

The Local Line

"A PPA Award Winning Publication"

The Official Voice of the
Northwest Illinois Area Local

Floor Edition

October 27, 2010

Update by: Jackie Engelhart

Election Results APWU winners in bold

President

Cliff Guffey - 32,242

Jim Musumeci - 10,222

Richard Cornell - 4,403

Vice-President

Greg Bell - 35,050

Mark Case - 11,579

Organizing Director

Martha Shunn-King - 16,595

Mark Dimondstein - 15,397

Moe Lepore - 9,962

Kathryn Shelley dePoo - 4,575

Health Plan Director

William "Bill" Kaczor - 28,411

Terry Finerty - 17,853

Clerk Division Director

Rob Strunk - 21,740

Debby Szeredy - 11,174

NBA Central Region

Mike O'Hearn - 1,559

Dave Baskin - 1,282

MVS Director

Robert C. Pritchard - 2,605

Thomas Matuszewski - 1,548

Results Continued...

Assistant MVS Director

Michael O. Foster - 2,639

Phil Elefante - 1,477

All newly elected officers will take office 11-12-10. Many national races were uncontested, and most of the winners for the major races were endorsed by the Leadership Team led by President Burrus and Vice President Guffey. The American Arbitration Association counted the ballots on 10-15-10 for 30 contested races. Of the 190,531 ballots mailed, only 51,994 were returned, so almost 3 of 4 members did not vote.

Apathy or Anger

Jim "Moose" Musumeci is the President of the Brooklyn, NY Local and came in second for President behind VP Guffey. He wrote about the anger he saw directed at the union at both the national and local levels. He says many members have directed their anger at the union for the life-altering changes that are being made by management.

OIG Report Says USPS Owed \$142 Billion

In a summary of four reports on postal finances issued on 9-30-10, the OIG concluded that the USPS could be owed 142 billion dollars. These reports list 55 billion overpaid to the Civil Service Retirement System CSRS and 5.5 billion overpaid to the Federal Retirement System FERS. The OIG recommends that future pre-funding levels be cut from 100% to 80%, and healthcare pre-funding levels be reduced to 30%. These changes could save USPS 59 billion dollars. Two well-known auditing firms also state the USPS has overpaid the CSRS by 50 to 75 billion dollars. The OIG report concludes that the serious condition of the USPS is caused by the erroneous interpretation of funding requirements imposed in a period of recession and loss of mail to e communications. Despite burdens created by the 2006 Postal Accountability and Enhancement Act the USPS has paid 21 billion in pre-funding of future retiree health care costs.

Jackie Engelhart

President

Dave Baskin

Vice President

Alan J. Czerwinski

News Director

Special points of interest:

Elections Results

APWU winners in bold

Results Continued...

OIG Report Says USPS Owed \$142 Billion

"A Colossal Sham" - Burrus

November Elections Critical

Local Impacts & Staffing

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"A Colossal Sham" -Burrus

Commenting on the OIG reports, APWU President William Burrus stated "The media repeat the claim that the Postal Service is teetering on edge of bankruptcy, but neglect to point out that these questionable obligations have nothing to do with USPS operating expenses, which include employee wages and benefits. The liabilities are a colossal sham, seized upon by postal management and by anti-worker congressmen who wish to erase the gains made by postal employees over 40 years of collective bargaining. The Postal Service has survived the worst recession in 70 years, along with societal shifts in communication, and congressionally imposed funding mandates that are not applied to any other governmental or commercial entity in the country. The USPS endured while providing the world's best mail service at the lowest cost. The OIG reports that despite these obstacles, if accounting rules were applied uniformly, USPS deficits would disappear and the USPS would experience a surplus. Unfortunately, the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) has ruled that resolution of these issues will require action by the Congress. Congressman Stephen Lynch has introduced bill HR5746 to change the formula for computing USPS pension costs." If not for these unfair pension funding liabilities, the USPS could meet its financial obligations, eliminate debt, have cash for operations, and minimize negative impacts on employees. Congressman Lynch is Chairman of the committee on government affairs which includes the USPS. He could be replaced by Congressman Daryl Issa next year.

November Election Critical

If Republicans gain control of the House of Representatives, then Congressman Issa (R-CA) will replace Mr. Lynch as the Chairman of the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee. He has publicly stated the USPS has 200,000 too many employees, and his goal is to allow the USPS to lay off employees. The prospect of Mr. Issa becoming the Chairman of the subcommittee dealing with postal affairs should ensure that all postal employees vote on November 2nd. Instead of looking at the OIG reports and fixing some of the unfair funding requirements his focus would be on fixing our contract by lowering our pay and benefits. Who chairs this committee and controls Congress is crucial to postal workers. When management meets with employees to give them their 60 day notices they say this is what we have to do to save the USPS, as if we are all in this together. Their agenda is to downsize the USPS beyond recognition as they work with the major mailers to privatize and eliminate overpaid union workers. We are not on the same side, as management gives unjustified discounts to keep mail out of postal plants while pre-sort houses like Pitney-Bowes process 14 billion pieces of mail per year at their 37 facilities in the U.S.. Years ago Regional Coordinator Leo Persails wrote an article titled "The Enemy Within" in which he predicted that the only way the Postal Service could be privatized was from within by postal management. Postmaster Potter announced he will retire on 12-3-10 but the privatization will continue as he will be replaced by Deputy Postmaster Patrick R. Donahoe.

Local Impacts & Staffing

One of the few NWIAL offices not impacted is Chicago Metro Surface Hub due to the Metro Plan and closing of AMC O'Hare. CMSH added 29 Clerk jobs in August which were filled by impacted O'Hare Clerks. Busse is requesting approval for 24 more Clerks but this must be approved by the Area Vice President. Carol Stream A/Plant Manager Sciruba met with most of the 66 impacted Clerks to explain why they are being excessed. We do not agree with much of what he said but at least he met with them, unlike Palatine. We disagree with his statements regarding his right to hire and keep Clerk casuals at CS while career Clerks are being told there are jobs for them in the Carrier craft. Article 12 states management must separate casuals to the extent possible prior to an excessing but CS is separating none of their 18 Clerk casuals. CS also plans to hire 30 Christmas casuals to staff cardboard cases. Both Palatine and CS have a lot of mail and management says there is a fall mailing season this year. Management has targeted a total of 220 Clerks in just about every Associate Office in the Northern IL District for another round of impacts based on the latest Function 4 Complement Report. There is still an impact for 14 Palatine Custodians based in part on empty floor space that is now occupied by three FSS machines. Palatine will have to submit a new MS-47 staffing package that will reduce any impact. Three more Clerks are retiring at Palatine and this attrition will reduce the impact. Congratulations to the retirees and to the eight CS PTF Drivers being converted per MVS settlement.

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