

The Local Line

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Northwest Illinois Area Local

Floor Edition

Update by: Jackie Engelhart

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Clerks Leaving on May 9th...

69 Clerks will be leaving the craft at Palatine on May 9, 2009 and we wish them all well in their new assignments. Some of the available assignments were for tour 2 with weekends off for Custodians in Chicago Stations of Niles, Lakeview, Northtown and Rogers Park and most of these jobs were taken. One unassigned Clerk who had toiled in Lower Automation for years on tour 1 told me she is going to Lakeview where she will be on tour 2 with weekends off. She is also closer to home. Instead of being tied to a machine on tour 1 at Palatine and waiting for the next batch of Clerks to be cut, she can now plan her life and live like a normal person. Wow! For some of these Clerks the move is actually a blessing, because they're off the chopping block at Palatine where Clerk work goes to Mail Handlers and the junior Clerks continue to follow.

The Chicago District Vacancies ...

The Union insisted that the Chicago residual vacancies be included in the choices offered to the Palatine Clerks. I spoke to Chicago District Human Resource Manager Rochelle Israel on April 1st when I went downtown for a meeting. She stated Chicago's residuals were needed for Chicago but I requested a list and it was ultimately provided to me. Later when we met with the Northern II District for an update on the Palatine number, I again informed management that the Chicago vacancies must be included. Human Resource Manager Lingenfelter told us that Chicago would not give her a list of their vacancies but we provided her with our copy so Chicago's vacancies were included. We knew that aside from Mail Handler vacancies in the plants, most of the vacancies in Northern were Carrier jobs that few of the Clerks wanted. We did not want Clerks forced to be Carriers.

AMC O'Hare Vacancies

Dave Baskin and I met with HR Manager Lingenfelter and Complement Coordinator Cathy Porter to help ensure the selections were made correctly. When we arrived Phyllis said there was a problem with the O'Hare jobs as Chicago e-mailed to say they may excess Clerks out of O'Hare and they want to hold on to their Mail Handler residuals. There is no current impact at O'Hare and we did not agree to allow management to take the O'Hare jobs off the table. Cathy did not think many of these jobs would go but in the end all 13 were taken. Again, we insisted that all residual vacancies within the commuting area be included in the choices. While all the Palatine jobs (Mail Handler and Custodian) were taken as expected, we were surprised that most of the Carol Stream Mail Handler jobs went unfilled, as did most of the Busse Custodian jobs. Only 6 Clerks went to Carol Stream Mail Handler and one to Busse Custodian. 5 went to Carrier or Window Clerk.

Jackie Engelhart
President
Alan J. Czerwinski
News Director

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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

Palatine after May 9th

The question is what will happen at Palatine after 69 Clerks leave on May 9th. No able-bodied Clerks have been placed on stand-by since the Palatine impact was first discussed with the Union in November of 2008. Even after the Palatine Compression and Re-alignment forced over 100 Clerks to tour 1, Clerks were not placed on stand-by. They were gainfully employed either in automation where they were assigned or in manual units such as IPP/Priority. Management has already been pulling tour 1 Stewards out of the Union office to be used for relief in automation and we asked Tour 1 A/Lead MDO Rose Kane what will happen after May 9th????

What will happen with incidental leave and holiday drafting? Can Palatine can get the mail out minus 69 Clerks? The 69 is actually 65 because 4 Clerks opted to stay in Palatine as Part-Time Regulars. **Clerks "Volunteer" to MH**

All of the residuals for Palatine Mail Handler that were taken by the impacted Clerks were for what unit? You guessed right if you said AFM-AI. Management took the AFSM from the Clerks and gave it to the Mail Handlers and now Clerks are being forced into the Mail Handler Craft to work on the AFSM. For anyone who thinks Clerks actually volunteer to become Mail Handlers, the truth is they're being encouraged to volunteer as they're being pushed out. I hear some were led to believe they would be converted after volunteering, but the truth is we are in withholding and they can't be converted as long as we remain in withholding. With all the excessing we could be in withholding for a very long time.

Carol Stream Labor-Mgmt.

We met with A/Plant Manager Nancy Fryrear on April 28th, and the #1 item was bids. Newly created automation bids will be posted on May 26th as follows: 27 for 1300, 5 for 1400, 12 for 2115, and 7 for 2215. Management has yet to request authorization for Priority bids as Palatine has already requested from Area. Some manual flats bids may be posted and some flat cases may be replaced with flat-racks. Some General Expediter bids have been targeted for abolishment while at the same time management is training Mail Handlers to scan in Clerk units and tag mail. We gave specifics for management to investigate and stop the violations. Injured Mail Handlers are not immune to the compression of tour 2 and will be moved May 9th.

Light Duty Discussed

The A/Plant Manager is cracking-down on light duty to the extent that few requests are being honored for 8 hours of work. Most slips show 4 hours work per night in manual letters. Those who cannot work 8 hours in machine bids are not getting 8 hours. If there is no work management can send light duty home but these employees are being automatically restricted to less than 8 hours per their light duty assignments. No one should be sent home if there is work available on any given day, but the fact is mail volume is down and light duty is first to go.

Housekeeping Crackdown

We asked why personal belongings, trash cans, and a desk were removed from the floor. She agreed to replace the desk with a standing desk, but said with our concern with the trash cans removed from letters was "silly".

National Reassessment -NRP

The NRP has been keeping a low profile since December, with a sighting here and there to make a job offer. I asked Manager Gilbert Lopez what's going on with NRP and he said they're working on No Work Available. I asked where is my list and he said there is no list. At this point it is safe to assume that those who have not yet received an NRP job offer may not be getting one. At Palatine I have requested a meeting with Greg Johnson to discuss the Necessary Worksheets submitted by Ron Woodall, Danny Bracket, and Ralph Ramion which contain only enough work for those few who are MMI within one year. Not included as necessary work is letters, flats, and nixie, which have been the main areas of accommodation for Clerks for 30 years. If those areas are eliminated, the necessary work and the injured employees are eliminated, and that seems to be the plan. It's no coincidence that management reduced the number of Clerks to be excessed by 42 (from 132 to 90) and the number of Limited Duty Clerks without bids or bids pending at Palatine is exactly 42. **Union Dues and Craft Change** There is a reciprocity agreement among the national unions for employees changing crafts. If the employee joins the new union and notes on the 1187 they are still paying dues to the old union, the new union should not deduct dues until the old union terminates their dues. If you do not join the new union you cannot get out of the old union until your anniversary date. You must inform the new union that you are still paying dues and do not want dues taken until the old dues are stopped.