

The Local Line

"A PPA Award Winning Publication"

The Official Voice of the
Northwest Illinois Area Local

Floor Edition

Update by: Jackie Engelhart

Joe Golden Retires...

Joe Golden retired from the post office at the end of May but he will continue to serve as our Maintenance Craft Director until the end of his term next year, and I hope that he runs again. Joe has been a great Maintenance Craft Director for our Local.

Joe is a hard worker who makes it his mission to file a grievance on every contract violation and there are many of them. He has been successful in holding management accountable when they violate the contract and management's actions have cost the post office millions of dollars on Joe's watch including the Busse payout of 2.75 million and the Palatine payout of \$1,150,000.00 for failing to perform the required number of cleaning hours. Joe recently finalized a Carol Stream payout on the same type violation for \$212,055.00 as the number of unperformed cleaning hours was less. Add up these grievances and you have 4 million, give or take a thousand. There are many others as management violates and Joe does his thing.

Michael Cooley Retires

Carol Stream tour 2 Chief Steward Michael Cooley retired at the end of May. Mike will be missed but he had his 42 years in and decided it was time to go. Mike was an excellent Chief Steward who was consistently conscientious and professional. He was a team player who served the Union for many years as a Steward and tour 2 Chief Steward. We appreciate the many years of excellent service to the Union of Joe Golden and Mike Cooley, and wish them both a long and happy retirement. Congratulations to both!

Joe joins Secretary Linda Retel and Chief Trustee Ray Wience who continue to serve the Union after their postal retirement.

In Transition...

Many of our Stewards are nearing retirement and Stewards are the backbone of the union. As I have told many a PSE, in a few years there will be a mass exodus of postal retirements. That time is now upon us. The next group should be prepared to step up and serve their co-workers. Management creates so many problems with a union but it would be worse without one.

Why you need a Union...

You need a union because you could be working at the Northbrook Post Office for Postmaster Narbi Miulli. I believe she has created a hostile work environment for Clerks in this office since her arrival two years ago. Recently a PSE Clerk resigned and cited the hostile work environment as her reason. I requested a copy of the resignation letter but so far they have not given it to me and the resigned PSE texted me they were angry about her resignation. She had asked the postmaster for Tuesdays off so she could take classes and was told she could be off on Tuesdays except after a holiday so she signed up. Later she was told she would have to work on Tuesday until 9 am and try to make it to class on the south side at 10am. The postmaster set her up and then double-crossed her. She said Narbi told her that she owed her for this. She got quite an education working in Northbrook. When she started there she did not think she needed the union but she changed her mind after awhile. Our Northbrook Steward will soon be returning from her third Removal.

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Special points of interest:

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How Long is an Emergency?

If you are an unfortunate craft employee at the Palatine P&DC an emergency is over two months. Management has the right to put an employee off on Emergency Placement if they are a threat to themselves or others. This is not the case where two employees were put out over two months ago. It took management weeks to conduct their investigation which consisted of gathering some witness statements from supervisors. When we asked why they were not back at work we were told by Plant Manager Elizabeth Wulf that she was waiting for the Postal Inspectors to interview them. I sat in when Inspectors interviewed our member and they did not seem to think there was any threat made and said they would have a report done within an hour and they did. That was on 5-23-19 and they are still off of work since 3-30-19! Plant Manager Wulf has told me in the past that it is her concern to protect the employees at Palatine. That is her reason for putting employees off of work on emergency and or trying to take their jobs. Most of these so called incidents are nothing more than a minor disagreement between employees, and if the same was done by supervisors nothing would happen. Zero Tolerance continues to be abused by some postal managers such as Ms. Wulf and Ms. Miulli. I contacted Senior Plant Manager Robert Prahel who basically said file a grievance and Labor Relations Manager Fred Schroeder who really does not get involved. It falls back on Labor Relations at Palatine and they are powerless. While having a minor disagreement at work should not be an excuse to put someone off work and or try to fire them, this is what is happening with certain managers. Don't let yourself become a victim of this management abuse.

Misuse of "Deems Desirable"

600 CCD Marcia Lloyd made me aware of letters being handed out by a Leave Control Supervisor on the subject of Deems Desirable. The letter informs the employee they will be required to provide acceptable documentation for all unscheduled absences they incur. These letters are a misuse of the Deems Desirable provision in the Employee and Labor Relations Manual and a tactic to get around the ELM Restricted Sick Leave Provisions. The ELM Section 513 states *"For periods of absence of 3 days or less, supervisors may accept the employee's statement explaining the absence. Medical documentation or other acceptable evidence of incapacity for work or need to care for a family member is required only when the employee is on restricted sick leave or when the supervisor deems documentation desirable for the protection of the interests of the Postal Service..."* There is a provision called Restricted Sick Leave that would require the employee to submit acceptable substantiation of incapacitation for sick leave. Management does not use this provision because it is too much trouble for them to follow all the steps listed in the ELM 513.39. So instead they use "Deems" in place of Restricted Sick Leave. Ms. Wulf is wrong but she persists in doing it. If they give you a letter that you are "deems desirable" bring it to the union and file a grievance.
Sam Wood on the RI-399 MOU
Sam Wood is a well respected APWU President in Florida who also felt the national RI-399 MOU was a sell-out of APWU. He said *"In our view, the APWU National President was working for the Mail Handlers in this poor agreement, not us. We have been told by the Mail Handler craft leaders that our union screwed us."*

The 12%

The NWIAL (our Local) is 88% organized with 1458 members and 195 non-members. Non-members are the 12%. When I attended the retirement party for Carol Stream tour 2 Chief Steward Mike Cooley I sat down with some friends and then got up to get a plate. When I came back there was a non-member sitting at the table and so I sat elsewhere. Then another non-member came over to chat with the members at the first table. Both of the non-members have 42 years in but they refuse to pay union dues. They have good jobs and good benefits because of the union but for some reason they refuse to be members of the union and pay for benefits they continue to enjoy thanks to the union and the willingness of the 88% to pay dues. I don't understand these people. We were there to honor a retiring union Steward which these non-members could care less about. Non-members have no shame as they continue to take what is paid for by their co-workers, not them. Thank you to the 88% who get it. If it were not for the union most of us would not be here as we would have tried to find a better job or been fired by postal management. I really don't understand them!
NWIAL Scholarship Time
Chief Trustee Ray Wience wants to get the word out that it is time to apply for NWIAL scholarships. Four (4) \$750.00 scholarships will be awarded to a member, spouse, child, stepchild, or legally adopted child of a member of the NWIAL. Application forms with the rules are available at the plant union offices and will be mailed to our Associate Offices. Applications must be received prior to the August Union meeting on 8-11-19. Winners will be pulled by members at the meeting from Ray's "Bozo Drum". This is for members only, not the 12% scabs.

