

The Local Line

"A PPA Award Winning Publication"

The Official Voice of the
Northwest Illinois Area Local

Holiday Schedules

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Floor Edition

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Holiday Schedules And Discipline

We have seen a marked increase in the number of disciplinary actions as a result of employees not reporting for duty once they are scheduled to work during holiday schedules.

Employees are reminded that if they are unable to report for duty on a day that they are scheduled to work, they must notify the USPS if they will not be reporting for duty.

When you are calling in for a holiday or a non-scheduled day, the computerized system cannot enter leave for those days and employees are told to contact their supervisor.

For Palatine and Carol Stream, employees should contact leave control. The point is, it is imperative that you call in. If you don't

call-in, management is generating 3971s for AWOL NO CALL and there has been disciplinary action initiated.

Skills Bank Assignments, The Mentoring Program, And Your Bid

The LMOU which was recently negotiated between the NWIAL and the USPS still has the skills bank language. We anticipate more utilization of the skills bank since there were some recent large monetary pre-arbitration settlements achieved. If you are unfamiliar with the Skills Bank procedures, please contact your area steward.

Management has their own program for non-bargaining unit assignments and their program is called the Mentoring Program. This program is not negotiated between the local and management.

Employees that are detailed to bargaining unit positions, within their respective facilities have nothing to worry about as far as losing their bid assignments, because these are temporary assignments that are recognized bargaining unit assignments. However, if you are in a non-bargaining unit assignment, (204b, EAS, etc) you are NOT in the bargaining unit and you run the risk of losing your bid assignment. If you are unsure regarding a skills bank assignment, you can always talk to your union steward. If you're out of the bargaining unit, you can always talk to management. If you are out of your facility, and your bid does not necessitate travel, the chances are you in a non-bargaining unit assignment.

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Special points of interest:

Holiday Schedules, Discipline, and Call-Ins

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Pay Increase Effective 3-18-06

The first COLA under the 2005-2006 contract extension amounts to a 22 cents per hour increase, or \$17.60 per pay period. The ninth COLA will take effect March 18, 2006 (pay period 07-2006, pay dated April 7, 2006). Pay charts reflecting this COLA and the 1.6% pay raise will be printed in the next APWU magazine.

1.6% Pay Increase also means a 79 Cents Dues Increase.

Effective pay period 07-06, March 18, 2006 there will be an automatic dues increase of 79 cents based on the 1.6 % pay increase. This is in compliance with Article 16 of the national constitution.

Postal Reform Legislation

The senate approved a postal reform bill by "unanimous consent" on 2-9-06. Before the legislation can be sent to President Bush differences between Senate bill (S. 662) and House bill (H.R. 22) must be resolved. A conference committee is currently meeting behind closed doors in to decide the fate of key provisions in the proposed postal reform legislation. Because they would make the federal budget deficit appear larger under federal accounting rules, the President has threatened to veto legislation if it includes two provisions. One provision would release from escrow 3 billion dollars the USPS saved by ending overpayments to the Civil Service Retirement System, and the other would return military retirement-benefit liability obligation to the U.S. Treasury. No other federal agency is required to pay these costs. Now is the time to contact your U.S Congressman and Senators to let them know that you support postal reform that does not hurt postal employees.

Identify Thieves Targeting Postal Employees & FEGLI

Nigerians posing as representatives from the office of Federal Employees Life Insurance (FEGLI) have been asking employees for their social security numbers, Employee IDs and USPS PINS. This group surfaced in Pittsburgh under the name **Employee Service Division, UAF**, and is distributing business cards claiming to represent FEGLI and is based in Silver Springs, MD. If anyone matching this description contacts you, call your local Inspection Service office immediately. Never divulge your USPS PIN to anyone and only provide your social security number and Employee ID when you're using it for an official purpose, such as on Postal-EASE or filing a health benefits claim. If you believe your USPS PIN has been compromised, you can establish a new one by calling the employee service line at 877-477-3273 and pressing 3. You'll be prompted for your social security number, your current USPS PIN and then prompted to select a new 4-digit USPS PIN.

Postal PEOPLE Fairs

Many of the local Personnel Office functions will be processed at a national Human Resources Shared Services Center located in Greensboro, North Carolina. This will begin in the Northern Illinois District in April of 2006. In her continuing effort to prepare employees for these changes **Ann Jones** is sharing information on upcoming Postal PEOPLE Fairs to be held as follows: **Carol Stream P&DC** on March 6 from 3 to 9:30 pm and on March 7 from 6am to noon. **Palatine P&DC** on March 8 from 3-930 pm and March 9 from 6 am to noon.

USPS Briefs APWU on Plans to Realign Postal Network.

The Postal Service provided a long-awaited outline of the Evolutionary Network Development (END) program in a meeting with APWU (national) officers on 2-14-06, on the same day it submitted the plan to the Postal Rate Commission. The Postal Service is required by law to seek an advisory opinion from the commission when it proposes to make changes in service that are national in scope. Under the Collective Bargaining Agreement, the Postal Service is also required to notify the union when a major relocation of employees is planned "due to the implementation of national postal mail networks." The APWU filed a Notice of Intervention with the PRC on 2-15-06, advising of the union's intent to participate in any proceedings that occur as a result of the USPS plan. The USPS plans to replace the nine existing facility-types with the following five processing facility types: **Regional Distribution Centers** which will process all classes of parcels & bundles and serve as Surface Transfer Centers, **Local Processing Centers** which will process single-piece letters & flats and will cancel mail, **Destination Processing Centers**, which will process single-piece letters & flats, **Airport Transfer Centers**, which will serve as transfer points only, and **Remote Encoding Centers**. Over a period of years, these facilities are expected to replace P&DCs, etc. The network must change, according to USPS, due to declining first class volume, redundancies in the existing network, and the need for operational flexibility.