

The Local Line

"A PPA Award Winning Publication"

The Official Voice of the
Northwest Illinois Area Local

Update by: Jackie Engelhart

Latest Group of Clerks to Stay at Palatine as Mail Handlers...

Senior Plant Manager Greg Johnson met with us for a Xmas Labor-Management meeting at Palatine on 12-10-10. (We asked for Xmas meetings at Carol Stream but newly appointed Plant Manager Sciorba said he could not meet with us until January and A/Plant Manager Alvarado said the same for Chicago Metro Surface Hub.) An important question was will the Palatine impact be reduced due to the increase in fall mail volume and Greg said "no" but it will be reduced by 14 due to the current attrition. He said most of the remaining 53 Clerks should get Mail Handler jobs at Palatine due to the 96 new FSS jobs posted. He said retreat-right letters have gone out to 16 Mail Handlers forced to move out of state and there should be MH jobs at Palatine for most of the 53 impacted Clerks. This has been the rumor.

What About CS?

We have heard nothing from CS management or Human Resources concerning where impacted-Carol Stream Clerks will go but the facility is still calling major overtime. I was told by HR that no more Clerks will be put into the Carrier Craft because those jobs will be needed for Carriers impacted by the FSS, but Mr. Sciorba said some Clerks may be placed into the Carrier Craft. He also said he will keep Clerk Casuals while he is excessing out 67 Clerks. This indefensible act of keeping 20 Clerk casuals while excessing Clerks may have helped secure his appointment, but he should not backfill career positions with casuals. Using casuals to backfill tour 1 automation and calling double-digit OT to get the mail out shows the 67 Clerks are needed. Why excess 67 Clerks after the AMP has pushed overtime to double-digit levels since July, but we will have to wait for the answer to that question Chuck has time for us.

AO Impact -220 Clerks
Management has issued impacts for 220 Clerks in just about every Associate Office in in the Northern IL District but can't issue 60 day notice letters until they meet with the Union (Area and Local). These impacts are based on what they call the authorized vs. actual complement. From my conversations with un-named managers these impacts will leave many offices short-handed and severely understaffed. Whoever is behind these cuts should have just waited for the FSS impact.

Palatine CFS to Close
The CFS Clerks called me in late September to say they were being told that the Palatine CFS unit was being closed and the mail going to South Suburban. I called President Malone at South Suburban and he said management had said nothing to him about CFS consolidating just as they had said nothing to us at Palatine. The date for the movement of Palatine and Chicago CFS mail to South Suburban is 3-5-11, so there will be an impact for 22 (more) Palatine Clerks due to CFS closing.

Floor Edition

December 13, 2010

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FSS Coming in January

It seems like the FSS has been coming forever but it will be here in January. The FSS stands for Flats Sequencing System and this huge machine will Delivery Point Sequence (DPS) flats so Carriers will not have to case their routes. The major savings comes from the reduction of Carrier hours in the office and more time on the street. The NALC agreed to the hiring of Transitional Employees to avoid a major impact on Carriers for FSS. Most T.E.'s will go but the only impact on Carriers will be some may be moved to another office. The FSS decreases Carrier hours but increases plant hours for mail processing employees to DPS flats on the FSS. The APWU position is that this DPS operation should be staffed by Clerks and the Local will file a dispute within 14 days of the start of FSS. This dispute will be held pending the national level dispute as the assignment of 8 Mail Handlers and 2 Clerks per machine was made by USPS at the national level. The fact that management now states they will be able to take most if not all of the 53 impacted Clerks means they would remain Clerks if FSS-DPS work was assigned to Clerks. Management posted 96 new MH bids for FSS but said there will be a net increase of 45 (because they did a MH BPI impact beforehand) The start up dates for Palatine are 1-10-11, 1-31-11, 2-22-11, and 3-14-11 and the Carol Stream FSS will start up on 4-4-11. Palatine will lose AFSM #3 and may lose a second AFSM later on. We had asked to make FSS part of the AFSM section but management wanted separate sections. 14 Clerk bids are posted and 14 more will be posted in January.

FSS Will Not Run on Saturday

A/Senior MDO Ramion wanted us to agree to split days off for the FSS as it will not be running on Saturday but we did not agree because our contract says days off must be consecutive in 200 or more man-year offices. Since the FSS will be down on Saturday FSS Clerks scheduled to work on Saturday will be sent to other units to work. The principal area of assignment is FSS and this will be a separate section unless the LMOU negotiations change that.

No Impact on Low Cost #1

Greg Johnson said the FSS should not impact staffing of Low Cost Tray Sorter #1 as the FSS works towns to DPS so mail that does not come in sorted to the town will still have to be run through an AFSM and sent to the Low Cost on it's way to the FSS.

Chicago Metro Surface Hub

Tony Alvarado is still the Plant Manager but he will be leaving at the end of December and the new Plant Manager is Alan Mitchell. We asked for Labor-Management due to several issues at CSMH, but Tony said we can set up a meeting with the new Plant Manager in January. Management did not discuss the SPBS details to tour 2 with us in advance so these Clerks are out of schedule if they have no 3189. Management has stated the facility will get 11 more Clerks and we requested information on Clerk casuals. Management failed to meet on our dispute filed for Mail Handler distribution of Priority mail in the R&D unit, and we will send up grievances until management addresses the dispute. CSMH and or Chicago District Health and Human Resources continue to delay OWCP claims and employee pay.

Steward Release at Palatine

Maintenance Manager Hilliard told me that Tour 2 Chief Steward Rick Szczesny cannot be released for Union activity for 10 or more consecutive days in December because he has employees in FSS training in Oklahoma. According to Maintenance Craft Director Joe Golden Palatine Maintenance is not short-handed because staffing includes FSS which is not running yet. Palatine Management from Greg Johnson on down know Rick always has a heavy workload but insist he provide a written list of his workload which we provided. Stewards are to be released based on their workload and based on his workload he must be released. This action is part of the ongoing retaliation against Maintenance Stewards Szczesny and Golden for protected grievance activity. Management periodically denies them Union time and has tried to intimidate them with discipline up to and including Removal. We have filed and resolved labor board charges and been forced to arbitrate cases on Steward release and for the discipline issued. How many of us would continue as a Steward under the pressure these two have had to deal with. We should not have to run back and forth to the Labor Board and arbitrate grievances on Steward release and Steward discipline. Some of our Clerk Stewards are being denied Union time while the facility is allegedly overstaffed by 67 Clerks. Vice President Baskin has had problems being released even though we are short on tour 1 due to Steward illness or injury. On 12-12-10 we appointed former Steward Jacque Jackson as an alternate on tour 1 so we have more coverage. Welcome back Jacque.

