

MOUND CITY CARRIER

Official Publication of Branch 343

2020 General Excellence
Award Winning Publication



St. Louis, Missouri
Chartered 1892



Volume 75, No. 6

"Diversity is our Strength and Unity is our Power"

June 2024

95TH OLE TIMERS DAY HONOREES



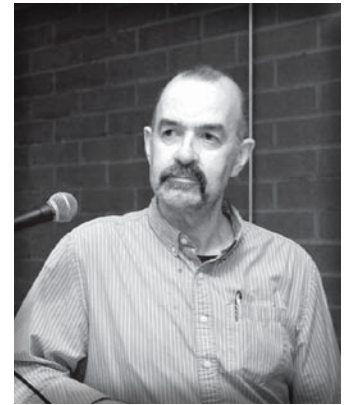
Front Row (L-R) 50-Year Gold Card recipients: Mike Weir, Russell (Rusty) Baccus and Tom Beaver.

60-Year Pin recipients: Dennis Jenicek, Wayne L. Imes and J. Edward Holt.

Back Row (L-R) Vice President/Financial Secretary Marvin Booker, Executive Vice President/Treasurer Brian Litteken, NALC Vice President James Henry, Branch 343 President John McLaughlin, RAA Larrissa Parde and Retiree Chairman Tom Schulte.

PRESIDENT'S ARTICLE ... By JOHN McLAUGHLIN

Postal Math: 259 Proper Complement of PTFs
 - 221 Actual Number of PTFs
 38 Number of PTFs short



"I'M RIGHT AS THE MAIL"

This phrase was uttered by Doc Holliday (Val Kilmer) in the movie "Tombstone." He was frequently ill, and in an attempt to convince his cohorts that there was nothing wrong with his health, he uttered, "I'm right as the mail." Just then, he collapsed on the barroom floor. This phrase was used years ago to convey a sense of certainty. Back in the day, the mail service was seen as one of the few items in life that was always prompt and on time. With the advent of stationary mail (credit MCC asst. editor Matt Gleiforst), I wonder if our customers hear this phrase now and laugh.

This service-destroying spiral began years ago. I remember when the supervisors would be caught doing clerk work or casing DPS, pay money in a grievance while readily admitting their wrongdoing, apologize and swear never to do it again. Now, management blatantly performs craft work and justifies it because "the mail needs to get out." They don't even pretend they will stop. Also, it was rare to see undelivered mail sitting on the floor in the morning when we reported for work. When it did happen, the reason why and the responsible carrier were identified, and the mail would go out ASAP that same morning. Next, management began to purposely not have mail delivered on some routes. But never the same route two days in a row. Now some routes will go undelivered until the regular on the route returns or only certain types of mail, DPS or parcels, get delivered.

No matter the reasons given by the service for purposefully delaying the mail, this has now become the new normal. Carriers are the ones who must try and explain to their patrons why they are not getting their mail. Carriers are the face of the franchise and carriers take the hit. The annual rating of America's favorite government agency used to be the highest for the Postal Service. As recently as 2020, the service received a

**Armed, off-duty police security
 provided at every meeting at the
 Union Hall**



MOVING?

WE NEED YOUR NEW ADDRESS!

If you have moved, please notify the branch office directly. Personnel does not notify us of your change of address.

Name _____

Address _____

City/State _____

Zip _____

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Mark Your Calendar

Don't sit on the sidelines ... Get involved!

- June 13 Regular Branch Meeting
- June 19 Juneteenth National Holiday Observed
- July 3 Retiree Meeting
- July 3 Note: Shop Stewards Meeting moved because of July 4 holiday
- July 4 Independence Day Holiday
- July 11 Regular Branch Meeting
- July 14 CSRS/FERS Retirement Seminar (see ad)

favorable rating of 91%. In 2023, the service has dropped to 62%. In three short years, the service, under PMG DeJoy's misguidance, has dropped nearly 30%. On the other hand, it is good to see politicians from both political parties piling on our PMG and his "10-year plan." Go to YouTube and search for our PMG enduring questions on Capitol Hill at the U.S. Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee hearing. In particular, check out Georgia Republican U.S. Sen. John Ossoff's questioning.

The senator addressed mail delays in Atlanta, Ga. (Palmetto, Ga.). They are the recipient of newly created *regional processing & distribution centers* as part of PMG's 10-year plan. Palmetto has experienced a tremendous reduction in service. Outbound mail is delivered on time at 67% and inbound first class mail is delivered on time at 36%. This is even worse if you consider the low delivery standards the service has implemented in recent years. What is even scarier is that our PMG knew within 1%, how late it was. When the PMG remarked that it would take months to fix, the senator quickly replied, "No, he has weeks." Surprise, it has only gotten worse.

Lastly, the senator asked the PMG if he received the letter he mailed him a month prior. The PMG stated he had not received the letter. The senator remarked the mail is late in Georgia, and a member of the Committee of Jurisdiction sent you a letter, and you did not receive it. I think the irony of that was lost on our buffoon of a PMG. The higher up one goes in the service, the less accountable and detached they become. Until the PMG, district manager, and postmaster comprehend and take total responsibility for the decimation of the 'service,' this will only get worse. Btw, the St. Louis Installation is still short 38 carriers. Carriers are not "right as the mail."

Until next month, do your job safely and accurately. Show up to **your** union meeting. You might learn something. We don't write the rules; we just have to play the game. Sláinte.

PLEASE BE ADVISED!

The July shop stewards meeting will be held
Wednesday, July 3 due to the July 4 holiday.

The August regular branch meeting will be moved from
Thursday, August 8 to Thursday, August 15
due to the NALC National Convention the second week of August

100% Union Honor Roll

CHOUTEAU	OLIVETTE
CUBA	PIEDMONT
DES PERES	SALEM
FENTON	SOUTH COUNTY
FREDRICKTOWN	ST. CLAIR
GAFFNEY	WARRENTON
GRAVOIS	WASHINGTON
JENNINGS	WENTZVILLE
MAPLEWOOD	WEST COUNTY

The following stations were represented at the May Stewards Meeting

Aftton	Marian Oldham
Carrier Square	Maryville Gardens
Clayton	Normandy
Creve Coeur	North County
Gaffney	Sappington
Gravois	South County
Harriet Woods	Southwest
Jennings	Weathers
Maplewood	West County

EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT ... BY BRIAN LITTEKEN

INTEGRITY SCANS

Carriers have been getting instructions concerning integrity scans of parcels during stand-up talks. I thought it would be helpful to review Handbook M-39 and Handbook M-41 on the proper procedures for delivering parcels.

Loading Parcels

“While loading parcels into the vehicle, carriers are to arrange them in the sequence of delivery. Instruct carriers to place missorted, missent, or undeliverable as addressed parcels and empty equipment in a specific safe location, either on the dock or in another readily accessible location, which will not require them to return to their casing area.” Missorted and missent parcels would not be scanned. Any undeliverable as addressed parcel should be scanned under the Return to Sender or Forward menu or Other menu. The carrier should endorse the parcel as Undeliverable As Addressed (UAA), Attempted Not Known, No Such Number, Insufficient Address, etc. and leave the parcel at the throwback case. Any Hold Mail parcels should be scanned Customer Hold. “Instruct the carrier to place hold mail in a central location *only* when space is not available at the carrier’s case.” Hold parcels should not be taken on the route because the customer may come to the post office to pick up their hold mail while the carrier is out on the route delivering mail. No parcels should be scanned on the post office parking lot under the Attempted menu except Customer Hold.

Delivering Parcels

“If a parcel is heavy, will not fit into your satchel, or requires a signed receipt, determine if someone is available at the address by ringing the doorbell or knocking on the door at the time of delivery of the rest of the mail.”

If Someone Answers the Door

If someone answers the door, the carrier scans the parcel under the Delivered menu.

If Someone Does Not Answer the Door

Carrier is Authorized to Leave Parcel

If someone does not answer the door and the carrier is authorized to leave parcels, the carrier scans the parcel under the Delivered menu. “Uninsured parcels or parcels that do not require a signature may be left

in an unprotected location such as a stairway or uncovered porch when the mailer participates in the Carrier Release Program by endorsing the parcel “Carrier – Leave If No Response” or the addressee has given written directions for an alternate delivery location.” “Carriers are not liable for loss or theft where these instructions and postal regulations are followed.”

Carrier is Not Authorized to Leave Parcel

If someone does not answer the door and the carrier is not authorized to leave parcels, the carrier scans the parcel under the Attempted menu.

When someone is usually available to receive parcels, “do not leave PS Form 3849, *Delivery Notice/Reminder/Receipt*. Write the date and the carrier’s initials and route number near the address and return the parcel to the office. Place the parcel in the gurney at the carrier’s case. Attempt a second delivery on the next delivery day. If the parcel is not delivered after the second attempt, complete and leave PS Form 3849.”

When someone is not usually available to receive parcels, complete and leave PS Form 3849 after the first attempt. “Endorse the parcel near the address, showing the reason for non-delivery (e.g. “No Response”), date delivery was attempted, and the carrier’s initials and route number. Upon returning to the office, deposit the parcel in the designated place for undelivered parcels.”

Throughout the day and before returning to the office, check for any undelivered parcels in the postal vehicle. If you have some parcels you haven’t attempted, backtrack to that delivery and make the attempt.

Next month’s article will cover what should be done with parcels after you finish delivery and return to the post office.



VICE PRESIDENT FINANCIAL SECRETARY

... BY MARVIN BOOKER



FOOD DRIVE 2024 THE AFTERMATH ...

First, I would like to give a huge thank you to all members, station coordinators, volunteers, and customers who helped make the 32nd Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive a great day of giving.

However, because we failed to receive any of the 579,261 postcards requested from NALC Headquarters on January 3, getting the word out was a challenge. St. Louis was not alone in facing this challenge. Kansas City, Columbia, and Florissant also did not receive any postcards.

Notwithstanding this setback, we were able to soldier through with the support of our local partners St. Louis Area Foodbank and the United Way Greater St. Louis. With their help we were able to get the word out through newspapers, radio, television, and social media. The branch also received a proclamation from the mayor of the City of St. Louis, Tishaura O. Jones, proclaiming May 11, 2024, as **“Letter Carriers’ Food Drive Day” in the City of St. Louis.**

However, despite the best-efforts of all, donations were significantly down about 70,000 pounds. The NALC must reexamine their support and commitment to the “Stamp Out Hunger” Food Drive. As an organization we let down the Foodbanks in three of the largest metropolitan areas in Missouri.



Receiving a Proclamation from the City of St. Louis proclaiming “Letter Carrier Food Drive Day” are Br. 343 V.P. Marvin Booker; Jordan Casey, St. Louis Area Foodbank; Sonja Gholston-Byrd, United Way; and Frank Enlow, Br. 343 Sergeant-at-Arms

The need for food donations to the Foodbanks that serve Missouri is great.

- 42% of households served had to choose between paying for food or housing.
- 40% of households served had to choose between paying for food or medicine or medical care.
- 39% of households served had to choose between putting fuel in their cars to get to work and putting food on the table.

The timing of our food drive is crucial. Food banks and pantries often receive the majority of their donations during the Thanksgiving and Christmas holiday seasons. By springtime, many pantries are depleted, entering the summer low on supplies at a time when many school breakfast and lunch programs are not available to children in need.

To have a successful Food Drive, planning must start as early as January. It is disappointing that all the planning and preparation by so many for this year’s “Stamp Out Hunger” Food Drive was derailed by the lack of commitment and support of the NALC.

However, my biggest disappointment is that we failed to provide help and hope to those in need. One must wonder if, like the USPS, the NALC has forgotten the meaning and the true essence of the word “service.”

“Service is the rent we pay for being. It is the very purpose of life, and not something you do in your spare time.” (Marian Wright Edelman)

Until next time be safe and be professional.

BRANCH LEGAL PLAN

Advice and Consultation on
General Practice and Civil Actions.



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RECORDING SECRETARY ... BY RICHARD BROWN



MANAGEMENT

Hello, brothers and sisters, I hope all is well. As our fight continues, we must face a few different opponents. Our leadership has changed yet again, losing Postmaster Diana, and gaining new Postmaster Medora. Most have not had the opportunity to meet Medora yet, but the word on the street is that she is an interesting leader to say the least.

One thing I have noticed is that our new postmaster holds her management staff accountable for some of the nonsense they do. This is by putting them off the clock, some in non-pay status while others are certainly having a moment of reflection. Medora's message has not quite reached the masses, because some of her management staff continue to lie, scheme, and cheat to make the numbers. They do this mainly to impress the powers that be, but they too will be found out. Their actions have sometimes negatively affected carriers too, by deleting clock rings, or even by not putting COP time in the system. Most of their problems have come from trying to cheat their own system, and the postmaster, or one of her cronies is catching it. When the postmaster finds out, she seems to act swiftly against them.

I say all of this because as you go about your day, you will see or hear some things at the hands of management that you know are improper. You must take notes and speak up when the opportunity presents itself. I'm not telling you to look for problems, but if you keep your head on a swivel, things will come into view. Four managers have been walked out of their office for various reasons, and I'm certain that others think they got away with something because it wasn't them. This is why I say keep your head on a swivel; you may assist in getting rid of an annoying supervisor or manager. None of this means that each of the managers deserved to be put off the clock, but I'm sure the postmaster wasn't wrong in all of her decisions either.

YOUR RESPONSIBILITY

Addressing an issue with your co-workers could help someone remain employed. If you see one of your co-workers doing something against policy, let the steward know. You may be saving their job and not know it. Don't try to be a hero because some people can't take constructive criticism, and the conversation between you and that person could turn ugly.

Speaking of letting your steward know, if you have approached your steward about an issue and they don't seem to be responsive, contact the Union Hall, option 1 (President). The president should know of these issues so that he can investigate the situation and maybe bring clarity to it. While stewards don't have all the answers immediately, they may be able to convince management of their wrongdoing enough to stop the

negative action momentarily. It takes time to learn the contract and if the steward is putting forth effort, give them time to resolve an issue. It is when they do nothing, that you should contact the union president.

We all have some simple responsibilities. Be where you are supposed to be when you are on the street. This "stationary time venture" has grown legs of its own and some of management has taken it to the extreme. Your famous words should be "I was working." Use common sense though. If you have no apartments on your route, why would you be in the same place for an hour? Maybe you are sick. Maybe your vehicle broke down and you can't call the office because your phone is dead. Maybe you are sitting there doing nothing (hopefully not). Management can see just about everything we do with these scanners, so don't become a victim of circumstance. Your route is what it is for the day. The time you spend delivering today may be different than the time you spent delivering yesterday. Be responsible for you, so you don't have to answer for foolishness.

GENERAL INFORMATION

If you haven't heard, the USPS board of governors is criticizing the Postal Service's "Delivering for America Plan." The board says they want the Postal Service to slow down on the recent changes due to persistent mail delays. The Postal Service has had their fair share of issues in Atlanta, Houston, and Virginia (which are locations of the new consolidated sites) but they don't seem to have a solid resolution to the problems they are encountering. The Postal Service is planning to open more of these types of centers all over, but they clearly can't control the mail delays in the few that they have. The good thing is the board is not only looking into the issues but appears to be holding PMG Dejoy accountable for the Postal Service's deficiencies.

Here in St. Louis, we have our share of mail processing issues, and 1720 Market St. is supposed to take on processing for some of the Springfield area. If you think it's crazy now, just wait until this happens. There is no telling how your mail will be distributed to you then.

I will caution you on one thing: If you have little mail to deliver and management offers you to leave early, don't let management trick you into using your leave to fulfill the day. Stay at work and let them know you are there to work. If they have nothing for you to do and insist that you leave, they should be paying you administrative leave (guarantee time) to make your eight hours if they tell you to go home. PS 3971 Form and a statement by you will be your best notification of the deficiency.

Until next time, stay safe and abide by the national agreement. Who is responsible!

HEALTH BENEFITS PLAN/OWCP ... *BARRY LINAN*



June greetings to all of the brothers and sisters of NALC Branch 343. The service needs to inform our new PTFs to sign up on LITEBLUE for their benefits (FEHB health plan, FEGLI life insurance, and Thrift Savings Plan) within 60 days of their hire/appointment date. The enrollment codes for our NALC Health Plan - High Option are 321 Self Only or 322 Self and Family, and for the CDHP Option the codes are 324 Self Only or 325 Self and Family. New PTFs can also optionally sign up for vision or dental benefits at www.benefeds.com. I would recommend that PTFs take at least the FEGLI Basic Coverage (annual salary rounded up to nearest 1,000 + 2,000). The FEGLI Basic is free to postal employees.

Also, make sure to sign up for a Thrift Savings Plan (TSP) retirement account. Your TSP account is similar to a 401k and I recommend investing at least 5% salary into it, since the USPS matches that first 5% of your salary contribution. Your TSP contributions are all deposited in your account tax-free. **PTFs, do not let the 60 days pass by without signing up for your benefits!**

HBP NEWS

The NALC HBP offers 24/7 access to doctors thru our Telehealth program. If you can't get in to see your doctor right away or don't currently have a doctor, Telehealth is available by downloading the NALCHBP Telehealth app onto your computer or smartphone. Download the Telehealth app at www.nalchbptelehealth.org or you can call 888-541-7706. Your Telehealth visit will cost you a \$10 co-pay at time of visit. Telehealth doctor visits can provide advice for minor health conditions, but as always, if you have a serious condition call 911 or go to a hospital ER.

Telehealth can also provide nutrition counseling, women's health services, lactation support, and dermatology support. While not a substitute for in-person doctor care, telehealth can provide a needed immediate consultation with a doctor while you await your appointment.

Medicare Part B – Special Enrollment Period (SEP): The Medicare Part B SEP that was ordered as part of the Postal Service Reform Act of 2022 is underway now and it runs through September 30, 2024.

Postal retirees should have received a letter from the service informing them of their eligibility to enroll in Medicare Part B and not have to pay the 10% per year premium after age 65 late penalty. **If you enroll during the six-month SEP, your Medicare Part B coverage will begin on January 1, 2025 and the premiums will begin being deducted then.**

OWCP NEWS

As I wrote last month, you are entitled to continuation of pay (COP) for up to 45 calendar days. After the 45 days of COP, if you still have time loss from work, you must file a Form CA-7, Claim for Compensation, with the DOL. Per ELM 545.811, your supervisor is supposed to provide you a Form CA-7 by day 30 of the COP period. You can request a CA-7 from your supervisor or go online at dol.gov/agencies/owcp/FECA and download the form. You complete the front side of the CA-7. You are requesting “a. Leave without pay” and provide the initial “Inclusive Date Range.” Provide dates based on your USPS Sat-Fri pay week and it will be easier to track your time with your paycheck. The first CA-7 you are filing just to initiate the DOL compensation pay process, so the dates can be for a partial pay week after your COP expires. For example, if your 45th day of COP falls on a Wednesday, you fill out your first CA-7 with the dates for Thursday and Friday that remain in that pay week. Your second CA-7 is then filled out for the dates of the following pay period Sat-Fri and Sat-Fri. You continue filing a CA-7 every two weeks until you no longer have time loss from work or otherwise instructed by the DOL.

You can file your Form CA-7 with your supervisor, Fax it directly to the District Injury Comp Office (HRM), or file it online thru your ECOMP account. If you file with your supervisor, make sure to keep copies of any/all forms. Management then has five work days to complete their portion of the CA-7, indicating your pay rate on the date of injury and send the completed form to the DOL for processing. More on CA-7 and compensation next month.

NOTES FROM THE MANAGING EDITOR

... BY TOM SCHULTE



SEEING OLD FRIENDS AT THE 95TH OLE TIMERS DAY

It's been my honor since I became the chairman of the retirees to serve as the host for our annual Ole Timers Day celebration. This annual event was conceived in September of 1930 when it was referred to in Branch 343 recording secretary's minutes as a "homecoming gathering" for retired letter carriers. That event was recorded as an invitation to retired letter carriers with a dinner to be served following their regular branch meeting.

Since Branch 343 was chartered in 1892, this celebratory gathering would have involved the first generation of carriers who may have recently retired. By all accounts the recording secretary's minutes showed that it was such a well-attended event, it became an annual affair.

Sometime post World War II, this annual gathering took on the moniker Ole Timers Day. Archival photos use this name from the mid to late 1950s. Call it what you will, this fraternal gathering would present itself as the perfect opportunity to issue 50-Year Gold Cards and decade long service pins to our retirees for their unwavering loyalty to remaining union members far past their active careers.

This year, eight union members received their 50-Year Gold Cards, 15 members received their 60-Year pins, and one member received his 70-Year Plaque. While all these members were invited to the luncheon, only six members were present to receive their respective award. For some members who live out of state, the journey in was too much for them to attend and health issues plagued other members. But despite those limitations, we were please to have six members present.

Festivities began at 11 a.m. with a meet and greet happy hour with hors d'oeuvres and liquid refreshments with an opportunity to welcome our honorees and guests and swap old yarns from times gone by. We were pleased to have about 65 guests join us for this year's celebration.

As chairman of the retirees, I offered welcoming remarks to our attendees and the order of how our program would follow. Newly retired member Chetney Drain, who serves the branch as our ad hoc chaplain, offered prayers prior to the serving of a delicious lunch.

Our awards presentation began with opening

remarks from Branch 343 President John McLaughlin who introduced the various office holders and dignitaries in the crowd before his introduction of our guest speaker, NALC Vice President James Henry.

Mr. Henry spoke about his own introduction into the union, witnessing the injustices taking place against union members, including himself, and his desire to become a shop steward to try and remedy those offenses. He reminded everyone of the challenges and sacrifices made on our behalf by all those union members who came before us, directing those comments to everyone in attendance.

We then proceeded to the awarding of our honored members. Those members in attendance receiving their 50-Year Gold Cards were Russell Baccus, Tom Beaver, and Mike Weir. Our 60-Pin honorees in attendance were J. Edward Holt, Wayne L. Imes and Dennis Jenicek. We also took the time to announce our two Retirees of the Year for their contributions to our retiree's group, they were Sandy Theismann and Mike Chenot.

Our program concluded with numerous attendance prizes provided by Ray and Charlotte Breakfield and Geno and Glenda Iberg, which were greatly appreciated. Geno also provided NALC veterans baseball caps to all our military veterans. I personally presented our guest speaker, James Henry, with a cap for his service in the United States Marine Corp.

To all of our honorees who were unable to attend and receive their much deserved awards, rest assured that they will be mailed out shortly.

We hope to see everyone next year when we celebrate the 96th Ole Timers Day.



REGION 5 NBA REPORT ... DAVID A. TEEGARDEN



REGION 5 LETTER CARRIER HEROES

Letter carrier Ricky Martin, Branch 2327, Canton, Mo., received a commendation letter from President Renfroe for taking action to assist a customer on his route. Martin came to the aid of a customer in distress, called 911 and waited with the customer until emergency responders arrived at the scene. The branch will be presenting Renfroe's letter to Mr. Martin in appreciation of his efforts.

DRT ISSUE UPDATE

Since last month's article we have undertaken a number of initiatives designed to reduce the backlog of cases at Step B and pending arbitration. We have a substantial backlog of cases at the Step B level and the arbitration level of the Article 15 process. Both DRT offices have an approximate backlog of 500 cases each. We currently have just over 500 cases pending arbitration at the NBA office as well. Pre-arbitration sessions with the service at the headquarters level have begun to take place and we are having some success in resolving and reducing disputes at both levels of the Article 15 process. We still have significant work to do to get those backlogs down to a manageable level. As I advised the carriers in attendance at the Nebraska, Kansas, and Iowa state trainings, what I will not do is settle just to reduce the backlog. I will not agree to going backwards on settlements.

REGION 5 STATE TRAININGS

We just recently finished with the last state trainings this spring. We visited Nebraska, Kansas, and Iowa in our spring tour. The Region 5 office provided training on OWCP, branch officer responsibilities, Informal A through Formal A case file building, legislation, and LMOU negotiations. Thanks to all the state associations for taking care of the training and hotel rooms, audio visual needs, and assistance with training. It was great seeing all of you and we look forward to seeing you at the National Convention or fall training.

REGION 5 TRAINING

As promised, we will begin our basic Steward College training June 2-4 at the St. Louis, Mo., Branch 343 Union Hall. We will accept up to 30 individuals for this training. Hotels, travel, food etc. are at the expense of the branch. If you would like to attend, please send any of us at the NBA office an email and we will consider you, first come first served, after slots are filled by the host branch. The training will cover basic steward rights and responsibilities and the Article 15 process in depth. Attendees should expect to participate in class and work hard. This will be a fast-paced class and attendee participation is required. We will begin class on Sunday at noon and conclude no later than 3 p.m. on Tuesday. If flying in, schedule departing flights no earlier than 5:30 p.m. on Tuesday.

We will also be providing basic steward training as well as some branch officer training virtually, beginning later in June. This training is a repeat of the training RGA Margaret Parker has provided in the past and is intended for new stewards or those thinking of becoming a steward. This will be separate from the Stewards College training mentioned above. The format and curriculum will be different for each of these training courses. Virtual training will not be as in-depth as the in-person training and is conducted for approximately two hours each night over a four-week period.

Once the contract is settled, the NBA office will conduct additional LMOU training virtually to assist branches with securing better benefits for their members or in creating an LMOU for branches that do not have one.

Preliminary indications are that we will have the Region 5 Rap Session at the same hotel in Kansas City and we will probably be at the same rate of \$126 a night plus tax. We intend to add a day of training on Friday to include much more in-depth branch officer training as well as OWCP and basic steward training, that will allow us to amend our schedule for Saturday. More information will be forthcoming soon.

2024 RETIREE AWARDEES

OLE TIMERS DAY CELEBRATION

May 4, 2024

70-YEAR PLAQUE

Albert Browne

60-YEAR PINS:

Gene Clements
Donald Doebber
Michael Hennessy
J. Edward Holt Jr
Wayne Imes
Dennis Jenicek
Jack Leschen
Joseph Mikes Jr.

Raymond Murrah Jr.
James Oldenburg
Carltn Pleasant
Jerry Sikorski
Gordon Smith
Vernon Warren
Carl Whitaker

50-YEAR GOLD CARDS

Russell Baccus
Raymond Beaver
William Grau
Elmer Guy

Thomas Lane
Michael Laub
David Maloney
Michael Weir

2024 RETIREES OF THE YEAR



Sandy Theismann



Mike Chenot



ST. LOUIS CARDINAL BASEBALL TICKETS STILL AVAILABLE

The Union Hall still has unsold St. Louis Cardinal
Baseball Tickets for purchase.



Great Seats (Behind Home Plate)
Section 249, Row 6, Seats 5 and 6
\$135 for the pair

Contact Executive Vice President Brian Litteken at:
314-241-4297 [ext. 2]

95TH OLE TIMERS DAY AWARDEES

*Pictured with honorees is NALC Vice President James Henry,
Branch 343 President John McLaughlin and Retiree Chairman Tom Schulte*

50-YEAR GOLD CARDS



Russell (Rusty) Baccus - Gold Card



J. Edward Holt - 60-Year Pin



Tom Beaver - Gold Card



Wayne L. Imes - 60-Year Pin



Mike Weir - Gold Card



Dennis Jenicek - 60-Year Pin

SCENES FROM THE 95TH OLE TIMERS DAY



FRIENDS AND FAMILY ENJOYING THE CELEBRATION



SAFETY & HEALTH ...BY RICHARD THURMAN

A SAFE WORKING ENVIRONMENT IS YOUR RIGHT!

In an article from The Eagle magazine over the previous two years, the USPS has outlined its ambitious Regional Processing Transportation Ecosystem design and concept for reconfiguring delivery and processing centers. The Eagle magazine details the configuration breakdown for the Delivery Unit (DU), Sorting and Delivery Centers (S&DC), Local Processing Centers (LPC), and Regional Processing and Distribution Centers (RPDC). This will be a considerable endeavor, bringing about immediate changes to each person's work environment over a sustained period.

There are immediate implications for every decision being made in your work environment. Therefore, every individual must understand what occurs in their working environment. Please remember to seek to understand the implications of the following: Code of federal regulations, OSHA standards and regulations, and postal books and manuals via Articles 14 and 19.

The **Handbook EL-800** states:

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) is designed to protect employees from safety and health hazards. Suppose suppliers (i.e., contractors) on postal premises violate OSHA requirements. In that case, the Postal Service provides guidance and suggested procedures for new construction, repair, and alteration projects at Postal Service sites and facilities. It applies to projects, activities, and programs managed

through quantity contracts, service contracts, basic pricing agreements, or funding documents that bind the Postal Service to the completion of work. The Postal Service is potentially liable for the injuries that may result to employees, customers, and or contract employees. Even if there are no injuries, OSHA may take enforcement action against the Postal Service for supplier violations.

Article 14 of the National Agreement states in part:

"Section 1. Responsibilities. *It is the responsibility of management to provide safe working conditions in all present and future installations and to develop a safe working force. The Union will cooperate with and assist management to live up to this responsibility.*

"Section 2. Cooperation. *The Employer and the Union insist on the observance of safe rules and safe procedures by employees and insist on correction of unsafe conditions. Mechanization, vehicles and vehicle equipment, and the workplace must be maintained in a safe and sanitary condition, including adequate occupational health and environmental conditions. The Employer shall make available at each installation forms to be used by employees in reporting unsafe conditions. If an employee believes he/she is being required to work under unsafe conditions, such employee may:*

"(a) notify such employee's supervisor who will immediately investigate the condition and take corrective action if necessary;

"(b) notify such employee's steward, if available, who may

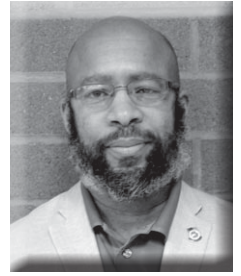
discuss the alleged unsafe conditions with such employee's supervisor;

"(c) file a grievance at Formal Step A of the grievance procedure within (14) days of notifying such employee's supervisor if no corrective action is taken during the employee's tour; and/or;

"(d) make a written report to the Union representative from the local Safety and Health Committee who may discuss the report with such employee's supervisor."

There are direct and indirect consequences for each action taken or the failure of management to act appropriately. Across the country, the Postal Service has been cited numerous times for repeated offenses in their facilities. Offenses such as:

- Contractual services initiated by outside contractors.
- Construction and repairs on postal facilities, including renovation.
- Grounds, buildings, and equipment maintenance work, including landscaping, pest control, and building/equipment prevention maintenance activities, including trash and recycling.
- Services, hazardous and biological disposal services, window washing, snow removal, food services, and building inspections.
- Equipment servicing and custodial services, which include



transportation services drop shipments, i.e., uneven pallets.

If you see something, say something! Do not hesitate to ask a question if you are unaware of the

regulation or the standard that applies. Be prepared to write a statement or be interviewed to protect yourself and your family. Many have been injured or affected because

someone failed to act or ask a question. You must ensure your safety and go home the same way you came. Look out for your brothers and sisters.

SOUTH COUNTY ... BY MATT GLEIFORST

Hello from South County. First off, I would like to congratulate a few of our carriers here on some amazing milestones that they have reached. Suzette Proctor, Ramona Droege, and Donna Boxdorfer all reached 30 years in the Postal Service this past month. Randy Ladyman achieved an incredible 40 years of service. This is not an easy job, both physically and mentally, so it cannot be understated how proud we should all feel for these carriers. So, to these four carriers, I say congratulations and thank you for your continued careers of dedicated service to our community.



One of the greatest rewards of being a letter carrier is being part of a union that gives back to our communities. Besides the everyday duties we have in serving our customers, we also go the extra mile of service in many other ways. On Saturday, May 11, letter carriers across the country participated in another successful food drive. As well as delivering mail, we collected countless bags of food from our generous customers to be donated to local food banks in need. Since the start of the letter carrier's food drive in 1993, the NALC has collected almost 2 billion pounds of food. Food drive day can definitely make for a difficult workday, but we should all be proud of the contribution that we are able to take part in. Without us this amazing accomplishment could not happen.

In a time when it feels as though the Postal Service is every day becoming more corporate and cold, it is so refreshing seeing retired members showing up to help. It is clear to me that most people in upper management do not care about the people that we serve or the communities they live in, but we still do. For several years, our own Gino Iberg and Doc Urbanek have continued to come in on food drive day to help collect food with the rest of us active carriers. They are in no way obligated to do so, after all they have both been retired for the better half of a decade, but they do because they care. They take pride in the careers that they had, and they still care about the people they served. I would like to thank both of them as well as all carriers that came in on their off days and the families of carriers that participated as well.

POSTAL FAMILY SPOTLIGHT

This month I decided that instead of interviewing a letter carrier, I would interview someone who is part of our South County family. Carol Stenger is the wife of carrier/shop steward Bob Stenger. Ever since I came to South County six years ago, I have known Carol. She often comes to visit her husband, but even more incredibly for us, she and Bob cater amazing buffet style meals for us on food drive day and at Christmas time. Carol is a wonderful, generous person and she is every bit a part of our postal family as any other carrier. She started catering for her husband's office during his first food drive at Clayton back in 1999. I asked Carol what was her favorite part of her husband working for the Postal Service, and her response was that she loved getting to do everything she does for us. She genuinely loves being with us during our most difficult and celebratory times. Her favorite part of hosting these events has always been getting to know and interact with her husband's coworkers. Her fondest memory was joining a group of letter carriers here for a girl's night out at Painting With a Twist. Carol is a beloved member of our postal family here and we are lucky to have her.

This career can be stressful and mentally taxing, but at times like this we should all be proud of what we do and how much we give back to our community. Until next time, keep your head held high and keep surviving.

THE "U" ... BY FRANK ENLOW

Brothers and sisters, the joint effort between union and management to properly adjust our routes has failed. And now management wants to make sure a 99, observing carriers on the street is being done with every carrier that has a route, and especially now that the mail volume has decreased as we are going into the summer vacations months. And to no one's surprise, undertime is back.

For those of you carriers that are new, every route has an estimated office time which includes casing your mail and other office duties. If you are leaving the office earlier than your estimated leaving time, you may have undertime. For example, if your estimated office time is two hours and you are leaving in one hour, you may have undertime. But once you begin delivering your mail and parcels, the increase in parcel volume may erase

management's estimated undertime. But you have to verbally inform them of your new situation as well as completing a 3996 upon returning to the office explaining why you were unable to complete the estimated undertime within the scheduled time.

Carriers, the talk of undertime comes around this time every year, it's not going anywhere. CYA carriers, CYA: COVER YOUR ASSETS.

Now let's talk about integrity scanning.

Believe it or not, carriers, the load truck feature is there to protect us from being accused of having packages that were mishandled. Management has been told to issue discipline for integrity scans on any package scanned in the office after 5 p.m.

Using this load truck feature is new, and you should be on street time when you are scanning your

packages. Using the load truck feature could possibly eat up some of that so called undertime management believes every carrier has. Who would've thought using the load truck feature could be a reason to argue that you don't have undertime?

Brothers and sisters, in order to learn more about what's going on with your job, you must start coming to the union meetings and get the information firsthand.

Alright carriers, once the scheduling date for OJI training is approved, information will be sent to all the MCSOs and their stations to make sure everyone has an opportunity to have a certified OJI trainer at their station.

Until next time from the "U"



DETERIORATING POSTAL "SERVICE" ... BY RETIREE BILL OSIA

First, I would like to congratulate all of my brothers and sisters of Branch 343, especially those who have shown loyalty and received their gold cards and 60-year pins at this year's Ole Timers Day on May 4.

We live on a rural route and for the past 18 years we have had one of the very best rural carriers we could have ever asked for. However, as of late, not only is she suffering from long COVID-19, but her postal morale has also plummeted to the point that when she is eligible, she's going to retire. The primary complaint she has is Postmaster Louis DeJoy's, "Delivering for America," 10-year plan. What has put a bee under her bonnet is this wacko sorting and delivery center fiasco. She becomes livid when she's berating his nonsense.

Now, I have a couple of personal examples of how USPS has gone downhill in a landslide of incompetence. In late March I ordered a special item that was shipped from eBay on March 30. This item began its trek from Huntingdon Valley, Pa. From there it arrived in Philadelphia later that day. It left there and arrived at Providence, R.I. Distribution Center. That same evening it arrived at the St. Louis Distribution Center. Four days later it was moving again through the network in transit to another facility. Since April 6 no more tracking information has been forthcoming.

Consequently, I made a trip to our local post office and spoke with the postmaster. She made inquiries and found my package was still in Philadelphia. She sent an email to that facility but hasn't heard anything yet. After several days I tried again and have yet to hear anything. I'm currently in contact with the seller about a replacement, but where the heck is my package?

In another incident I sent a parcel to my nephew certified mail. I tracked it and found that it took more than a week to leave our local post office and travel to the St. Louis Distribution Center only 70 miles away for delivery in 63109. What if these items were medical necessities? What's happened to delivery standards? Why is no one being held accountable for the deteriorating service in the Postal Service?

KNOW YOUR RIGHTS: CHALLENGING ON-THE-JOB DRUG TESTS

... BY JERRY CANTRELL

Being a letter carrier is a physically demanding job. An on-the-job injury can be a real setback, and getting the medical attention you need is of paramount importance. However, the process can get complicated when medical facilities request a drug test — a request that can feel intrusive and raise questions about your privacy, especially when you haven't done anything wrong.

Here's the key point: Drug testing after a work injury for letter carriers is never a mandatory requirement when visiting a medical facility. While they may present it as a requirement, the **United States Postal Service (USPS) cannot mandate a drug test solely because you were injured on the job.** Your supervisor also lacks the authority to order a drug test without reasonable suspicion of impairment. Merely being in an accident does not constitute reasonable suspicion.

So, why the push for testing? Medical facilities often see drug testing as an additional service that generates revenue. However, this shouldn't come at the expense of your privacy.

Here are some steps to take if you're pressured into a drug test after a work injury:

- **Be Polite but Firm:** Maintain a calm and respectful demeanor while expressing your discomfort with the test. You can say something like, "Thank you for offering, but I'm not comfortable with a drug test right now. Getting treatment for my injury is my top priority." (Don't let them bully you)
- **Know Your Rights:** Briefly explain that you understand drug testing for letter carriers following on-the-job injuries isn't mandatory.
- **Your Body, Your Choice:** Remember, you have the right to decide what goes into your body. A drug test, unless absolutely necessary, is an invasion of privacy.

Exceptions: Now, there are exceptions where a

drug test might be warranted. For instance, if the accident involved a suspected criminal act, like driving under the influence while delivering mail and causing a serious accident, a drug test might be required by law enforcement. However, this situation falls outside the scope of a typical work injury.

Within the USPS, there are specific guidelines for drug testing letter carriers. These guidelines, outlined in the handbook EL-860-2022-8, dictate "Fitness for Duty Examinations." They establish a clear and stringent process for when and how drug testing can occur with letter carriers. **Random drug testing, for example, is not permitted for letter carriers.**

By understanding these guidelines and your rights, you can ensure that medical facilities do not pressure you into an unnecessary drug test. If you feel pressured or unsure about the situation, don't hesitate to contact your union representative. They can offer specific guidance and ensure your rights are protected.

Remember, getting the medical attention you need should always be the priority. However, by asserting your rights, you can navigate the process without unnecessary complications and delays.

CSRS/FERS RETIREMENT SEMINAR

SUNDAY, JULY 14, 2024

10 A.M. TILL 2:30 P.M.

LETTER CARRIERS' HALL

1600 S. BROADWAY

ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI 63104

ALL MEMBERS AND SPOUSES WELCOME

Training will be conducted by
former National Business Agent Mike Weir

Please RSVP by calling (314-348-8722)

Lunch will be provided

WEST COUNTY RETIREE ... BY PAM STEPNEY



Greetings sisters and brothers of Branch 343. How's everybody doing? Fine, I hope. Food drive has come and gone and this year was particularly challenging without cards. No, it was not the branch's fault! Over 500,000 cards were ordered on January 3, but we only received a few thousand.

Collection bags were dropped off at the stations and hopefully some of them were delivered. There were plenty of thank you cards. Some of the letter carriers delivered those to their customers before the food drive. Lisa Miles of West County delivered the bags and wrote on the thank you cards that the food drive was Saturday 5/11/2024, and she picked up quite a bit of food. Kudos to you sister for making do with what we had.

I arrived at the West County Station at 8:30 a.m. and started driving around to pick up food to help the letter carriers, since we're short-staffed every day, and management did not cover the open routes by bringing in ODL nonscheduled carriers. I went up and down the streets on several routes, but there was no food hanging on the mailbox or sitting on the ground in bags. It was a food desert. Vice President Marvin Booker got the message out on Channel 4 on Friday, but I guess not a lot of our customers saw it. It's a darn shame we didn't receive the cards because we usually pick up a lot of food for the Foodbank. Plus, this is great advertisement for the Postal Service and it makes letter carriers look good. Thank you to all the letter carriers who came in to volunteer and work instead of taking vacation. Food drive is only once a year, and we are

helping stock the shelves for the needy. Thank GOD it's not you.

The barbecues in the stations were really good, so thank you to those who took on that task to feed the volunteers and hungry letter carriers. This is the one time of year we all put our differences aside and do the right thing. So make plans next year to do it all again.

Moving on! Thank you to the letter carriers I invited to come to the branch meeting. If you couldn't make it last month, I'm standing at the door waiting to greet you in June on the second Thursday of the month at 7:30 p.m.

What's happening to the workplace? Fighting over the whiteboard, the scanner is the biggest snitch of all time, and Joe Clark said, "If you look like that when you come to work go back home and change." We are 390,000 plus members strong so why are we having these daily issues? Management should come around with the overtime board for you to choose what you're going to deliver, or case on which route you choose to work overtime on. Deliver your route as though you're being inspected daily, giving the scanner the data that it needs to adjust your route in your favor. Spend your uniform allowance yearly and look like a professional letter carrier, polished and ready to work.

When you see brown, they're in brown down to the socks, which was written into their contract to wear daily. Management comes in dressed as though they're going to the club, so they don't care what you wear. Take pride in how you look for your company. Spend your allowance every year. It's not your money so remember

to use it or lose it. If you don't have your uniform credit card please call 1-800-287-5003 to order one today.

If you are a retiree, make plans to attend the retirees meeting on the first Wednesday of each month at noon at the Union Hall. It's nice seeing your sisters and brothers. The retirees banquet was really nice and they presented awards to 70, 60, and 50 year members. Our very own Mike Weir and Dave Maloney's names were called to receive their 50-year Gold Cards. Stop where you're at and give them a round of applause. Bravo! Congratulations, brothers, and thank you for continuing to be members of the greatest union on earth. If you retire you will receive an 1189 in the mail, and you only have a certain amount of time to return it, so make it happen. Dues are only a few dollars per month.

Happy Father's Day. On this special day, we honor the unsung heroes — the fathers who tirelessly provide, protect and love unconditionally. Happy Father's Day to all the dads out there! Your strength, wisdom, and kindness shape your kids' lives in ways that can never fully be expressed. May your day be filled with joy, laughter, and the warmth of family.

Congratulations to the scholarship winners. Go out and make your parents proud. Be the changes you want to see.

Remember to do your best, leave the rest, don't stress, GOD bless, register to vote, exercise your right to vote and thank you for coming.

THERE ARE ALTERNATIVES ... BY RETIREE MIKE LAURY

(In light of recent articles in the MCC regarding suicide, Mike wanted to share his story)

In 1975, when I was 19, I attempted suicide by taking a bottle of sleeping pills. I never ever wanted to go to that dark place again. When I began thinking about harming myself (or worse) again, in the summer of 2008, my psychiatrist saved my life. This article is about my decision to go on disability retirement as a letter carrier.

It has been just over 11 years since I went on disability retirement from the post office. My psychiatrist strongly suggested that I consider taking this monumental step back in 2012 due to my ongoing bipolar disorder diagnosis. Before taking this crucial health step in my life, my wife and I had to decide if this would be financially feasible. We met with our financial advisor and after "running the numbers," we decided it would be best for us to take the disability retirement journey. The following things had to occur

before I could "ring that disability retirement bell."

I decided a job as a janitor in the Lindbergh school district would keep my stress levels to a minimum. My psychiatrist agreed. Also understand that in the long run, my mental health was the determining factor in cutting short my career as a letter-carrier. My new custodial salary, disability pension and my wife's salary as a teacher allowed us to pay the bills, although we had to adapt to a more frugal lifestyle.

There were financial drawbacks including no more letter carrier overtime, for me, that was a hit of about 12-15k per year, and no more matching or "free money" from FERS on the first 3% of my base pay or matching of 50% for the next 2% after that. Health insurance coverage was another huge determining financial factor when considering DR. (Disability retirement). Talk to someone at

OPM about how your health care through the post office would be affected when considering DR. The financial sacrifice has been huge over the past 11 years. I want to "stress" without stressing you out, that I still feel like I made the right choice choosing disability retirement.

I want to thank celebrities like Lady Gaga, Simone Biles and others for reshaping the stigma and attitude towards mental health in recent years. With mental health issues, family members, co-workers and friends don't often see this invisible battle that you may be going through. Before someone you know or love makes the "impaired decision" of self-harm that they can't "walk back," please make it your business when it's "none of your business" to help. The suicide and crisis lifeline in Missouri and Illinois is 988. Please remember, only consider disability retirement as a last resort.



Fenton letter carrier Tom Seifert joins the "Last Punch Bunch" receiving congratulations from shop steward Steven Powers and Br. 343 President John McLaughlin.



Fenton letter carrier Robert Jones receives congratulations on his retirement from former Br. 343 President Bill Lister, current Br. 343 President John McLaughlin, and David Gerik.

BRANCH MEETING

BRANCH 343, ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI

MAY 9, 2024

Summary of Branch Action

- MSC To pay the branch bills.
- MSC To have a check of \$300 sent to Dr. Barbara Anderson for the evaluation and selection of the John H. Haake Scholarship winners.
- MSC Motion made to set aside the bylaws for Branch 343 to say thank you to the St. Louis Area Foodbank by making a \$750 donation, for all their assistance during the Food Drive.

Recently Retired Member

John Knowles..... Ferguson 4/30/2024

Deceased Members

Charles E. Baer Jr. Gold Card.....02/01/2022
 Columbus C. Batt..... Gold Card..... 01/17/2023
 Robert W. Harvey Gold Card.....03/25/2023
 James (JJ) Johnson Gold Card.....03/21/2024
 David M. Knight Gold Card..... 11/13/2023
 Victor R. Thomas..... Gold Card..... 08/04/2023

New Members

Cesar Alarcon..... Maryville Gardens ... 4/20/2024	Atif Mahr Ferguson 4/06/2024
Crystal Bishop Mackenzie Pointe..... 4/06/2024	Felisa Matlock..... Clayton 4/06/2024
Frederick Brown..... Gaffney 4/06/2024	LaToya McKinney North County 4/06/2024
Hildre Carter Weathers..... 4/20/2024	Jimmy O'Neil..... Jennings 4/06/2024
Larry Clay Jr. Ferguson 4/20/2024	Levelle Partee..... Gravois..... 4/06/2024
Jalon Cockrell..... Harriet Woods 4/20/2024	Devante Perkins North County4/27/2024
Tyla Conklin Chouteau 4/06/2024	John Ray..... Mackenzie Pointe..... 4/06/2024
Adrian Conway Normandy 4/20/2024	Nicole Sloane Park Hills.....4/27/2024
Meosha Cooper Olivette 4/06/2024	Hnat Soroka..... Town & Country..... 4/06/2024
Jasmine Cosby Maryville Gardens ... 4/20/2024	LaQuan Thomas..... Maplewood..... 4/20/2024
Zamunda Davis..... Harriet Woods 4/20/2024	Michael Tillman..... Town & Country.....4/27/2024
Robin Dillard..... Normandy 4/20/2024	Jonathan Traeger..... Union 4/06/2024
Jessica Escontrias Sappington 4/20/2024	Paris Turner Mackenzie Pointe.....4/27/2024
Patrica Fernandez Creve Coeur4/10/2024	David Tyson..... Affton 4/20/2024
Jahmal Flanigan Affton 4/20/2024	Stanley Ware..... Mackenzie Pointe..... 4/06/2024
Charlene Griggs..... Weathers..... 4/20/2024	Anita Washington.... Oldham..... 4/20/2024
Trey Hill..... Ferguson 4/20/2024	Charleston Wheelis... Mackenzie Pointe..... 4/06/2024
Alfens Johnson Maryville Gardens ... 4/20/2024	Ken Williams..... Maryville Gardens ... 4/20/2024
Trevon Johnson Weathers..... 4/20/2024	Da'Mar Young Jr..... Normandy 4/20/2024
Cory Mack Affton 4/20/2024	Medin Zahirovic Mackenzie Pointe..... 4/06/2024

BRANCH MEETING ATTENDANCE PRIZES

MAY 9, 2024

- | | | |
|---|---------|----------------------------|
| 1. Cardinals vs Boston Red Sox | May 19 | Melissa Henniger, Kirkwood |
| 2. Cardinals vs Baltimore Orioles | May 21 | Marvin Booker, Union Hall |
| 3. Cardinals vs Colorado Rockies | June 9 | Danisha Marble, U-City |
| 4. Muny: Les Miserables | June 18 | Danisha Marble, U-City |
| 5. Muny: Dreamgirls | July 2 | John McLaughlin |
|  | \$52 | Brian Gray, Southwest |

Highlights

The meeting was called to order at 7:37 p.m. The invocation and "Pledge of Allegiance" were led by Chet Drain and the minutes were read by Recording Secretary Richard Brown and accepted.

NBA's Report, Patrick Baker (RGA)

- *Thanked the branch for allowing him to come to the meeting, NBA office recently did some training in Kansas and Iowa. The Steward College will run from June 2-4*
- *The RAP session will be at the same place. There will be an extra day of training on Friday. Dave is trying to get NALC Secretary Treasurer Nicole Rhine to do Branch Officer Training. He is not sure what happened with food drive cards but assured us it will not happen again.*

Legislative Report, Mike Weir: He spoke on **HR 7629** (Protect Letter Carriers), **HR 5995** (Federal Retirement Fairness Act) HR 82/S-597 (Social Security Act), 2025 COLA is currently 1.7%. He spoke on Trump and his antics. Asked everyone to contribute to LCPF and PAC fund.

Retiree Report, Tom Schulte sent greetings from the retirees. Ole Timers Day was Saturday May 4. We had eight 50-yr. pins, three retirees were present, and 16 60-yr. pins, with three retirees present and one 70-yr. pin.

Labor Council Report, Pam Stepney announced that car maker Volkswagen America, has signed up to become unionized.

- *She went to a luncheon for Women of Unions. A lady present gave a synopsis of what the Postal Service is going through. Branch 343 Vice President Marvin Booker stood up and talked about our Food Drive. He gave out some Food Drive posters and received the support of the Labor Council.*

Mound City Carrier Report, Tom Schulte advised the membership to read the May issue of the MCC regarding the HIPPA training that Exec. Vice President Brian wrote about.

- *Tom also advised everyone to post the Heat Illness insert on the bulletin board in your office.*
- *Deadline for articles for the next issue is Monday, May 13.*

Haake Scholarship Report, Pam Stepney: The John H. Haake Scholarship winners will be presented at the June regular branch meeting.

Trustees Report, La'Tecse Litteken: Books audited and found in good standing.

Reading of Bill, Recording Secretary Richard Brown: Motion to pay bills and properly second. Motion Passed

Executive Vice President/Treasurer Report, Brian Litteken: He has changed the reservations for all the delegates to their arrival and departure dates.

- *The deadline to cancel without being charged is still July 18. He spoke on Integrity Scans (how to load parcels and scan parcels before leaving office, and while on the route). Scan hold mail before leaving office, scan others at the address, if returning parcels to the station inform management and complete PS 1571 and endorse parcels). The method described will help keep you out of trouble. The UAW is trying to increase unionization in the South. The Toyota Plant especially, because of safety reasons. The governors don't want the union because the workers receiving more pay will "threaten the values we live by." He read out the available attendance prizes.*

Vice President/Financial Secretary Report, Marvin Booker reported that there is no food drive cards this year. Hopefully, the customers will remember the food drive and put food out anyway, he is optimistic about amount of food to be picked up. He is going to the City Hall on Friday 5/10 to get a Proclamation for Letter Carriers Food Drive Day. The Food Drive hub sites are Creve Coeur, Jennings, Affton, and U-City.

Moment of silence for deceased members.

Good of the Union, Chad Wallace from Weathers spoke on carriers safe-guarding themselves, especially during storms.

President's Comments, John McLaughlin spoke on the route inspections completed at Affton. Several routes were not covered, and the mail did not go out. Lots of mail showed up after the inspection was completed. The REAT team found that management was changing (falsifying) clock rings, and a manager was walked off the floor. The union is hoping to throw the entire inspection out. There have been four managers put off the clock since our new postmaster arrived. Vice President. Marvin Booker has been successful speaking with the new postmaster.

Prizes: Five - three sets of Cardinal tickets, two sets of Muny tickets

50/50: \$52 Brian Gray

Benediction: Chet Drain

Attendance: 36

Respectfully Submitted,
Richard Brown, Recording Secretary



SCENES FROM THE 2024 NALC "STAMP OUT HUNGER" FOOD DRIVE

Food Drive collection totals to be published next month



Political Action Honor Roll

JOE POLITTE★★★★★	CATHERINE CIARAMITARO★★	<i>In Memory of</i> KURT ECKER★	BILL LISTER★
RICH RHYNER★★★★★	JOHN HAAKE★★	ROBERT EVERS★	JOHN McLAUGHLIN★
ART BUCK★★★	<i>In Memory of</i> TIFFANY HAGER★★	SAMUEL GOODMAN★	NICKI L. PRADO★
JOE FITZJARRELL★★★	LAWRENCE McHAYNES JR.★★	GENO IBERG★	<i>In Memory of</i> JOSEPH P. REGAN★
TONY JASPER★★★	MIKE WEIR★★	LAURA KEIM★	TOM SCHULTE★
LYNN RAY PRATT★★★	MARVIN BOOKER★	JOHN KONOPKA★	DARLENE TATE★
DAN BRAUCHLE★★	JIM BRUGGEMAN★	MEAGHAN LAKEY★	DAVID TEEGARDEN★
JOE CANMAN★★	JOHN BUCHHEIT★	BARRY LINAN★	DEAN WERNER★

CATHERINE CIARAMITARO	ROBERT EVERS	LYNN RAY PRATT	SARONDA SUTHERLAND
FRANK ENLOW	ROY HATCHARD JR.	GARY ROBERTSON	MIKE WEIR

The above honor roll gives special recognition to those members who give \$50 or more. Each star represents \$100

Richard Boien

IS YOUR NAME LISTED? WHY NOT?
SEND YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS PAYABLE TO BRANCH 343, P.A.C.

MIKE WEIR
612 CHARLESTON OAKS DR.
BALLWIN, MO 63021-7387

(Donations are not tax deductible)

**PLEASE BE ADVISED IN REGARDS TO ANY ARTICLE SOLICITING CONTRIBUTIONS
TO THE LETTER CARRIER FUND OR OUR OWN POLITICAL ACTION FUND**

By making a contribution to the Letter Carrier Fund or our local Political Action Fund, you are doing so voluntarily with the understanding that your contribution is not a condition of membership in the National Association of Letter Carriers or of employment by the Postal Service, nor is it part of union dues. You have a right to refuse to contribute without any reprisal. The Letter Carrier Political Fund and Branch 343 Political Action Fund will use money it receives to contribute to candidates for federal office and undertake other political spending as permitted by law. Your selection shall remain in full force and effect until cancelled. Contributions to the Letter Carrier Political Fund are not tax deductible for federal income tax purposes. Federal law prohibits the Letter Carrier Political Fund and Branch 343 Political Action Fund from soliciting contributions from individuals who are not NALC members, executive and administrative staff or their families. Any contribution received from such an individual will be refunded to that contributor.



Br. 343 Legislative Activists met with St. Louis County Prosecutor and candidate for the 1st Congressional District, Wesley Bell at the 43rd Annual County Democratic Gala May 11.

(L-R) Frank Enlow, Meaghan Lakey, Mike Weir, Wesley Bell, Pamela Stepney, Geno Iberg, John McLaughlin and Rich Rhyner



Legislative Activists met with Missouri State Representative 98th District Deb Lavender and Missouri State Senator from the 1st District Doug Beck at the County Democratic Gala May 11.

(L-R) Frank Enlow, Meaghan Lakey, Rich Rhyner, Mike Weir, Deb Lavender, John McLaughlin, Pamela Stepney, Geno Iberg, and Doug Beck

John H. Haake BRANCH 343

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 Brian Litteken Executive Vice President/
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 Marvin Booker Vice President/
 Financial Secretary
 Richard Brown Recording Secretary
 Frank Enlow Sergeant-at-Arms
 Saronda Sutherland MBA Representative
 Barry Linan ... Health Benefits Representative

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 Barry Linan William Lister
 Marvin Booker Mike Weir
 Richard Brown

MOUND CITY CARRIER

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All correspondence and all articles intended
 for publication in this paper should be
 addressed to:

Tom Schulte, Managing Editor
 1600 S Broadway
 St. Louis, MO 63104-3806
 Phone: 314-241-4297

or

You may submit articles and photos from
 events and retirement photos to:

tomnalc@sbcglobal.net

If you submit a photo, please identify all
 members in the photo.

All copy should be TYPED in upper and
 lower case, double spaced and written on one
 side only. Articles are to be limited to 500
 words and must be signed.

Opinions expressed intend no malice toward anyone —
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Articles may be edited for brevity and potential libelous
 statements.

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RETIRED MEMBERS MEETING

LETTER CARRIERS BUILDING
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1st Wednesday of the month.
 Lunch at noon, meeting at 12:45 pm

Tom Schulte, Chairman.....636-255-3057
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Deadline for articles for
 the JULY issue is
 JUNE 17, 2024

★ ★ ★

REGULAR BRANCH MEETING
 THURSDAY, JUNE 13, 2024
 7:30 pm

★ ★ ★

SHOP STEWARDS MEETING
 WEDNESDAY, JULY 3, 2024
 7:30 PM

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