

# 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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## Palatine # Reduced!

We finally met with A/Senior Plant Manager Greg Johnson for an update on the Palatine excessing and we were told that the number will be reduced from the original 132 letters sent out. He said the number will be reduced to 75 or 90, depending on whether or not the Great Lakes Area approves Palatine's request for the addition of 15 Priority positions to work the Priority mail. The return of some Priority mail from Busse to the plants to improve service has been a success and the mail should stay. Greg Johnson asked his managers to take another look at the number to be excessed as tour 1 did not think they would be able to get the mail out with the a loss of 132 Clerks. I can't say what someone else would have done but Greg inherited this mess and I am glad he's the one making the decisions. The arrival of Mr. Johnson couldn't have come at a better time.

## 32 Out of Palatine

Approximately 32 of the original 133 impacted Clerks will be required to be excessed out of the Palatine, depending on the results of residual Mail Handler positions and additional Priority jobs. According to management 27 Mail Handler casuals will be removed from Palatine P&DC. Up to 38 residual Mail Handler positions at Palatine will be withheld for impacted Clerks. Five Custodial positions are currently withheld. The remaining excess Clerks will be placed into currently withheld jobs at Carol Stream and within the local commuting area. We have identified Mail Handler and Custodian jobs at Chicago Metro Surface Hub (Busse) so there should be sufficient jobs within the plants so that no Palatine Clerk is forced into the Carrier Craft. The junior of the 75 or 90 Clerks will preference on the Palatine residuals and the remaining Clerks will preference on the residuals outside of Palatine.

## Carol Stream Clerks Want Bids Posted -

The tour 2 Clerks assigned to tours 1 and 3 on 1-3-09 are still in assignments, and we have told management we would like to see newly created bids posted soon to replace these assignments. CCD Taylor and I will be meeting with A/Plant Manager Nancy Fryrear soon to discuss what bids management intends to post and when. **Targeted Allied & Indirect Positions- TAIP** Headquarters instructed all districts to reduce TAIP positions by 33% and each plant is supposed to review General Clerk, General Expediter, Review Clerk and Postage Due positions to see which ones will be eliminated. Carol Stream Review Clerk and NWIAL Trustee Ray Wience found that his 38 years of seniority was not enough to save his Review Clerk job at Carol Stream. Sorry Ray. The many changes coming at us affect junior as well as senior Clerks. We will challenge any abolishment where management is back-filling the position and we see this daily.

Jackie Engelhart  
President  
Alan J. Czerwinski  
News Director

### Special points of interest:

**Palatine # Reduced!**

**32 Out of Palatine  
TAIP**

**The Uphill Fight to Keep  
Clerk Work in the Plants  
It's the Transfer of Work**

**Involuntary Details in  
Associate Offices**

**Associate Office Reversions**

**Attacks on MVS Craft  
Support HR 4236**

Northwest Illinois Area Local  
American Postal Workers Union  
194 W. Lake Street  
Elmhurst, IL 60126  
Phone: 630-833-0088  
Fax: 630-833-0248  
Email: nwialapwu@hotmail.com  
Web: www.nwial.com

## **The Uphill Fight to Keep Clerk Work in the Plants**

The current Palatine Clerk excessing and the Tour Compression are being blamed on mail volume reductions and we know mail volume continues to decline. Past excessing at Palatine and Carol Stream was due to the loss of the SPBS and AFSM work, and the transfer of Clerk work to the Mail Handlers on the APPS and AI modification to the AFSM. The AFSM-AI is an Automated Flat Sorter and the APPS is an Automated Parcel Processing System. The Primary Function of each machine is to process mail. Neither is a culling or prepping operation, but in contradiction to RI-399 Craft Jurisdiction principles, management at the headquarters level awarded what had been primarily Clerk work on the SPBS and 100% Clerk work on the Flat-Sorter to the Mail Handlers. This is consistent with what APWU sees as the USPS plan to have one mail-processing craft in the plants. This not so secret plan was picked by local management in the plants after they assigned Low Cost Tray Sorter (LCTS) #1 in both plants to Clerks (with a Mail Handler loading) and then assigned LCTS #2 to the Mail Handlers. The work on all of these LCTSs is the same, distribution of tubs and trays. The only LCTS that is not distribution is LCTS # 5 at Carol Stream, which is a culling operation and not disputed by APWU. We are not trying to take Mail Handler work, we are just trying to keep Clerk work. I recently talked to National CCD Jim McCarthy and RI-399 Coordinator Tom Maier and they say our LCTS disputes should be arbitrated sometime in the summer of 2009.

## **It's the Transfer of Work**

Clerks are being excessed because of the transfer of Clerk work to the Mail Handler Craft and not because of mail volume decline. The steady attrition of craft employees has offset the volume decline or you would see management excessing Mail Handlers. They are not affected because management keeps transferring Clerk work. If the excessing was strictly based on volume decline then it would impact both crafts involved in mail processing in the plants. The Tour Compression likewise only affected one craft in the plants, the Clerks. If you keep taking from one and giving to the other this will result in excessing from the losing craft. A few years ago you heard the statement, "It's the economy, stupid." I will update that to "It's the transfer of work, stupid."

## **Involuntary Clerk Details in Associate Offices**

In the last month management of the Northern II District has begun involuntary details of Part-Time Flexible Clerks from their home office for periods of three to six months. I contacted Human Resource Manager Phyllis Lingenfelter and she is relying on the Hub Clerk Agreement which permits management to share a PTF with another office if the PTF is getting insufficient work-hours in their home installation. I spoke with a National Business Agent and our National Clerk Craft Director, and they both agree that these involuntary details are not PTF sharing under the Hub Clerk Agreement. These Clerks should have received 60 day notice letters per Article 12. The common thread in these involuntary details is Area 1 POOM Judy Carlson.

## **Associate Office Reversions**

Recently we have been successful in challenging a few AO reversions but the immediate reaction we get from the District Complement Coordinator is that we may have to excess out of that office, so the fight goes on and on.

## **Attacks on MVS Craft**

The craft has been under attack since 2001 when the USPS Transformation Commission made a recommendation to contract out vehicle maintenance and transportation work. Recently, President Burrus signed a controversial Memorandum of Understanding called Postal Vehicle Service (PVS) Amended Work Rules Pilot to address the very real prospect of the threat of "mode conversions" which is the USPS term for eliminating Postal drivers within and installation and contracting all transportation work.

## **Support HR 4236**

The Mail Network Protection Act of 2007 (HR4236) would provide for the protection and the integrity of the US mail. This bill requires the USPS to bargain with unions representing career employees before entering into a contract for mail processing, mail hauling, or surface transportation of mail, if the contract in a 12-month period would involve work that would otherwise be performed by these employees and either 1) involve more than a specified amount of time; or 2) cost over \$5 million. The passage of this bill is critical and all postal employees should contact their Senators and Congressman to support this bill.

## **NWIAL Retirement Seminar**

The seminar on 4-25-09 from 9am to 5pm is free to all NWIAL members with a \$10 donation to COPA and advance registration.