

The Local Line

"A PPA Award Winning Publication"

The Official Voice of the
Northwest Illinois Area Local

Floor Edition

Update by: Jackie Engelhart

June 6, 2009

Woodall Era is Over
On 5-21-09 Great Lakes Area Vice President Jo Ann Feindt announced that Ron Woodall has been assigned as the Manager of In-Plant Support for the Great Lakes Area. He has been detailed to this position for the last several months. "In his new position he will be responsible for managing plant operations within the Great Lakes Area as it relates to service, financial and productivity improvements." For those of us who lived through the last few years at Palatine the thought of Ron managing plant operations for the entire Great Lakes Area is a scary thought. After a collective sigh of relief, the Greg Johnson era begins. Greg is a people person and a good choice to improve morale as well as service. The difference in what we had and what we have now, it that Greg will do what he can where he can to minimize adverse impacts on the employees.

Thank-you Bob Hart
Recently we met with the Window Clerks at the Carol Stream Branch and OIC Mary Moore to hear their concerns. The number one concern was the removal of stools from the window last year so I called District Manager Bob Hart and left a message with his Secretary. Within two hours he called me back and then agreed to allow the Clerks to have their stools back. This may not seem like a big deal, but they are on their feet all day at the window and having a stool to rest on for a minute in between lines of customers makes a big difference to the Window Clerks. They do a job that most of us would not want, in the front line performing retail transactions and service customers all day. When the line gets too long they blame the Window Clerks who is expected to perform the perfect transaction every time. I thank Bob Hart for responding so quickly and returning stools to the Carol Stream Branch.

C S Bids Cancelled

On 6-4-09 we met with tour 2 AFSM Clerks to address rumors about their bids being abolished. In-Plant Support Manager John Colao told me one week ago they were "looking at" eliminating a tour 2 AFSM crew. The AFSM Clerks wanted answers because of the 53 Clerk bid posting that was due to come on 6-5-09. The posting includes all the newly created automation jobs and current vacancies. John informed the Clerks and the Union at this meeting that the decision has been made to run one AFSM crew on tour 2 and some jobs would be abolished within the next six weeks. He explained this was due to shrinking mail volume and in anticipation of FSS bids to be posted three months ahead of FSS arrival at Carol Stream in January 2010. The AFSM Clerks asked if the posting could be extended or cancelled because they had less than 24 hours to bid and Vice President Baskin and I agreed to this. The bid posting will be reposted on 6-23-09.

Jackie Engelhart
President
Alan J. Czerwinski
News Director

Special points of interest:

Woodall Era is Over
Thank-you Bob Hart
C S Bids Cancelled
Bid Controversy
Witness Statements for 1.6
CS Social & Rec. Committee
without APWU
Maintenance Craft Director

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

Bid Controversy

We know the Clerks who bid on the current CS posting will be upset about the delay and having to bid again, and you can blame Vice President Baskin and myself because we had to make an on the spot decision to agree to cancel the posting or leave the AFSM Clerks out in the cold. I was reminded by John Colao that the newly created automation bids were not posted sooner because management knew there would be more Clerk jobs abolished after the Tour Compression and they did not want to post the new jobs until the TAIP, affecting Review Clerks, General Expeditors and Postage Due Clerks was done. They did not want to post the new jobs and then abolish these Clerks and that was the right thing to do. The reduction in AFSM bids was not anticipated and is the result of the accelerated decline in flat volume coupled with the changes caused by the impending FSS arrival. The newly created bids were to be posted after TAIP was completed so the impacted all Clerks would know they needed to bid. The parties agree the impacted AFSM Clerks should also have time to bid on the large posting. I want to thank the new CS A/Plant Manager Lee Thompson for her cooperation in setting up and attending the meeting within a day of the request. The tour 2 Clerks were upset that three AFSM bids were recently posted and filled by senior Clerks who will now remain in the section with the new days off of Saturday/Sunday, while junior Clerks are pushed out of the section. Those bids would not have been posted if we knew the section was about to be reduced. This is all bad timing.

Witness Statements for 1.6

There has been a spike in reports of Supervisors and Managers performing bargaining unit work on tour 1 at Palatine since the 69 Clerks were excessed on 5-9-09. On several days management has worked Mail Handlers in the one job Clerks have left on the AI, and these Mail Handlers were the Clerks who had just been excessed into the Mail Handler craft. You can see the cause of Clerk excessing is to perform Clerk work on the AFSM that was taken from us. Vice President Baskin sent a letter to the Stewards after we witnessed some of these violations just after the excessing, instructing them to be vigilant on filing grievances for all violations where Supervisors (1.6) and Mail Handlers (7.2) are performing Clerk work. He sent a copy of this letter to management which made them very mad, especially the part about filing these grievances for money and fighting back on the excessing. Violations of Articles 1.6 and 7.2 are always for money, but its not all about the money, its about the work. Why would we sit back and allow this to happen unchallenged, and why would any Clerk? If you see a Supervisor or a Mail Handler doing Clerk work there is no excused for not writing a statement. These statements are to protect your work and your Clerk job.

USPS Zero Tolerance

No employee should have to come to work and feel threatened either verbally or physically. But under Zero Tolerance even minor incidents reported to management can result in both employees being walked out until management decides they can return. The threat of Removal is always on the table, so think about, it's your job.

CS Social & Rec. Committee without APWU

We have had a running disagreement with the long-serving Chairperson of the CS Social and Recreation Committee dating back to last year when she removed a long-serving APWU member with no notice to either the member or the APWU. We met with her and then Plant Manager Johnson to get our member returned. Instead the Chairperson contacted us to tell us how we must make our appointments in the future and suggesting who we appoint. Until this is corrected we are not participating with the Committee but this doesn't seem to matter as no effort has been made by management to resolve the problem, and the Chairperson seems to roll along on without APWU participation. The Social and Rec. Committee is for the employees. It should be run by members appointed by the respective Unions and not by the Chairperson alone. I am told there have been no meetings and the question is who voted on the money for Great American?

Maintenance Craft Director

For the past few months Palatine Maintenance Manager Ricky Hilliard has refused to honor detail requests for Maintenance Craft Director Joe Golden. In my opinion this is retaliation for Joe's refusal to agree to contract violations and for the number of maintenance grievances being filed at Palatine. Joe has been forced to work many hours off the clock to process grievances and to meet with management. He has gone without sleep and been bounced back and forth between tours but he will not trade grievances for a detail. These attacks show how effectively Joe is doing his job.

JZ