

The Local Line

"A PPA Award Winning Publication"

The Official Voice of the
Northwest Illinois Area Local

Floor Edition

December 27, 2011

Update by: Jackie Engelhart

Carol Stream Bids to be Returned...

Plant Manager Johnson held a meeting with tour 1 Automation Clerks on 12-22-11 to announce he is putting them back into their bids. He also said the (six day) bids he posted were not illegal, and the Union disagrees. This is the subject of a national dispute as the new contract states bids must have at least two consecutive days off in a 200 man-year office. Management did not change the schedules of the abolished Clerks to avoid liability for out of schedule pay. They abolished tour 1 Automation and all FSS bids on 10-8-11 and then posted 123 illegal six day jobs to push Clerks to bid on six-day jobs. Not one Automation bid was awarded as all the Clerks stuck together and did not bid. A few FSS Clerks bid on FSS six day schedules to get the noon start time but most of the bids became residual which is what both management and the Union expected.

Patience is Rewarded

We are happy that Greg decided to correct this, but it took two months. The Union agreed to time extensions for the dispute and grievances filed in the interest of resolving them at the lowest level. The Clerks knew what was done was not right but did not blame us for what management did. Greg told the Clerks that staffing changes will occur when the moratorium on plant closings end on May 15, 2012. We said staffing changes should be made when they are needed and not before. Management and the Union have agreed that all 100+ six day residuals will be reverted. We do not agree that the occupied six day jobs are legal and the Union will appeal that part of the dispute and grievances. It was a no-brainer to put the Clerks who did not bid on six day jobs back in their bids. Greg says it was all his decision to abolish 123 jobs in order to post jobs with six-day schedules, and I will take him at his word on it.

Happy Holidays !?

Some employees were not paid for the Thanksgiving holiday though they were not required to work and did not volunteer to work. As long as they were in a pay status for the last hour before or the first hour after their holiday they must be paid the holiday. Some were required to work their non-scheduled day and did not report, but no reporting for an NS day is not a reason to take your holiday pay. A grievance must be filed within 14 days of when you became aware you were not paid. In the case of someone who is required to work the holiday and does not report they will only be paid if the absence was due to an emergency and the absence is approved. For an emergency or illness you must call in as soon as you are able to. The contract states "As many full-time and part-time regular schedule employees as can be spared will be excused from duty on their holiday". When they staff 100% the Union files a grievance for extra pay but the employee can not get their holiday back.

Jackie Engelhart
President
Walter Elerby Jr.
News Director
Dave Baskin
Vice President

Special points of interest:

Carol Stream Bids to be Returned
Patience is Rewarded
Happy Holidays
The History of Zero Tolerance
The Joint Statement
What Happened in 1992
Happy New Year 2012

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

The History of Zero Tolerance

On 2-14-92 the USPS and all the postal unions with the exception of the APWU signed the USPS Joint Statement on Violence and Behavior in the Workplace in response to the Royal Oak tragedy.

The APWU explained why they did not sign the Joint Statement:

"When the Joint Statement was first proposed to the APWU by the USPS, the APWU chose not to be a signatory to the document because we knew that the USPS would apply the principles of the Joint Statement against bargaining unit employees and not against managers. We believed the Joint Statement would be used to discipline our members and would not be used to discipline managers who violated its terms."

All other postal unions did sign the Joint Statement in 1992.

"The NALC and NPMHU found out that the APWU was correct in that the USPS did apply the Joint Statement in a disparate fashion."

The NALC filed grievances over the disparity in enforcement of the Joint Statement and the USPS took the position that the NALC had no right to enforce the Joint Statement in the grievance procedure. In a National Level Award, Arbitrator Snow agreed with the NALC that the Joint Statement is a contractually enforceable agreement between the parties and subject to the grievance procedure.

The NPMHU wrote a letter to the USPS Postmaster General in 1997 Renouncing their signature on the 1992 Joint Statement but USPS rejected their letter, referring to the Snow Award which stated it was a contractually enforceable agreement. All Postal Unions now recognize that enforcement of Zero Tolerance is one - sided.

The Joint Statement

"We openly acknowledge that in some places or units there is an unacceptable level of stress in the workplace; that there is no excuse for and will be no tolerance of violence or any threats of violence by anyone at any level of the

Postal Service; and that there is no excuse for and will be no tolerance of harassment, intimidation, threats, or bullying by anyone.

We also affirm that every employee at every level of the Postal Service should be treated with dignity, respect, and fairness.

The need for the USPS to serve the public efficiently and productively, and the need for all employees to be committed to giving a fair days work for a fair days pay does not justify actions that are abusive or intolerant.

"Making the numbers" is not an excuse for the abuse of anyone.

Those who do not treat others with dignity and respect will not be rewarded or promoted. Those whose unacceptable behavior continues will be removed from their positions."

The APWU predicted correctly that the Joint Statement would be used to discipline craft employees and not supervisors.

When a craft employee reports an incident with another craft employee they are often both walked out and kept out while management conducts their investigation, but that never happens when the incident involves a supervisor.

An employee sent me a statement regarding an incident he had with a supervisor and asked me to post. He states the supervisor cursed at him and called him a MF punk.

The employee reported the incident but the supervisor has not been put out while management conducts their investigation.

What Happened in 1992

Royal Oak facility was the first of a series of shootings at postal facilities in the 1990's that gave rise to the term "going postal". Any one who brings a gun to work and shoots people is mentally ill but the investigation of Royal Oak found serious problems with the workplace climate at the facility.

The Joint Statement language was agreed to in response to the harsh management tactics at Royal Oak and the resulting stress it created.

The reason for the Statement was to avoid more violence, and to ensure that all employees are treated with dignity, respect and fairness.

The Statement has been used as a blanket policy against employees for minor disagreements at work, which was not the purpose of it.

"Making the numbers" is not an excuse for the abuse of anyone" is part of the Statement for a reason.

Management at Royal Oak had created a stressful workplace with a get results at all cost mentality. USPS uses the Statement against employees and not supervisors.

The Joint Statement was created to prevent the type of abusive management tactics that created a hostile workplace at Royal Oak, but instead has been used to deny "Just Cause" to craft employees.

Twenty years later we still have abusive supervisors among us and we still have managers who do not treat us with dignity and respect.

Craft employees must continue to stand up when they are not treated with dignity, respect, and fairness.

APWU Shirts Still Coming in

The shipments were delayed but more are coming in and we will get them out as soon as possible. If you are a member you can still sign up and give us your size.

Happy New Year 2012!