

The Local Line

"A PPA Award Winning Publication"

The Official Voice of the
Northwest Illinois Area Local

Floor Edition

Update by: Jackie Engelhart

Abusive Manager

On 8-2-2021 tour 3 Steward Nigel Mayes sent an email to myself and plant manager, Pam Bronson about tour 3 MDO Kathy Brown creating a hostile work environment, and in particular an incident on 7-28-2021 when a clerk suffered a anxiety attack resulting in an ambulance being called. He states in the e-mail to the plant manager, "There was an incident recently and Ms. Brown once again was the root cause of that incident. An employee became so overwhelmed with Ms. Brown constant harassment that an ambulance had to be called... Why does an employee have to experience an anxiety attack caused by your manager to work for the USPS? This place is a powder keg ready to explode and your manager, Kathy Brown is the cause of it." The next day I received a well-written 7-page statement from the clerk who suffered the anxiety attack due to the harassment by MDO Kathy Brown. I sent it to the plant manager who read it and said it sounds serious.

She set up a meeting with the employee, the MDO, and the Union to discuss the statement. Most employees are afraid to write a statement on bad managers. Two Stewards were present at the meeting and say MDO Brown denied all of the allegations. The employee states "Brown started yelling at him/her at the time clock. Later s/he got permission to go get a pair of medium sized gloves, at which point s/he was told by Brown to return to his/her machine. Brown then came over to the employee's machine while s/he was sweeping, in his/her face yelling at him/her saying "this is her building and that she runs this whole building" and what I was doing is job abandonment and she could tell me to leave and that she tells me what to do unless she tells me otherwise and I was trying to explain to her that I thought the supervisors had talked and that I was doing as I was told but she kept cutting me off and telling me I can't go where I want to go and that I needed to listen and she kept saying to me "do you understand" so I

could respond but I didn't because I was trying to calm down and get her to listen to me and she said something else about how she is the manager and she runs the building and she kept repeating "do I need to get a union Steward" and smirking but she wouldn't give me time to answer and was asking me did I understand what she was saying and walked off. I felt myself getting mad so I went to the bathroom to calm down. "

Royal Oak Tragedy

On 11-14-1991 there was a mass shooting at the postal facility in Royal Oak Michigan by a fired postal employee who had lost his arbitration case. He shot 9 people, 3 of them fatally. There were other postal shootings in the 90's so that the term "going postal" became synonymous with workplace shootings. Michigan Senator Levin stated that Royal Oak was rife with harassment of employees". On 6-15-1992 the US House of Representatives Committee on Post Office and Civil Service issued a report on the shooting, calling Royal Oak a "powder keg" and stating the shootings could have been avoided.

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Jackie Engelhart
President
Dave Baskin
Vice President
Alan Czerwinski
News Director

Special points of interest:

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Royal Oak Tragedy
USPS Zero Tolerance Policy
PSE Conversions
Adios Mi Amigos!
Scholarship Winners 2021

Northwest Illinois Area Local
American Postal Workers Union
194 W. Lake Street
Elmhurst, IL 60126
Phone: 630-833-0088
Fax: 630-833-0248
Email: nwial7140@yahoo.com
Web: nwial7140ayahoo.com

USPS Zero Tolerance Policy

On 2-14-1992 the USPS issued a "Joint Statement on Violence and Behavior in the Workplace" which was signed by all postal unions except the APWU, and by the Associations representing the Supervisors and Postmasters. The APWU did not sign because it was thought that the enforcement would be on craft employees and not on management. This has proven to be true over time as the other postal unions have learned. The Joint Statement is the basis for the USPS Zero Tolerance policy and states in part, *"We openly acknowledge that in some places or units there is an unacceptable level of stress in the workplace; that there is no excuse for and will be no tolerance of violence or any threats of violence by anyone at any level of the Postal Service; and that there is no excuse for and will be no tolerance of harassment, intimidation, threat, or bullying by anyone. We also affirm that every employee at every level of the Postal Service should be treated at all times with dignity and respect, and fairness. The need for the USPS to serve the public efficiently and productively, and the need for all employees to be committed to giving a fair day's work for a fair day's pay, does not justify actions that are abusive or intolerant. "Making the numbers" is not an excuse for abuse by anyone. Those who do not treat others with dignity and respect will not be rewarded or promoted. Those whose unacceptable behavior continues will be removed from their positions."* The APWU was right that the Joint Statement would be used against the craft employees, when it was created as a result of the hostile work environment created by management at Royal Oak, MI. There should be Zero Tolerance for abusive supervisors at USPS.

PSE Conversions

Per the National MOU dated 6-21-2021 6,982 PSEs must be converted by 8-14-2021. Management has not created bids (duty assignments) for any of the newly converted clerks and they must post bids once these clerks are unencumbered for 120 days. The newly converted clerks were placed into assignments as management said the MOU says to "convert in place" but they should have allowed employees to preference on non-scheduled days by seniority but they didn't. The Union is filing grievances on the failure to assign non-scheduled days by seniority. The instruction to assign NS days without preferencing by seniority came from District 1, which is the old Chicago District. By adding the Illinois parts of Lakeland and Central to Chicago management has created a real disaster as the Chicago District was one of the worst districts, and now has added responsibility. Marcy said a grievance will be filed on the delay in posting the Award for Palatine Clerk bids. **Adios, Mi Amigos!** (a good-by letter from Steward Tom Miller) *"After 43 years in the Postal prison system, I'm getting "paroled" effective 8-1-21. I became a Union steward almost as soon as I started and stayed in the Union my whole career, serving as a steward and numerous officer positions. I want to thank President Jackie Engelhart and all the officers and stewards of the NWIAL for the opportunity to work along side them in our struggle against USPS management. I have always derived great joy in helping others and my Union work was very rewarding. The fight against management never ends, that's why its called a struggle. Management consistently violates the Contract that they agreed to. Some managers are allowed to*

bully workers. The Union is your defense to stop management abuses. We have a lot of new workers and I urge you to consider becoming a Union Steward and join the fight to protect your jobs. As a Steward, you will be trained and you will learn along the way. I didn't know much when I started, (and some would argue I still don't know much) but you learn. The Union pays a salary and you have to be given Union time on the clock to do all Union business. You don't take any work home with you. It can be a very emotionally rewarding job. I plan on moving out of Illinois, but not right away. I've offered any help I can provide to Jackie if she wants it, including helping train new stewards. The greatest part of working at the USPS so long was meeting so many good people. That is the hard part of leaving. Over my time, I have found the vast majority of Postal workers are good and decent people trying to provide for themselves and their families. They don't deserve the harassment from management. Join the struggle! Finally, I urge you to all live life in the present to the fullest. Don't worry about the past, its gone. Don't worry about the future, its not here yet. Live in the present and make it so good, you will always have great memories."

Scholarship Winners 2021

1. Colin Hozey, grandson of Diane Leighton, Palatine
2. Ian Geisler, son of Tim Geisler, Busse
3. Yasmin Glispie, daughter of Yolanda Glispie, Melrose Pk.
4. Rishi Shah, son of Dharmendra Shah, Busse

Alternates

1. Irene Varghes, daughter of Annammu Raju, Busse
2. Tara Pikey, granddaughter of Joe Golden, Palatine retired

