

The Local Line

"A PPA Award Winning Publication"

The Official Voice of the
Northwest Illinois Area Local

Floor Edition

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Update by: Jackie Engelhart

\$15,000 Retirement Incentive MOU for APWU Employees

The Postal Service and APWU announced the signing of Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for a one-time retirement incentive of \$15,000 to all career APWU employees except Electronic Technicians levels 10 and 11, and MPE Mechanics, level 9. The same incentive was agreed to for Mail Handlers and calls for incentive payments to be offered to 30,000 APWU and NPMHU employees. Employees already retired are not eligible for the \$15,000 payment. Negotiations took two months and were finalized on 8-24 per President Burrus, who said "this agreement achieves a long standing objective of the APWU." The payment is being offered to employees eligible for regular retirement, and voluntary early retirement. Employees who cannot retire are eligible for the incentive upon voluntary separation.

The MOU Details

Within 30 days of the signing of the MOU, employees must indicate in a manner prescribed by the Employer their intent to participate in the retirement incentive program by taking (1) optional retirement, (2) voluntary early retirement (VERA), or (3) voluntary separation. Full-time employees at their option may retire or separate on or before 9-30-09, or they will be assigned by the Employer a date of 10-31 or 11-30-09, based on operational needs. Part-time flexible and part-time regular employees will be assigned a retirement or separation date of 11-30-09. Employees indicating they are taking a VERA under terms of this MOU who wish to revoke their decision must do so before 9-25-09. Employees retiring on or before 9-30-09, will receive a \$10,000 payment on 10-16-09. For those retiring later the \$10,000 will be paid within two pay periods. The last \$5,000 payment be paid on 10-29-10.

Palatine Town Halls

No Information on AMP

Last week, A/Senior Plant Manager Greg Johnson held Town Hall meetings on all tours at Palatine. He started each meeting by saying the AMP study has been sent to the Area, they are reviewing it, and no decision has been made. In the meantime this union has requested information related to the study as well as the completed study that was sent to the Area. To date we have received nothing from management except a "tracking number" for the information request. This is the first time we have received a tracking number in response to an information request. So much for transparency and letting the unions and the employees know what's really going on. What we are hearing unofficially is that any problems cited by the District are being met with "make it work" by the Area. This is exactly what we were afraid of, that no matter what, the Area and or Headquarters would ram the AMP thru regardless. So why don't they just tell us the truth?

Jackie Engelhart
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Special points of interest:

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- Is Palatine on the Chopping Block Because of Low BPI?
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Is Palatine on the Chopping Block Because of Low BPI?

That is a question I have been asking various managers at both plants and I continue to hear that Palatine's BPI is much lower than Carol Streams' and that is the reason Palatine was chosen as the loser in the AMP Study. I asked why Carol Stream Automation Clerks have no mail and are being placed on stand-by while Palatine seems to have enough mail to avoid stand-by. One manager said it might be because Carol Stream has better BPI and works up the mail but a senior Palatine manager said Palatine still has more mail. I have asked for mail volumes for both plants to answer the question. It has never been the union's job to tell employees how fast they should be working but we know that management looks at BPI when making staffing decisions. We've heard threats for years at one plant that tour 2 would be eliminated because of low BPI. Then the volume dropped and tour 2 was "compressed". BPI is dropping at both plants because volume is dropping. I am told Carol Stream was at 70% but has dropped to 63% because of low volume, and Palatine was as low as 48%. The daily BPI is in the Carol Stream Eye of the Eagle and should be in the daily Palatine bulletin. It is not the union's job to inform employees about BPI, but in this case Palatine management wouldn't be talking to all employees about the relationship between Palatine's low BPI and the facility being designated as "The Biggest Loser" by the Area. I don't understand why there was no mention of BPI and it's relation to the AMP Study in the recent Palatine Town Halls.

NRP Update "A Glitch"

Listening to Headquarters NRP Guru Steve McGovern a few weeks ago the message was that the Northern II District (NID) was ready to move forward with the NRP and No Work Available. Tour 1 Carol Stream was included as one of the first five offices for the Limited Duty NRP changes so I asked Health and Human Resource Manager Gilbert Lopez when these meetings would start. He said they are on hold because there is a "glitch", in that the other districts (Chicago and Central) have not reached the same point in the process as the NID. The NID cannot begin telling employees there is no work available until those districts within the local commuting area (50 mile radius) have exhausted their necessary work. Employees reaching MMI after one year must be accommodated if there is necessary work available within the local commuting area, so the NID cannot proceed until Chicago and Central have exhausted necessary work in their districts or at least have done so on paper. They must follow the process laid out by headquarters and cannot move to the next step until the other districts are ready. Needless to say the NRP "team" from headquarters and area will be pushing these other districts to hurry up so NID can start the no work available phase. We met with A/Plant Manager Lee Thompson two weeks ago to inform her that CS has too few bids in letters and flats as compared to Palatine and this fact has prevented Carol Stream Clerks (injured and able-bodied) from bidding into these units. She said she would look at this but we have also filed a grievance to Step 2

No News at Chicago Metro

Employees continue to ask what's going on with the new staffing plan and the answer is "nothing". We have heard nothing more on the staffing plan in weeks, and have just scheduled a Labor-Management meeting with Plant Manager Ruby Branch for 9-8-09. Ruby is also Plant Manager for AMC O'Hare which we hear may become the International Service Center in 2010 when the expensive ISC lease expires. The AMC employees were told recently that the building will be the new home of the ISC and that they will be impacted. The USPS allegedly will move the ISC into the AMC building and kick the AMC out. What will happen to the AMC employees remains to be seen. Maybe that's why it's so quiet at Busse right now because they have their hands full with AMC. There are rumors that Busse can opt out of its lease in two years and the operation may be moved to the BMC in Forest Park. The Postal Service is moving operations from leased into owned facilities in an effort to save money.

NWIAL Scholarship Winners

Chief Trustee Ray Wience presided over the drawing for 2009 NWIAL Scholarships at the August membership meeting. The winners of the \$500 scholarships are F Gonzales, son of Annabell Gonzales-Gahol, Jed Hwang, son of Sun Ok Hwang, A Rodriguez, daughter of Sue Rodriguez, and Karol Mayberry. The alternates are Jane Suh, daughter of Hyong and Hye Suh, and Neel Shah, son of Sandya Shah. Congratulations!

PS- Our livelihood depends on the mail and we can help ourselves by using the USPS whenever we can, and by not using alternatives.

