

The Local Line

"A PPA Award Winning Publication"

The Official Voice of the
Northwest Illinois Area Local

Floor Edition

Update by: Jackie Engelhart

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Clerks Returning...

Since the beginning of the year we have been going back and forth with management at Palatine regarding retreat rights to the Clerk craft. This was because management had returned a few Clerks who did not have retreat rights and had missed some Clerks who have retreat rights. We signed a settlement to return 7 Clerks but asked that it be put on hold until we were sure the names were correct. Management sent out the letters to Clerks who were excessed out of Palatine who had the option to return and now they are notifying those in the Mailhandler Craft at Palatine they must be returned by seniority. In the last Local Line I wrote that Clerks who were excessed into the Mailhandler Craft at Palatine and then excessed out of the facility had to come back because Steward Dave Baskin insisted they had to come back. The contract does not address the situation where a Clerk is excessed to Mailhandler within the installation and excessed out as a Mailhandler.

I put that information out in the last Local Line. Since then I was able to talk to our NBAs and a National Clerk officer who all say they do not have to come back.

7 to Return on 11-14-15

Seven employees are scheduled to return from the Palatine Mailhandler craft on 11-14-15 and that leaves eight employees left in the MH craft at Palatine who must return because of the contract. I know they do not want to come back and I wish there was something we could do locally for them. Unfortunately, the contract is clear that when employees are excessed within the installation they have to be returned. Some employees have been returned from the MH craft at Palatine because they had no choice. We submitted a resolution to have this changed in the next contract at the last convention but it did not pass so I don't know that it will be changed. We do not agree with the contract on this but are bound by what it says. I have received messages from some of the affected employees asking me to let them stay in the MH craft and I wish I could.

Palatine Clerk Staffing

I spoke with management about returning the 8 employees so we can end the Palatine retreat right issue. Plant Manager Mayberry referred me to In-Plant Support who he said was working on a new Function 1 scheduler, so I asked them how many more Clerks are needed. I was told "one" and that's not including the seven who are returning due to the grievance settlement. With all the Clerks we have lost this year they said we only need one. With all the overtime being called, up to 16 hours, and the struggle to get the mail out, they need one. I asked how many Clerks Palatine has and they said 330 regulars and 52 PSEs. That is not enough and I thought they would want to retreat more Clerks. Instead they are all saying the problem is attendance and leave control is now addressing bad attendance. They do not have enough Clerks regardless of what their Function 1 scheduler says! For Palatine PSE Clerks waiting to be converted to career we have grievances filed on reverted bids that, if settled, would force them to return the remaining Clerks.

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Special points of interest:

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Why No Rehab Assignments

We requested information through Labor Relations at Carol Stream as to why an employee deemed permanent years ago was never given a Rehabilitation Assignment, and continued to be held in an Automation bid s/he was notable to work. The employee was not allowed to work overtime because s/he was being held in an Automation bid years after reaching Maximum Medical Improvement (MMI). Failure to Rehab the employee resulted in years of lost overtime opportunities in Manual. I filed a Labor Board charge because management repeatedly failed to provide information as to why the employee was not given a permanent rehab assignment. They responded by providing a letter stating rehab assignments are made in accordance with the ELM 546. The ELM refers to the Employee and Labor Relations Manual, a large postal handbook. The ELM 546.141 states "*The procedures for current employees both limited duty and rehabilitation assignments. Limited duty assignments are provided to employees during the recovery process when the effects of the injury are considered temporary. A rehabilitation is provided when the effects of the injury are considered permanent and/or the employee has reached maximum medical improvement...*" The employee had reached MMI years ago but they would not respond as to why s/he was not rehabbed. I requested a list of all CS employees who had reached MMI and the names of those who have been rehabbed. They provided a long list of MMI employees, and then sent a letter stating none of them are rehabbed. Management has stopped making rehabilitation assignment for some reason and this is not just at CS. Grievances have been filed for two employees at their request.

Carol Stream ADRP Grievance

National Assistant Clerk Craft Director Lynn Pallas-Barber called us to say she is discussing the CS grievances for not filling residual vacancies and will then discuss the Busse grievance. In the CS grievances there are 17 40 hour jobs and 14 NTFT jobs and we will see how many we get filled. There should currently be enough bids for all able-bodied CS Clerks So most if not all these residuals would be posted on e-reassign and if not filled then would be used to convert CS PSE Clerks to career. The authorized complement at CS is 380 regular clerks and 76 PSEs. Management posted 40 hour jobs for the AFCS-200 which replaced the NTFT jobs so we may agree to revert the six-day NTFT jobs if we can get the 40 hour jobs filled.

We Lose Busse SPBS case

Union Advocate Doreene Motley won the first case which required management to pay SPBS clerks out of schedule when management worked abolished SPBS Clerks on the machine but did not post bids. Arbitrator Stallworth sustained the first grievance and the USPS paid 12 of the 13 employees a total of \$124,528 in out of schedule pay. The non-compliance grievance was filed on 4-1-10 and USPS paid the employees on 8-20-10. The Union pursued the non-compliance grievance after the employees were paid as USPS amounts differed from what the Union calculated and management did not explain their calculations. Mr. Stallworth denied the non-compliance case at Arbitration. His Award states the employees are not entitled to guaranteed pay, overtime pay, night differential, or out of schedule pay, but that is what we asked for in the first case that he sustained. In the first case he said employees were entitled to compensation but in the second case he says they are not entitled.

\$56 Million AO Settlement

The national union negotiated a \$56 million dollar settlement for postmasters performing bargaining unit work in small offices. The settlement requires postmasters to report their bargaining unit hours via an electronic 1260 form Starting on 12-5-14 and this has resulted in payments to Clerks. The second part was pay Clerks for violations prior to 12-5-14. \$26.23 will be paid to each PTF and NTFT Clerk who worked in level 15, 16, and 18 offices from 5-7-11 to 12-5-14, as they were the Clerks most harmed by these violations because they were not guaranteed 40 hours per week. Clerks who worked the entire 187 week period should get \$4900.00.

FEBH Open Season...

Open Season begins on 11-19-15. Carol Stream and Busse already had their Health Fairs on 11-3-15 and Palatine's is on 11-13-15, and the hours for all were 6am to 6pm. OPM announced the new Self Plus One enrollment type that will be effective 1-1-2016. The SPO will allow you to cover yourself and one eligible family member that you designate as your covered dependent. For more information visit www.opm.gov/selfplusone. You can sign up for SPO during the current FEBH open season.

USPS Hiring Retiree for XMAS

Postal annuitants were sent letters this year offering them six weeks of employment at \$15.63 hourly, and this holiday work will not reduce their retirement checks.

PSEs Working Past 365 Days

A few PSEs have called saying they were not given a five day break and asking if they should therefore be turned over to career. The answer is "no" but they can let us know so we can file a grievance that they should not have been working which will result in overtime pay to the violated ODL employees but not the PSEs. 