

The Local Line

"A PPA Award Winning Publication"

The Official Voice of the
Northwest Illinois Area Local

Local Update by Jackie Engelhart

Floor Edition

May 17, 2006

Palatine Medical Unit
On 5-11-06 a grievance was appealed to step 2 for the closing of the Palatine Medical Unit. The next day a tragedy occurred at Palatine, when tour 3 Mailhandler Veronica Washington was found unconscious in the Security Office. I am told a co-worker was able to revive her, but only temporarily. I did not know Veronica personally, but I remember her smiling and waving from the Security Office. I know she will be missed by many of her co-workers, as well as family and friends. My first thought upon hearing of this tragedy, was "we need a medical unit at Palatine." Of course I do not know if the outcome would have changed, but I know most of us would feel better knowing we had a trained professional in the building, just in case. Senior Management of the Northern Illinois District has assured us that they are in compliance with all federal rules and regulations, and we do not doubt it.

Being in compliance is not the point, the point is for the price of a nurse (or two) we could have trained medical personnel on site, as they do at Carol Stream. Carol Stream and Palatine have always had approximately the same number of employees, but Palatine does not need a Medical Unit?

Other Priorities

The Postal Service must operation efficiently to stay in business, but I question some of the priorities in the Northern Illinois District. How is it that we can afford to pay two "VOE Coordinators" for two years each, but we cannot afford to keep one nurse at Palatine? I have asked this question and received no response. Human Resource Manager Phyllis Lingenfelter maintains the Medical Unit was closed on April 21, 2006 based on a letter sent to Mark Tovey in 1998. I have requested information as to what prompted the closing eight years later, and I have received nothing. I believe this is nothing more than man-

agement trying to save a few dollars. They would rather invest those dollars in VOE Coordinators than a Medical Unit. Whether they are in compliance with all laws and regulations is not the point, the point is what are their priorities? On May 8, 2006 Vice President Baskin and I met with new A/District Manager Nancy Rettinhouse, and one of the issues we discussed was the closing of the Palatine Medical Unit. We asked her to take another look at it and she said she would.

Supervisors to Write Restrictions for Job Offers

The Union was informed that all medicals for Palatine employees should be sent to the Carol Stream Medical Unit. Shortly thereafter we became aware that the Carol Stream Medical Unit is too busy to write out restrictions for job offers, and that this will be done by the supervisors. This was formerly done by the Palatine nurse, Chris Hoffman. Does this mean the supervisors will have access to employee medicals. Medicals should not go to Supervisors.

Special points of interest:

Palatine Medical Unit

Other Priorities

Supervisors to Write Restrictions for Job Offers.

Carol Stream Low Cost

Carol Stream Key Handling

Chicago Metro Information

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Rockford

APWU Files Complaint on "END"

Retirement Seminar May 20th!

Thank You Bob Tunstall

Carol Stream Low Cost

Operation of the Carol Stream Low Cost Tray Sorter #2-4 began on May 11, 2006. The APWU will be filing grievances by pay period and tour for the violation of Article 7.2, crossing crafts until this issue is resolved. This Dispute was sent to the Regional Level on May 2, 2006. While more and more and more clerks are being forced onto machine jobs, the LCTS would have provided manual distribution jobs that are sorely needed. This is a major loss to the clerk craft thanks to the "decision" of Plant Manager Ron Woodall.

Safety Concerns

After a tub fell off the overhead conveyor belt for the new tray transport system to the LCTS, section of guard rail was installed at the spot where the tub fell from. Management has stated "that the new system does not require guard rails, but that if any tubs fall off they will look at installing guard rails for the entire system."

CCD Taylor responded "One tray falling is one too many" and "Safety first, no matter the cost."

Carol Stream Key Handling

Maintenance Craft Director Chuck Olson is currently reviewing all information for the Carol Stream Key Handling grievance. He informed me that this review will take many hours of his time, but he wants to make sure the settlement is correct. Once he has arrived at the distribution of the 16,000 hours he will share the information with myself and Vice President Baskin before submitting to management. He has been in communication with National Business Agent Vance Zimmerman for guidance of the implementation of this settlement.

Chicago Metro Information

Clerk bids were posted on May 2, 2006 at Chicago Metro Surface Hub. On the last day of the posting (May 11th) management gave out abolishment letters to SPBS and FSM clerks. Clerks should have received their abolishment notices prior to the posting of these bids, not on the last day of the posting. We discussed the possibility of re-posting these bids in June because the employees did not know their bids were abolished until the last day of the posting. Plant Manager Anderson stated he would check with Labor and Human Resources to see if this was possible. On May 16th I spoke with the Barbara Singleton, the Manager of Labor Relations for the Chicago District, and she informed me that the bids had been awarded and they would not be reposted. Plant Manager Anderson was cooperative in his efforts to see if the bids could be reposted. The abolishment letters should have come first so employees would know their status, but the contract has not been violated by their failure to do so.

Cooperation at Metro

Mr. Anderson informed us that he wants to improve communication with the Union, and he wants our input on issues affecting our crafts. He informed us that he will meet with employees who have attendance discipline of 14 days or more to tell them they should talk to him if they need help, before, not after, they get more discipline.

Tour 3 MDO Problems

Tour 3 MDO Hudson continues to generate complaints from both Unions. Most recently she put an employee out of "my building" for failure to follow instructions & asking why she was moved.

Rockford

The IPWU state convention was hosted by the Rockford Local this year and they deserve a lot of credit. The Rockford Local (and Plant) is fighting for it's life, due to the AMP (Area Mail Processing Study) that would consolidate Rockford's outgoing mail to Palatine P&DC. Rockford President Greg Voiles and Vice President Art Haws stated they do not want to offend our Local or the employees at Palatine in their fight to keep their mail. We told them we fully support them in their fight and we do not want to see Rockford lose their mail and the jobs that go with it. On May 5th many of the delegates joined the Rockford Local in a peaceful picket outside the Rockford Post Office.

APWU Files Complaint on "END"

The APWU filed a complaint in US District Court on April 21, charging that the USPS violated the Postal Reorganization Act in implementing its "network realignment" plan known as Evolutionary Network Development (END), and asking that these consolidations be put on hold.

Retirement Seminar May 20th!

Human Relations Director Mimi Jackson reports we have 70 members registered for the NWIAL Retirement Seminar on May 20, 2006 at the Elmhurst Union Building. The hours are from 10am to 2pm, and lunch will be served. The seminar is free to all members with a \$10.00 donation requested for COPA.

Thank You Bob Tunstall

Former national Secretary-Treasurer Robert L. Tunstall died on May 12 at his home in Oregon. Mr. Tunstall, who had diabetes, was 64. He was loved and admired for his humanity and his tireless service to the APWU. His failing health forced him to retire from the work he loved. Thank you Mr. Tunstall.

