

# The Local Line

"A PPA Award Winning Publication"

The Official Voice of the  
Northwest Illinois Area Local

## Local Update by Jackie Engelhart

### Locker Inspections to be Conducted 12-29 to 1-4.

Management will be conducting inspections of all employee lockers in the Northern IL District beginning on 12-29-07 and ending on 1-4-08. The reason given by management for these inspections is that mail was found in the locker of a retired employee (location unknown). Management should have sent a letter to each employee's home at least one week prior to the start of the inspection, and they have notified the Union. All employees should be aware of these inspections and check your locker before 12-29.

### Tragic Consequences

You would think no employee would keep mail and/or illegal items in their lockers and/or on postal premises but it happens. The consequences are severe and the punishment invariably is termination. For someone facing removal the future can look hopeless. An infraction that would legally result in a misdemeanor at worst, can be used to ruin your life.

### Happy Holidays

Management drafted on Christmas Day and Christmas Eve this year, and will do the same for New Years Day and New Years Eve. Senior Management wants to be on the safe side so they schedule heavy. When 600 CCD Jack Pyssler and I talked to Senior MDO Bracket the Friday before Christmas he said he scheduled based on the mail he expected as Wednesday was a regular delivery day. Jack informed Danny there were 25 tour 1 automation volunteers who were not taken for other tours while those tours were drafting. He said he would get with the MDO's but I don't know of anyone being taken off the schedule.

### Happy New Year

For New Years Eve we asked that employees not be coming and going at midnight as management has agreed to for many years. The idea is to let employees come in early and get home before midnight, but Danny said they could come in later.

Great minds think alike, as MDO Wisner has decided to change the starting time for the tour 3 automation Clerks from 1450 to 1700 on New Years Eve! He is on a long-term detail from Carol Stream per the Senior Plant Manager.

### Holiday Message

I wish I had kept the Great Lakes Area message from Area Vice President JoAnn Fiendt where she talks about the importance of spending time with your family during the holiday season. For most of the last 30 years management was able to staff Christmas day with volunteers and did not draft. Dave and I went to the Plants on Christmas Eve and it was pretty dead. We file holiday grievances for improper drafting if they don't take cross-tour volunteers and/or don't maximize the casuals up to 12 hours. We to talk to the MDO's to get draftees off but they don't budge. While Senior management enjoys their holiday, their message for the craft employees is spend time with your family after working your holiday.

## Floor Edition

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Special points of interest:

**Locker Inspections to be Conducted 12-29 to 1-4.**

**Tragic Consequences**

**Happy Holidays (Not)**

**Happy New Year (Not)**

**Holiday Message**

**Major Postal Unions**

**APWU Still the Largest**

**Overtime at Busse**

**LMOU Impasse Items**

**Come to Work...**

## Major Postal Unions

The American Postal Workers Union (APWU) is the largest postal union, representing 272,000 career employees and 5,000 transitional employees in the Clerk, Maintenance and Motor Vehicle crafts. The National Association of Letter Carriers (NALC), the second largest postal union, represents more than 224,000 career employees. NALC members deliver mail to residences and businesses on city delivery routes. National Rural Letter Carriers Association (NRLCA) career and part-time relief workers deliver mail to residences and businesses on rural delivery routes. The National Postal Mail Handlers Union (NPMHU), a division of the Laborer's International Union of North America represents over 55,000 career employees engaged in the bulk transfer, loading and unloading of mail.

### APWU Still the Largest Union

Over the past few years an APWU member could forget that we are still the largest union in spite of management's best effort to eliminate jobs and take our work. The average hourly rate for APWU is \$22.41, for NALC is 22.46, and for the NPMHU is \$20.80. (Rural Carriers are not paid by the hour.) Management at the national level has assigned mail processing work away from Clerks to Mail Handlers for the obvious reason that they make less money than we do. As of 2-16-07 all APWU employees will be upgraded one level and this will increase the cost difference between a level 6 mail processing clerk and a level 4 mail handler. With management intent on reducing overtime this year, many employees will be living on their base salary with little OT.

## Overtime at Busse

If you are non-scheduled on Saturday/Friday and management calls overtime for Saturday they must make the call in seniority order. Management makes the call on Friday for the ODL to work Saturday but they only call it for the Saturday/Sundays. They think they can skip the Saturday/Fridays if they make the call on Friday because they say the person is "absent". Absent does not mean non-scheduled and this interpretation is incorrect. I spoke with Operations Manager Shanteau Anderson about this and informed her this was a violation but she defended her position. I don't know where they got this idea as I have not seen this happen in many years anywhere else. Leave it to Busse. If this happens to you file a grievance within 14 days and you should be given a make-up within 90 days of the date of the violation. If you are not given the make-up within 90 days you should be paid. Management has been calling in the (tour 3) 1950 Clerks but not the (tour 1) 2000 for pre-tour overtime. If this overtime is being called consistently they should be rotating the overtime between the tours as both tours are available to work during those same hours.

### LMOU Impasse Items

Vice President Dave Baskin is preparing to arbitrate impasse items for Carol Stream on 2-8-08, for Busse on 2-14-08, and for Palatine in March. Most of the impasse items involve leave and holiday issues, and at Palatine the movement between upper and lower automation is also an impasse item. When either party does not agree on an LMOU item either can appeal is to impasse arbitration. Dave has written all LMOU proposals and counter-proposals, he has appealed all the impasse items, and he will be arbitrating the cases.

## Come to Work

Anytime I talk to Danny Brackett he complains about employees not coming to work, and says the Union should be addressing this. We agree employees should come to work unless they are sick or have an emergency at home. We know that employees who abuse their leave can work themselves out of a job if they don't improve their attendance. The Union has a good track record of defending employees with attendance discipline but we need something to work with. Some employees can't even give us a reason for their attendance and in those cases the Union doesn't have much of a case, but we do the best we can with what we have. Senior Postal Management identified their top 3 objectives for 2008 and they are sick leave, managing overtime, and maximizing the use of casuals. We agree that employees should come to work, but we disagree on other leave issues. Several years ago management changed the interpretation of the "choice vacation period" to mean your vacation only. Management will not approve advance incidental leave even when the 14% has not been met for that day during the choice vacation period. Every year it is harder to get incidental leave, and Danny says that's because "people don't come to work." He also says they need casuals because "people don't come to work." We agree employees should come to work, but they should not have to beg for incidental leave. Honor the 14% so employees don't have to beg and/or call in.

*JK*