

# The Local Line

"A PPA Award Winning Publication"

The Official Voice of the  
Northwest Illinois Area Local

Floor Edition

Update by: Jackie Engelhart

## APWU President to Visit IL in September

Recently President Mark Dimonstein called me to say he will be in Illinois on September 14 -16 and would like to hold Town Hall meetings with the members. He asked about doing them at our Union Hall but I said I thought he would get more members if he could meet at the Plants. The Plant Managers at both Palatine and Carol Stream agreed to allow Mark to meet with APWU members at their facilities off the clock. I have not talked to the Busse Plant Manager but will ask her as well. Hopefully Mark will update us on when we will have a new contract. The Town Halls would most likely be between 3pm and 5:30 pm which would allow him to meet with tour 2 and tour 3. If Mark is able to meet at Busse the time would likely be 5pm to 8pm. This would be a chance to meet your national President and hear him talk about the contract and state of our union. He plans to come but has not confirmed yet. Dates and times must be confirmed with him.

## Labor-Management at Palatine and CS

We recently held regular meetings at both plants. Palatine Plant Manager Quintin Mayberry was cooperative and in agreement that when problems arise on a tour the MDO should meet with the Union to resolve the issues, and not wait for Labor-Management meetings. We have done this on and off for years but it makes sense to deal with the problems on each tour at the tour level, and only take it to the Plant Mgr. if there is no resolution. At Palatine Mr. Mayberry agreed to change the start time for tour 2 Low Cost from 0900 to 0800 as the employees had requested after the AFSM start time was moved up to 0650. CS Plant Manager Mike Kotula continues to work with us and we were able to resolve most issues. We asked what is being done to avoid flooding at the CS Plant as occurred during a very heavy rain, and we were told that the sewers may be too small but the USPS Field Service Organization, FSO, has been out to look at the problem and they may dredge the retention pond to hold more water.

## Busse...

We requested Labor Management on 6-8-15 and will finally get a meeting scheduled in August. The Plants are saying they will be keeping the Priority mail they are currently working, which we were told some months ago would be going back to Busse. A final decision will be made by 9-30-15. Busse has struggled over the years and has ranked near the bottom in service. Morale has historically been a problem at Busse. Clerks are treated unfairly in how overtime is called for the NMO "Corrals" which is supposed to be a dual unit, but all the OT is being called for one craft. After the Clerks go home you see all Mailhandlers working in this dual unit. We have talked until we are blue in the face about this but management does not seem to care about treating employees fairly. An example of what's wrong at Busse is our request for a new door for our union room because the door is in bad shape. After repeated requests we were promised a new door by the Plant Manager but we never got a new door. Go look at our door, it's disgusting. That's Busse.

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### Special points of interest:

APWU President to Visit IL in September  
Labor-Management at Palatine and CS  
Busse...  
Maintenance Issues at Busse  
Tour 3 Stewards Get Results on Labor Board Charges...  
Micro-Manager & Minions  
Palatine Retreat Rights  
"Ten to Win" for COPA  
Retirement Seminar on 9-26  
Scholarship Drawing on 8-9

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### **Maintenance Issues at Busse**

By now most of the Custodians who were part of the 2.75 million dollar settlement have been paid. There is money set aside in case someone was missed or comes forward with a legitimate claim. That money is to be held for six months to allow time for anyone with a claim to come forward. Former Steward Jonn Johnson filed the grievances going back to 2009. Joe Golden won the case and Vance Zimmerman applied that win to the other grievances. Some of the Custodians were paid close to \$100,000 but I don't know how many thanked Jonn or Joe for this free money they got. Jonn was an excellent Steward and there is no one that will do the work he did. Ray Stripling is an excellent Steward and the only Maintenance Steward at Busse. Being a Maintenance Steward at Busse is stressful, let alone being the only Maintenance Steward. We need Maintenance Stewards at Busse and have solicited for tours 2 and 3, but no applicants. The union depends on members to serve as Stewards at each facility so if no one wants to serve that's a problem. Be part of the solution.

**Tour 3 Stewards Get Results on Labor Board Charges...**

Tour 3 Stewards (Chief) Yolanda Safsaf and Bhupendra Patel have filed several Labor Board charges against USPS for failure to provide information they requested. In most cases the Labor Board will get management to provide the information but in this case they took it a step further and had USPS enter into a settlement agreement that states *"We will not fail and refuse to respond or delay in responding to the Union's information requests that are relevant and necessary to its role as your bargaining representative."* The facility is to post this notice for 60 days. Good job Stewards!

### **Micro-Manager & Minions**

This month I received six identical letters from Postmasters in Area 7. They stated the office would no longer accept Step 2 Appeals by fax and would no longer discuss Step 2 grievances by telephone. These identical letters were signed by the Postmasters of Park Ridge, Mount Prospect, Kenilworth, Golf, Wilmette, and Glencoe. A week later I received the same letter from Northbrook and two weeks later one from Winnetka. I happened to see Area 7 MPOO or Micro-Manager as I call her, and asked her why she didn't just mail me one letter instead of having all her Postmasters sign and mail the identical letters. She said they had a meeting and discussed this and they all agreed with it. I don't believe that for a minute because most of them did not have a problem with faxing Step 2's. This is another example of what's wrong with the Post Office today. Back in the day, Supervisors and Managers had some authority to make decisions affecting their operation but today Supervisors are being micro-managed to death, and case in point are the Area 7 Post Offices under the stern control of MPOO Elizabeth Wulf. Two Postmasters have left before they planned to go to escape this. They did not want to be Minions. The reason for the letters had to do with some grievances being filed for money in these offices for pay to Custodians for MS-47 violations and for Clerks for 1.6. The grievances will not go away.

**Palatine Retreat Rights**

I met last week with Labor and said I need letters mailed to anyone on the union's list who we do not have a letter for showing they were offered their retreat rights. The Labor Representative was in Milwaukee researching this issue. We need to get this done so we can retreat the right employees.

### **"Ten to Win" for COPA**

While it is apparent that most of our members are not activist-types protesting out on the picket lines, there is something they can do to help the union defend our jobs. The APWU Committee on Political Action is used to support those who support postal employees. Since the Supreme Court ruled in Citizens United that corporations are people the amount of money being spent by corporate interests to influence legislation increased. Groups that do not have money for political contributions have a very weak voice on legislation. Members pay dues to fund the day to day business of the union but dues are not used for political contributions so we have to ask for contributions to fund COPA. APWU has started a COPA campaign called "Ten to Win" which is asking members to sign up for automation payroll deduction of \$10 per pay period for COPA. Most of our Stewards make a monthly contribution to COPA which accounts for most of the COPA money from our Local. If there is one thing we need to do better its to educate our members on the importance of giving \$\$\$.

We will have the "Ten to Win" forms available at union offices. Please consider signing up for a pay period donation of as little as \$2 per pay period or \$104 yearly.

**Retirement Seminar on 9-26**

Our annual retirement seminar presented by Human Relations will be on Saturday, 9-26-15 with last years speaker, Don Sevre. Flyers will be available soon with more information on the seminar.

**Scholarship Drawing on 8-9**

Four winners will be pulled at the August 9th Union meeting which begins at 2:30pm. Chief Trustee Ray Wience will preside over the drawing and there is still time to turn in a scholarship application. Both events are members only.

