

# The Local Line

"A PPA Award Winning Publication"

The Official Voice of the  
Northwest Illinois Area Local

Floor Edition

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Update by: Jackie Engelhart

## Palatine Bid Problems

The vacancies for the Palatine Realignment were posted on 12-4-14 and close on 12-14-14, a Sunday, which is odd. There are 74 pages of bids and the bidding is to be done on-line or by phone bidding. Due to problems some Clerks have had with not being able to get a password and or a pin number we (the union) have asked that these affected clerks be allowed to submit paper bids if that is the only way they can bid. Management has stated that a manager must be a witness and visually verify that the Clerk cannot submit their bids on line. Plant Manager Quintin Mayberry and In-Plant Manager Esther Smith are aware of the problems and I told Quintin that the affected Clerks need to be notified by management ASAP that they can submit paper bids if they cannot get their pin or password. He said he will get back to me but is concerned. Most of the problems are being directed to the union and Gail Towner the In-Plant Support Specialist, instead of the In-Plant Manager.

## Unable to Bid...

Anyone who has been unable to submit their bids on-line or by phone due to password and pin problems should contact the union, and Esther Smith, the In-Plant Manager, at 847-590-6566, or the In-Plant Specialist, Gail Towner at 847-590-6763. You can also leave a message Plant Manager Mayberry 847-590-6602. Aside from not being able to submit bids at all, some Clerks are telling us they were unable to bid on certain jobs that come up as "ineligible". We have informed Gail and she said she does not know why these jobs are coming up ineligible and she will have to cancel those jobs and post them in January. She said she will make a list of these jobs being cancelled due to this problem and post the list on the bid board. Gail, as always, has been very cooperative when problems are brought to her and does whatever she can to correct things. I can be reached at the Union Hall at 630-833-0088 to answer questions or assist with problems. Make sure you inform the union and management of any bidding problems.

## Closed Section or not...

Questions are still being asked as to why Clerks whose bids were taken from them and reposted do not have retreat rights and are not being given closed section bidding. If your bid is being taken from you what does it matter how it is taken, you are out of a bid and may not be able to get that bid back when it is reposted with the change in NS days. It does not seem fair that management can take your bid and you not have the protection of retreat rights and a closed section bid. That is why we always ask that management wait until a bid is vacant to make changes such as NS days. Closed section bidding only applies when there is a reduction in the number of bids in a section, or when the section has been reduced and Clerks remain excessed out of the section, such as the tour 2 Manual Sections at both Palatine and Carol Stream. For those losing a bid due to management's decision to repost blame them because they have the exclusive right to schedule and staff per the contract. The Union's job is to ensure that bid changes are made per the contract.

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### **PSE Letters...**

PSE Clerks nation-wide received a letter recently as a result of the National Post Plan Settlement regarding staffing of small offices. Under the Post Plan USPS cut the hours of service in small offices down to six, four, and even two. USPS then replaced Clerks on the window with Postmasters, etc. The Union won a national award on this action which required the four and six hour offices to be staffed by clerk craft employees. The four hour offices are to be staffed by PSEs and the six hour offices by PTF Clerks. The letter sent to the PSEs includes a list of these offices for PSE who may want to go to one of these offices. Many of the offices on the Lakeland list sent to the Palatine PSEs are in the Rockford area or are in Wisconsin. Every job on the list requires the Clerk to pass window training and a scheme, and state the employee may be separated if they fail to pass the qualification. PSEs do not have to respond to this letter unless they are interested in one of the listed job offices. Management has to fill these jobs in four hour offices with PSES and are offering them to current PSEs within the district so that is the reason for the letter being sent.

### **CS PSE Conversion Process Stalled at Headquarters Level**

I have talked to the Central, IL Complement Coordinator several times and she has stated that the remaining Carol Stream Clerk residual vacancies that have gone through the MOU process are waiting for approval at the Headquarters level. She said that two weeks ago and I have called her twice since for an update on this. We still have a grievance at Step 2 in case management decides not to abide by the Fill Residuals MOU, and am waiting for their answer. Management says they are at their authorized Clerk complement.

### **Seven to Return at Palatine...**

No PSEs were converted under the MOU at Palatine because we still have career employees with retreat rights to the Clerk craft. Palatine/Lakeland management has been reverting vacant Clerk jobs for over a year while staffing machines with one Clerk and we have several grievances on this. Two grievances were resolved. One restored seven reverted residual vacancies and the other filled the seven residuals by returning seven employees to the craft. The seven employees to be returned are currently in the Mailhandler Craft at Palatine. These are the next seven in line according to management's retreat right list. Per the settlement the effective date for their return is 12-27-14. No PSE Clerk can be converted at Palatine until all Clerks who were excessed are either returned or have an opportunity to retreat.

### **ADRP Settlement & Dobry**

I spoke with Labor Specialist Ron Colby recently regarding when he would pay the out-of-schedule we have agreed on and he said he had to check to see who in the ADRP settlement was also part of the Dobry Award, and then he still has to go to the District Manager for his approval. We have filed a non-compliance on the ADRP but think the out-of-schedule may be paid without going to arbitration. I will continue to pursue the OOS with my counterpart, Ron Colby. The Dobry non-compliance case is scheduled for January 18, 2015. Labor Relations never paid a dime on this case and told the union they interpret the remedy as being only for two weeks instead of what is now four years because they never put the grievants back in the bids they were entitled to. The parties agreed to contact Arbitrator Dobry to interpret his Award but as far as we know they never made any effort to do so.

### **CS, Maintenance & MVS**

We have no further information on the Clerk bidding at CS but management wants the bids to be effective by the end of January. Neither Palatine nor Carol Stream have shared their Realignment staffing changes for the Maintenance Craft and are both still working on them. We know that tour 1 will become the cleaning tour so there will be some shift of Custodians from tour 2 to tour 1. Palatine Transportation Manager Mark Wilson said he does not think there will be many changes in schedules for MVS employees and we have not been informed of any changes for MVS at CS.

### **Spending Bill Funds 6-Day Delivery but Does not Stop the Plant Consolidations...**

News Editor Al Czerwinski (Z) reports that Congress came to agreement on a \$1.01 trillion dollar spending bill that funds 6-day delivery but makes no provision to stop USPS from closing plants. The bipartisan omnibus spending bill retained language calling for six-day mail delivery service but ignored the plea from Congress and others to delay closing 82 postal facilities starting in 2015. Some have heard rumors that the consolidations and the bid changes were put on hold but those rumors were absolutely not true. Only Congress can stop this and they don't care enough to stop it. They only care about 6-day delivery so USPS is free to "realign".

### **Gift Cards for our Members**

As in past years the NWIAL is giving a Jewel gift card to our members for Christmas. The amount of the card is \$15.00 and the cards are available at the union office in all three plants and will be given out at the AO's as soon as possible but before Christmas. We hope all our members have a Merry Christmas in spite of the massive bids changes going on.