

The Local Line

"A PPA Award Winning Publication"

The Official Voice of the
Northwest Illinois Area Local

Report from National Craft Conferences

Floor Edition

August 16, 2005

National Clerk Craft Officers Report.

National Clerk Craft Director Jim McCarthy and several other national clerk officers reported on issues affecting APWU members. Director McCarthy sounded many of the same themes as President Burrus.

McCarthy Speaks

McCarthy stated something is missing in labor today. No anger. We should be angry about what is happening to workers. Ask workers at the coffee shop, grocery store, etc. if they would trade jobs. Our members have no appreciation for what we have or what it will take to keep it. We must anticipate change and prepare for it. He predicts change will be incremental, as new P&D's (Philadelphia) are built and older ones are retrofitted. The future of the Postal Service is good and APWU members have a good future. We buy insurance on everything, what about our jobs and our pension. Are we stupid or naïve?

Support labor. In the early days of labor people died for collective bargaining. The American Dream is slipping away and we are letting it happen. Members think all they need to do is pay dues. The 75,000 scabs don't even have the integrity to pay dues out of that paycheck they cash.

The Union has nothing to be ashamed of. We are a bastion for working people. Protect it and don't worry about the small stuff. Get involved and contribute to COPA. Think about what it would be like with no collective bargaining. Wake-up. Educate our members. We have to share the burden. We believe in what is right, good pensions, health care, public education, etc.

USPS Revenue Share

McCarthy stated that out of a 900 billion dollar a year mailing industry the Postal Service captures only 70 billion, less than 10%. The Postal Service is trying to reclaim some of the business we have lost to competition by improving service.

Unit Clarifications

Assistant Clerk Director Pat Williams reported that APWU is appealing national level unit clarification grievances on Address Management System, Mail Flow Coordinator and Business Mail Entry Analyst jobs. These jobs are currently EAS but APWU contends they are clerk craft work.

TACS Grievances

TACS grievances have been filed in offices where management has reassigned TACS work from clerks to supervisors. Palatine lost three TACS clerks jobs when management abolished their jobs and assigned the work to supervisors. The Palatine grievance is pending arbitration. The work was historically clerk work in this office, as timekeeping was staffed by clerks before those jobs were abolished and replaced by TACS clerks.

Preserving Our Work

APWU must continue both nationally and locally to preserve clerk work when management decides to give it to supervisors or another craft.

Jackie Engelhart
President
Alan J. Czerwinski
News Director

National Clerk Craft Officers Report

McCarthy Speaks

USPS Revenue Share

Unit Clarifications

TACS Grievances

Preserving Our Work

Personnel Offices to Close

Associate Office Issues

RI-399 Report

APPS Dispute

Containerization Dispute

We Want Bids

Casuals in Lieu of at C.S.

Chicago Metro Surface Hub

Personnel Offices to Close

APWU has raised concerns at the national level about the Postal Service plan to close personnel offices nationwide and centralize operations to Greenville, North Carolina. The goal is for all personnel actions to be done on-line, either on Postal EASE or on the postal network known as Lite-Blue. All 80 Performance Clusters are scheduled to switch to on-line personnel service beginning in January of 2006, with completion in 2007. Palatine's personnel office will closing before the end of the year and Era will be going to Carol Stream. Carol Stream will be closing next year. Issues of concern for APWU include job bidding, unassigned process, bid histories, information requests, and LMOU compliance. Retirement packages will be mailed and retirement counseling will be done by phone. United Airlines was allowed to dump their pension responsibility. A 57 year old airline employee's pension was unilaterally reduced from \$2700.00 to \$900.00 per month. The same federal government that allowed this could do it to us. Only the Union stands in the way. Non-members need to know this.

Associate Office Issues

Postal Express stores at Albertson's are staffed with APWU members. Walmart said no because they do not want Union in their stores. Management intends to roll out 2500 Automated Postal Centers (APC's) in Post Office lobbies. This will eliminate jobs but any work involved with these APC's is clerk work. Management loves the Mystery Shopper but have agreed it will not result in discipline. It does and we continue to fight this discipline.

RI-399 Report

Mike Gallagher is APWU's national RI-399 representative and he reported on national disputes. He reported that hearings have recently concluded on a challenge by the National Postal Mailhandlers Union (NPMHU) on the LEM-LEM. This work has been assigned to clerks as it is a machine used to keep mail in the automated mail stream. While very few jobs will be affected by this dispute, the decision could indirectly affect other jobs.

APPS Dispute

The Automated Package Processing System (APPS) dispute is one of two major national level disputes currently awaiting national level arbitration. The Postal Service assigned all APPS work to the mailhandlers and the APWU is challenging this. While the distribution is performed by the machine the function of the operation is still distribution. The distribution of parcels has always been clerk work, whether it was performed manually or mechanically. The Postal Service has now automated the work and we believe clerks must follow the work. We know jobs have been eliminated in the SPBS and LIPS and clerks have been excessed to the mailhandler craft in some offices as a result of management's decision to assign this work to mailhandlers.

Containerization Dispute

NPMHU has filed a dispute at the national level on containerization. When tubs, trays, etc are distributed into containers we call that work distribution. The NPMHU is calling it containerization and claiming it should be performed by mailhandlers. The outcome of this dispute will also affect many jobs nationwide. I spoke with Mike about the Palatine Low Cost dispute as well.

We Want Bids Posted

Bids are once again being posted at Palatine as management is reposting vacancies since the implementation of the Labor Scheduler. Management is still understaffed in some units and that is partly the result of bids held by injured employees. We have asked that management review bids being held by employees whose limitations are permanent. These employees should be given assignments consistent with their limitations and the job should be posted for bid. We have discussed this with A/Plant Manager Melvin Dean and he has agreed that management will review long-term injured holding bids to determine if they are permanent. We have made the same request at Carol Stream with A/Plant Manager Ron Woodall and he has also agreed to review these bids.

Casuals in Lieu of at C.S.

Casuals are being worked at Carol Stream in lieu of full-time employees because management is working them to replace long-term or permanently injured employees. Casuals may only be used as a short-term supplemental work force. At Carol Stream management has been working casuals for over one year on a continuing basis and this has been grieved on tours 1 and 3. Working casuals to replace permanent or long-term injured employees is a violation of the contract.

Chicago Metro Surface Hub

Management at CSMH has given the Union a revised estimate of the number of clerks called for by the Labor Scheduler. Number of full-time was reduced from 117 to 104 and PTF's reduced from 29 to 26. No clerks will be excessed out of the facility or out of the craft. Volunteers may transfer to the mailhandler craft as management plans to hire approximately 70.