

# The Local Line

"A PPA Award Winning Publication"

The Official Voice of the  
Northwest Illinois Area Local

Floor Edition

Update by: Jackie Engelhart

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## NRP Part II

On 10-13-09 we received a letter from Northern Illinois District Labor Relations Manager Scott Sharon regarding NRP meetings scheduled for APWU employees. The letter was for Palatine P&DC and it stated "Below is a list of clerks and maintenance staff that will have their work status meeting on 10-22. On 10-22-09 Steward Mimi Jackson and I proceeded to the room where the meetings were to start at 8 pm. We spoke with Team Leader Luz Moreno who informed us the team would be meeting with only one of the 35 APWU employees on the list. We asked what about the rest and she said "we're still searching for work". The next day I contacted Health and Human Resource Manager Gilbert Lopez to ask him why we got a list of 35 employees when they met with only one Clerk, who is working their bid duty assignment in manual letters.

## Preliminary NWA

I asked him about the 36 Carol Stream employees scheduled for work status meetings on 10-27-09 and he named five who would be met with and given job offers. I asked about the other 31 and he said they are still looking for work. Management has already stated that all "necessary work" in the plants has been exhausted and Gilbert said they are now searching outside the plants. Luz Moreno said more necessary work may be available after the retirements. Gilbert said "it's possible". He said if someone retires who has an NRP job offer, that work would be offered to another injured employee. He also stated that the employees on these lists who have not been met with "are preliminary no work available". He said "No Work Available" meetings will be pushed back from late 2009 to early 2010. Some injured employees targeted for NWA under NRP decided to retire and avoid being walked out.

**National Human Relations Director Carney Teaches NRP at IPWU**  
APWU Human Relations Director Sue Carney taught OWCP and NRP at the Illinois Postal Workers Union Human Relations Seminar in Arlington Hts. She gave the latest information on the NRP Phase II Limited Duty Process. The Postal Service expanded to Limited Duty because after two years and millions of dollars they have completed only five districts and outsourced few employees. Vocational Rehabilitation. Limited Duty employees are considered temporary and are not subject to Vocational Rehabilitation. Sue said "This is like being on the Serengetti, and tossing the injured to the lions to save the herd." Management is trying to layoff injured employees. She said a suitable job offer must have at least four hours of work and must be available for 90 days. A form 2499 is for Rehab employees only, and writing in changes on an existing job offer is improper. Management is in violation on all of these.

Jackie Engelhart  
President  
Alan J. Czerwinski  
News Director

## Special points of interest:

NRP Part II

Preliminary NWA

National Human Relations Director Carney  
Teaches NRP at IPWU

Palatine Refuses to Wait on  
Moving Tour 2 Clerks

Carol Stream Abolishments

Chicago Metro Surface Hub

Constitution Changes Pass  
Second Reading on 11-8-09

President Buurus to Retire

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### **Palatine Refuses to Wait on Moving Tour 2 Clerks**

We repeatedly asked Palatine P&DC A/Senior MDO Ramion to wait to move the 33 tour 2 Clerks to nights until after the retirement vacancies are posted. The simple logic is this would give them a chance to bid into a duty assignment instead of being moved to tour 1 unassigned. Why move them to tour 1 2100 Automation on 11-7-09 when they could bid into duty assignments by the end of the month? Our request to Mr. Ramion fell on deaf ears, so we made several calls to Senior Plant Manager Greg Johnson, and one to District Manager Bob Hart, but both of them failed to return calls. Management could have done the right thing and at least give these senior employees a chance to bid instead of moving them twice. What we have come to expect is that senior management will put the employees last every time.

### **Carol Stream Abolishments**

Carol Stream management gave us no notice for meetings with employees concerning the abolishment of tour 2 AFSM and manual flats bids, and for time changes for tour 3 Automation from 1 and 2 pm to 3 and 4 pm. Vice President Baskin was given 30 minutes notice for the tour 3 meeting and I got 24 hours notice for the tour 2 meeting. The short notice to the union was per A/Plant Manager Lee Thompson who was returning to Michigan and wanted to attend. She stopped by the doorway on her way to her telecom, but In-Plant Support Manager Colao actually took the time to talk to the Clerks and answer their questions. He said the reason for making the changes now is that flats volume drops off the table in December .

### **Chicago Metro Surface Hub**

Management informed the unions on 11-2-09 that they plan to proceed with the staffing plan changes that had been put on hold months ago. We were given copies of the draft abolishment letters on 11-6-09 but find these letters were actually given out to the employees later that day. This staffing plan was prepared by Chicago District In-Plant Support and presented to the unions by management back on 4-14-09 and again on 7-1-09. We had been told these changes would not be made until January of 2010. They say they don't have enough clerks on Saturday so Saturday/Sunday bids will be changed to Sunday/Monday. There will be one more meeting with the unions on 11-10, and management states they will be meeting with the employees about these staffing changes.

### **Zero Tolerance at CMSH**

Plant Manager Ruby Branch met with the unions to discuss the subject of zero tolerance in light of two recent incidents with the Elk Grove Police being called to the facility. She passed out an "Action Plan for Threats and Assaults" and asked for union cooperation to inform employees that calling the police for non-emergencies reflects unfavorably on the Postal Service, and will not be tolerated. She put out a "Direct Line" on 11-6-09 stating the Police are not to be called unless there is a real emergency and not for failure to follow instructions. This behavior will no longer be tolerated at Busse and employees are not to call 911 on their cell phone. We say calling the police should not be abused, but if an employee feels threatened they do have the right to call the police.

### **Constitution Changes Pass Second Reading on 11-8-09**

These changes were submitted by the Constitution Committee for the purpose of saving money in light of declining dues income due to accelerating retirements.

These changes rolled back the one-level pay upgrade for all officers and stewards effective immediately. The Organizing Director position is eliminated effective on 1-1-2010. The number of automatic full expense paid delegates to conventions has been reduced from the entire Executive Board to the President and Vice President, based on the availability of funds. More changes are needed to bring spending in line with income, and we must continue to reduce spending to maintain our core function of representation. More changes will be submitted in 2010 as we look for ways to reduce expenses. Constitution Chairperson Motley and members Harris and Hein did an excellent job on these changes. This will be an active committee.

### **President Burrus to Retire**

In a speech at the APWU Craft Conferences, President Burrus announced he will not seek reelection in November of 2010. He said he is in good health and loves what he does, but is ready to move on to another part of life. His statement "In the interim I intend to continue my commitment to the membership, every hour and every day" drew a standing ovation from the crowd. He was elected Vice President in 1980 and served with President Moe Biller for the next 21 years. He was elected President in 2001 and re-elected in 2004 and 2007. He is a true leader, in a class by himself, who often stood alone in opposing USPS actions.

*JZ*