

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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"No Work Available" Lists to be Finalized

We again requested the "No Work Available" lists as we hear they do exist. I spoke with Health and Human Resource Manager Lopez on 8-10-09 and he stated they have the lists but he cannot give them to us until they are finalized. As I have stated before, if you do not now have an NRP Job Offer and you are not working in your bid you are likely to be on this list. Each affected employee must be notified at least 14 days in advance of being scheduled for a "NWA" interview. The Northern IL District is getting closer to putting injured employees out of work. I was told that management will be scheduling "work status meetings" with Limited Duty at the same time they begin the NWA interviews with Rehab employees. Limited Duty employees will be placed in one of three categories, Partial Day Work, Full Day Work, or Complete No Day Work.

Limited Duty - NWA

I asked how many would be in each of the three categories as compared with the percentages we were given for the pilot results and was told "our percentage (of Complete No Day Work) was much higher." This means that many Limited Duty employees will be rolled in with the Rehabs and told to stay home as well. Management has been talking about the NRP for permanent employees for at least two years in this district, but they waited until the last minute to tell us that the Limited Duty will be walked out along with the Rehabs. When they gave us pilot percentages for the three categories on 7-28-09 we did not expect that the percentages here would be much different. We should know better than that by now because this district is very serious about cutting employees. The pilot numbers given out show 29% of the employees in other districts as "Complete No Day Work" but "our percentage is much higher."

Carol Stream Catch-22 the Failure to Post Bids

In 2007 abolished Carol Stream FSM Clerks asked why bids were not being posted in manual flats and why the only bids being posted at CS were in Automation. Plant Manager Johnson and In-Plant Support Manager Colao stated they would not post bids in flats because they had injured Clerks assigned to that unit and could not be sure that they would be the ones to get the bids. At the same time Palatine posted newly created flats bids which were posted for all Clerks, and some injured Clerks were able to bid into manual flats because management posted bids. Over the last year we have advised injured employees to bid so they can protect themselves from the NRP. Palatine Clerks have been able to get bids in letters and flats, but Carol Stream has posted no bids in these units for years. According to management information there are 11 flat bids at CS versus 32 at Palatine. Flats is considered "necessary work" at CS but for how many?

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Special points of interest:

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Pre-Sort Discounts

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Carol Stream NRP

I will be meeting with management to determine how many injured Clerks will be accommodated in manual flats and letters at Carol Stream. Palatine stated weeks ago that they have no more necessary work to be assigned. Carol Stream has not said whether they will be making more NRP Job Offers but no more have been made at CS except for updating existing NRP Job Offers. The purpose of the requested meeting is to find out how many more NRP Job Offers will be made at CS for letters and flats. The union's position is that there must be more NRP Job Offers in these units and/or bids posted. Injured Clerk should be bidding jobs within their restrictions but at CS there are no bids being posted in the units where they can work so they have nothing to bid on. The injured Clerks assigned to letters and flats are performing the same work as the bid employees with modification based on the individual restrictions. The idea that necessary work can't be part of a bid is false because all craft work is part of someone's bid.

Automation Rejects to Letters

On 8-8-09 a Palatine Clerk informed us that bin #5 on all States machines will now be worked in manual letters instead of being sent to the DIOSS. Mail from bins 5, 8, 9, 10 and 11 are being directed to 030. A few months ago management removed a few cases from manual letters when the location of the unit was changed and with this additional volume those cases could be used. We asked if this additional volume will reduce stand-by time (directive) but were told they're getting the mail out on time.

Palatine AMP Study?

Management said the AMP Study would be completed by 8-3-09 and we hear it has been sent to the Area but the results have not been shared. Palatine employees continue to come to work every day hearing rumors that "Palatine is closing" based on the AMP Study hanging out there. I am sure this does not help employee morale.

Priority Bids Needed at CS

Carol Stream has refused to post bids for Priority although Clerks work in this unit daily and have been for months. We discussed this again at Labor-Management on 8-4-09 and informed management that we are at the contractual time limits requiring the posting of bids, and a grievance for the posting of bids will be filed.

Carol Stream Clerk Casuals

Management is working Clerk casuals on tour 1 and we filed a grievance because CS Clerks remain excess out of the craft since 2007. The MDO did not think this was a grievance and did not want to hold a step one. We disagree with her because management reduced the number of Clerks at the facility and forced them into another craft. They were required to separate Clerk casuals to the extent possible prior to excessing. As long as one Clerk remains excess the use of Clerk casuals will not go unchallenged.

Chicago Metro Surface Hub

We have heard nothing more about the staffing changes but have agreed to add the SPBS and Data Collection as sections in the Local Memorandum of Understanding (LMOU). We are now waiting for Labor Relations Manager Barbara Singleton to provide the clock-rings needed for the payout on the SPBS Award.

Stop Senate Bill S 1507

HR-22 is the House bill to provide short-term financial relief to the Postal Service for the pre-payment of future retiree health benefits. The Senate bill S 1507 was amended by Oklahoma Senator Tom Coburn with a provision that would require arbitrators ruling on postal contracts to take into account the "financial health of the Postal Service." President Burrus states "If this bill passes, it will destroy collective bargaining for postal workers and he calls on every APWU member to e-mail or call their senators immediately to urge them to vote no on S 1507. Arbitrators routinely consider the financial health of the Postal Service, but if the amended bill is passed into law it would have a profound effect on negotiations, and contract discussions in 2010 would be overshadowed by this new requirement. This provision would drastically change postal collective bargaining and would be contested far into the future by the union and management. The current law does not require arbitrators to consider any particular factor but to give the parties a full and fair hearing, including an opportunity to present evidence in support of their claims."

Pre-Sort Discounts

President Burrus continues to criticize the excessive discounts still being given to pre-sort houses that take mail out of the postal system. Philadelphia BMC President Vince Tarducci reports that Pitney Bowes processes 14 billion pieces of mail in their facilities around the country. The Postal Rate Commission has agreed with APWU that the discounts exceed the "postal costs avoided." This is where some of the mail has gone.