

The Local Line

"A PPA Award Winning Publication"

The Official Voice of the
Northwest Illinois Area Local

Floor Edition

Update by: Jackie Engelhart

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Palatine Impacts are Cancelled

On 8-2-11 Lakeland cancelled both Palatine impacts but may re-issue a revised CFS impact when and if CFS closes. The latest date for CFS closing was 10-1-11 but now there is a question when and if it will close. South Suburban cannot handle the mail they received due to the June closing of the CFS unit at Cardiss Collins in Chicago. Some CFS Clerks retired and some bid out after receiving abolishment letters in February stating they would be abolished "no sooner than 3-5-11" and the Union filed on the improper abolishments and on CFS reversions. We continue to push management to allow any senior in lieu of Clerk who waived the moratorium to go if they want to, and have moved the grievance filed on that issue to Step 3. The fact that the impact is cancelled does not change the fact that they should have been allowed to go months ago.

Carol Stream Impact is Cancelled

We were told on 8-9-11 by senior management that the CS impact is also cancelled, and were told CS is replacing Clerk Casuals with new Postal Support Employees, as Casuals are eliminated by the new contract 8-23-11. They are doubling the number of non-career Clerks from 17 to 37. The Area/Headquarters want PSEs hired to cut the overtime down to 2%, but we were told the OT for Clerks is only 3.5%. Most of the Carol Stream OT is in the Mail Handler craft not the Clerk craft. Per the new contract they can hire up to 20% PSEs which would be 98! The change from 6% to 20% non-career in the Clerk and MVS crafts was one reason why many of us locally did not support this contract. We told Greg Johnson that it was not right to assign PSEs to tour 3, especially with Clerks waiting to retreat to back to tour 3 in Automation and the AFSM, and that grievances will be filed.

NTFT Jobs on 8-23-11

Another reason we did not support this contract was the creation of what are called "non-traditional" full time jobs. These jobs do not have to be 40 hours and do not have to have consecutive days off, but are still called "full-time". Palatine P&DC informed us that the PTR Clerks will be assigned to 32 hour schedules on tour 1 with consecutive days off. We have heard nothing from management at any of the Associate Offices regarding the schedules they will be assigning to PTF Clerks. PTFs in all offices level 21 and above office must be converted on 8-23-11, and one AO Steward saw a proposed schedule for PTF Clerks in his office of five hours per day and six days per week. Most PTF Clerks work more than 30 hours and a change to NTFT most likely will be a pay cut. The contract states that "Before implementing any new non-traditional assignments the local union will have the opportunity to review, comment, make suggestions and propose alternatives".

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Special points of interest:

Palatine Impacts are Cancelled
Carol Stream Impact Cancelled
NTFT Jobs on 8-23-11
National Reassessment Process Concluded on 1-31-11?
Sandra McConnel vs USPS...
Local Negotiations in Process...
From MVS Director Thomas...

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National Reassessment Process Concluded on 1-31-11?

PostalReporter.com. reprinted a notice from USPS dated 7-1-11 on National Reassessment Process, which was the plan to remove injured on duty employees from their jobs unless they could come back and perform full duty. The notice to all Area VPs stated "The reassessment of Limited Duty and Rehabilitation employees, referred to as the NRP concluded on 1-31-11. Assignment of Limited Duty and Rehab employees will continue to be made in compliance with ELM Section 546, Handbook EL 505, all applicable federal laws, and our collective bargaining agreements, and the attached guidelines should be used when trying to identify adequate work for limited duty and rehabilitation employees. As questions arise, managers and supervisors should work closely with Health and Resource Management, Labor Relations, the Human Resource Manager, and the Law Department in order to clarify the issues presented and to ensure compliance with both USPS and federal regulations." The NRP has accomplished its mission and they will continue the same process of refusing to accommodate most IOD employees by saying there is no "necessary work" for them. They have since changed the term "necessary work" to "adequate work" to be consistent with the ELM 546. There is speculation that the USPS "ended NRP" because of the EEOC Class Action filed against USPS due to NRP. An adverse ruling in the EEOC Class Action NRP case could have a "Material Impact" on USPS, and the lawsuit was cited in USPS most recent financial report.

Sandra McConnel vs USPS...

This EEOC Complaint was filed in 2006 by Sandra McConnel and certified as a class action in 2010. Class members are all permanent rehabilitation and limited duty employees at the USPS who have been subjected to the NRP from 5-5-06 to the present, and they argue one or more of the following complaints:

1. NRP is a systemic attempt to abolish reasonable accommodation agency wide.
2. The agency's alleged non-discriminatory policy is being applied in a discriminatory manner.
3. The process constitutes denial of reasonable accommodation.
4. The process constitutes discrimination based on disability.
5. The process constitutes unlawful harassment and hostile work environment based on disability.
6. The agency unlawfully modified or terminated each person's approved disability accommodation without cause.
7. The agency made its reassignment decisions improperly by failing to engage in the interactive process.
8. The agency applied the program discriminatorily with regard to each individual and how the process was applied.

USPS responds that "The Postal Service used the NRP to ensure that its records were correct and that employees receiving workers' compensation benefits were placed in jobs consistent with their abilities...The class is seeking injunctive relief and damages of an uncertain amount on behalf of a yet undetermined, but very large number of employees. If the plaintiffs were able to prove their allegations in this matter and to establish the damages they assert, then an adverse ruling could have a material impact on USPS.

Local Negotiation in Process...

Vice President Dave Baskin is leading the LMOU negotiations and has prepared all the proposed changes submitted by NWIAL. Weekly meetings are being held at each plant with the President, VP, and Craft Directors. Meetings are being held in August at the plants and in September for Associate Offices. The Union has submitted changes that management has not agreed to but this is the time for us to submit any proposed changes.

From MVS Director Thomas...

Greetings Brother and Sisters... Our postal jobs, pay and benefits are being threatened by Congress and the corporate power houses. I believe if we reach out to support **House Resolution 1351** we could make a difference. We must get involved, our careers depend on it. The MVS craft has suffered from subcontracting issues for the last two decades in Northern IL and across the nation. There have been major changes within the USPS which are frightening but we must stand strong and fight. I encourage every member to find out who their congressman is and contact them to support legislation to help USPS and its employees. The new contract provides hope that work can be returned to PVS, but we must work together to make that happen. Across the nation unemployment stands at 9.2% while we are protected by a new Union contract through 2015. For MVS it will not be business as usual as we will compete to return sub-contracted routes to PVS. Remember the CBA is not always easy, pretty, logical, or without abuse, but neither employers or workers have found a more effective and democratic way to promote their respective interests.

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