

The Local Line

"A PPA Award Winning Publication"

The Official Voice of the
Northwest Illinois Area Local

Floor Edition

Update by: Jackie Engelhart

Carol Stream PSEs threatened about OT
I was told on or around 12-27-19 that tour 3 PSEs were called in to the tour office by MDO Kathy Brown for what they were told was to be a Safety Talk. Instead they were told they have to work 10 hours, 6 days per week or they could lose their job, and this was coming per her instructions so I reached out to A/Plant Manager Pamela Bronson about this via email but never got a response from her. I waited and resent the email and she said she did get it but she did not respond to what I said. *"I understand peak season is a big deal and we have to get the mail out but PSEs are not robots and working them 10 hour 6 days per week cannot continue. If a PSE does not stay 10 hours 6 days per week they should not have their jobs threatened. I guess there are two sides to Christmas at the plant, the signs posted saying how much mail was processed and thanking the employees, and the other using MDOs like Ms. Brown to threaten the jobs of*

PSEs, who perform the hardest job in the plant, with their jobs if they cannot work this grueling schedule. "Christmas is overtime season at the Post Office but for PSEs at Carol Stream who have been working 6 days forever to be told they have to stay 10 hours or risk losing their jobs is rough. Forget about your health, forget about your children, work 60 hours, or we will take your job. No wonder so many get discipline for attendance! Carol Stream just took all the PARS and FPARS from Palatine in August so you knew there would be a lot of mail this year. On top of that CS was in the top 5 on many days for cancelling the most mail in the nation. That's what happens when the higher ups send so much mail into one plant.
Palatine Much Different
Palatine lost PARS and FPARS but still felt the need to over-hire PSEs "for peak" and not tell them they were temporary hires until its time to let them go in January. Tour 3 PSEs were working 6 days and 6.5 hours, and did not have to worry about OT. Ms. Wulf does not like Clerk OT.

Gone for Good???
Is Palatine Plant Manager Elizabeth Wulf coming back or is she gone for good???

Craft and EAS employees are happy that she is gone on a detail to the Area and hope the detail becomes permanent. When she left in 2018 there was celebration on the workroom floor but she came back as the titled plant manager so we will have to see what happens. Hopefully there is a promotion out there for her. In the meantime we have Allen Mitchell as the A/Plant Manager on a three month detail at Palatine. We met him years ago when he was Acting at Busse for a few months. He says he is willing to open up communication with the unions which is a welcome change for us. Mr. Mitchell is the Manager of In-Plant Support at a large plant in St. Louis. His District Manager is Charles Scieurba, former plant manager at both CS and Palatine, a good one. We asked the new plant manager to return the flat and letter cases recently removed as there are not enough cases for the bid employees to work in. Cutting to 5 letter cases and 2 flats racks is crazy!

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Special points of interest:

Carol Stream PSEs threatened about OT
Gone for Good???
Reversions stop Conversions...
Zero Tolerance...
APWU Facts on Privatization

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Reversions stop Conversions...

We have said this before, when management reverts jobs this prevents PSE conversions. Carol Stream has converted PSEs this year because of the additional PARS mail. Palatine has not converted because they lost the mail. A/Plant Manager Allen Mitchell states he is expecting updated complement numbers from the District which may allow management to settle some of the many Clerk reversion grievances filed. If Palatine is under complement for Clerks they would need to post more jobs and convert some PSEs. Once they provide the authorized complement numbers we will find out if we will see jobs re-posted and possibly PSE conversions, after a long dry spell at Palatine. Carol Stream and Palatine have seen many Clerks retire this year. Even Busse has had a few Clerks retire this year but the authorized complement keeps going down. Busse Stewards file on every Clerk reversion and 600 CCD Marcy Lloyd files at Palatine. Palatine not only lost the PARS mail but lost work when the USPS at the national level gave all work on the "Universal Sorting System" to the Mailhandler Craft even though the work is distribution which is Clerk work and replaced much of the Incoming Parcel Post unit assigned to Clerks at Palatine. That dispute should be arbitrated within six months per the Updated National RI-399 MOU and it has been six months since the USPS notified APWU President Mark Dimondstein on 7-12-2019 that they were assigning all work on the Universal Sorting System was assigned to the Mailhandler Craft. The so-called Universal Sorter is nothing but a Low Cost Sorter for non-machineable parcels which means the employees are really distributing the mail exactly the same as in the Clerk IPP unit.

Zero Tolerance...

When an employee is accused of a "zero tolerance" incident they are usually put on Emergency Placement without pay by management. This is only the Craft employees as it rarely occurs when a manager is accused. There is a Transportation supervisor at Busse who has been accused several times by Craft employees of various zero tolerance incidents but that supervisor has never been walked out. The plant manager is fully aware of these incidents per the APWU and I have talked to him myself. Management will make excuses for their own but will walk out a craft employee for the same thing or less. When a Craft employee is put out they often stay out for weeks while management takes their time deciding what to do. Does it really take 3 or 4 weeks to take statements regarding a verbal disagreement between employees? Once the employee is put out they fall between the cracks as the plant manager may want to make an example out them or may be too busy to deal with the situation. The best advice in employee vs. employee and or employee vs. supervisor disagreements is for the employee to walk away. Don't be provoked into responding. It's not worth losing your job over. APWU never signed the 1992 Joint Statement as other unions did because there was a fear that it would be used only against Craft employees and they were right. *"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, threats, or bullying by anyone."* (From the USPS Joint Statement)

APWU Facts on Privatization

1. *There has been talk of selling off the Postal Service for many decades, mostly pushed by anti-government, anti-union, corporate business forces. The latest effort is different because it has the strong backing of the White House.*
2. *Parts of the USPS have already been privatized. Much of the surface transportation work which was formerly APWU work has been contracted.*
3. *President Trump appointed a task force to make recommendations on the future of USPS. The task force members were mostly Wall Street executives.*
4. *In June the Office of Management and Budget published a devastating report stating that it needs to prepare to convert USPS from a government agency to a private corporation, with major changes in the level of service.*
5. *The Task Force issued its report in 2018. It laid out steps to take to prepare the USPS for privatization, including cuts to service, eliminating delivery days, increasing private mail sortation, and even franchising of the mailbox.*
6. *The Task Force report called for elimination of postal worker's collecting bargaining rights and cuts to pay and benefits.*
7. *Congress will ultimately decide whether to sell off the Postal Service. The APWU and other postal unions are educating members of Congress on the facts and asking them to publicly oppose the sale of the USPS. A majority of House members and Senators have signed onto public resolutions opposing the sale." (This information is from a flyer that was mailed to all APWU members recently.)*

