

# The Local Line

"A PPA Award Winning Publication"

The Official Voice of the  
Northwest Illinois Area Local

Floor Edition

Update by: Jackie Engelhart

## Priority Mail Changes

The Mailhandler Union At Carol Stream put out A newsletter on 3-19-15, stating that Priority mail will go back to Busse and a machine is in the process of being built to handle priority mail at that facility. We did not know Priority sent to the plants last July would be going back to Busse. We were not told that the mail was going back or we would not want Priority bids posted at the Carol Stream plant. We filed a grievance for Priority bids at Palatine but management was working the mail on the IPP belt at Palatine, so they did not post bids. I called Carol Stream Plant Manager Kotula and he said he thought he told us the mail was going back and he said it was always his intent to send the Priority back. I also spoke to Busse Plant Manager Devette Murphy and she said they did not know when they lost the mail if it would be coming back, but they are getting a Universal Sorter for non-machineable parcels and incoming Priority now being worked at the plants will come back.

Busse management says the Universal Sorter should be installed by the end of the summer but CS Plant Manager Kotula says the mail will probably remain at the plants through the end of year because it will be going into the heavy volume period before Christmas. Chicago International Military Service Center Has a Universal sorter. The ISC machine has four keying stations, an automatic dumper, and a lot of connecting belts. **Busse Labor Scheduler** Management met with us on 3-27-15 to share their Labor Scheduler Staffing plan for the Clerk Craft. The plan was based on the 99 Clerks on the rolls and 18 PSE Clerks. Not all 99 Clerks on the rolls are in the building and one Clerk has since been promoted to an EAS job. We reviewed the changes and informed In-Plant Manager Oladeji that we are prepared to discuss the changes but he said they're not ready to meet. I received some angry emails from an employee attacking the Union for not protecting seniority because of proposed starting time changes.

Scan Where You Band start times will change from 1800 to 1600 and 1930. Clerks with bids must be offered options for new times by seniority if their NS days match. SWYB bids will increase from 13 to 24 bids with 12 at 1600 and 12 at 1930. Rack bids go from 24 to 9 with no time change. NMO bids will increase from 11 bids to 22 bids, 6 at 1600, 16 at 1930. NMO bid Clerks will have the option to accept the time change (from 1800) to the new start times if their NS days match with the bids that are needed. Tour 3 APBS will reduce from 15 to 14 bids with no time change but with some changes to NS days. There will be 12 tour 2 APBS bids with a time change from 11 to 1130. 6 General Expeditors will remain on tour 3 but two bids will be reposted to change the NS days. Tour 2 Expeditors are reduced from 7 to 4, and tour 1 Expeditors from 7 to 6, with some changes made to NS days on both tours. We will try to minimize adverse effects on Clerks but the Union does not make scheduling changes. It was not the Union's idea to change any bids.

April 9, 2015

Jackie Engelhart  
President  
Walter Elerby Jr.  
Vice President  
Alan Czerwinski  
News Director

### Special points of interest:

Priority Mail Changes  
Busse Labor Scheduler  
USPS Eliminates Scheme from all Clerk Duty Assignments...  
Excessing in NWIAL Offices  
Go to your own doctor...  
House Budget Bill Targets us  
CAT and April 15th Tax Day  
"Boats" Sails into Retirement

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

### **USPS Eliminates Scheme from all Clerk Duty Assignments...**

In a letter dated 2-20-15 to APWU President Mark Dimondstein, the Union was informed that USPS intends to remove scheme from all Clerk duty assignments in 2015. The letter states in part *"The Postal Service intends to eliminate scheme qualifications on Clerk bid duty assignments after March 7, 2015. This is due to the continuing reduction in mail volumes requiring manual scheme knowledge. Furthermore, eliminating scheme qualifications on Clerk bid duty assignments will reduce the substantial annual costs for scheme training. There will be no impact to employees within the Clerk Craft who currently occupy a duty assignment with a scheme requirement. Local management will have the discretion to provide scheme training to employees to support operational needs. However, the training will not be required for any bid duty assignments."* USPS also put out a "Scheme Training FAQs" with questions and answers regarding the change. It states that bids posted after 3-25-15 will not have scheme requirements on the bid, but employees must qualify on bids posted prior to this date that included scheme requirements. The National Union filed a dispute because USPS made a unilateral change that violates the contract.

### **Excessing in 2 NWIAL Offices**

Management is excessing the only FT Clerk out of Kenilworth to be replaced by a working postmaster (15 hours per week allowed) and by a PSE converted to PTF Clerk. It's good that the PSE Clerk was converted but the regular Clerk who has run that post office for years by herself and is well-liked by the local community is getting the boot and moved many more miles from her home, which is the thanks she gets from management.

Prospect Heights is losing one FT Clerk and they only have two FT, two PTF Clerks, and a working postmaster (15 hours allowed). Management's Report shows two PTF Clerks are working a total of 280 hours per month and they will continue to work 280 hours per month so they cannot justify excessing a FT Clerk. They say the FT Clerk can "volunteer" to be a PTF to avoid excessing, and one of the PTFs in that office was a FT Clerk who volunteered to go back to being a PTF years ago. This office will be left with one FT Clerk and two PTF's and the Postmaster will be forced to work more than the allowed 15 hours. These are two of the offices in Lakeland Area 7 presided over by Elizabeth Wulf, the Manager of Post Office Operations or MPOO. Many of the offices in Area 7 are NWIAL offices and most of the problems in these offices are not caused by the Postmaster/OIC but by the MPOO micro-managing. Offices like Mount Prospect and Northbrook cannot afford to lose FT Clerks but when one leaves the Postmaster must revert the job, and maybe they will get a PSE. On any given day when I call one of these office I don't know who's in charge because many of the PMs in Area 7 are not in their own office but detailed to another office where that PM is on detail to another office. One of them got tired and retired, shortly after being titled as the PM, and there will be more PMs retiring in Area 7. The USPS does not seem to care any more if their windows are sufficiently staffed because they base window staffing on earned revenue so if customers are not spending enough money Clerks are cut. The PM does not want to cut the staffing because they know what they need but they are told what to do by the MPOO and the District.

### **Go to your own doctor...**

When an employee is injured on the job they are sent to a clinic contracted by the USPS. When they go back to that contract doctor he/she becomes your doctor for your OWCP claim, and if you want to change that doctor you have to get permission to do so. We advise you not to see the contract doctor a second time if you prefer to be treated by your own doctor for your on the job injury.

### **House Budget Bill Targets us**

House Concurrent Resolution 27 would increase the amount that postal and federal workers must contribute for retirement to 6%, would increase the amount that postal workers pay for health benefits, and lower the interest rate earned on Thrift Savings G Fund. The bill was passed by a vote of 219-208 with all Democrats and 26 Republicans voting against it. Let your congressman know you are against the House Budget bill.

### **CAT and April 15th Tax Day**

CAT stand for Contract Action Team and the national union is asking us to pass out flyers at area post offices on April 15th stating, *"Your Post Office Gets Zero Tax Dollars"* as part of the effort to inform the public about this little known fact and what the APWU is fighting for in our negotiations. CS employees can get flyers at CS and pass them out by the branch. The national union has provided a limited number of CAT T-shirts for members who want to actively participate in CAT events but are not being given to every member.

### **"Boats" Sails into Retirement**

Congratulations to Ron Langten, (Boats) our long serving tour 2 CS Maintenance Steward who retired recently after 18 years at the post office and 20 years in the navy. He retires to spend more time with his family and enjoy not working. He will be missed by us all but will be our latest retiree member.

