

# The Local Line

"A PPA Award Winning Publication"

The Official Voice of the  
Northwest Illinois Area Local

Floor Edition

Update by: Jackie Engelhart

## Contract Mediation

Contract negotiations ended on 5-27-15 with no agreement after the parties extended bargaining by one week. On 6-12-15 APWU and the USPS met with officials of the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service to begin mediation on a new contract. Mediation is required by the Postal Accountability and Enhancement Act (PAEA), if bargaining reaches an impasse and the parties must participate in mediation for at least 60 days unless they agree to an alternate method. APWU was not in agreement with USPS economic proposals which are:

1. Eliminate COLAs as they currently exist.
2. Increase employee' cost for healthcare.
3. Create a new permanent lower pay scale for future career employees and reduce benefits.
4. Increase the percentage of non-career employees.
5. Weaken protection against layoffs.

APWU is asking members to wear union gear every Thursday until we get a new contract.

## Difficult Times for Unions and Workers

Over the last 100 years unions have improved the working conditions for all workers by fighting for a 40 hour work week, overtime pay for hours worked over 40, lunch and work breaks, and an end to forced child labor. Union workers are better paid with better benefits than non-union represented workers. Corporations fight to keep unions out and have pushed for laws which make it difficult for workers to organize. Many states now have "Right to Work Laws". Under these laws an employee cannot be forced to pay union dues to a union that represents them in the workplace. Allowing workers to not pay dues to the union that represents them weakens the union because some will opt to not pay dues. Right to Work is really the right to work for less because workers in Right to Work states make less than those in states without Right to Work laws. Postal unions are open shops by federal law and must represent employees who refuse to pay their fair share for the cost of that representation, dues.

## Busse Bid Changes

We met with management about two weeks ago to discuss the bid changes. Steward Bhupendra Patel asked In-Plant Manager Dapo Oladeji if they were able to make any changes to the bids to be posted, and he said they did not have the authority to make any changes to the staffing plan without permission. Complement Coordinator Herby Weathers explained how he planned to assign bids and we said that he could not assign employees to a new principal area of assignment but would have to repost the bid if the PPA is being changed. Management agreed to follow the union's advice. Our Stewards asked to meet with Mr. Oladeji to go over the bid-matching but so far he has not met. The staffing plan was made either by the Area or Headquarters with input from Busse management. Management has the right to schedule and staff but must follow the contract. When management makes staffing changes the Union works to minimize the impact on the employees and to ensure that the contract is followed. Busse has not informed the Union when the changes will be made.

June 15, 2015

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### Special points of interest:

Contract Mediation  
Difficult Times for Unions and Workers  
Busse Bid Changes  
Numbers, Dignity & Respect  
Palatine BMEU Complaints  
\$80,000 at Step 2 Palatine  
Dobry Non-Compliance Case to be Heard on June 25th.  
Busse 2.75 Million Settlement  
Flooding at Carol Stream  
NWIAL Retiree Chapter  
NWIAL Scholarship Time

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## **Numbers, Dignity & Respect**

Automation is where Clerks are pushed the hardest to get numbers, that is thru-put productivity goals. When tour 1 was the DPS tour some of the worst supervisors were on tour 1 at Palatine and the employee complaints about how they were being treated was high. The worst offender, an A/MDO went to another facility and things got better for tour 1. Tour 1 was downsized under the realignment and we have "new" supervisors tasked with getting the numbers up in tour 2 and 3 Automation. Service scores went down in the second quarter due to the changes in mail processing starting times, and the plants are under pressure to get their numbers back up now. We are hearing more complaints at Carol Stream about how some of the MDOs talk to employees. Plant Managers are being told to get their numbers up and they rely on their MDOs and Supervisors. The Union has communicated that Supervisors and MDOs should be able to get the mail out without sacrificing dignity and respect. At Carol Stream Plant Manager Kotula will find time to return a phone call and or meet with us when we have concerns, but we do not see the same at Palatine. There is no relationship when a Plant Manager does not return calls or find time to meet with us.

## **Palatine BMEU Complaints**

There have been consistent complaints from employees in this unit about the supervisor's conduct. Union Stewards have talked to the supervisor many times and filed numerous grievances but none of this has changed the conduct. We have communicated with the supervisor's boss and will take it wherever we have to so that the supervisor is no longer able to abuse the employees in this unit. Personal grudges and retaliation have no place in the workplace.

## **\$80,000 at Step 2 at Palatine**

About two weeks ago Steward Dave Baskin met for two days on some 2014 Step 2 Appeals with Labor Relations. He left me a note stating he settled 106-108 grievances and got \$80,218 for the members. He said most of them were for PSEs working over 40, also over 60, not paid higher level, and hostile work environment. Dave said he had 600 grievances pending at Step 2 so that leaves 500 more Clerk/MVS grievances. The big money grievances are for the PSEs working over 40 and over eight in a service day when there was an ODL Clerk available. Management usually settles these grievances and of any grievances we file these are for big money. Most of these grievances were filed when Palatine had a tour 1 and management was working the PSEs over 8 and over 40 because they did not have enough Clerks. Dave apparently filed most if not all the PSE overtime grievances, and there are a lot of them because management was in violation. Dave is a prolific grievance filer and he can take credit for getting the members a lot of free money. I am happy for the members who are getting this settlement money. The amount of free money being paid by Palatine for improper use of PSEs shows that the facility needs more Clerks and we have a six month old agreement to return some excessed Clerks but cannot seem to get the documents we have requested to identify who is next in line. Some Clerks were returned improperly and we do not want that repeated. According to management the Clerks next in line are in the Mailhandler Craft at Palatine but they cannot provide letters for senior Clerks showing they were offered retreat rights. We want the right Clerks returned and in the right order. Until then Palatine will work PSEs over 40.

## **.Dobry Non-Compliance Case to be Heard on June 25th.**

Vice President Walter Elerby Jr. won this case for the Union and is preparing for the arbitration for the non-compliance of the Award. Dobry issued his Award on 6-2-12 and this hearing should put an end to three years of non-compliance.

## **Busse 2.75 million Settlement**

The Union has provided a list to management of the amounts to be paid to the affected Custodians so the USPS will process the payout.

## **Flooding at Carol Stream**

I just got off the phone with tour 3 Chief Steward Ramon DePeralta and he reports that the facility is starting to flood and employees are being directed to the cafeteria. I called VP Elerby and he said that parts of the floor are roped off due to the water coming in but a few machines are still running. He said CS has taken in water before but this is a bad as he's ever seen it. As I look out the window here at the Union Hall in Elmhurst it is pouring outside and may not stop for several more hours. I hope the rain stops soon as its getting scary. Global warming is playing havoc with the weather with droughts and flooding in state after state. I hope Carol Stream does not flood too badly and also that our members are not badly affected.

## **NWIAL Retiree Chapter**

Human Relations Director Mimi Jackson and some our more recent retirees have formed a retirement chapter. Their chapter name is "Retirees United Northwest NWIAL" or RUNN for short.

Under Interim President Karen Czerwinski they are working on a mailing to other NWIAL retirees who pay \$36 retiree member dues.

## **NWIAL Scholarship Time**

Chief Trustee Ray Wience has put out the 2015 scholarship forms. Four \$500 scholarship winners and two alternates will be drawn at the August 9th union meeting.

