

The Local Line

"A PPA Award Winning Publication"

The Official Voice of the
Northwest Illinois Area Local

Floor Edition

Update by: Jackie Engelhart

Palatine P&DC has 24 cases and 2 have died
Palatine P&DC has reported 24 covid19 cases, and a second co-worker recently passed away... Carol Stream and Busse each have 6 positives. Palatine brought in a contract cleaner due to the absence of some custodians and to perform extra covid-19 cleaning. We lost a 2nd Palatine co-worker and friend to the virus and hope this is the last one to be lost.

Both will be missed by their families, friends, and the Palatine family. The only good thing to report is that the number of positives is not going up as quickly as it was and hopefully we are bending the curve at each facility and within the state of Illinois... The governor has ordered the wearing of masks when we go out and where social distancing is not possible. For the most part we are protecting ourselves and each other by wearing masks while at work and out in public and keeping six feet apart where possible. The retail windows should all have clear plexi-glass shields by the end of May.

Management Using Other Crafts at Busse
Management at Busse and the Chicago District has been using Carriers and Tractor-Trailer Operators to process mail for the past several weeks. They did not notify us and we found out when the Stewards saw them on the workroom floor. I was provided information by President Keith Richardson of the Chicago Local who was informed that other crafts are processing mail at the ISC which is part of the APWU Chicago Local. This is another example of the management group at Chicago Metro Busse. They do not give us any information or courtesy. Busse has been short of Clerks for years as they continue to revert jobs. With no jobs posted there are no residual vacancies and PSEs don't convert. The only way to get PSEs converted at Busse is to wait for a new contract, when we may get them converted if they have 2.5 years of service... Carriers are not supposed to be going to other offices during the Covid-19 but Chicago District is sending them to Busse and ISC to process mail!

PSE Conversions

Carol Stream has no PSEs with 2.5 years of service as they were converted based on the additional mail when Palatine PARS was moved to CS in 2019. Palatine P&DC will be converting 17 PSEs and Busse is converting 14 PSEs on 5-9-2020 based on the new union contract. Congratulations to all of them as they have worked hard to get to this point, and 30 months is long enough to have to work as a non-career employee. Now their seniority will count towards retirement, and they have retirement, and have health benefits. This is how it should be! **No duty assignments...** Management is not posting duty assignments for newly converted Clerks at Palatine or Busse, but are giving them assignments. They have to post bids if the Clerks are unencumbered, that is without a bid for 120 days, so I don't know why they aren't posting bids for them. We will monitor the 120 days from 5-9-2020 and file grievances if bids are not posted for all Clerks. Management does not want to convert PSEs or to post bids, so the union has to fight for career jobs.

May 6, 2020

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

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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

Palatine P&DC Management Plans Clerk Bid Realignment

Marcy and I were given a list of the bid changes to be made per A/Plant Manager Allen Mitchell and In-Plant Support Manager Moore. Every few years management says they need to realign bids because they don't have people where they need them. How can this happen when they have the authority to post bids and can change a bid when it becomes vacant? The Plant Manager said that the bids were in the wrong places due to the bid realignment done in 2017. There was no realignment in 2017 at Palatine although there were two at Carol Stream based on the Function 1 Scheduler run at the headquarters level. We wanted to make some changes at CS to keep more Clerks in their bids but were told in 2017 that they were not allowed to make any changes in the bids per USPS headquarters. A few months later CS made more changes because the first set of changes did not work very well. At CS Clerks were thrown out of their bids twice in 2017 because management had to change bids. Palatine did not change bids in 2017 thanks to In-Plant Support Manager Jill Dewey who retired, and on the watch of Liz Wulf. Thanks to Jill and Ms. Wulf we did not have upheaval in 2017. Palatine lost the PARS mail to CS beginning in April of 2019 and no jobs were reposted although then Plant Manager Elizabeth Wulf stated that she had to reduce her work hours by the equivalent of 22 FT Clerks and she reduced the PSE work hours. Mr. Mitchell offered details to tour 2 and tour 3 Automation to later start times because he said he did not have enough mail at 0700 to keep the machines running and was using too many hours. Now he wants to change the start times for 24 tour 2 to 1100 and 35 tour 3 to 1900.

Not the Worst of it...

We know that most employees do not want to have their start time changed especially to a later time. Management is changing some 0700 Automation Clerks to 1100, and some 1500 Clerks to 1900. When they asked for volunteers to go from 0700 to 1100 they did not get any and they only got tour 3 volunteers when they paid them 4 hours of out of schedule pay. As bad as that is, and it is bad, they had a reason for the time change. We said at least they weren't changing NS days to throw Clerks out of their bids and then we got the long list of changes showing they wanted to change and repost 100 Clerk bids or 1/3 of the bids. How could they have 100 Clerks with the "wrong" NS days? Marcy and I continue to review the bids to match as many as possible and to ask to make changes. Some sections are open like tour 2 manual where 6 of the 8 Clerks match. Tour 1 and 3 Manual are closed because of retreat rights for some Clerks who lost bids in IPP and LCTS due to the Universal. 2/3 of tour 1 and 3 manual match. We are getting most of those bids back but management wants to cut the number of Flat and Letter bids. Many smaller sections match such as Postage Due and Expeditors.. Most but not all AFSM and FSS bids match with some exceptions. Tour 1 Automation all matches, but the time is changed to 2100. A lot of tour 2 and tour 3 Auto bids with week days off are being changed to other week days off, but most senior weekends match. Most of the senior tour 2 and 3 Automation Clerks with weekends off will keep their same NS days. We do not have an effective date for these changes but A/Plant Manager Mitchell did not want the union to delay the process when we offered to review the bids to make sure it was done correctly.

How do we Know?

When an employee tests positive the District Medical Unit is to contact that person and ask them questions regarding who they have had contact with, and the people named are supposed to be called and told that they may have been exposed. How do we know that is happening when we don't know the names of the positive cases? We understand the privacy issue, but I had a call from someone who was told by the person they were positive several days ago, and s/he has not been called by the district. S/he is very upset because s/he has an underlying health condition as do some family members. S/he works in a small unit and believes s/he should have been contacted.. as s/he was most likely exposed. S/he wants to know why s/he was not contacted and s/he called me. I will try to find out but without naming names it is more difficult.

End of the Lockdown in June...

Governor Pritzker extended the stay at home order until the end of May and has unveiled a plan to re-open the state when advisable. He did open a few things in May and should open more in June. We hope to see offices open in June which would allow our Local and the Chicago Local to hold elections which are on hold because the election companies are closed per order. We cancelled the April and May meetings based on the governor's order. The national union extended the term of office for those in contested races. That includes me, VP Elerby, Secretary Linda Retel, Chief Trustee Ray Wience, Trustee Sue Rodriguez, Maintenance Director Joe Golden, and MVS Director Ken Redinger. Unopposed officers, Treasurer Patel, Trustee Myer, 600 CCD Lloyd, 601 CCD Taylor, and AO Director Kathy Stokes began their new term on 5-3-2020.