

The Local Line

"A PPA Award Winning Publication"

The Official Voice of the
Northwest Illinois Area Local

Floor Edition

December 11, 2008

Update by: Jackie Engelhart

Palatine Impact "150"
Senior Plant Manager-Ron Woodall made good on his threat to re-issue an impact for Palatine based on declining mail volumes. The impact dated 12-9-08 states *"The Palatine P&DC is currently undergoing a realignment of mail processing operations that will result in the compression of their current tour 2 operations. In addition, the facility has had a drastic reduction in mail volume and overall workload. As a result of the compression of tours, dramatic reduction in mail volume, and the overall decline in the workload the installation will have to reduce the number of employees other than by attrition. It is anticipated that this installation will have to reduce it's workforce by 158 full-time clerk craft employees. Of the 158 full-time employees, 8 will be retiring due to the VER, this will result in an overall proposed excessing of 150 FT clerk craft employees"*

Where Will They Go?
Ron warned us in March 2008, and his massive Clerk bid changes are based on a reduction of 150 Clerks at the facility. Where will these Clerks go, and why make all these changes before you know if they are going, where they are going, and when they are going? I am waiting for a response from our District Manager Robert Hart to these questions so I can share information with the 150 impacted Clerks who need and deserve answers. This plan is calculated to inflict maximum disruption on Palatine Clerks. The realignment targets Clerks for mass changes in bids to reduce tour 2, and week-end bids on all tours. The plan name changed from "Tour Compression" to "Complement Realignment" but smells like a General Bid. Tour compression does not require massive reposting throughout the facility. How is overstaffing in Palatine mail processing and poor BPI restricted to the Clerk craft?

Plan: Scare & Disrupt
Their plan is designed to scare and disrupt Clerks. This week several Clerks were reassigned to the Mail Handler craft. As some of these Clerks were long-term 204-B's some Clerks asked us about this. When management scares Clerks, some "volunteer" to become Mail Handlers. Management says Mail Handlers will be compressed next (after they scare more Clerks into becoming PTF Mail Handlers). For the purpose of scaring Clerks this is a very good plan. We asked two weeks ago if there were any residual vacancies in the MH craft at Palatine and were told there was "1". When we asked how more Clerks were reassigned to MH, we were told they plan on eliminating 28 MH casuals. They could have told us that two weeks ago but they didn't. Palatine will continue their plans to scare Clerks into retiring, taking the next VER, filling residual custodial vacancies, or "volunteering" to become Mail Handlers.

Jackie Engelhart
President
Alan J. Czerwinski
News Director

Special points of interest:

Palatine Impact "150"
Where Will They Go?
Plan: Scare & Disrupt
**Carol Stream Can Man-
age...**
Both CCD's Hard at Work
Treating Employees Like
Gold
Thanks Ruby Branch...
Help Yourself...
NWIAL Gift Cards after
12-15

Northwest Illinois Area Local
American Postal Workers Union
194 W. Lake Street
Elmhurst, IL 60126
Phone: 630-833-0088
Fax: 630-833-0248
Email: nwialapwu@hotmail.com
Web: www.nwial.com

Carol Stream Can Manage...

Carol Stream has also been told to compress the tours and that is what they are doing. 75 Clerks are being moved from tour 2 and assigned to tours 3 and 1. The big difference is Carol Stream is limiting changes to the units actually affected by the compression. We don't like it, but at least they are limiting disruption to the targeted units. Carol Stream did not use the tour compression as an excuse to run a Labor Scheduler. I called our District Manager Robert Hart and told him that Carol Stream is not inflicting unnecessary disruption on their Clerks as Palatine is. Carol Stream looks out for their employees and that is why their BPI is better. Mr. Hart advised me to speak with Ron in regards to my concerns (again) and get back to him. The next day I got the Palatine Impact from HR Manager Phyllis Lignenfesler, who ended her call by saying "we need to work together"! I told Mr. Hart that Palatine ran the Labor Scheduler in 2005 but Carol Stream chose not to. Ron is again running a Labor Scheduler and using it to expand the misery of the tour compression to affect many more Clerks. How is it- Carol Stream can staff without the regular disruption to Clerks we see at Palatine, and be the more efficient plant? Palatine A/Senior MDO Ralph Ramion said the changes are needed because Palatine has more mail and the BPI is lower. I told him that Carol Stream has better BPI because they look out for their employees. They know how to manage and not mess with their Clerks. Ron didn't call me back and I saw Mr. Hart sitting in Ron's office as I came to meet with more Clerks.

Both CCD's Hard at Work

Both Calvin Taylor and Alan Czerwinski have been working diligently to minimize the impact of these changes at each plant. As many more Clerks are being impacted at Palatine based on the new "matching" information we received on 12-8-08, management has agreed to set up more meetings with impacted Clerks on tours 3 and 1. We did not know until we got this list on 12-8-08 how many Clerks were actually being affected. Employees want to know why we didn't tell them, but we don't have access to the same computer programs that would enable us to sort through this massive amount of data. Had management provided this information earlier we would have shared it with the affected Clerks. We have asked Tim and Ralph to expedite these meetings but we don't run Palatine.

Palatine -150 Clerks

As stated, we do not know if management has residual vacancies for 150 Clerks. Detroit released an impact for 85 Clerks recently, so we don't know if they have any place to move any of them. At Palatine we continue to hear that the 150 Impact and the mass schedule changes for Clerks is based on drastic mail volume declines, but they increase the number of Mail Handlers. Tim said they are PTF's but PTF's in the plants work 40 hours per week and get paid at a higher rate of pay. How will Palatine get their mail out with 150 less Clerks? They will try to crack down further on Clerks on productivity goals and threaten discipline if they don't run so many pieces. I asked if Mail Handlers have BPI and Tim said its all mixed in?!

Treating Employees Like Gold

I wanted to believe that Mr. Hart meant that but I have been disappointed time after time. Talking nice to employees is good, talking to them at all is good, but that is not enough. What about quality of work-life? Is that just a slogan? Until "Vision, Passion and Purpose" include treating Clerks fairly at all offices in the Northern IL District, slogans are just that.

Thanks Ruby Branch...

Ten Clerks finally retreated to tour 3 SPBS bids at Chicago Metro Surface Hub on 12-6-08. Thanks to our Stewards and Katrina as well for finally getting it done. We will monitor the mail volume after Christmas to see if additional bids may be needed for the SPBS. Busse is full of Mail Handler casuals for Christmas and they should not be working in any Clerk unit. If you see this let us know and write a statement.

Help Yourself...

Clerks at all offices should report instances of crossing crafts and/or supervisors performing bargaining unit work. With the continuing reduction of Clerk jobs within the Postal Service we can help each other by taking these violations seriously and protecting our work. When management has a procedure talk with employees they should be calling for a Steward and they have agreed to do this in the past. If they have not called for one let us know about it. You have 14 days from when you became aware of a violation to file a grievance, so don't wait until the last minute because the Union needs time once you contact us.

NWIAL Gift Cards after 12-15

All NWIAL members will get a \$10 Jewel card from us and we all wish you a Merry Christmas.