

# The Local Line

"A PPA Award Winning Publication"

The Official Voice of the  
Northwest Illinois Area Local

Floor Edition

Update by: Jackie Engelhart

## Excessing Rumors at Palatine...

Just last week we were informed that Palatine is the test site for a new DBCS Auto Feed Pilot named TOTUM BEAST and the test would begin on or around 7-13-2020. We had just got this, but the email sent by the contractor to the Palatine plant manager and the in-plant support manager was dated 3-5-2020.

The test was delayed by the COVID-19. I contacted the National Union and they said the test site is being changed to Virginia, not Palatine. I am told there are rumors at Palatine of 100 Clerks being excessed. I don't know where the rumor is coming from but management did not post enough bids for all able-bodied Clerks stating they are only posting 258 because that is the authorized complement. In early May there were 295 Clerks on the rolls so management was leaving 41 Clerks with no bid, unencumbered. (This includes 17 PSEs who were converted on 5-9-2020.) Management must post a bid when a Clerk remains unencumbered for 120 days.

When I first contacted the National about the DBCS feeder test they said they knew nothing about it. I asked about possible excessing but was told only that the USPS is looking at Palatine. I note that Elizabeth Wulf is the Great Lakes Area In-Plant Support Manager and she is in the email loop for this new feeder. I wonder how much she had to do with trying to make Palatine the test site for the TOTUM BEAST. I received a letter from Palatine management dated 6-16-2020 stating *"Please let this serve as official notification that due to the decline in volume it was necessary to reduce the automation and flat equipment in Palatine P&DC. Automation will reduce from 25 DBCS and 1 DIOSS to 19 DBCS and 1 DIOSS which was based on the type of DBCS series, maintenance downtime and a steady loss of volume. Although we have already allocated DBCS machines that are not being utilized, machines are now scheduled to be moved."* Palatine is also losing 1 FSS machine. Mail volume is way down since COVID-19.

## Need Communication...

I did reach out to Palatine management and asked them to hold service talks with the employees who are hearing these rumors. Management says they do not have any information to share with employees. 14 Palatine Clerks retired in May and more will go. Maintenance Craft Director Joe Golden spoke with the MCD at Fox Valley who said they are losing two FSS machines... At this point the DBCS feeder is just a test and the USPS is broke so where would the \$\$\$ come from? **Carol Stream Clerks** Carol Stream has 131 PSEs and temporary Mail Processing Assistants but very little mail. It does not make sense to flood the building with more non-career Clerks when the mail volume is so low. I asked the plant manager and she said that some are not there as they quit or get fired, and we still have COVID leave and vacations. She said CS is still 27 Full-Time Clerks under the authorized cap of 361. CS should be converting PSEs to fill the 27 FT Clerk positions and the plant manager is waiting for headquarters to approve these conversions.

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## Special points of interest:

Excessing Rumors at Palatine...  
Need Communication...  
Carol Stream Clerks  
New Postmaster General  
From Labor Notes...  
Illinois AFL-CIO Resolution  
Busse Line H Settlement  
NWIAL Election...

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## **New Postmaster General Takes Over on 6-15-2020**

(This article is from Labor Notes)

*“Much of the criticism of new Postmaster General Louis DeJoy has centered on his fund-raising for President Trump. This fact is cause for worry but postal workers should be even more alarmed at his 35 years experience in labor analytics, the art of eliminating as many jobs as possible. His company has a terrible labor record, rife with red flags, including sexual harassment, discrimination, speedup, workplace injuries, excessive use of temps, misclassifying workers as independent contractors, and inadequate sick leave during the current pandemic. DeJoy is only the fifth postmaster general since 1971 not to come from within the USPS. His experience in supply chain logistics was clearly a factor in his appointment. His New Breed Logistics (before it merged with XPO) was a contractor to the USPS for more than 25 years. XPO Logistics does extensive business with the USPS, potentially putting DeJoy in the position of overseeing decisions that affect his own personal financial interests. He and his wife own between \$25 and \$50 million in XPO stock. The postal board of governors is asking Congress for \$25 billion for modernization. What might DeJoy’s version of modernization look like? Take a look at the XPO website: Our focus is on robotics, autonomous vehicles, automated sortation systems, drones and other cutting edge technologies that speed goods through the supply chain. Once startup is complete, managers use XPO Smart labor analytics to optimize productivity. In other words the company specializes in the science of weeding out any worker who’s not super-productive and super-compliant, regardless of seniority.”*

## **Illinois AFL-CIO Resolution**

***Whereas**, Our calling for social and economic justice and equality extends not only to the workplace, but also across all segments of our state and its institutions including schools and government; **Whereas**, Systemic racism is ingrained in our culture, and it is deplorable that so many still face fear and oppression every day in their workplace and in broader society due to racism; and **Whereas**, Dr. Martin Luther King said at the 8th Illinois AFL-CIO Convention in 1965, that “It is not a coincident that the Labor Movement and the Civil Rights Movement have the same essential origins. Each movement grew out of burning needs of an oppressed poor for security and equality. Each was denied justice by the dominant forces of society and had to win a place in the sun by intense struggle and sacrifice; **Whereas**, In the recent pandemic shutdown, many black and brown low income workers cared for our sick and elderly, kept mass transit operating, stocked grocery stores, and staffed health care facilities. While performing essential jobs, many suffered the effects of the COVID 19 virus at a rate disproportionately greater than the broader population; and **Whereas**, The killing of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery, and countless other people of color has brought the United States to a new and urgent awareness of the pervasiveness and persistence of racism, igniting unprecedented and widespread protests, including in cities throughout Illinois, and **Whereas**, Countless AFL-CIO members and their families are participating in these protests calling for an end to structural racism and its devastating impact on people of color and on the very foundation of our society, and*

***Whereas**, As the largest organization for social justice in Illinois, the IL AFL-CIO has a duty to speak out in support of oppressed people wherever intolerance, inequality, and injustice exists; be it **Resolved**, that the IL AFL-CIO reaffirms our commitment to fight against racial inequality wherever it exists; and be it further **Resolved**, that the IL AFL-CIO will work hard to assist all affiliates in dismantling all forms of bias in our unions, building solidarity, and raising awareness of how racism and other forms of bigotry have been used to weaken unity, limit power and damage efforts to advance an agenda to help all working people; and be it **Resolved**, we will continually strive for the ideals found in our governing documents and in Dr. Kings speech in 1965 to build a better state and nation where we can truly live as one people.”*

## **Busse Line H Settlement**

Busse custodians will be paid for Fiscal Year 2019 Line H hours. A grievance filed by Craft Director Golden was recently settled for 6,337 hours to be paid to Busse ODL Custodians. The 6,337 hours will be divided among ODL custodians by quarter. Because Joe filed the preceding fiscal year 2018, the 90% was not met, the settlement states if it is found that the FY 2018 Line H hours were not met, another 4,634 hours will then be paid to Busse custodians. These hours will not be paid until the FY 2018 grievance is settled. The USPS is coming to grips with the Line H grievances filed at Busse, Palatine and Carol Stream. **NWIAL Election...**

The Election Committee reports that they must wait for Phase 4 of the governor’s Restore IL Plan (50 in a room) for the ballot stuffing to be done, and look for his announcement soon. We would all like to get this over with ASAP.