

The Local Line

"A PPA Award Winning Publication"

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Northwest Illinois Area Local

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Update by: Jackie Engelhart

Palatine Universal Sorting System...

This machine is really a Low Cost Sorter for mail that is worked on the Incoming Parcel Post belt assigned to Clerks. This so called Sorting System is not like the High Speed Tray Sorter which automatically sorts mail to the correct container. The new machine directs mail to one of 16 lanes where an employee will sort the mail to one of several containers by zip code. This is called manual distribution and should be performed by Clerks. The mail to be worked is mostly the same mail worked in the IPP unit by Clerks as recognized in the RI-399 and the Local Inventory. The decision to assign (give) this work to the Mailhandlers was made at the National level and will have to be fought for at the National level. I reviewed the National RI-399 MOU changes made last year and it states "Disputes concerning National craft determinations may be initiated only at the National level" so there is no reason to file Locally based on that language.

I have talked to National President Mark Dimondstein and Assistant Clerk Craft Director Lynn Pallas-Barber, who are the main national officers responsible for this MOU which I consider to be a sell-out of the Clerks and the APWU in general. They claim to have cleaned up the RI-399 black hole because they agreed to withdraw just about every dispute filed by APWU while allowing the Mailhandler Union to pursue disputes on the AFC -200 Cancellor Facer, which is the only time in the last 20 years where the USPS took work from Mailhandlers and assigned it to Clerks. The reason for that was because the new 200's cancelled, faced, and sorted mail. Carol Stream has the 200's which are staffed by Clerks and these jobs are part of the Automation unit at CS. The only good part of the MOU states "Any National level case disputing a craft jurisdictional determination will be arbitrated within six (6) months of the implementation of the determination." I will continue to follow up on this case with the national officers.

Sent a Bad Message...

Those who have read the updated RI-399 MOU know it was a bad deal for APWU and the Clerks. They can say we may not have prevailed in RI-399 arbitration at the national level but signing this says were not willing to fight for work taken from us. I let these national officers know what I thought of this MOU, which also kills Local disputes if the MHs were doing the work as of 9-1-17 such as the CS IPP unit (outside belt). It has become clear over the last 20 years that the USPS takes work from Clerks and gives it to MHs every chance they get. In the case of the High Speed Tray Sorter at Palatine it was because the machine does the sorting, but on this new Sorter the employees do the sorting. Either way they give it to the Mailhandlers. There is no rhyme or reason to this except they want to take Clerk work away from us. Distribution is Clerk work so they say Mailhandlers can read but that is not the point. Clerks can drive but does that mean they are going assign Clerks to drive the Mules? APWU national officers need to fight a whole lot harder.

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Special points of interest:

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National RI-399 MOU Payout

We received notice on 9-20-19 that the payout for the National RI-399 MOU will be paid on the 10-4-19 paychecks. The notice states "*Per the March 1, 2019 MOU from President Dimondstein: The tripartite MOU between the USPS, APWU and the NPMHU regarding the processes and procedures of future RI-399 disputes as well as the withdrawal of most national level jurisdictional disputes was signed on 6-26-18. The USPS agreed to a monetary settlement of \$14,5 million to each union in consideration of the withdrawal of the national level grievances. Each union has the authority to determine how the monies will be distributed. In consultation and agreement with the Clerk Craft Director it was determined to distribute the money on an equal basis to the following categories of clerk employees: All career clerks who were on the rolls as of 9-1-17 in installations that employ both clerks and mailhandlers. All PSE clerks who were on the rolls on 9-1-17 in installations that employ both clerks and mailhandlers and who are still on the clerk rolls on 3-1-19. All clerks will receive an equal amount of \$166.75. The USPS will make payment on this settlement on the 10-4-19 paycheck. 85,153 employees are being paid \$166.75 each for a total of \$14,199,262.75. This includes 65,700 career clerks still working, 9,139 retired clerks, and 10,314 PSE Clerks. Please note that the APWU and NPMHU have decided on different methods of payment and the numbers differ because APWU is paying more employees. This monetary award is for our national union withdrawing all our national work disputes and some Local disputes like IPP at CS. \$166.75 is not even a days pay. I would rather have the work...*"

Tale of Two Plants...

Carol Stream is rolling in mail with the addition of PARS mail from Palatine. The additional mail results in overtime for the Clerks and the hiring of more PSEs and more PSE conversions. Conversely, Palatine lost the PARS mail in addition to the outgoing mail sent to CS in 2010. This means less Clerk overtime, fewer PSEs hired and fewer PSE conversions. Both plants started out fairly even in the 1993 but once the Great Lakes Area offices were moved to Carol Stream in 2010 CS has been gaining mail. Palatine actually processes more flat mail due to the heavier 600 volumes but keeps losing mail. With the loss of IPP bids because of the Universal Sorter Clerks are losing more jobs at Palatine which does not help convert the PSEs. The only plus is that Clerks have been retiring at both plants and the exodus of Clerks will continue. **Busse Overtime Complaints** Management has been calling 12 hours for Clerks on tour 2 and for MHs in general but will not call 12 hours for tour 3 ODL Clerks which is the main mail processing tour. The Union is filing grievances but Plant Manager Halfman does not think this is going on or that it is a problem. Management does not understand that most employees want to be treated fairly. When Dan became plant manager last year we thought there would be improved relations with the union and more consideration for the employees but were wrong. There does not seem to be much improvement at Busse since the departure of Plant Manager Devette Murphy over a year ago. We will be requesting a meeting with Dan Halfman to discuss the overtime issue and to discuss why the few Clerks left with bids in the Rack unit are still being moved to the LUCAS unit on a daily basis.

Northbrook Clerks are Heard...

After almost a year of efforts to have a Climate Assessment done at the Northbrook Post Office, it finally happened last week as the MPOO and three Postmasters came to Northbrook to talk to the employees about the work environment. Clerks and Carriers were allowed to speak to the Climate Assessment Team with or without APWU representatives. We did not sit in with the Carriers but sat in with many of the Clerks many of whom did say there is a hostile work environment caused by Postmaster Narbi Miulli. We will be waiting for the results to be printed and for any actions taken to improve the work climate. Some said it will not change if Narbi stays as she will not change. I agree 100% with that statement. **Seminar a Success...** Human Relations Director Vivian Henderson and her Committee put on another successful Retirement Seminar on 9-21-19 with about 80 members getting information from Retiree guest speaker Joe Gordon who covered Civil Service and FERS together in the am and pm classes with an updated booklet. Joe did a great job per Vivian and answered questions for the members planning their retirement. **Vote in the National Election** Everybody should have received a ballot with a booklet containing a statement from each candidate. Every member should vote and if you are undecided or need more information ask a trusted Steward or call me and I will give my take. Ballots must be received in Washington DC by 10-7-19 at 2pm. If you did not receive a ballot you can call the American Arbitration Association at 800-529-5218 from 9am to 5pm eastern time or go to www.aaaelections.org/apwu to request a duplicate ballot. Ballots will be counted on 10-7-19 at 2pm and results posted at apwu.org.

