

The Local Line

"A PPA Award Winning Publication"

The Official Voice of the
Northwest Illinois Area Local

Floor Edition

Update by: Jackie Engelhart

A Staples Employee
On 11-10-13 the USPS announced a pilot program to place postal retail units in 81 of Staples 1600 Stores to be staffed by non-postal personnel. Recently I received an email from Change.org asking me to sign the petition for a Staples employee named "Sue". The email said "My name is "Sue" and I work at Staples. I can't tell you my full name because I'm afraid I'll lose my job for what I'm about to tell you: Staples recently decided to cut part-time employees' hours just so they won't have to provide health care benefits under Obamacare. Staples is taking advantage of a loophole in the health care law that says employers don't have to provide coverage for employees who work less than 30 hours a week. Staples also told managers to hire more part time workers if they need to cover the schedule. Cutting employee's hours just to avoid paying for health care is not right. I can't afford to make less money than I do now without taking on another job.

I've worked as an Easy-Tech Representative for 9 years now, selling thousands of computers, protection plans, and services. I typically work 30 to 35 hours in a week, so when I was told that my hours would be cut, I was heartbroken. I recently got married and we have a baby on the way, 25 hours a week is not enough to make ends meet let alone start a family. Staples doesn't want to provide health care to its employees, but there is hope. Other chain employees such as Darden Restaurants (owners of Olive Garden and Red Lobster) reversed similar cuts after intense public pressure. Other corporations like Starbucks have pledged not to reduce part time hours. By signing my petition, you'll be amplifying the voices of thousands of Staples employees across the country who are afraid to speak out and can't afford to have their hours cut." This petition caught my eye because Staples staffs its stores with low-paid, no-benefit workers, and that is how USPS intends to save money selling its retail postal products.

Staples Action Planned

In a letter received on 12-30-13, the APWU is asking that each Local send a delegation to visit Staples stores in their area and deliver a protest letter to the store manager. The letter states the postal unit should be staffed by postal employees and if that does not happen we will urge our members, families and friends to stop doing business with Staples stores.

UPS NMO Update...

We have filed grievances at both Carol Stream and Palatine since they began sending Non-machine-able Outsides mail to be machine sorted by UPS. This six month pilot test started at Carol Stream on 12-10-13 at Carol Stream and 12-17-13 at Palatine. The CS volume averages 200-300 pieces per night according to management and we have requested this information for Palatine. I spoke to national officers including President Mark Dimondstein on this and he asked me to talk to the Local Mailhandler Union. The National was notified by USPS of this test in a letter dated 8-8-13 but did not notify us. The letter states "No significant impact to the bargaining unit is anticipated."

January 2, 2014

Jackie Engelhart
President
Dave Baskin
Vice President
Walter Elerby Jr.
News Director

Special points of interest:

A Staples Employee
Staples Action Planned
UPS NMO Update...
Dobry Non-Compliance Case
Another Non-Compliance Case
Associate Offices and 1.6 & 7.2
Changes for the New Year
Palatine A/Senior MDO Ralph Ramion
is Retiring on 1-4-14.
2014 Election Committee

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: nwial714@yahoo.com

Dobry Non-Compliance Case

Our National Business Agent assigned to this case has agreed to bump it up to the top of the docket and hopes to get it scheduled in April of 2014. The case will be assigned to our Local Advocate and Carol Stream Chief Steward Walter Elerby Jr. who won the original case in 2012. This case affects 34 Clerks who would have matched with tour 3 Automation bids management posted as "newly created" in July of 2010. Management failed to comply with the Award by matching the 34 Clerks with the jobs they were improperly denied and offered to pay four weeks out of schedule. If they had contacted Arbitrator Dobry in a timely manner when we asked them to we would not have to go in front of a different arbitrator to interpret his Award.

Another Non-Compliance Case

We have another Palatine case that was settled at Step 3 on 4-18-12. The grievance was filed because management violated the contract when they reposted 40 tour 1 Automation 2250 jobs as NTFT 10/4. The contract states "*When an occupied traditional Clerk FTR duty assignment is reposted as a non-traditional full-time assignment, all duty assignments in that section currently occupied by employees junior to the incumbent in that assignment will also be re-posted for in-section bidding.*" The Step 3 settlement required management to repost the bids of the junior Clerks for in-section bidding and this was done effective 8-11-13. After that the parties were to meet at Step 2 to discuss any further remedy. We have contacted Labor Specialist Mary Ann Gocha several times and she has yet give an answer on payment of the monetary remedy. We believe a non-compliance grievance will have to be filed but are trying to get an answer first.

Associate Offices and 1.6 & 7.2

If you are a Clerk in an Associate Office you know management has reduced the staffing as far as they can by excessing and not replacing Clerks who retired. Most offices are at the point where if one Clerk calls in they cannot get the mail out without having a supervisor do the work. Glenview has been short-staffed since they lost the Winnetka Clerks who came with the mail under a Delivery Unit Optimization in 2010. Management did not post enough bids in Glenview to handle the added Winnetka mail so they have supervisors and the Postmaster doing Clerk work. Conny Smith our new Steward at Glenview is busy filing 1.6 grievances for management performing bargaining unit work. She reports Supervisor Resha, Postmaster Vickie Henderson, and A/POOM Elizabeth Wulf were moving equipment and sorting/scanning parcels. Resha assigned a PSE Custodian to drop skids and flats to the Carriers in violation of Article 7.2. If we did not have an active Steward in this office I doubt if we would know about all these blatant violations in Glenview. Now that the Clerks see they have a Steward who will fight for them they are writing statements when they see management doing their work. We have a good Steward at Northbrook but when Larissa Davis goes home at noon management thinks they can use a 204-B Carrier do Clerk work, but there is one determined Clerk who always lets us know. Wilmette continues to have supervisors working the Bulk Mail. Clerks should report t violations as the loss of work will be used to reduce the number of Clerks. Customer lines in some offices are long because they do not have Clerks, and it looks like management is trying to drive business to contract units like Staples.

Changes for the New Year

Chicago Metro L&DC will have another new plant manager for the new year as Donald Williams is going to the NDC as of 1-6-14. I was told that Adam Nelson will be the next A/Plant Manager at Busse. Adam started in In-Plant Support at Palatine and moved to In-Plant for Busse, Chicago, and the Great Lakes Area. I don't know if he has any experience as a Plant Manager but I was told that "He knows Priority." It seems that the one thing you can count on at Busse is a new Plant Mgr. Donald Williams was reasonable for the short time he was here and we wish him well in his new job.

Palatine A/Senior MDO Ralph Ramion is Retiring on 1-4-14.

For the last two years there have been rumors that Ralph was retiring but he would always say no. This time the rumor is true as he confirmed he has 40 years, and its time to go while he has his health. Ralph started at North Suburban Facility and has been at Palatine as MDO/Senior MDO since 1992. He knows the history of Palatine as well as any manager and I'm sure his knowledge will be missed. Its another sign of the times that one of the last Palatine managers who started at NSF is retiring. Ralph was strict and old school, and employees will not miss that. In the end you take with you your retirement annuity and memories of the people you worked with. Most of us will take some good memories with us and hopefully Ralph will take some with him.

2014 Election Committee

We will need three members and one alternate for the Committee. If you are interested you must submit a letter to me by 1-11-14. If you have questions you can contact me at the Union Hall or look in the Local Constitution. Committee members will be selected at the 1-12-14 meeting.

