

# The Local Line

"A PPA Award Winning Publication"

The Official Voice of the  
Northwest Illinois Area Local

## Local Update by Jackie Engelhart

**Palatine Impact is 78!**  
On Thursday afternoon I received a call from Palatine "In-Plant Support Specialist and former FSM Clerk Chachana Elliot. She called to set up meetings with the Palatine FSM Clerks concerning AI. I told her I had met with tour 1 and 2 and had asked to meet with tour 3, but we still did not have any official numbers. Complement Coordinator Bertha McGee was to call us as soon as she had the numbers. I had also talked to Palatine A/Senior MDO Danny Bracket but he also was waiting for the information from Bertha. I asked Ms. Elliot if she had 60 day letters etc and she said she'd call me back, because she did not have any information prepared for us or the FSM Clerks. **She called back & said the number to be accessed to MH is 78!** She said Ron (Woodall) wants to meet with us at 10:30 on Monday, and I'm sure meetings with the FSM clerks will be scheduled next week.

**The AFSM Clerk**  
I received this excellent statement from FSM Clerk Pam Brown: "On 3-7-07 the AFSM Clerks were informed that the AFSM Clerks will be replaced on the AFSM by mail handlers. The mail handlers will be performing our duties on the AFSM. All prepping of mail in the FSM area has been done by clerks. In fact, I am presently prepping mail on the AFSM. Mail handlers have never been utilized in the FSM area to prep mail. Therefore, when management replaces me with a mail handler they are violating my rights under the Collective Bargaining Agreement, Article 4 Section 3 "Any new job or jobs created by technological or mechanization changes shall be offered to present employees capable of being trained to perform the new or changed job and the employer will provide such training. Therefore, I have the right to remain in the AFSM after the Automatic Induction is implemented in the AFSM. Management is

aware that in a Mail Processing Facility (Palatine & Carol Stream), no craft has exclusive jurisdiction over prepping mail. The mail handlers performed duties of prepping mail in an opening unit, which is not part of the FSM area. Since the Automatic Induction is being put on my work station, I should not lose my position. The AI eliminates the opening unit. Therefore, the mail handlers positions are being eliminated. I feel I should remain on the AFSM and not be replaced by a mail handler. Allowing mail handlers to work on the AFSM is crossing crafts because the AFSM is a mail distribution machine. I want to remain on the AFSM after the AI is added to the AFSM. If I am replaced by mail handler or moved to another tour, as a resolution I want 50% more pay per hour until I am returned to the AFSM. I want to remain in the AFSM on tour 2." **Pam is right and they are wrong, but they don't care about right & wrongs, & they don't care about Pam or any other craft employee.**

## Floor Edition

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### Special points of interest:

Palatine Impact is 78!

The AFSM Clerk

"Management & Mail Handler Working Together"

The Struggle Continues

The Break Issue

Chicago Metro Surface Hub

Why the Harassment at Franklin Park Post Office?

## **"Management & Mail Handlers Working Together"**

This is the banner hanging over the employee entrance at Palatine P&DC. Sadly, for the APWU, it appears that this slogan is true. The National Postal Mail Handler Union has always offered the USPS a cheaper wage scale work force, but in the past the USPS assigned work to each craft based on the work performed and not the wage scale. This is a thing of the past, as is painfully obvious by the blatant transfer of clerk work on the AFSM. As Pam stated, the work being eliminated is the prepping (035) unit, not the flat sorter work. The USPS and the MHU are working hand in hand to stall the Dispute Process in place to adjudicate jurisdictional disputes. The many disputes filed by APWU are not being heard while our employees are being \_\_\_\_\_! USPS used to stand for United States Postal Service but there is no more Service, it's the company, and the company does not care what they have to do to save money. Cutting jobs through automation and increased productivity is no longer enough. The latest strategy is to take mail processing and distribution from the mail processing clerks because they are level 5 and soon to be level 6. The determining factor for work assignments is no longer the work itself, but how to give it to lower paid work force. Locally, Ron, Joe, Tim and Chachana worked together to take non-robot distribution jobs in multi-line and central dispatch and give it to the mail handlers. Ron and the Mail Handler President always agree on RI-399 issues, which means all work is mail handler in the plants now days.

## **The Struggle Continues...**

But now its not only against the USPS but also the MHU, eager to take our work. The days of you keep your work and we'll keep ours are gone as the USPS continues its dirty work. When the FSM clerks listen to management's presentation of this travesty, they will say "at least you have a job" and "we appreciate your efforts" and "we need you to continue" **blah blah blah**. As they take your bid they want to make sure that you don't stop working your butt off. Don't let your morale suffer just because they are taking your bid job and giving it to a mail handler. They will say "its not my decision" and "I'm just doing my job". "The "leadership" asked a Clerk, "Do you want your days off or do you want a job?!" Nice attitude.

## **The Break Issue**

We spoke with Lynn Smith last week and he was disappointed that I did not ask him what I could do to help with the break problem, as the Mail Handler Presidents did. I told him that we are not treated like the Mail Handlers. The APWU is filing class action grievances on the sign out and in policy implemented at Carol Stream and Palatine, as we do not agree with this unilateral change. Having said that, we do understand that management has the right to enforce the 15 minute break policy. Management at every level is being strictly monitored to ensure that employees are productive for 7.5 hours per day. As the 15 minute break is being more strictly enforced employees need to adhere to the policy. We will continue to talk to Lynn Smith in regard to rescinding the signing in and out.

## **Chicago Metro Surface Hub**

I have requested a meeting with Plant Manager Anderson to discuss the continuing PTF six day work schedule and the posting of bids.

I have also informed him that he cannot work Clerk casuals on tour 2 per the new contract and must use only career Clerks on tour 2. I will be out at Busse one evening per week at 1700 to meet with Jonn and Sherry. I was there at 1750 on Thursday, 3-8-07 and heard MDO Schramm getting agitated with a maintenance employee and I told Steve he sounded "hostile". We have had too many incidents at Busse with employees being walked out, recently for failure to follow an instruction. All employees have a right to be treated with dignity and respect, but we can't correct it if you don't tell us. Report abusive supervisors to Melvin and to the Union.

## **Why the Harassment at Franklin Park Post Office?**

That is the question I have for the District Manager in regards to the treatment of employees by new Postmaster Charlotte Jones and Supervisor Deborah James. They are handing out petty discipline to clerks and trying to send the injured APWU steward out of the office. APWU steward Arlene Thomas-Benford was injured on the job when she was instructed to lift some heavy boxes by herself because the supervisor refused her request for help with the heavy boxes. Window clerks are being disciplined for failure to follow if they forget to ask one of the scripted questions. If the clerk is following the instructions but forgets to ask one of the questions does this justify discipline? Is this just cause? Apparently it is to Charlotte and Deborah. Maybe that's why they're trying to get rid of the steward!

*JE*