

The Local Line

"A PPA Award Winning Publication"

The Official Voice of the
Northwest Illinois Area Local

Local Update by Jackie Engelhart

Bombshell Arbitration Award at Palatine !

On 6-23-08 Arbitrator Anne Kenis stunned management with the following Award: "The grievance is arbitrable. It is hereby sustained on the merits. The Postal Service violated the National Agreement by permitting and/or inducing senior clerks to volunteer in lieu of junior clerks to be excessed into the mail handler craft at the Palatine P&DC. The corrective action sought by the Union is granted."

Dave Baskin Wins it!

Vice President Dave Baskin filed this grievance and he presented the case in the arbitration hearing and he deserves full credit for this victory. This grievance was filed in part based on a complaint from one of the volunteers that he/she had been promised overtime if he/she became a mail handler. These Clerks "volunteered" either out of fear that they would be the next ones excessed to the MH Craft or because they believed they would get more overtime.

Mail Handlers Testify

Thanks to Anita Hatcher and Kenny Reed for agreeing to testify for the APWU in this hearing concerning what they heard on the floor about overtime promised to Clerks.

The Corrective Action

Vice President Baskin has provided a letter to each of the 18 Clerks who are eligible to return to the Clerk craft and be made whole. In this letter he outlines the remedy:

1. No loss in seniority
2. Out of Schedule Pay
3. Guaranteed pay
4. Lost Clerk Overtime
5. Level 6 Pay
6. Sunday Premium
7. Night Differential
8. Penalty Overtime
9. Difference in Wages

This settlement pertains to Palatine Clerks who volunteered to become Mail Handlers in lieu of Clerks to be excessed.

Palatine Excessing is Cancelled on 6-23-08.

Management notified APWU on 6-23-08 "*The withholding notice issued for the Palatine P&DC issued on 3-5-08 is being cancelled.*"

Grievances Mean \$\$

Senior Management at Palatine continues to ignore the Union and consider grievances as a Labor Relations problem. With the USPS in dire financial straits due to the drastic decline in mail volume, they can ill afford to pay money out for grievances. Until Senior Management (and not Labor Relations) is held accountable nothing will change. **Another Union Victory!** Tour 2 Steward Bob LaFoe has won more money for Palatine Custodians. Last time it was for improper contracting of snow removal, and now money has been awarded for management's use of Group Leaders in lieu of qualified Job Instructors. Bob has been filing grievances each time management uses a Group Leader to train new Custodians instead of a qualified Job Instructor per the USPS Handbook EL-701. This grievance was settled in pre-arbitration by National Business Agent Vance Zimmerman, and there are more of these grievances in the system.

Floor Edition

July 1, 2008
Jackie Engelhart
President
Alan J. Czerwinski
News Director

Bombshell Arbitration Award at Pal!

Mail Handlers Testify

The Corrective Action

Pal. Excess is Cancelled on 6-23-08.

Grievances Mean \$\$

Another Union Victory!

Management Details Grievance Sustained

Busse Maintenance

FSS & Declining Mail Volume

Warning about "Job Fairs"

Early Out or Vera

Our New Stewards

"Management Details" Grievance Sustained at Busse for \$\$.

On 6-9-08 two grievances I filed at Chicago Metro Surface Hub for out-of-schedule premium were remanded from Step 3 to Step 2. The parties at Step 3 agreed that *"The above referenced grievances are hereby remanded to Step 2 where the parties shall re-discuss these cases and attempt to reach a mutually agreeable resolution based on the principle that if the employees are working out of their bid schedule at management's request they are entitled to out of schedule pay for the hours worked outside of their schedule."* I will be meeting with CMSH management on these remands, but they have failed to provide 1723 Assignment Orders for many of these employees. If you have worked out of your schedule at the request of management from 2-5-08 to the present please forward copies of all of your 1723's to me for the settlement of these grievances. Some employees feel it is unfair to pay the employees who are on the details but that is what the contract calls for. The fact that the same employees who are being detailed to preferred schedules are also entitled to the out-of-schedule pay may not seem fair, but the payment of this money may force management into posting bids for some of these long-term details. In order to avoid future liability for out-of-schedule pay management will probably tell employees on management details to fill out a 3189 schedule change for personal convenience. The only 3189's that will be signed by APWU are those requested by the employee for their own personal convenience and not for management details.

Busse Maintenance

Maintenance Craft Director Joe Golden has submitted the list for the Key Handling grievance that the employees have been waiting for. Maintenance Manager Grewal has submitted his "updated" MS-47 staffing package and the number (34) is the same as the old staffing package. Mr. Grewal is continuing the same old understaffing in the maintenance craft at Busse. I received a complaint a few days ago from a Custodian who said management has assigned more square footage per Custodian and unilaterally changed the past staffing practice of two (2) Custodians per quadrant down to one (1). It is doubtful that management is in compliance with the MS-47 and this will cost them money in the long run as grievances will be filed for the understaffing and non-compliance.

FSS & Declining Mail Volume

At the District Meeting on 6-9-08 I asked Senior Management why they were going forward with the planned deployment of two FSS at Carol Stream and three at Palatine in light of the decline in mail volume. District Manager Hart stated they were locked into this purchase, but also said the FSS will get a return on investment in one year. He said USPS expects to save 5 billion on this 2 billion dollar investment, and that 300 routes in the Northern IL District will be eliminated when they turn on the switch. The NALC agreed to 6% Transitional Employees in the Carrier craft due to the expected impact of FSS in late 2009 or early 2010. In the meantime we believe they may start to excess Clerks from the plants into the Carrier craft. They save money if full time employees in the plants volunteer to become PTF carriers needed now, but what happens to those PTF Carriers not needed when the FSS goes on line in 2010?

Warning about "Job Fairs"

Management has flyers out advertising "Job Fairs" at the plants to entice employees to re-assign to customer services. Don't be fooled into reassigning as a PTF Clerk or Carrier in the Associate Offices unless you want to change your status from regular and start over as a PTF. Management is notorious about not converting PTF's who consistently work 40 hours a week in the AO's. They don't convert them voluntarily and rarely resolve a conversion grievance. You will remain a PTF for years, and you could see your hours cut to four (4) hours per pay period. Management's flyer is misleading when it says *"Opportunity to become full time sooner."* All Clerks in the Plants and most Mail Handlers are already full time so how is this an opportunity to become full time sooner? As far as volunteering to become a carrier, re-read the comment from Mr. Hart *"300 routes will be eliminated when they turn on the switch."* If you fall for this "reassignment opportunity" you can expect to remain a PTF, see your hours cut, and face possible excessing as the junior employee in your new office.

Early Out or Vera

APWU headquarters will not confirm this, but management of the Northern IL District is saying there will be an announcement of another early out in August.

Our New Stewards Are:

Cheryl Fair, D'Andrea Harris, Marcia Lloyd (all Clerk) and Samuel Jackson (MVS) at Palatine, and Thomas Conway (Maintenance) and Nigel Thomas (MVS) at Carol Stream.