

# The Local Line

"A PPA Award Winning Publication"

The Official Voice of the  
Northwest Illinois Area Local

## Local Update by Jackie Engelhart

### Floor Edition

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#### Hurricane Katrina

By now we are all familiar with what is being termed the worst natural disaster in U.S. history. Thousands have lost their lives and hundreds of thousands have lost their homes in the devastated areas. We have seen the news coverage from New Orleans, Biloxi and the rest of the Gulf. This is a tragedy of epic proportions. As APWU President Burrus stated "We are deeply saddened by the devastation of Hurricane Katrina. We mourn the tragic loss of life and the deprivation so many are suffering."

#### Relief Donations

Americans are generously making donations to the Red Cross for relief efforts for the hurricane victims. APWU members are encouraged to help their fellow workers who have suffered tremendous losses by contributing to the Postal Employees' Relief Fund. The fund is a charitable organization established by postal unions and the USPS, which benefits active

and retired postal employees who incur a significant loss in property damage as the result of a major natural disaster. Contributions can be made to the Postal Employees' Relief Fund and sent to PERF, PO Box 34422, Washington, DC 20043-4422, or they can be sent to the APWU, Att: PERF, 1300 L Street NW, Washington DC 2005.

#### New Thrift Fax#

Due to hurricane Thrift fax # has been changed to 866-817-5023.

#### Labor Scheduler Problems at Palatine.

Employees continue to be excessed out of their bids at Palatine P&DC, particularly from manual letters. Employees should be working in their bids and management stated the Labor Scheduler would put employees where they are needed. ???

#### LDC 68 Meetings

At both Palatine and Carol Stream some long term limited duty clerks continue to hold bids they may never work again. We have asked management to review long term

limited duty clerks to determine if some of these bids should be vacated and the limited duty clerk be given an assignment consistent with their restrictions. We will be meeting at both facilities this month.

#### Casuals Backfill Injured Employee Jobs at C.S.

At Palatine management excesses bid employees from unit to unit to cover these injured bid holders in automation and AFSM. At Carol Stream management uses casuals to backfill these jobs. Because the employees are not listed as permanent management continues to hire casuals to cover these jobs on a "temporary" basis. After a year it is no longer temporary and the casuals are being used year round.

#### Carol Stream Impacts

With the possible elimination of CFS and SPBS operations next year at Carol Stream management needs to ensure there are enough jobs for the impacted employees to avoid any possible excessing out of the facility. Once these operations go the casuals should go.

News Briefs by AL Z  
COLA Increase  
Effective September 3rd  
It Pays to Belong to APWU  
Say No to VOE Survey  
Surveys Circumvent  
Participation is Voluntary  
Union is True V.O.E.  
CFS/PARS Meeting Held  
CFS Consolidation Probable  
C.S to Eliminate SPBS Crew  
Consider the Impact  
New Plant Manager at Metro  
Later Hours at Post Offices  
Article 1.6 Surveys in A.O.s  
Stewards Sign Up for COPA  
50-50 Organizing Drive is Coming!

### **Sr. Plant Manager's Business Update .**

On September 9 Sr. Plant Manager Ron Woodall phoned with an update on operations changes mandated by headquarters. The first is 3 Day Consolidation which will consolidate states first class letter trays going to small volume destination. This mail will be consolidated at Palatine P&DC based on this office having the larger volume of the 3 plants (Palatine, Carol Stream & Rockford). The reason for the change is to eliminate sending out half empty trays that flown under contract with Fed Ex. USPS estimates this will take out 17 million trays nationally.

### **"Decentralization of Manual Secondaries"**

The second change is that secondary volumes currently being manually worked in the plants will be returned to the actual post office. This will affect the Arlington Heights (EAR) unit at Palatine and the Wheaton unit at Carol Stream. There are approximately 18 bids in the Arlington unit and 15 bids in the Wheaton unit. We hope there will be no excessing out of the plants and into these post offices as a result. We do not have a date yet for these changes.

### **"Metro Plan & Pathway to Progress"**

USPS will be redesigning networks and consolidating APPS mail to one Regional Distribution Center (RDC) in the metro area. RDC's will work Standard A bundles, 2 C bundles, and spurs. Palatine will keep their APPS but their spurs will go to Chicago Metro Surface Hub once the second machine is accepted. Acceptance of the second APPS may occur in October.

### **Chicago Metro Surface Hub**

We met with In Plant Support Manager Adam Nelson on September 7th and he agreed to submit the paperwork to convert the two senior PTF clerks. He also agreed to post approximately 15 clerks bids in October. Bids are needed in manual flats, racks, and general expeditor units. Once the second APPS is accepted and SPBS operators are not needed, more manual bids will be posted. This is progress. We will continue to meet with Adam, and hope to meet with the new Plant Manager Melvin Anderson soon.

### **FMLA Packet to be Mailed from Topeka, Kansas.**

Effective September 20, 2005 USPS will begin mailing FMLA packets from Topeka, Ks. In the past these mailings were done by the local FMLA Coordinator. Packets will include a cover letter, a Publication 71, and the form WH-380, Packets will be sent when a employee calls in for FMLA and is required to certify or recertify. The local FMLA office will continue to perform other duties.

### **USPS Security Audits**

Security Audits are being performed periodically at all Postal installations. The audit person will enter the facility and look for security breaches, such as employees not wearing badges, large bags on the work room floor, and unlocked postal vehicles. These audits are taken seriously and employees need to be aware that they should wear their badges at all times while at work. If you have items (such as headphones, gloves, aprons, etc that you need to carry with you on the workroom floor you should consider a clear bag to carry them. This should eliminate the security issue on bags.

### **Carol Stream Key-Handling Win!**

Maintenance Craft Director Chuck Olson received Arbitrator Fletcher's decision on the Carol Stream Key Handling grievance on September 11, 2005. The

Arbitrator ruled for the Union. The Award Summary states "The grievance is sustained. Agreement violated when contractor used to work on conveyor belts in the Carol Stream Postal facility. Maintenance Craft employees to be paid an amount equal to the hours contractor worked in the facility."

### **PTF Conversions**

PTF's have been or will be converted in the near future in the Carol Stream Plant, Wheaton, Melrose Park, and Franklin Park Post Offices. We will continue to convert as many as possible.

### **"APC Pilot Project"**

An internal postal management memo is evidence that Automated Postal Centers (APC's) will be used to try to cut window clerk jobs. APC's will be deployed in the counter line, similar to automated check-ins at the airport. Memo states "the APC in the lobby will remain...having them in the counter line will encourage useage, reduce wait time in line, and reduce SSA staffing."

### **New Steward Appointment**

Daniel Hernandez has been appointed as a tour 1 clerk steward at Palatine P&DC.

### **MVS Director Resigns**

MVS Director John Imburgia resigned his position effective August 31, 2005. After speaking with John I (regretfully) accepted his resignation. Carol Stream MVS steward Craig Bardoner also resigned effective September 7th. Solicitations will be posted at the facilities for these positions and interviews will be conducted. Letters may be sent to the President at the Elmhurst office. You must be an MVS employee to apply.

*JL*