

MOUND CITY CARRIER

Official Publication of Branch 343

2020 General Excellence
Award Winning Publication



St. Louis, Missouri
Chartered 1892

Volume 76, No. 1

"Diversity is our Strength and Unity is our Power"

January 2025



“May I stress the need for
courageous, intelligent, and
dedicated leadership...

Leaders of sound integrity.

Leaders not in love with
publicity, but in love with
justice.

Leaders not in love with money, but in love with
humanity.

Leaders who can subject their particular egos to the
greatness of the cause.”

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.
1929 - 1968

PRESIDENT'S ARTICLE ... By JOHN McLAUGHLIN



BLAH, BLAH, BLAH ... I CAN'T HEAR YOU !

While we wait for the votes to be tallied on our new Tentative Agreement (TA) in Washington, I believe the business of politics in our nation's capital may pose far greater consequences to our future than the outcome of the vote on our TA.

We can start with the hear no evil bozo pictured above. Our PMG DeJoy recently endured a barrage of questions for over three hours at a U.S. Postal Service Oversight Committee Hearing on the epic failure of DeJoy's *Delivering for America Plan (DFA)*. The 10 year plan is now in its third year. Congressmen took turns passing on their constituents' complaints of pathetic mail service from all over the country. DeJoy proceeded to humiliate himself as well as the USPS. Rep. Rich McCormick, R-Ga., was grilling DeJoy when he childishly covered his ears because he did not like what he was hearing. DeJoy said he would give himself an "A" for the job he has done so far. Rep McCormick informed him that he can't grade his own paper. Our own local management does the same thing to us. They don't want to hear what we have to say. They ignore and avoid the union at all costs. Congresses' powers over the Postal Service are literally in their committee's name, "Oversight." The congressman was not wrong that the American people are ceasing to use the Postal Service at an alarming rate because of the degradation of service. If your mailed bill payments aren't being delivered on time, you will start paying online or over the phone instead. Sometimes it seems like DeJoy's actual plan is to see how pissed off he can get our patrons by hamstringing the letter carriers from doing our job.

The attacks came from both sides of the aisle and the blame was squarely placed on DeJoy's shoulders. While it is quite apparent that DeJoy is doing his best to destroy the Postal Service, both sides of the aisle do not seem to have the same solution. During another hearing on Capitol Hill, Sen. Josh Hawley, R-Mo., chastised DeJoy as well. His focus, however, was on DeJoy's purposefully slowing down rural deliveries. He mentioned Kansas City once and never mentioned St. Louis. His focus appeared to be solely on rural delivery. He went so far as to mention a private citizen rebuilding a Post Office in rural Missouri which had been destroyed by a tornado. His point was a private citizen did what the government (Post Office) could not do. Sen. Rand Paul, R-Ky., took a run at DeJoy as well. He belabored the point that 80% of the Postal Service's cost was labor. He criticized him for hiring more career employees. We all know what they both were hinting at here, privatization of the Postal Service. They have no intention of fixing it, they just want to use our failures as an excuse to privatize us. It is also no secret that our new president has mentioned on more than one occasion that the Post Office should be privatized. How long before the so-called Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE) sets its eyes on the Postal Service?

The bigger question is why have our leaders in the NALC been so quiet? DeJoy should be our common enemy. DeJoy has spent the last three years spending money like a man with no arms. The NALC should be piling on with these politicians blaming DeJoy for wasting so much money on his unnecessary 10-year plan. If the TA gets voted down, we need to be allying ourselves with those who think DeJoy is the problem, but who also believe that the solution is not privatization. The answer is another plan to reshape the Postal Service. NALC President Renfro is not wrong that the Postal Service must change, but the error he makes is in believing the fallacy that we only have two options. He seemingly agrees with DeJoy's DFA plan, but only because if we don't change anything we are doomed. This misguidedly presumes there are only two paths the Postal Service can take. Surely, the NALC could come up with and propose a better plan to Congress and the American public.

Carriers simply just want management and DeJoy to get out of our way, let us deliver the mail to our customers, and then just go home to our families. Stop spending money on monitoring us and instead monitor the mail. Take the money DeJoy is spending on Post Office Supercenters and get us our damn new vehicles already.

And with that, I hope everyone read the TA and voted. Happy new year ... 2025!

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.



BRANCH LEGAL PLAN

Advice and Consultation on
General Practice and Civil Actions.



GOFFSTEIN LAW, L.L.C.

JOHN H. GOFFSTEIN
ATTORNEY

225 SOUTH MERAMEC, SUITE 402
ST. LOUIS (CLAYTON), MO 63105
TELEPHONE: 314-932-1919
FACSIMILE: 314-932-5048
JOHN@GOFFSTEINLAW.COM
GOFFSTEINLAW.COM



Mark Your Calendar

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

Jan. 9	Regular Branch Meeting
Jan. 20	Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday Observed
Jan. 26	CSRS/FERS Retirement Seminar - Letter Carriers Hall (see ad)
Jan. 31-Feb. 2	Regional Rap Session - Kansas City, Mo.
Feb. 5	Retiree Meeting
Feb. 6	Shop Steward Meeting
Feb. 13	Regular Branch Meeting

**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 _____

MOUND CITY CARRIER
Published monthly by:
Branch 343, NALC
1600 South Broadway
St. Louis, MO 63104-3806

Send change of address to:
Branch 343
1600 S. Broadway
St. Louis, MO 63104

EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT ... BY BRIAN LITTEKEN

WINDOW OF OPERATION IT'S BAAAACK



Management has been telling carriers on the overtime desired list (ODL) they need to clock out by 8:30. This becomes a contract violation if non-ODL carriers are drafted to work overtime off of their route and the ODL carrier has not worked 12 hours yet.

Hundreds of grievances were filed in 2012 and 2013 over this same issue. At that time, the Postal Service was calling it the Window of Operation. The Postal Service was justifying it by saying the outgoing mail had to be at the distribution center early enough to be sorted for the next day. The National Agreement still states, "Full-time employees not on the "Overtime Desired" list may be required to work overtime only if all available employees on the "Overtime Desired" list have worked up to twelve (12) hours in a day or sixty (60) hours in a service week." This holds true in December. As a matter of fact, ODL carriers can work over 12 hours a day and 60 hours a week during December.

Don't make any decisions.

Letter carriers get paid to deliver the mail.

Managers get paid to make decisions.

What if you can't get all the mail delivered by 8:30? Many times, letter carriers make the decision to either bring some mail back or get back late. After all, these seem to be the only choices. The trick is to force the supervisor to make the choice.

The best way to handle this situation is to text your supervisor on the scanner. Let your supervisor know where you are and how long you think it will take you to finish the delivery of all the mail. Take a picture of the text you send. This is your proof that you notified management of your situation. Then just keep working until management texts you on the scanner with instructions or it's time to go back to the office to make it back by 8:30 (whichever comes first).

If the supervisor fails to text their instructions

on what to do with the rest of the mail and you can't finish delivering all the mail by 8:30, you should return to the office by 8:15 and ask for further instructions. Follow whatever instructions your supervisor gives you. Never return mail to the office and leave it without getting instructions on what to do with the mail from the supervisor.

If your instruction is to go back out and deliver all the mail, fill out PS Form 3996 so that you are authorized for the overtime.

If your instruction is to leave the mail at the office, make a note of what instructions you were given and what time it was. Add any mail which was not delivered and returned to the office on PS Form 1571. Sign the form and give it to the unit manager. Get a copy of the 1571. The 1571 shows that you did not make the decision to not deliver mail, but that management did. The 1571 protects you if you receive discipline for failure to perform your duties.

Coworker: Are you okay? You seem a bit stressed.

Me: I don't want to talk about it

Me 2 minutes later



RECORDING SECRETARY ... BY RICHARD BROWN

Happy new year to all. I hope everyone enjoyed bringing in the new year and may your 2025 be prosperous.

By now, you should have received your ballot in the mail to vote on the NALC Tentative Agreement for 2023-2026. The summary of changes are on the NALC website for your perusal. I hope you took the time to read and understand it, to ensure your vote is/was one that reflects the work/life balance you expect. Regardless of the outcome, we must remain vigilant in our efforts to hold management accountable and to abide by our contractual obligations. Just a reminder, your ballot must be returned by January 13, 2025, so don't delay getting it in the mail if you haven't already.

THEY STILL DON'T KNOW

I wrote in my last article about management lacking the knowledge necessary to effectively do their job. Upper management continues to hire and/or promote those who do not have the ability to manage people, let alone a business. Every action they seem to take is about their feelings versus what the language in the contract requires them to do. Some of the management staff you can at least talk to, so they understand the error of their way and they might actually listen. Then there are those that believe they can do whatever they want, or simply follow the ignorance of their superior. Either way, their actions usually show you that they don't want to know what the right thing to do is.

Things have now gone a step further in the wrong direction. More managers are being rewarded for their foolish behavior by way of promotion and/or additional duties that will cause harm to their own as well as the letter carrier. How is this a concern, you say? Management has a new "steward like representative" from management, who causes total unrest at the office they currently manage. That individual's position is geared to get comanagement out of trouble. When those management folk realize the person has no clue what they are doing, they will become more angry and more vindictive. That means things may become more difficult for the letter carrier because that management personnel will take their issue out on you. Management doesn't know what they're doing and don't want to know, they simply rule by

their feelings and expect the union to agree with them.

Be mindful of the attitude displayed by your management staff and act accordingly. This does not mean for you to argue with them, just use the power of the contractual language which, in most cases, protects you from long lasting harm.

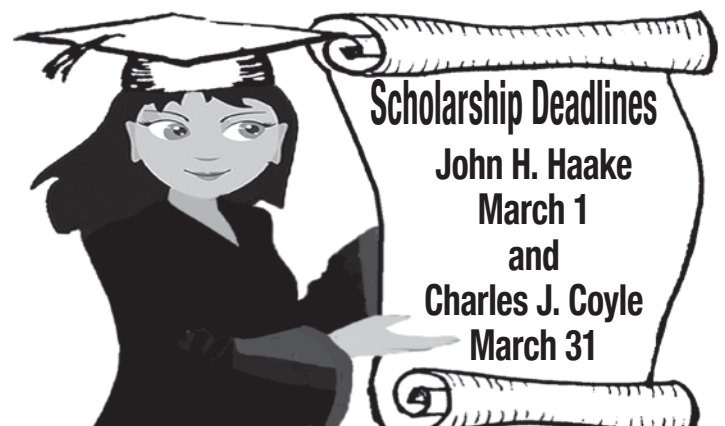
WE STILL DELIVER

Hopefully this past holiday season did not put too much of a burden on your physical well-being. While the holidays are behind us, we still have deliveries to make. There is no crystal ball to tell us what the mail and parcel volume will be this year, but we must make every effort to deliver what we get each day. If management continues with this one-hour office time, you must note any mail that you will be leaving behind. If you are instructed to be back at the office at a certain time and you discover you didn't complete your deliveries, you must also note that.

How is this notation conducted? Fill out PS 1571, it will be your best friend in either of the above instances. After management signs it, get a copy or take a picture of it. As mentioned before, management will not admit they instructed you on either action and you may be left holding the bag.

Please do the right thing and deliver all mail distributed to you daily and if you can't, for whatever reason, be sure to report it on PS 1571. You are a customer at the end of the day and surely you want the items you are waiting for.

Who is Responsible!



VICE PRESIDENT FINANCIAL SECRETARY

... BY MARVIN BOOKER

MANAGEMENT HATES THE LETTER CARRIER!!



At first glance, it's puzzling that an organization like the Postal Service, that has long been a symbol of reliability and public service which depends heavily on the dedication and hard work of the letter carrier, would "hate" them.

While "hate" may be a strong word, as the face of the organization to the public letter carriers feel undervalued and overburdened by the system they work within. This reality stems from a combination of unrealistic demands, micromanagement, safety concerns, and systemic issues that have created a strained relationship between the Postal Service and the letter carrier.

Here is an overview of the key issues that might lead to the perception management hates the letter carrier:

The Nature of the Job

Letter carriers are the backbone of the service, responsible for delivering millions of pieces of mail daily to homes and businesses. However, the job is physically and mentally demanding. Letter carriers often face long hours, exposure to harsh weather conditions, and the pressure to meet strict delivery deadlines. These challenges are compounded by increasing workloads, toxic management, and a shrinking workforce.

In many cases, management implements undertime or overtime and stretches employees thin to meet operational demands. From the letter carrier's perspective, this can feel like neglect or exploitation. When an organization prioritizes efficiency metrics over employee well-being, workers can quickly feel undervalued and disrespected.

The Burden of Unrealistic Expectations

One of the main reasons letter carriers feel unappreciated is the ever-increasing workload. The rise in e-commerce has led to a dramatic increase in the number of packages carriers must deliver. At the same time, traditional mail volumes have decreased, creating a paradox where carriers are

handling fewer letters but more parcels, which are bulkier and more time-consuming to deliver.

Adding to this stress are rigid time constraints imposed by management. Carriers are given strict schedules and routes to complete, often with little regard for real-world obstacles like traffic, weather conditions, or heavy packages. When carriers fall behind these unrealistic schedules, they face discipline, even if the delays are beyond their control.

Micromanagement and Monitoring

Another source of tension is management's extensive use of monitoring technology. Carriers are tracked using GPS systems installed in their scanners and delivery vehicles. While this technology is intended to improve efficiency, it often feels like a tool for micromanagement. Carriers are constantly watched, with their every stop and movement scrutinized. This level of oversight can erode trust between workers and management, making carriers feel like they are not respected as professionals capable of doing their jobs independently.

Furthermore, management prioritizes strict adherence to metrics over the well-being of employees. For instance, carriers may be disciplined for taking breaks or deviating from their route, even if they are addressing unexpected challenges. This leads to a toxic work environment where carriers feel more like cogs in a machine than valued members of the organization.

Safety and Well-Being

The physical demands of being a letter carrier are significant. Whether walking long routes, lifting heavy packages, or driving in challenging conditions, carriers face daily risks to their health and safety. Despite this, letter carrier safety concerns are not taken seriously.

Letter carriers are expected to deliver mail during extreme weather conditions, including heat

waves, snowstorms, or bitter cold. Further, encounters with aggressive dogs and unsafe neighborhoods further add to the hazards of the job.

When safety concerns are raised, management often prioritizes efficiency over the letter carrier's well-being. For instance, rather than addressing the root causes of safety issues, some supervisors may downplay them or place the responsibility entirely on the carrier. This lack of support leaves many workers feeling undervalued and vulnerable.

Lack of Empathy from Leadership

Management is disconnected from the realities of the job. Decisions made at the top often prioritize cost-cutting and operational efficiency without fully considering their impact on front-line workers. For example, route adjustments aimed at optimizing delivery times increase workloads, leading to longer days and more stress for carriers.

This perceived lack of empathy is further exacerbated by communication gaps. Letter carriers feel their concerns are ignored or dismissed, particularly when it comes to safety, workload, or scheduling issues. When workers do not feel heard or valued, it deepens their frustration and

the belief that management is indifferent to their reality.

Union Tensions

The union plays a critical role in advocating for workers' rights. However, tensions between the union and management complicate matters. Protracted negotiations, grievances, and disputes over the contract and policies create an adversarial atmosphere. While unions aim to protect carriers, the lack of swift resolutions can leave letter carriers feeling stuck in a system that is broken.

If management were willing to address any of the above issues, they could create an environment that values and respects the people who keep America's mail moving. But don't hold your breath. Remember, they hate us!

Until next time, be safe and be professional.

The following stations
were represented at the
December 2024
Shop Stewards Meeting

Aftton	Normandy
Carrier Square	North County
Clayton	Sappington
Creve Coeur	South County
Gravois	Southwest
Jennings	Weathers
Kirkwood	West County
Maryville Gardens	

CSRS/FERS RETIREMENT SEMINAR

SUNDAY, JANUARY 26, 2025

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 to the Mike Weir
at 314-348-8722

Lunch will be provided

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

HEALTH BENEFITS PLAN/OWCP ... BARRY LINAN



New years greetings to all the brothers and sisters of NALC Branch 343. 2025 marks 55 years since the inception of the USPS from the Postal Reorganization Act of 1970. Since then the USPS has not been a part of the congressional budget. It operates solely off its own revenues and no tax dollars. I bring this up because I believe we will soon be hearing calls again from right-wing profiteers to “privatize” the USPS. What they really mean by “privatize” is to break up the USPS into smaller pieces and then sell those pieces off to the highest bidder.

When talk of privatization comes, consider first that the USPS is a nationwide government “service” to all Americans and isn’t designed to be profitable like private corporations are. Second, the unprofitable service to rural communities is subsidized by the profitable service to urban communities. The likely rationale for those advocating privatization will be based on the fallacy that the USPS “is broke and doesn’t make money.” **In fiscal year 2024, the USPS had a total revenue of \$79.5 billion and that was an increase of \$1.4 billion in revenue over 2023.** Clearly the USPS does make money, but the problem is that the USPS had \$89.5 billion in “total operating expenses” for 2024. Part of that deficit could be attributed to overspending by management, but not all of it.

Consider that because the USPS is not a part of the congressional budget, it must make its own contributions to the FERS and CSRS retirement funds. **The USPS received a bill for \$5 billion from OPM in 2024 for these so called “unfunded liabilities.”** All of the other federal agency contributions to the FERS and CSRS funds are made by annual congressional appropriations (i.e.: tax dollars). Also consider that through the years, Congress has passed a number of bills saddling the USPS with extra funding obligations that no other federal agency has and using us as a veritable “cash cow” for the FERS and CSRS funds.

- In 1974, the USPS became responsible for any CSRS liability from employee pay raises.
- In 1990, the USPS became responsible for any CSRS/FERS liability created by COLA raises to retirees.

- In 2003, the USPS became responsible for any CSRS/FERS liability for prior military service and that OPM would also begin calculating CSRS/FERS liability on a “dynamic” basis that includes projected future pay increases, inflation, and interest rates.
- In 2006, the USPS became responsible for the government portion of retiree health benefit premiums.

Are you sensing a pattern here? No other federal agency has these same added CSRS/FERS liabilities and not coincidentally their CSRS/FERS contributions are all annually appropriated (pay as you go) by Congress in the budget. So when the inevitable talk about the USPS losing money comes up, yeah it is, but make sure they also understand that **the USPS has been singularly required by Congress to make outsized advance payments to OPM for years to prop up the CSRS/FERS retirement funds for all of the other federal agencies.**

HBP NEWS: I’m getting lots of calls from retirees about changes in the opting out provision of the **Part D SilverScript** prescription drug program. In the OPM letter we received in November (mine was dated 10/10/24) advising us of our enrollment in the new PSHB, it states on page two **“by opting out of automatic group enrollment into your PSHB plan’s PDP EGWP (for NALC it’s SilverScript) you will not receive prescription drug coverage under the PSHB plan unless you elect to enroll in your plan’s MAPD (Medicare Advantage plan).”** This language is also on page 207 of our 2025 HBP brochure, **“Warning: If you choose to opt out of or disenroll from our PDP EGWP (SilverScript), your premium will not be reduced, and you may have to wait to re-enroll during Open Season or for a QLE (Qualifying Life Event).”** I found out that OPM had a hearing on October 24, 2024, and decided to finalize their own ruling that **“Postal Service annuitants ...who opt out of the Medicare Part D plan offered by their PSHB plan will lose prescription drug benefits under their PSHB plan – is most consistent with the PSRA and**

its policy goals.” For the record, the PSRA does **not** require all annuitants in the PSHB to enroll in a PDP EGWP Part D plan, it only requires all of the PSHB plans to **offer** a PDP EGWP Part D plan. Our NALC HBP offers the SilverScript Part D plan to fulfill this obligation in the PSRA law. OPM themselves decided to make a rule that if you opt out of your PDP EGWP that you will lose your prescription drug benefits under your PSHB plan. My problem with OPM’s decision is two-fold, one that PSHB annuitants are automatically being group

enrolled into these PDP EGWP plans and two that some annuitants have financial reasons why they want to opt out. Then OPM rubs it in our faces by saying if you opt out “***your premium will not be reduced,***” even though you’re also telling us we will lose our PSHB prescription drug benefits that we already pay for with our monthly premium! I’m not happy with this OPM ruling at all and I suggest you voice your own displeasure by calling OPM at 888-767-6738. Follow that up with calls to your elected congressmen and senators.

REGION 5 NBA REPORT

REGION 5 RAP SESSION UPDATES

Although not required it is suggested that attendees bring a laptop for use in most of the training classes.

If you are attending the LMOU class, you need to bring a copy of your branch LMOU with you. Be prepared to discuss it.

REGION 5 UPDATES

There have been some changes with the NBA office staff I would like to pass along.

Patrick Baker is now a regional administrative assistant (RAA). President Brian Renfro promoted Patrick from regional grievance assistant (RGA) to his new position as RAA recently. Pat has been a great addition to the office and will transition into his new role seamlessly as he was handling many of the duties of RAA Larrissa Parde while she was detailed to NALC HQ.

Many of you speak to Kyle Turner who served as the regional office assistant (ROA) when you call the Region 5 NBA office. Upon Patrick’s promotion to RAA, President Renfro also appointed Kyle Turner as the RGA to fill that vacated spot. Although Kyle worked as ROA previously, he handled many of the RGA and RAA duties in the office so the transition into his new RGA role will also be relatively easy.

I believe the members in Region 5 are well served by both these appointments. Congratulations to both of you on your new roles in the NALC.

... DAVID A. TEEGARDEN

ARBITRATION RESULTS

YTD for 2024 Region 5 has advocated 74 arbitration cases and won 78% of those cases. We won 92% of our contract cases and 48% of discipline cases. Our Informal, Formal A, Step B and arbitration advocates have done an outstanding job in preparing grievances and it shows in this year’s totals. Thanks for all your efforts on behalf of the Region 5 membership. These are excellent results!

Lastly, I hope the new year brings you health, happiness and prosperity.

Until next time stay safe out there.



NOTES FROM THE MANAGING EDITOR

... BY TOM SCHULTE



NEW YEAR, NEW CHALLENGES

No time wallowing in “I told you so’s.” The very first proposed recommendation for the incoming Trump administration is the privatization of the U.S. Postal Service. I can’t honestly recall how many times our heads have been on the chopping block through previous administrations, but this is the first time that insolvency due to mismanagement presents a real danger to our survival.

Leading the way is our illustrious Postmaster General Louis DeJoy former head of New Breed Logistics which was a shipping logistics support contractor with the U.S. Postal Service for over 25 years. A 2001 audit by the USPS inspector general found that the USPS had given New Breed Logistics noncompetitive contracts of more than \$300 million, starting in 1992. The audit concluded that the noncompetitive contracts cost taxpayers \$53 million more relative to competitively-bid contracts. The audit concluded that the noncompetitive contracts would potentially increase the USPS costs and performance risks down the road. The conclusions were never investigated.

New Breed Logistics was acquired by XPO Logistics, a freight transporter service. DeJoy served as CEO of XPO’s supply chain business in North America until 2018. XPO also held significant contracts with the U.S. Postal Service.

DeJoy’s controversial selection by President Trump, to serve as United States postmaster general in 2020 was made despite the obvious conflicts of interest. DeJoy was heavily invested in UPS and Amazon before taking on his new role as PMG and drew scrutiny for not divesting from his \$30-\$75 million equity stake in XPO, a subcontractor for USPS. In fact, under his tenure as postmaster general, USPS has increased its business with XPO. DeJoy was the first postmaster general in two decades without prior experience in the USPS.

Not surprising, upon assuming the office of postmaster general in June 2020, he instituted measures to ban overtime and suspend extra trips to deliver mail to reduce costs. The results of which led to the immediate slowing of mail service.

On August 7, 2020, DeJoy announced he had reassigned or displaced 23 senior USPS officials, including the two top executives overseeing day-to-day operations. Rep. Gerald E. Connolly who chaired the House committee that oversees the USPS, said the reorganization was “deliberate sabotage.” Following congressional protests, the USPS inspector general began a review of DeJoy’s policy changes. In August 2020, DeJoy announced that the Postal Service would suspend cost-cutting and operational changes for the time being.

DeJoy received criticism for his decision in February 2021 to award a \$6.5 billion contract to modernize the USPS fleet exclusively to OshKosh, which had previously admitted a lack of expertise in producing electric vehicles. Those contractual obligations have yet to be fulfilled.

In March 2021 DeJoy issued a 10-year plan called “Delivering for America” to stabilize the finances of the Postal Service. Provisions of the plan include, lowering speed of delivery, but increase reliability, and extending first class deliveries from three to four days while increasing postage rates. In other words, charge more for poorer service. Hardly a recipe for financial stability.

So here we are, five years into the 10-year plan and the results are the unprecedented financial hemorrhaging of the USPS and congressional investigations directed at DeJoy for his incompetence. Yet who stands to lose should the Trump administration decide to privatize the USPS? Every employee currently working for the United States Postal Service. It won’t be DeJoy!

RETIREE REPORT

... BY GUEST RECORDING SECRETARY NICKI L. PRADO



MINUTES FROM THE DECEMBER MEETING

Chairman Tom Schulte called the meeting to order at 12:45 p.m. Lawrence McHaynes led us in prayer and the of Pledge of Allegiance. Tom thanked the officers of Branch 343 for providing the delicious chicken lunch from Hodak's. Tom volunteered to provide lunch for the January meeting.

Volunteers: Volunteers to provide lunch in 2025 included: Geno Iberg - April, Kevin Welby and Sandy Theismann - May, NBA David Teegarden BBQ - June and Mike Weir - August. Tom asked everyone to consider volunteering for the additional open months.

Sick Call: A card was signed and sent to brother Tom Harman.

Minutes from the Last Meeting: Minutes from the last meeting were read by guest Recording Secretary Nicki L. Prado.

Treasurers Report: Treasurer Mike Chenot reported a checking account balance for December 2024 of \$1065.36. Bills paid out to John Haake, Nicki Prado and Mike Chenot for the November lunch and for supplies, leaving a balance of \$616 cash on hand.

NBA Report: NBA David Teegarden reported changes in the NBA's office. NALC President Brian Renfroe promoted Patrick Baker to regional administrative assistant (RAA) and Kyle Turner has been promoted to regional grievance assistant (RGA). Jeremy Six, former postmaster of Los Angeles is our new district manager.

Branch 343 Presidents Report: John reported that management attempted to change the language of the carrier vacation scheduling memorandum. John said they notified management immediately about the issue regarding time limits and directed the carriers to follow the language of the Local Memorandum of Understanding (LMOU). John presented a video to the retirees on how to operate the new defibrillator attached to the Union Hall wall.

Legislative Report: Mike Weir lamented on the unqualified cabinet position candidates President Trump has proposed. Be prepared for the increased

prices on goods and services because of Trumps proposed tariffs and deportation of migrant workers who grow and harvest the crops.

Health Benefits Report: Barry Linan reminded the retirees that the Postal Service Health Benefits (PSHB) open season ends on Monday, December 9. Everyone should have received information on their present coverage. Please review your coverage and if changes need to be made, you must do so on the OPM website or the OPM phone extension but be prepared to wait if using the phone. There is a question as to the language that is in the NALC brochure and what OPM put out regarding the drug coverage and Silver Script if you can opt out.

Chairmans Report: Tom reminded everyone that since the first Wednesday in January 2025 is New Years Day, our January retiree meeting will be held on January 8. Don't show up on the 1st! Tom announced that he had purchased 10 Christmas wreaths to be placed on the graves of letter carrier family members buried in Jefferson Barracks National Cemetery. Tom stated that he and Geno Iberg were going out to place the wreaths on Saturday, December 7.

Unfinished Business: Nicki L. Prado presented a gift card to Brother Rich Rhyner for all his work tending the bar, setting up the hall for our monthly luncheons, and cleaning up afterward. His contributions to the retirees has not gone unnoticed.

New Business: Sister Pam Stepney gave a report on the John H. Haake Scholarships. Pam has personally gone out to stations to promote the program and solicit greater participation. This year we currently have 21 applicants.

Deceased Members: A moment of silence was observed for John Konopka.

50/50 Winners: Three \$25 winners for December: Lucille Snow, Mike Chenot and John Haake, who donated it to the PAC Fund.

Closing Prayer: Offered by Lawrence McHaynes.

Meeting Adjourned: 1:45 p.m.

SOUTH COUNTY ... BY MATT GLEIFORST

Hello from South County. I hope everyone enjoyed their holidays and is enjoying the start of this year. It may be a new year, but unfortunately we are still dealing with the same old problems of misguided management from the highest levels on down. Management teams have been instructed to put any carrier off the clock they find violating any safety procedures while out on the street, and in some cases even in the office. If a carrier is caught driving without wearing a seat belt, delivering mail with an earbud in, looking at their cell phone, or any number of other minor violations, management is now required to put the carrier on emergency placement via Article 16.7 of the National Agreement. This is a non-pay status. In normal discipline a carrier gets progressive corrective action so that they can learn from their mistakes before losing their job, but postal management has decided that minor safety violations deserve the ultimate fiscal punishment. In my opinion this is not the intention of Article 16.7, but this is what the higher ups want done. Management does not have the right to do this and there is never a guarantee on getting a job back or receiving back pay. So always be on alert and follow all safety protocols to protect your job.

One other issue that is going on all over is supervisors informing carriers that their vacations are cancelled because they do not have enough annual leave to

cover the period of time they are off. This has happened at several stations, including ours, which seems to be a pretty good indicator that this instruction came from the postmaster or higher. Unfortunately for management, this is inaccurate. According to the Employee and Labor Relations Manual (ELM), if an employee has approved leave and the employee has an insufficient leave balance, the leave is changed to leave without pay (LWOP). Here at South County, one of our carriers was only a few hours short of the annual leave needed for their vacation and they received a letter stating that if they took this leave then they would be considered absent without leave (AWOL). AWOL means a carrier simply did not show up to work without prior notification and could face serious discipline. Again, this leave was already approved in advance, so this letter was false and a scare tactic to get this carrier to cancel his vacation. Why does

management have to keep screwing with us?

On a much sadder note, last month our custodian, Bobby Williamson, passed away due to complications after surgery. He was a truly kind man and a wonderful coworker. He was an Air Force veteran and known around town as the "unofficial mayor of Oakville." Last summer he even offered to have me and my kids over to swim at his pool after we ran into him at the store, and we were on our way to the Six Flags waterpark. I figured I would take him up on that offer this summer. I wish I had last summer. Our time is short on this Earth, so please take every opportunity to spend time with those you care for the most. Bobby was well loved here at South County and he will be missed.

Until next time, keep your head held high and keep surviving!



**NALC
Disaster
Relief
Foundation**

www.nalc.org

202-423-2443

DisasterReliefFoundation@nalc.org

WEST COUNTY RETIREE ... BY PAM STEPNEY



Greetings sisters and brothers of Branch 343. How's everybody doing? Fine, I hope. Let's make one of our New Year's resolutions to be kind to one another and show compassion for life. What in the world is going on? They murdered the CEO of United Health Care? I know some people are having a hard time getting approval for medical procedures using certain insurance companies, but what is going on, with social media? People are texting comments like "Thoughts and Deductibles" and unfortunately my condolences are out of network" about the young man murdered in the streets of New York. Did we forget he was a man with two children, a husband, a son, an uncle, and a brother? My condolences to the family, on both sides. Because the man who did this, his life is over too, and his family's name is forever stained by this crime.

Make 2025 the year you put your letter carrier uniform on every day you report to work. Some of you wear anything to work to deliver mail and that's a shame since we get a yearly allowance. If you don't know your anniversary date you can call 1-800-287-5003 to contact your uniform debit card. They'll tell you your balance and anniversary date. The union requested increases on the allowance during contract negotiations and yet you purchase items from any company on the internet selling uniforms. Why not wear your uniform when you go out to deliver mail to your customers? I'll say this again like

I said before, brown wears brown down to the socks and shoes, and it's in their contract to do so. I know there are a lot of new people and they need guidance, so you as the seasoned regular should give them help and show them the right way. Tell them to go to the hall to get uniforms and you bring in your slightly worn ones too.

It is the season to watch your surroundings and deliver your route safely. Last month the shop steward from Maryville Gardens got robbed while out doing her job. If you are approached by a person or persons asking for keys, packages, mail, a cell phone, or anything else, give it to them so that they don't have a reason to attack you or take your precious life. Give up everything and look for anything you can remember about their shoes, clothing, facial features etc. to tell the authorities.

Privatizing the U.S. Postal Service has been talked about by president elect Donald Trump. With him taking office in 2025 and continuing to entertain this change in structure what would that mean for you if your job is no longer federally protected? Well, how about no more union representations, benefits, pensions etc., a reduction in the size of the workforce, a reduction in wages and fewer benefits. Corporate America prioritizes profits over competitive wages. Loss of benefits, retirement plans and other benefits under union-negotiated contracts. Loss of union bargaining power as private corporations sideline union influence. A change in work

conditions as private companies impose work performance targets

on workers to increase profit and efficiencies, etc. If this doesn't sound all that great to you, don't complain if you did not get out and vote. Your not voting was a vote agreeing to a change of this nature in your job.

Retirees make plans to come to the meeting on the first Wednesday of each month to see your old work buddies, and you'll get to see me. It was good to see brother Ray Breakfield in attendance last month. Please lift our brother up in prayer while he fights the good fight. We love you, Ray!

If you are eligible to retire, make plans to attend the CSRS/FERS Retirement Seminar given by retiree Mike Weir on January 26, from 10 a.m. until 2:30 p.m. at the Union Hall. Lunch will be served.

There are 21 applicants for the John Haake Scholarship as of December 16, 2024. Most of them were retirees' children or grandchildren because our new workforce is so young.

Thank you for taking the time to sit down and vote on the tentative agreement sent out by our union, your vote is your voice. Never stand silently!

Happy Dr, Martin Luther King Jr. Day! "We must use time creatively, in the knowledge that the time is always ripe to do right."

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

THE "U" ... BY FRANK ENLOW

WELCOME TO 2025!



Brothers and sisters, we made it through another year, no thanks to management. The writing has been on the wall, but management has made it perfectly clear this season that service is not a priority. You only have one hour of office time and then all of you should be on street time and every carrier should be off the street by 8:30 with all the mail and parcels delivered.

Each year the powers that be come up with a new way to take advantage of us as carriers and as usual, there are way too many carriers that are willing to do whatever it takes to make their bad decisions look good. There are carriers that are still working off the clock ignoring their office time, while management wants to take 12 more of the 30 guaranteed minutes that we have left to further reduce our office time. And we are helping them by not filling out the 3996s.

If you are instructed to curtail mail and move to street time, follow your instructions. You should start a paper trail by filling out your 3996s every day asking for time based on your daily mail volume and always include the amount of mail you were instructed to curtail the day before. There are also carriers that believe it is OK to clock out on the street and continue to deliver mail and packages so that they won't get in trouble for being out past 8:30.

Brothers and sisters, you are so wrong for thinking that this is what you need to do because they want us off the street by 8:30. Send a text over the scanner or return to the station for further instructions. For those of you that are so willing to clock out and continue to work, remember if you have an accident or hurt yourself while you are out there off the clock delivering mail, do you really think management is going to do the right thing and say that you were doing it for the team. They won't. Brothers and sisters, you want more money, but you are willing to work off the clock for free. Why?

Now, let's talk about discipline!

Carriers, if you are called in the office for a PDI, nine times out of 10, discipline will follow.

And it is your responsibility to reach out to your steward so that a grievance can be filed **within 14 days** regardless of what you are being charged with.

Discipline begins with two letters of warning, a seven-day suspension, two 14-day suspensions, and a notice of removal. If you fail to file a grievance, each piece of discipline stays in your file for two years. There have been way too many of you that are not saying anything to your shop steward, until you receive a notice of removal, and by then it may be too late.

Carriers it's not just your union's job to protect you. You need to learn how to protect yourselves as well.

Until next time from the "U"

ARE YOU SKIPPING LUNCH AND BREAKS?

HERE IS THE COST.

*Based on making \$36.20/ hour.
(Regular)*

One Break	\$6.03
Two Breaks	\$12.06
Lunch	\$18.10
Lunch and Two Breaks	\$30.16
(weekly)	\$150.80
(monthly)	\$603.20
(annually)	\$7,841.60
(25 year career)	\$196,040.00

"ALL THE LONELY PEOPLE" ... BY MIKE LAURY

I remember about 20 years ago; the first time I had to deliver mail after 7 p.m. It was January. Here I am, freezing my ass off, and slipping on gum balls, acorns and any other tree trash that would impede my progress. I had bought my own miner's type helmet from Harbor Freight, which had an elastic head band with a tiltable flashlight on it. I finally felt safe after I had traversed a top step to deliver the mail. Suddenly, the porch light went on and out came a patron, none too happy. Wheel of Fortune was playing in the background as the elderly gentleman said in a smart-ass way while looking at his watch, "Are you a vampire?" (Halloween was two months ago, you old codger.)

I said, "No, sir" but thought to myself about the blood-sucking supervisors who were still nice and cozy at Southwest Station.

He proceeded to complain, "You know, mailman, stamps have gone up again and the more they go up the later you are to deliver my mail." I could still see part of his chicken dinner between two or three of the teeth on the top row of his dentures. His older brother, who I will assume was Father Time, had been giving him a heads up on when I would arrive. There is no way the old coot could have seen me coming unless he had night vision goggles especially made for Navy Seals.

Just as quickly as his disgust had surfaced, it seemed to be replaced with a quizzical look, and he smiled at me. Oh, oh, I knew what was coming next. After working a few years at the post office, you can sort of sense these things. He started up again with a smile and looked at me saying, "Do you know anybody who was in WWII? I

was in France in 1944," he told me. With each passing word, I became more transfixed with what turned out to be an interesting conversation. I finally handed him his mail and was on my way, but I couldn't help but think about all the lonely people who just want a little bit of companionship, even if it's just the mailman.

Thank you for letting me share this brief encounter that I had with this ordinary person, who back in the winter of 1944, did extraordinary things for our country. I'm not sure where all the lonely people come from, but when you see one, give them a smile or a hello even if you don't feel like it. Hope you all had a merry Christmas and a happy New Year. And remember, it never hurts to be safe.

Signed,

The guy who saw both Forsch no hitters.

BENEFITS

Emergency Annual Leave

Emergency requests do not require advanced approval, but the employee must notify the appropriate postal authorities as soon as possible as to the emergency and the expected duration of the absence.

ELM 512.412

Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA)

FMLA entitles you up to 12 work weeks of absence during a leave year for the reasons covered by the act. Reasons for FMLA Leave are:

Birth of child, or to care for the child during the first year after birth. Placement of a child with the employee for adoption or foster care. The employee's care is medically necessary for a spouse, son, daughter or parent with a serious health condition.

The employee is unable to work due to his/her serious health condition. Military events and related activities for the Reserve and National Guard. **ELM 515**



DID YOU KNOW?

ARMED ROBBERY OF THREE POSTAL WORKERS LEADS TO 21+ YEARS IN PRISON

*Press Release: U.S. Attorney's Office, Eastern District of Missouri
December 18, 2024*

St. Louis- U.S. District Judge Matthew T. Schelp on Wednesday sentenced a man who robbed U.S. Postal Service letter carriers in St. Louis County to steal checks from the mail to 21 years and three months in prison.

Xavier Sean Boyd, 20, of Jennings was one of five people involved in a conspiracy in the summer of 2022 to rob postal workers of the arrow keys that unlock mail collection boxes, use those keys to steal checks and then use those checks to commit fraud.

Boyd robbed a postal carrier at gunpoint on June 1, 2022, on Chambers Rd. in St. Louis County. The conspirators used that key four days later to steal mail from collection boxes in Berkley, West Florissant, Normandy, Overland and Ferguson.

Boyd and co-conspirator Roy Lee Jones deposited \$19,199.60 in stolen checks into Jones' credit union account on June 7, 2022. The next day, they tried to withdraw the entire amount but were only able to obtain \$8,500. They also deposited checks into Xavier Boyd's bank account but were not able to withdraw any of the stolen funds.

Jones robbed a second postal carrier of his arrow key on June 9, 2022. Boyd robbed a third carrier less than 20 minutes later. Both were in Boyd's mother's SUV at the time. The third postal carrier noted the license plate of the SUV and police spotted the vehicle within minutes. Boyd initially pulled over and then sped away, sparking a high-speed chase that ended when Boyd crashed. Both men fled, carrying pistols. Police tackled Boyd within feet of the SUV and arrested Jones on the front steps of a nearby day care center.

In a video call from jail after his arrest, Boyd warned one of his coconspirators to try and thwart the investigation, according to court documents. Boyd had just graduated from a prestigious local high school and had at least one college acceptance at the time he was terrorizing postal workers.

"Postal Service employees play an integral role in our communities delivering mail to the American people. As public servants, postal employees must be allowed to do their job safely and securely. Postal inspectors will aggressively investigate anyone who brings harm to these invaluable public servants," said inspector in charge, Ruth Mendonca, who leads the Chicago Division of the U.S. Postal Inspection Service, which includes the St. Louis Field Office.

Boyd pleaded guilty in September to three counts of robbery and two counts of possession and brandishing a firearm in furtherance of a robbery.

Last month, Judge Schelp sentenced 22-year-old Jones to 84 months in prison. Jones pleaded guilty in August to one count of robbery, one count of theft of a mail key and one count of possession and brandishing a firearm in furtherance of a robbery.

The U.S. Postal Inspection Service and the St. Louis County Police Department investigated the case. Assistant U.S. Attorney Jason Dunkel prosecuted the case.

When an active letter carrier dies...

- Notify the employee's immediate supervisor, postmaster and Human Resources Shared Service Center (HRSSC) at 877-477-3273. HRSSC will advise about any benefits payable, and how to apply for them. It will provide and render assistance in completing the application for death benefits under the employee's retirement system, as well as the claim for death benefits—Federal Employees' Group Life Insurance (FEGLI) and claim for unpaid compensation.
- Notify the Thrift Savings Plan (TSP) at 877-968-3778.
- Notify the letter carrier's NALC branch.
- If the employee was a veteran, notify Veterans Affairs at 800-827-1000.
- Call the Social Security Administration at 800-772-1213.
- Notify banks and other financial institutions.
- Notify insurance companies (life, health, home, automobile, etc.). If the employee had a policy with NALC's Mutual Benefit Association (MBA), call 202-638-4318 between 8 a.m.-3:30 p.m. EST, or write to MBA, 100 Indiana Ave. NW, Suite 510, Washington, DC 20001-2144.
- If the employee had health insurance through the NALC Health Benefit Plan, call 888-636-6252. If the employee had health insurance through a different Federal Employees Health Benefits (FEHB) plan, call the number on the back of the insurance card. Health insurance coverage for a surviving spouse and dependent children continues automatically if the employee had family coverage at the time of death and if a monthly survivor annuity is payable.
- Obtain a sufficient number of death certificates for your needs from the mortuary.

When a retired letter carrier dies...

- Notify the Office of Personnel Management (OPM). This should be done as soon as possible through its website, by email, by phone or by mail. To report the death of a deceased annuitant to OPM, do one of the following:
 - Visit [servicesonline.opm.gov](https://www.opm.gov) and click on "Report an Annuitant Death." This will take you to an online form to complete and submit.
 - Send an email to retire@opm.gov and include the following information pertaining to the annuitant and survivor(s): Retired letter carrier's full name, CSA number, date of birth, Social Security number, survivor's full name, relationship to the deceased, Social Security number, date of birth, address and phone number.
 - Call OPM at 888-767-6738.*
 - Write to OPM at Office of Personnel Management, P.O. Box 45, Boyers, PA 16017. Provide the information on the deceased and survivor(s) as above.
- *Calling OPM can sometimes take several attempts due to high call volumes. Callers may be on hold for 20 minutes or longer. The NALC Retirement Department staff is familiar with OPM and is well-versed in explaining OPM's processes. Upon request, the NALC Retirement Department will report the death of a retired member to OPM and answer any questions. To contact the NALC Retirement Department, call toll-free at 800-424-5186 on Monday, Wednesday and Thursday from 10 a.m.-12 p.m. and 2 p.m.-4 p.m. Eastern Standard Time. The NALC Retirement Department also can be reached Monday-Friday from 9 a.m.-4:30 p.m. at 202-393-4695. Long distance charges may apply.
- Once the death of an annuitant has been reported to OPM, the OPM will stop payment of the monthly annuity and mail the applicable claim forms to the survivor. In most cases, two forms will be included in the packet:
 - application for death benefits under the retirement system (death benefits include survivor benefits and/or any unpaid annuity balance) and
 - application for Federal Employees' Group Life Insurance (FEGLI)
 - The packet also includes pre-addressed return envelopes, color-coded pink and blue, to facilitate rapid distribution and processing within OPM.
- Notify the bank where annuity payments are deposited, as well as any other of the retiree's financial institutions. Any annuity payments deposited after the date of death will be reclaimed by OPM. Return any uncashed annuity checks to the address on the accompanying Treasury Department envelope.
- Obtain enough death certificates for your needs from the mortuary.
- Notify the retired letter carrier's NALC branch.
- If the retiree was a veteran, notify Veterans' Affairs at 800-827-1000.
- Call the Social Security Administration at 800-772-1213.
- Notify insurance companies (life, health, home, automobile, etc.).
- If the retiree had a policy with NALC's Mutual Benefit Association, call 202-638-4318 between 8 a.m.-3:30 p.m. EST, or write to MBA, 100 Indiana Ave. NW, Suite 510, Washington, DC 20001-2144.
- If the retiree had health insurance through the NALC Health Benefit Plan or any other FEHB plan, the OPM will inform the health plan. When a spouse is entitled to survivor benefits, he or she will receive continuous health insurance coverage as long as they were covered under their spouse's FEHB plan at the time of death. The health plan will automatically change to self-only and be switched to the surviving spouse's name.
- If the retiree participated in the Thrift Savings Plan, contact the TSP at 877-968-3778.

If the spouse of a retired letter carrier dies, call the NALC Retirement Department for instructions on how to restore annuity to full amount, switch health coverage from family to self (unless you have dependent children) and change beneficiaries.



SIGN ME UP!

How to contribute to the Letter Carrier Political Fund using PostalEASE — ONLINE Enrollment

Through PostalEASE, active letter carriers can contribute directly from their USPS paychecks to the Letter Carrier Political Fund (NALC's PAC) by designating the Political Fund as one of the three payroll "allotments."

Online Enrollment

1. Login to USPS's Postal Ease website at <https://ewss.usps.gov>
You may also get to the Postal Ease website through the USPS LiteBlue website See the instructions below
2. Click "I agree"
3. Enter your Employee ID number and Password and click "Submit"
If you have not yet set up a password click the link provided on the page or go to:
<https://ssp.usps.gov/ssp-web/welcome.xhtml>
If you forgot your password click the link provided on the page or go to:
<https://ssp.usps.gov/ssp-web/einVerification.xhtml>
4. Under Payroll click "Allotments / Payroll Net To Bank"
5. Click "Continue"
6. Click "Allotments"
7. Enter the 9-digit Financial Institution Routing Number: 0 6 4 0 0 0 1 7
8. Enter your 17-digit Account Number _____ 0 0 3 4 9 5 2 5 3 5
See instructions in step D at right
9. Enter Account type as "checking"
10. Enter amount of your Allotment: \$ _____
The maximum yearly amount is \$5,000
11. Click VALIDATE
12. Click SUBMIT
13. Print or write down your confirmation number for your records

BEFORE YOU START, YOU'LL NEED:

- A. Your 8-digit Employee ID Number (on your paystub)
- B. Your USPS password
- C. Your Postal Record Number (Located on the back cover of your Postal Record magazine, above your name. Or call 202.393.4695 to get your Postal Record Number). See the example below.



- D. To create your personal account number, insert the seven digits of your Postal Record Number to the spaces below:

_____ 0 0 3 4 9 5 2 5 3 5

To get to Postal Ease through Lite Blue:

- Got to www.liteblue.usps.gov
- Enter you employee ID and Password and click "Log On"
- Click "My HR"
- Click "Employee Apps"
- Click "PoastalEASE"
- Begin at step 1 above

By making a contribution to the Letter Carrier Political 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. Any guideline amounts are merely suggestions, and you may contribute more or less than the guidelines suggest and the union will not favor or disadvantage you by reason of the amount of your contribution or your decision not to contribute. The Letter Carrier Political Fund will use the 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 deductible for federal income tax purposes. Federal law prohibits the Letter Carrier Political 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. Federal law requires us to use our best efforts to collect and report the name, mailing address, name of employer and occupation of individuals whose contributions exceed \$200 in a calendar year.



SIGN ME UP!

How to contribute to the Letter Carrier Political Fund using your retirement ANNUITY

Using your **Annuity**, retired NALC members can contribute directly from their CSRS or FERS annuities to the Letter Carrier Political Fund (NALC's PAC) on a monthly basis. This is a convenient way to make regular donations to the political action fund similar to the payroll system available to active carriers.

Enroll by Phone

Call the NALC Retirement Office at 202.662.2877 anytime or toll-free at 1.800.424.5186 Monday, Wednesday and Thursday from 10 a.m. to noon or 2 to 4 p.m. (ET). (Note: you will need your CSA retirement Claim number.)

Enroll Online

1. Go to www.servicesonline.opm.gov
2. Enter your CSA number, beginning with the letter A and ending with a zero. SAMPLE: A22222220
3. Enter your PIN (Personal Identification Number). If you don't know it, click Using Services Online for help with one.
4. Once you've entered your CSA number and PIN, click Log In.
5. On the next page, click ALLOTMENTS TO ORGANIZATIONS.
6. Click START
7. Select the Letter Carrier Political Fund (Formerly COLCPE)
8. Enter the amount of your monthly contribution. (Maximum yearly amount is \$5,000)
9. Click SAVE
10. On the next page click YES (if correct), then print the next page for your records.

Enroll by Mail

Complete this form and send to:

NALC Retirement Department, Attention: Letter Carrier Political Fund, 100 Indiana Ave. NW, Washington, DC 20001-2144

I, _____ (your name) wish to contribute to the Letter Carrier Political Fund. I authorize the Office of Personnel Management to withhold the amount below from my *monthly* annuity payments:
☐ \$30 ☐ \$25 ☐ \$20 ☐ \$15 ☐ \$10 ☐ Other: \$_____ (Maximum amount per year is \$5,000) and forward that amount to the Letter Carrier Political Fund (NALC's PAC). I make this authorization voluntarily and may revoke it at any time by notifying the Letter Carrier Political Fund in writing.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Full Name (please print): _____ Branch: _____

CSA: _____ Phone: _____

By making a contribution to the Letter Carrier Political 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. Any guideline amounts are merely suggestions, and you may contribute more or less than the guidelines suggest and the union will not favor or disadvantage you by reason of the amount of your contribution or your decision not to contribute. The Letter Carrier Political Fund will use the 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 deductible for federal income tax purposes. Federal law prohibits the Letter Carrier Political 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. Federal law requires us to use our best efforts to collect and report the name, mailing address, name of employer and occupation of individuals whose contributions exceed \$200 in a calendar year.

BRANCH MEETING

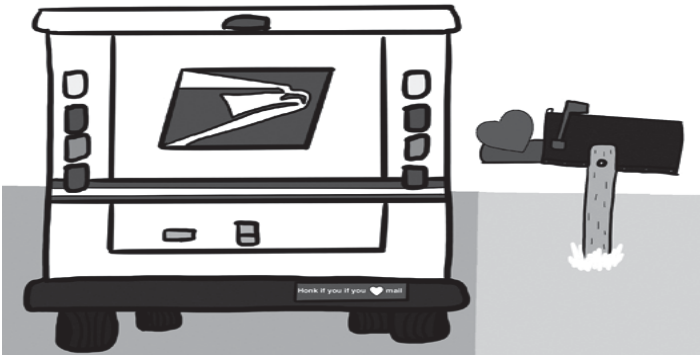
BRANCH 343, ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI

DECEMBER 12, 2024

Summary of Branch Action

- MSC To pay the branch bills.
- MSC That Branch 343 donate \$200 to National Disaster Relief Fund
- MSC That the branch purchase the two best available seats for the 2025 Muny season to be raffled at the branch general meetings.
- MSC That Branch 343 send up to 10 branch officers and stewards along with the president, to be determined by the branch president, to the Region 5 Rap Session in Kansas City and pay their expenses.
- MSC Branch 343 to send Formal A Steward Nate Markovich to the NALC Formal A and Beyond Training on March 1-7 or September 13-19 and the branch pay all expenses.

**TELL CONGRESS:
SAVE OUR
POSTAL SERVICE**



New Members

Anna Barbee Mackenzie Pointe.. 11/22/2024
Dovie Coleman..... Clayton..... 11/22/2024
Alexandrea Dietz..... Rolla11/25/2024
Janeikka Robnett..... North County 11/16/2024
Shamika Walton Harriet Woods 11/22/2024
Sophia Watkins Gravois11/16/2024
Robert Williams O'Fallon 11/9/2024

Recently Retired Member

Robert Joseph Gaffney 11/30/2024

Deceased Members

Frances McCord Retired 06/26/2024
James Roberts Retired 11/04/2024
Walter Schriber Gold Card.....12/02/2024



BRANCH MEETING ATTENDANCE PRIZES

1. SLU Billikens vs. Wofford
2. SLU Billikens vs. William Woods
3. SLU Billikens vs. St. Bonaventure
4. Blues vs. Buffalo Sabres
5. Blues vs. Anaheim Ducks

Dec.18
Dec. 28
Jan. 8
Dec. 29
Jan. 9

Jyron Johnson, Weathers
Shonna Randle, Carrier Square
Richard Thurman, Retired
John Thomas, Affton
Marcell Esters, Veto Reid



Marvin Booker, Union Hall

Highlights

The meeting was called to order at 7:33 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.

NBAs Report, Dave Teegarden: The deadline to return ballots for the Tentative Agreement is mid-January. There is a Virtual Rap Session on the NALC site regarding the Tentative Agreement, and he encouraged us to visit the site. Region 5 Rap Session has been extended one day. Year to date, they sent 74 cases to arbitration and have 600-700 pending arbitration and have a winning rate of 78%. The deadline for health benefits sign-up has been extended. Dave gave the address and a fax number for sending the form (SF 2809) and it must be postmarked by December 13, 2024. Back-ups for DRT have been activated to reduce the number of cases. NBA office tried to pre-arb a bunch of cases, but the service refused to settle. There have been two promotions in the office (Pat Baker is now an RAA and Kyle Turner is now the RGA). Our District Manager Jeremie Six's biggest issue right now is safety. If you are caught without a seat belt on or the door open, they may put you off the clock.

Legislative Report, Mike Weir: Mike spoke on the Social Security Act, Project 2025 and Trump nominees.

Retirees Report, Tom Schulte: They had 40 in attendance and Tom thanked the branch for providing lunch (Hodaks).

Labor Council Report, Frank Enlow: Boeing and the UAW are now laying off people. The city is trying to re-vamp the airport, but they can't get anyone to take on the project. The prevailing wage law passed, but the city has been unable to enforce it. They are trying to figure out what to do with the Rams settlement money.

Mound City Carrier Report, Tom Schulte: Tom spoke on the reason for the length of the MCC this month. He pointed out executive vice presidents article as a good informational read. There will be a retirees seminar January 26, given by Mike Weir.

Haake Scholarship Report, Pam Stepney: They received 21 applications, and each scholarship is \$1,500.

Safety and Health Report, Richard Thurman: A carrier had a gun pulled on her while delivering packages at Maryville Gardens. Thurman advised everyone to file a report on ECOMP if this happens to you. St. Louis County police are patrolling more to help protect letter carriers. Any safety issue that happens to you, please complete a PS 1767.

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

Political Action Committee Report, Mike Weir: Mike read the names of contributors to the PAC fund. He encouraged us to give to the PAC and LCPF.

Executive Vice President/Treasurer Report, Brian Litteken: The Tentative Agreement has been mailed is due to be returned by January 13. Open season for health benefits was extended to December 13. The Carrier Academy was suspended due to peak season but the PTFs should still receive driver training and package delivery/scanner training, which consists of four hours. Brian advised that if you are leaving mail uncased, or bringing mail back in the evening, complete a PS 1571.

Vice President/Financial Secretary Report, Marvin Booker: Marvin spent all day December 12 organizing and verifying first phase vacation selection, due to management's failure to do so. They still are not complete until management does their part. He advised that second phase is not to be turned in until first phase is posted. SWIP is about 2/3 completed with the database.

President's Comments, John McLaughlin: John spoke on the virtual rap session which is on the NALC website. He urged everyone to vote on the Tentative Agreement. He referenced Booker's hard work on the first phase vacation cards. A manager was walked off the floor due to delayed mail, but her replacement seems to be doing the same thing.

Respectfully Submitted,

Richard Brown, Recording Secretary

USPS

EAP

SERVICES

Health, Wellness and Prevention Through Your EAP

Have you checked out what the EAP has to offer lately? We offer a wide range of services for everyone. Our goal is to help USPS employees and their families live better.

Counseling

Counseling continues to be the backbone of the EAP, offering assistance to those who need help. Our caring, supportive, professional staff are able to provide counseling services with a solution-focused treatment. The EAP can be a solution for short-term counseling needs and a resource guide for longer-term situations.

Consultation

For those facing a situation of concern that doesn't require counseling, the consultation services offered may be just what you are looking for. EAP

consultations are a way to talk to a professional about a specific topic to get advice, information or just have someone listen to your concerns. Getting a second opinion, guidance or information may be very helpful and the EAP offers a professional and objective viewpoint.

Coaching

Life coaching has become a highly sought-after and successful way for people to set and achieve goals in both their personal and professional lives. EAP coaches have a keen understanding of life transitions, extensive experience

in helping people communicate more effectively and a belief in your potential. Coaching will help promote self-awareness, clarify your visions, values, intentions and goals, and enhance skills in all areas of your life.

Web-based therapy

As you are lending compassion through listening to others, it's important to pay attention to where things are with you. Do you need support or a listening ear yourself? Do you need to find ways to better manage life challenges so that you can reduce stress? Try web-based therapy by visiting EAP4YOU.com.

All of these services strive for one thing: a healthier, happier you. Overall wellness is the state of being content in body, mind and spirit, and finding balance in each of these significant areas of your life. The quest to improve overall wellness is a perpetual work-in-progress as life events may threaten to throw things out of balance.

That is why the USPS EAP continues to focus on health, wellness and prevention. With a focus on overall wellness and helping employees and their families live up to their greatest potential, the promotions and programs of the EAP continue to evolve and expand to help achieve that wellness.

More information about the EAP, the services we offer and how we may assist you is only a phone call away. You can also visit EAP4YOU.com for more information and resources. Available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, we are always available to help you through a struggle, assist you as you reach a goal and encourage you to live the best life you can. Why hesitate? Give us a call today!



CALL US TODAY: 800-327-4968
 800-EAP-4YOU | TTY: 877-492-7341
WWW.EAP4YOU.COM

Political Action Honor Roll

JOHN HAAKE★
GENO IBERG★

TOM SCHULTE★

NBA DAVID TEEGARDEN★

MIKE WEIR★

CATHERINE CIARAMITARO

LYNN RAY PRATT

DENNIS STEGMANN

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

John Haake

Shonna Randle

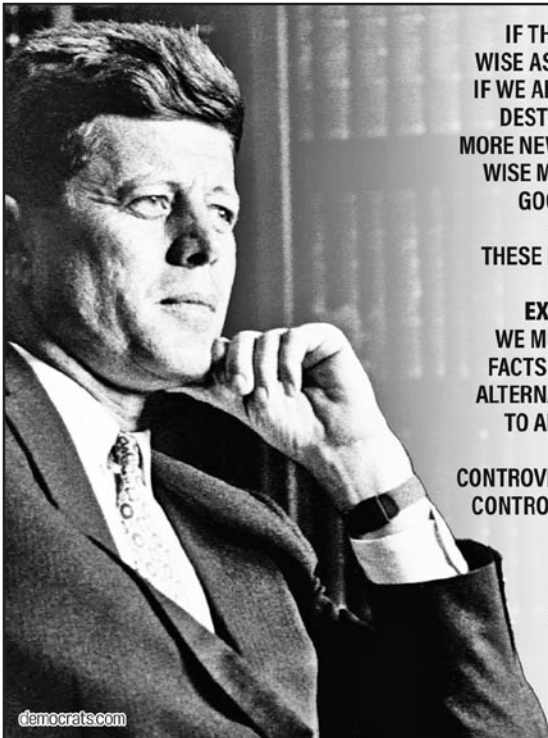
IS YOUR NAME LISTED? WHY NOT?
SEND YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS PAYABLE TO BRANCH 343, P.A.C.

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.



IF THIS NATION IS TO BE
WISE AS WELL AS STRONG,
IF WE ARE TO ACHIEVE OUR
DESTINY, THEN WE NEED
MORE NEW IDEAS FOR MORE
WISE MEN READING MORE
GOOD BOOKS IN MORE
PUBLIC LIBRARIES.
THESE LIBRARIES SHOULD
BE OPEN TO ALL—
EXCEPT THE CENSOR.
WE MUST KNOW ALL THE
FACTS AND HEAR ALL THE
ALTERNATIVES AND LISTEN
TO ALL THE CRITICISMS.
LET US WELCOME
CONTROVERSIAL BOOKS AND
CONTROVERSIAL AUTHORS.
FOR THE BILL OF
RIGHTS IS THE
GUARDIAN OF OUR
SECURITY AS WELL
AS OUR LIBERTY.
JOHN F. KENNEDY
SATURDAY REVIEW,
OCTOBER 23, 1960

democrats.com



John H. Haake BRANCH 343

—OFFICERS—

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

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

La'Tecse Litteken Shonna Randle
 Germaine Anderson Nathaniel Markovich
 Michael Rucker

CORRESPONDENT POSTAL RECORD

Tom Schulte

MEMBER-AT-LARGE

NEGOTIATING COMMITTEE

Jerry Cantrell Lamont Broomfield
 Andrew Garces Marvin "Blu" King

DELEGATES TO THE ST. LOUIS LABOR COUNCIL

Pamela Stepney Frank Enlow
 Barry Linan William Lister
 Marvin Booker Mike Weir
 Richard Brown

MOUND CITY CARRIER

Published monthly by NALC Branch 343
 Contents may be reproduced by NALC
 publications — Just mention Branch 343.

STAFF

Tom Schulte Managing Editor
 Brian Litteken Editor
 Barry Linan Editor
 Meaghan Lakey..... Editor
 Matt Gleiforst..... Asst. Editor

ADVISORY BOARD

Brian Litteken John McLaughlin

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 —
 neither do they necessarily express the views of the editor
 nor that of Branch 343 N.A.L.C.

Articles may be edited for brevity and potential libelous
 statements.

LETTER CARRIERS BUILDING BRANCH OFFICE

1600 S Broadway
 St. Louis, MO 63104-3806
 314-241-4297

President: 314-761-1784
 EVP: 314-753-1699
 VP: 314-517-3200

Hours: 8 am - 5 pm (M-F)
 8 am - Noon (Sat)

Fax: 314-241-2738

Website: www.branch343.org

HEALTH BENEFITS HOT LINE

Barry Linan — Hall: 314-241-4223
 Tuesday 8 am to 5 pm

WORKMEN'S COMPENSATION HOT LINE

Barry Linan — Hall: 314-241-4223
 Wednesday 8 am to 5 pm

SAFETY & HEALTH

Richard Thurman, Creve Coeur
 314-218-4829

EEO REPRESENTATIVE

Andrew Garces
 314-353-5702

MBA LIFE INSURANCE

Saronda Sutherland, MBA
 314-623-9354

FOR PERSONAL HELP CALL:

1-800-EAP-4-YOU

NBA OFFICE

David Teegarden — 314-985-8040
 RAA Charles Sexton RAA Larrissa Parde
 RAA Patrick Baker RGA Kyle Turner

RETIRED MEMBERS MEETING

LETTER CARRIERS BUILDING
 1600 S Broadway

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

Tom Schulte, Chairman.....636-255-3057
 Ray Breakfield, Vice Chairman573-358-5266
 Mike Chenot/Kevin Welby, Treasurers.. 314-779-3356
 Tom Schulte, Recording Secretary636-255-3057

Deadline for articles for
 the FEBRUARY issue is
 JANUARY 13, 2025

★ ★ ★

REGULAR BRANCH MEETING
 THURSDAY, JANUARY 9, 2025

7:30 pm

★ ★ ★

SHOP STEWARDS MEETING
 THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 6, 2025

7:30 PM

The Letter Carriers Building
 1600 S Broadway



Non-Profit
 Organization
 U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
 St. Louis, MO
 Permit No. 1452

John H. Haake Branch 343

MOUND CITY CARRIER

1600 S Broadway

St. Louis, MO 63104

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED