

The Local Line

"A PPA Award Winning Publication"

The Official Voice of the
Northwest Illinois Area Local

Floor Edition

Update by: Jackie Engelhart

PSE Conversions...

Management at Busse has stated they will convert 15 PSE Clerks as a result of two grievances. The PSEs will be converted as residual vacancies are created from the posting of 15 newly created duty assignments. There are currently 16 PSE Clerks at Busse but 15 of them are long-term and one is newly hired. 15 long-term PSEs will be converted over the next few weeks/months. Carol Stream is converting six PSE Clerks as a result of two grievances. The grievances were filed for management failing to fill eight regular 40 hour residuals and 12 NTFT 36 hour jobs. These grievance go to one of our national clerk officers to be discussed and settled at that level. On the first grievance for eight residuals s/he settled it for six PSE conversions. We asked about the second case filed for the 12 residuals and s/he said the that the six conversions settled both grievances. We made it clear to this officer we are not satisfied with settling for six out of 20 CS conversions, and will push the issue.

Palatine Retreat...

We were told by one of the Palatine Industrial Engineers who deals with Clerk bids that the rest of the ten employees in the Mailhandler craft should be returning back soon. This was confirmed by me with the Plant Mgr., but since then I was told that this has been put on hold. We requested a list of all residual vacancies and a list of all able-bodied unencumbered Clerks which would require management to return some of the remaining ten employees from the Mailhandler craft. Management is short of Clerks and Mailhandlers. Palatine is working PSE Clerks to feed trays on the Multi-line Low-Cost and when we complained about this the Plant Mgr. said he has to get his mail out so they must be very short on the MH side. Cross-Craft grievances are being filed by the MH union for the violations. The only Palatine PSEs being converted are those who get promoted to jobs in the Associate Offices. This is because we are still dealing with the fall-out from the excessing of Clerks out of Palatine from 2005 thru 2011.

Chicago Service Improvement Teams...

On 3-7-16 we attended a meeting at Cardiss Collins with District Manager Greg Johnson called so management could talk to the unions about the Service Improvement Teams assigned to the District for 60 days to look for ways to improve service in the Chicago District which is near the bottom in service. 70 managers have been assigned to this project under the leadership of Greater Indiana District Manager Larry Diegle. Larry said this is about finding ways to improve and not blaming anyone. The President of the Chicago Local for APWU, the President and Vice President of NPMHU 306, and the President of the Chicago Carriers Union were all there and each one spoke about understaffing and the problems it creates. We talked about Busse. Maintenance employees say they are working in a hostile work environment because they do not have enough staffing to keep up with trouble calls coming from operations who want jams cleared right away. We discussed issues with the Team and they see a problems to be corrected.

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Special points of interest:

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PSEs and Attendance

I recently appealed a grievance for a Notice of Removal for attendance for a PSE Clerk. The Clerk had a 7 Day on his record that would have come off in less than three months and we argued that the employee had improved his attendance prior to being issued the NOR so the discipline was not corrective but punitive, in violation of the National Agreement. Labor Relations entertained the possibility of a settlement but at the end said they could not settle. I appealed the case to the next level and wrote in part " *The Postal Service relies on non-career PSE Clerk work force to staff the Automation unit in most plants. PSEs at the Palatine P&DC work 40+ hours in the least desirable schedules with no regular days off, are required to work all holidays, and have a hard time getting advance leave requests approved...Yet when it comes to attendance they are held to a higher standard, because they are non-career and can be disposed of more easily than a career employee...The union is not asking for special treatment for the grievant but believes he should be given the same consideration as any other employee as he is performing the same work for less pay and benefits, but given less consideration when it comes to discipline and attendance problems.*" We are fighting to get our PSEs turned over because they do not have the same rights as career employees although they work the same job for less pay and benefits They can be fired more easily because USPS maintains PSEs are not entitled to the same steps of progressive discipline and can go from a Letter of Warning to a Removal and skip the 7 and 14 day suspensions. We are getting PSEs turned over at Carol Stream and Busse but Palatine is a problem. Palatine residuals must be filled.

Problem MPOO & Postmasters

We have filed many grievances in Glenview since Luvada Darling was appointed as Postmaster by MPOO Elizabeth Wulf and there were many problems in the office. The Postmaster did not have a good relationship with the Clerks or the APWU in this office. The last titled Postmaster had not been in the position long when she was moved by the MPOO and retired. Glenview has been having problems for years since USPS decided to send Winnetka Carriers and mail to Glenview as a way of saving money under what they call Delivery Unit Optimization (DUO). They send the mail and the Carriers but do not add enough Clerk staffing to process the additional mail. Service went down and in some ways Glenview never recovered from the DUO. Postmasters were moved in and out. Clerk bids were reposted but no one was there long enough to make sure Clerks were in the right bids after reposting. Postmaster Vickie Henderson was dealing with the aftermath of the DUO when she was moved out by the MPOO. She retired which allowed the MPOO to hire someone new. She hired Ms. Darling to clean up Glenview but has now moved her and Jeff Hansen is the new OIC. It is my guess that Glenview did not improve under Ms. Darling. Park Ridge Postmaster Ruby Brooks retired before she wanted to and MPOO Wulf selected Calamidy Winbush as the new Postmaster. As in Glenview, a Postmaster who got along well with the Clerks and the union was replaced by one with a more hard-nosed attitude. In many offices the Postmaster stays until they are promoted or retires, but in offices under MPOO Wulf movement of postmasters has been like a revolving door in the last two years with some moving out the door.

Democracy, Participation and Union Meetings...

We just had a primary election and hopefully all of you voted. The fact that two candidates not considered "establishment" are winning has surprised the pundits and shows that many voters are dissatisfied with politics as usual. While these two unconventional candidates are at opposite ends of the political spectrum they show that voters who were not engaged in the political process are now participating very enthusiastically. Only 60% of registered voters vote in a presidential election year and only 40% vote in the off year. Democracy requires participation and hopefully informed voters who will be voting in November. The election for APWU national officers will be in October and we encourage members to participate in the voting process to determine who will lead the national union for the next three years. Changes were made last time due to dissatisfaction with the incumbents so elections do make a difference. Union meetings are another way for union members to participate. Unions hold monthly meetings to conduct business and to report to and share information with the members. They give us a chance to meet with members outside of the post office and to exchange information where no managers are present. NWIAL membership meetings are usually held on the second Sunday of each month except for May (Mother's Day) and October (Columbus Day holiday) when they are held on the first Sunday of the month at 2:30pm. We will be putting out a survey to determine if more members would be able to attend meetings if the day and/or time was changed. The Union Hall is at 194 West Lake Street in Elmhurst right off of 290. Refreshments are served. We hope to see more of you there.

