

The Local Line

"A PPA Award Winning Publication"

The Official Voice of the
Northwest Illinois Area Local

Floor Edition

Update by: Jackie Engelhart

Service Scores Drop 26% in Southeast Area

The President of the Sun Coast Local in Florida posted USPS service scores in the Southern Area before and after the Operational Window Changes and the scores show a **26.31% decline** from the first quarter of Fiscal Year 2015 to the second quarter of 2015. All 12 districts in the Southern Area had a double digit decline in service scores after the realignment. That's a huge drop in service and the national union is tracking service decline in an effort to reverse the plant consolidations. Palatine and other plants in the Lakeland District struggled to adjust to the realignment but we have seen no service scores. Bid changes went into effect on 3-7-15 at Carol Stream so they are just starting their transition. Scores will go back up after the Operational Window Change but how will closing more plants affect service? Gary and Muncie, IN will be trucking their mail back and forth to Bedford Park and Indianapolis for processing.

Contract Negotiations Began on 2-19-15...

President Dimondstein issued his first report on the contract negotiations. He stated *"In addition to improvements in wages and benefits, the APWU negotiating team will focus on the most important problems that need to be fixed in our current CBA, the three-tier wage structure, career conversion of PSEs, living wages for all postal employees, protection of full-time work, and real limits on subcontracting our work. We will also focus on protecting and expanding services to the American people, which directly impact our wages, hours and working conditions. The APWU and USPS agreed to meet multiple days every week between now and the expiration of the current contract with the parties taking turns presenting proposals.*

The contract determines things we take for granted such as seniority and bidding rules, holidays, no lay-off protections, 50 mile excessing limit, sick and annual leave, holidays wages, COLAs, health benefits, and the grievance procedure we use to enforce the CBA.

New Postmaster General

Megan Brennan was sworn in as the 74th PMG on 3-6-2015. The first female PMG served four years as vice president and chief operating officer. She says she wants to invest in cutting edge technology to improve USPS ability to track mail and packages and modernize the delivery fleet to be able to accommodate the growing package volume. She wants Congress to overhaul postal laws so the USPS can compete more aggressively for package delivery business generated by ecommerce. She said *"Fundamental reform is needed, and "We have a financial situation that is untenable."* Total mail volume has dropped from 171 billion pieces in 2010 to 155 billion in 2014 due to a large decline in first class mail. Package delivery has increased from 3 billion in 2010 to 4 billion in 2014. Brennan says she wants to work with stakeholders including the union when addressing postal reform. *There is a permanence to our mission and the enduring role we play in serving the nation, however the story of USPS is really about change."*

March 11, 2015

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

Special points of interest:

Service Scores Drop 26% in Southeast Area
Contract Negotiation Began on 2-19-15
New Postmaster General
Postal Pulse Replaces VOE
Dobry Non-Compliance Case Scheduled for 6-25-15
More Money for Custodians From the CAT Coordinator

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

Postal Pulse replaces VOE

The Voice of the Employee VOE survey is being replaced by the Postal Pulse Program. The USPS held briefings with the Union and Management Associations in January and stated in a 2-19-2015 announcement that all unions and associations had expressed support for the goals of the program. The APWU does not agree with the new program and filed an unfair Labor Charge protesting the false claim made by management. The APWU has a long history of opposing employee opinion surveys because management used them against the union during the 1998 contract negotiations. In response APWU adopted a resolution opposing the use of surveys as a means to interview employees and union officials to evaluate job-related issues. Similar resolutions have been adopted at APWU conventions. President Dimondstien responded that our voices are more powerful when we speak together through our union than when we speak individually with management. He noted that the false announcement of support for Postal Pulse was made on the opening day of APWU contract negotiations. Employees who feel they are being pressured to take the survey should contact a union steward. The question also remains as to what has been the benefit to the employee for the years of VOE? They talk about VOE scores at the occasional Town Hall meeting but what else do they do with it? VOE surveys employees about Supervisor Communication, Sexual Harassment and Exclusion based on race, gender, ethnicity, Dignity and Respect, Employee Recognition and Accountability. **The Union Pulse** is hearing that Clerks in Automation at Palatine do not feel they are being treated with dignity and respect.

Dobry Non - Compliance Case Scheduled for 6-25-15...

This non-compliance case was originally scheduled for hearing on 7-16-14 in front of Arbitrator Drucker but the date was cancelled by management. It was re-scheduled on 11-7-14 in front of Arbitrator Ann Kenis but then the Union requested a continuance. Arbitrator Kenis has been on leave so the hearing date was delayed but is now scheduled for 6-25-15. We are still seeking help from the National Union to allow Dobry to be allowed to interpret his Award but he is no longer on the panel. It is my opinion that management would prefer to re-litigate this case in front of Kenis than to have Dobry interpret his own Award. The Award was issued on 6-2-12 and the remedy extended back to 7-10-10, or two years of liability. Management has done nothing to implement the Award and says the out of schedule is only two weeks. **More Money for Custodians** The national union signed an MOU on Custodial staffing that requires management to perform 90% of the cleaning hours called for in the installation MS-47 staffing package or pay the Custodians at the end of the fiscal year for the unworked hours. The MOU was signed on 7-9-14 and the 2014 Fiscal Year ended 9-30-14 so the 90% for FY2014 is the twelve weeks from 7-9-14 to 9-30-14. Management was to provide the Local Union with the work-hours for each installation to determine if they met the 90% work-hours. If the installation did not meet the 90% they were to automatically pay their Custodians for the unworked hours. The Maintenance Craft Director is reviewing the plant information and I have been working to get information for NWIAL Associate Offices. For offices that did not meet the 90% their Custodians will be paid.

From the CAT Coordinator

CAT stands for Campaign Action Campaign and AO Director Kathy Stokes is NWIAL's Coordinator. The National Union wants to get the members to support them in the contract negotiations by wearing CAT stickers and T-shirts. If you are interested in getting a CAT shirt to show your support, and would actually wear it, then let us know and we will order as many as we are allowed to have. Kathy wrote a very good letter explaining the mission of CAT and I will share some of it here. *"If you were not aware we are currently in negotiations for a new contract. The Postal Service is a good place to work now and the union played a big part in making it so. We are fighting to make it even better. Other jobs don't pay as well or provide the benefits we have, and for most jobs there is no such thing as job security.*

*Wearing our CAT shirts will show management that we are serious about gaining a decent contract and better working conditions for all. Also, we want the public to know the postal workers are NOT the problem but the solution in providing efficient universal service for all. We took an oath when we began our careers to protect the public's mail, but the destructive course management is taking is causing longer lines and poor customer service. We want to do a good job that reflects a positive image, but we must fight to achieve it. Lastly, this is a good time to approach **non-members** and ask them to join the union. They want a raise and better working conditions too. They need to help unify this movement and not just exist as dead weight. I am personally asking them to be part of the fight and join the union today. **Where there is unity there is strength.**"*

