Local

Floor Edition

April 30, 2007

Jackie Engelhart  
President  
Alan J. Czerwinski  
News Director

Special points of interest:

Palatine Impact is 41

Northern IL District

Palatine is Bad!

Ron & RI-399

Ron & Injured Clerks

Ron & Upper & Lower

Tim Forgets His Promise?!

## Local Update by Jackie Engelhart

### Palatine Impact is 41

On April 20, 2007 we received copies of letters sent to 37 Palatine Clerks, notifying them that they would not be involuntarily reassigned due to AI, but would remain in the Clerk craft. On April 21, 2007 we received the revised Impact Statement for Palatine from management. This revised statement reduced the original impact numbers for Palatine from 73 to 41. We don't know why the original number was so high, but we know Clerks are steadily leaving due to retirement, reassignment, and removals. We were also notified that five Clerks volunteered to go to the mail handler craft (or were scared into it). One clerk changed their mind and will remain. Now that the impact has been corrected and lowered to 41, we need to discuss the number of Clerk bids that will remain in the AFSM and when the closed section bidding will occur. Some AFSM Clerks have already bid out, after working on the FSM for years.

### Northern IL District

I am told the numbers are down for the Northern Illinois District, and that we currently rank 77 out of 80 USPS Districts. Chicago remains # 80. I don't know if this information is correct or not, but I can understand why we might be going down. The District Manager continues to require his managers to enforce his sign out and in for break instruction. If, in fact "we" are # 77 out of 80, I think "we" have bigger issues to focus on. Is alienating the craft the way to improve performance? What happened to USPS management becoming part of the 21st century and valuing the employee? Unless you are part of a management committee (that bypasses the Union) like WEI or EQWL (which APWU is not) management is not interested in what you think. Unless, of course your name comes up for the Voice of the Employee Survey. I don't know about the numbers, but morale is down, with Palatine leading the way.

### Palatine is Bad!

I've been hearing this around the district since the Labor Scheduler was implemented (only at Palatine P&DC in June of 2005. The Labor Scheduler exceeded 40 Clerks to the Mail Handler Craft, and with all the attrition since then, not one Clerk was returned. I've been at Palatine since 1992, and I've never seen morale for craft and supervisors this low. I believe the current (Senior) Plant Manager has created what we have today. Ron Woodall came from the Peoria REC Site to Palatine in 2001, and is now the Senior Plant Manager. He has been tasked by his boss with cleaning up the mess at Palatine, but who created this mess in the first place?! Ron Woodall has been a disaster for the APWU at Palatine. He has broken one agreement after another, on issues such as leave, RI-399, and most recently Upper & Lower Automation. He has broken agreements on the Low Cost Tray Sorter at both Palatine and Carol Stream.

### Ron Woodall & RI-399

He has taken Central Dispatch and Multi-Line Break-Up bids away from us, years after the 2001 Palatine Inventory that he signed, agreed Non-Robot distribution in these units was assigned to Clerks. When Labor Relations Specialist Joe Kalisz decided to give this work to Mail Handlers in December of 2006, Ron agreed with the Mail Handler Union, that there should be no Clerk jobs in Central Dispatch. He has given manual distribution and mail processing work to the Mail Handlers, so he can get reduce his complement of higher-paid APWU-represented Clerks at both plants.

### Ron Woodall & Injured Clerks

In 2002 management began sending light duty clerks home in order to save mail for the limited duty. On July 10, 2003 Ron ordered manual letters on tour 2 closed down, and approximately 30 limited duty and rehab clerks were sent to nights. The able-bodied manual letters bid clerks were not abolished, but were sent to other units (mostly automation) once manual letters closed down at 0900 each day. The tour 2 limited duty Clerks were given a "choice" of tour 1 or tour 3 and a choice of non-scheduled days on their new tour. Ron's reason for closing manual letters was that the mail was not going anywhere after final dispatch. The fact that these were senior employees who had been injured on the job was not a factor in this decision. The manual letters bid Clerks were denied the right to work their bid because management had to shut letters down to move the injured Clerks. Although I have not been notified, I understand Ron closed down letters on tour 2 at Carol Stream.

### Ron & Upper & Lower Auto

Few plants in this area ran the "Labor Scheduler", but Ron did at Palatine. He put Tour 3 MDO Tim Anderson in charge of this project, and many discussions were held with the Union and the previous administration. They decided to implement the Labor Scheduler when we took office in May of 2005, but a major issue remained unresolved. They wanted to change the agreement for bids to be posted as Upper and Lower Automation, and post them as Automation. Lower Automation was DBCS, while Upper was OCR, BCS and DBCS. On tour 1, Upper Automation did not process DPS (Delivery Point Sequence) mail, and consequently, senior Clerks bid to and preferred to work in Upper. Lower was all DPS and was staffed by (mostly) junior Clerks. The issue was a great concern to the Union, and Ron was threatening to abolish and repost all Automation bids if we did not agree. I signed the agreement he wanted to avoid his abolishment threat, and in return we were promised that tour 1 bids would be posted by starting time with the 2250 senior Clerks reporting upstairs and the 2150 and 2200 Clerks reporting downstairs. Tim Anderson promised that if Automation Clerks had to be moved between floors, it would be done by juniority. He said he would inform all MDO's. Tim remembered his promise the last time I talked to him, but I can't say the same for Ron. Recently we discussed the problem with A/Senior MDO Danny Bracket and he promised to contact Tim, who has been detailed to the Irving Park Road Facility by Ron Woodall.

### Tim Forgets His Promise?!

Since then, an employee with no prior discipline was walked out and issued a removal for refusing to go from one Upper to Lower Automation. As I told tour 1 MDO Michelle Davis, "if management does the wrong thing 100 times, the employee should follow the instruction 100 times and get a steward." This does not mean that management is right. On April 30, we met with Danny Bracket, and he informed us that he had talked to Tim Anderson, and Tim denied making any promise. (Tim never returned my phone call.) Well there it is, management got what they wanted, and they don't have to keep their word on what they promised to get what they wanted. We have had to learn the hard way, that management is expected to lie at Ron Woodall's plant when they don't like what they agreed to with the APWU. If they renege on written agreements, it shouldn't be shocking that they would lie about a verbal agreement. Not only did Tim say the movement would be by juniority, he also promised that tour 1 Upper Automation Clerks who were moved to Lower so they would "match" and keep their non-scheduled days, would be able to return to Upper by seniority when a tour 1 bid with those same days became vacant in Upper Automation. I'm sure he now has total amnesia. Management does what they want, regardless of what they agree to, but the employees must be held accountable. The employee who did not want to be moved is deemed insubordinate and issued a removal, but managers who lie to the Union get promoted. You can only stretch a rubber band so far, and Ron has stretched this rubber band to the breaking point. Palatine is not only bad, now its worse! *Je*