

# The Local Line

"A PPA Award Winning Publication"

The Official Voice of the  
Northwest Illinois Area Local

Floor Edition

Update by: Jackie Engelhart

July 3, 2009

## National Union to Court to Enforce Award!

In an effort to cover their butts management refused to pay the 18 or so Clerks who volunteered in lieu of excess Clerks at the Palatine P&DC resulting from the AFSM-AI theft of Clerk work in 2007. Vice President Dave Baskin took the grievance from Step 1 to victory in arbitration only to have management refuse to implement the award. Northern IL District Human Resource Manager Phyllis Lingenfelser rolled the dice and decided to pay only one of the 18 Clerks covered in the class action award. She paid this Clerk an amount substantially lower than the Union's calculation. Phyllis also asked the Local Union to agree to a meeting with the Arbitrator to "clarify" what was a clear award. She has stalled the inevitable and increased the liability that USPS will eventually have to pay.

## Arbitrator Refuses to Enforce her own Award

Dave filed a grievance to force management to implement the award and pay the Clerks. It was moved to the top of the docket and scheduled before Ann Kenis, the same arbitrator who had issued the award. Our National Business Agent Linda Turney was shocked when Arbitrator Kenis stated at the start of the hearing that she could not enforce her own award! Labor Relations at both the Area and District levels had sent clear signals to Ms. Kenis that they were not pleased with her when they appeared as "observers" at some of her hearings. I did not think this would work until she said she did not have authority to enforce her own Award. NBA Turney joined us in asking our National Union to have the legal staff in the Industrial Relations Department take USPS to court. They have reviewed the case and informed us this week they will take USPS to court to enforce the award.

## Palatine to CS AMP

On 6-10-09 a surprise announcement was made that an Area Mail Processing study would begin on the possible consolidation of some of Palatine's operation to Carol Stream. This was a shock to everyone at Palatine including Plant Manager Greg Johnson. A few days later we were sent a copy of a letter on this AMP from Area Labor Relations Manager Dan Bessler to APWU Regional Coordinator Sharyn Stone. The letter stated in part *"This letter is solely intended to provide you with information that we plan to conduct the study. If the business case supports consolidation, a public meeting will be held to allow members of the community to ask questions and provide feedback. Community input will be considered before a decision is made... If you have any questions concerning this AMP feasibility study please contact Ron Woodall at 630-539-4728."* Palatine is now on the national AMP hit list and I think we all know who put us on that list. We have to stop it.

Jackie Engelhart  
President  
Alan J. Czerwinski  
News Director

## Special points of interest:

National Union to Court to Enforce Award!  
Arbitrator Refuses to Enforce her own Award.  
Palatine to CS AMP  
Loss of Mail Hurts all Crafts  
Stand-by Abuse Discriminatory  
Busse Staffing Changes

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](mailto:nwialapwu@hotmail.com)  
Web: [www.nwial.com](http://www.nwial.com)

### **Loss of Mail Hurts all Crafts**

With the assistance of CCD Al Czerwinski, I prepared a form letter for use in writing our Congressmen and Senators for help in stopping this mail consolidation. Those letters are available and we urge all employees to sign and mail letters to both U.S. Senators (Durbin and Burris) and your Congressman. If you do not know who your Congressman is we will look it up for you. This letter writing campaign must begin immediately and include all craft employees of APWU and NPMHU. We welcome all Mail Handlers who are willing to sign and mail these letters to stop the AMP of Palatine mail that will negatively affect both crafts. In an ironic twist this proposed management action will hurt both crafts as Palatine with little gain for Carol Stream employees.

### **VP Baskin Writing to Local Businesses to Enlist Support**

Dave has written a letter to notify local businesses in Palatine of the proposed consolidation and how it would negatively impact them, with no improvement in service. In 2006 both Rockford and Fox Valley were targeted to lose mail in USPS consolidations plans. Then Palatine Plant Manager Ron Woodall wanted to take mail from Rockford into Palatine P&DC but the Rockford employees fought back and stopped him. The USPS decided that the AMP of Fox Valley into South Suburban would not work. I believe Ron Woodall has already decided to do this and is relying on the Industrial Engineers to justify his decision. The way to stop this AMP is to take our case to the local community, local community leaders, and our Congressmen and Senators.

**Stand-by Abuse Discriminatory Management at Palatine and more recently at Carol Stream has begun placing Limited Duty/Rehab employees on stand-by and removing them from the workroom floor.** In the old days when we ran out of mail on an LSM we remained in the unit until more mail came. These employees are instructed to report to a designated room and to sit there for hours, with nothing to do but stare at the four walls. They come to work and have job assignments which they are not allowed to work when placed on stand-by. Instead of allowing the mail to be worked up and placing the entire unit on stand-by management is intentionally segregating Limited Duty and Rehab for stand-by. Why would they not work up all the mail and put everyone in the unit on stand-by? They are not saving any money by placing injured employees in a room and allowing only able-bodied employees to work the mail. What is the real motive? The reason injured employees are placed on stand-by while others continue to work the mail is to document that there is no work available for them under the NRP. If the injured employees had bids instead of job offers they too would be allowed to work. The difference between Palatine and Carol Stream is that Palatine continues to repost bids in Letters and Flats which affords injured Clerks an opportunity to obtain a bid and protect themselves from the National Reassessment Process. At Carol Stream management does not post bids in Letters and Flats because they have assignments for injured Clerks. It is always better to have a bid than an assignment that can be withdrawn.

### **Busse Staffing Changes**

Both unions were invited to a second meeting on 7-1-09 to discuss staffing changes proposed on 4-13-09. The meeting began with confusion as the room was full when the Mail Handlers arrived and they said they would meet separately. Human Resource Manager Rochelle Israel made some general statements and then the In-Plant guys from Chicago (Mike and Matt) began to outline the plan. The union asked questions and made suggestions but every time we did, Mike got visibly irritated. His attitude was were telling you what were going to do and were not changing anything. The staffing plan is computer-generated plan similar to others we have seen such as the 2005 Labor Scheduler or the 2009 Complement Realignment. We asked why the number of Saturday/Sunday bids in the Racks was changing from eight to one and the reason given was that the computer generates the right mix of off days for the daily staffing called for. They ran an Off-Days Calculator and came up with the off days. Mike did not respond well when we asked if they could take another look at trying to keep more Saturday/Sunday bids. Ruby and Shanteau finally responded that they are short on Saturday and need more Sunday/Monday bids. The plan calls for the elimination of the tour 2 and 3 General Clerks which we strongly disagree with. It also calls for the creation of three newly created best qualified Data Collection Technicians who Ruby plans to use as back-up General Clerks. Rochelle said all employees would get 30 days notice for any bid abolishments.

*JK*