

MOUND CITY CARRIER

Official Publication of Branch 343

2020 General Excellence
Award Winning Publication



St. Louis, Missouri
Chartered 1892

Volume 77, No. 3

"Diversity is our Strength and Unity is our Power"

March 2026

"FAIR CONTRACT" NATIONWIDE DAY OF ACTION



FIGHT LIKE HELL!

How to Destroy the USPS = Proceed with Present Strategy

President's Article ... *By John McLaughlin*

I think we may be witnessing one of the most successful and admired institutions being systematically dismantled and destroyed through incompetence and/or purposeful and deliberate destruction. I can't think of a better way to destroy the post office than what management is doing right now. Every decision seems designed with the sole purpose of eliminating what it is we do, delivering mail and parcels to each household six days a week.

It began a while back when the service thought it would be profitable to eliminate blue mailboxes. These boxes contain revenue. What company eliminates revenue? The criteria for eliminating the boxes were if on any given day there were fewer than 25 pieces of mail in them, they would be pulled out. There were so many blue boxes that each station had multiple collections each day. The St. Louis collection unit had 15-20 dedicated collection routes. Now, our collection unit consists of one collection route.

Does anyone remember Customer Connect? This was a program designed to create revenue. A city letter carrier had a full-time job coordinating with a sales team in the USPS to encourage customers to use the Postal Service. Carriers were encouraged to talk to our customers to use our service over our competitors. This program generated over \$100 million annually. I guess the pinheads in management decided those precious minutes we spent actually speaking to our customers were not worth the revenue being generated.

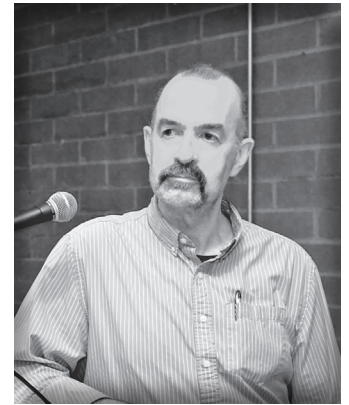
The Postal Service has been very quiet over the years about vote-by-mail. One would think that the PMG would have been the biggest champion of this. It would establish a process and revenue stream no other entity could provide. As a quasi-government

entity, the USPS would surely have been the sole beneficiary of such a lucrative and recurring revenue stream. After all, the Postal Service is annually viewed as one of the most trusted government agencies. The USPS has chosen to go the opposite way. They've changed their postmark policy. A postmark date may not match the date you dropped mail off at a post office. So, if you drop off your ballot at your local post office, it may not be postmarked until days later.

Requirements for employment in the post office have all but been eliminated. There is no test to become a city letter carrier. There is no interview with applicants. In fact, they are hired sight unseen. Clerks are no longer required to be scheme qualified. There is no minimum amount of time of employment before a carrier can become a boss, 204b. Supervisors used to have to take a class and pass a test to become a full-time supervisor. Now, you just have to be related or friends to be promoted.

Routes used to be adjusted more frequently and according to the post office's own handbooks with input from carriers and the union. Now, route adjustments are less frequent, and routes are adjusted not by the handbook but by arbitrary RCI (**w**Reaking **C**haos **I**ntentionally) teams who predetermine how long a route will be with no input from carriers or the union.

It was sacrilege to delay mail any day. First class mail went out every day or heads rolled. I know this sounds strange to new carriers, but if on the rare



occasion mail was not delivered the day before, management would investigate why and a carrier would be instructed to deliver that mail first thing that morning. Standards were lowered and then all but eliminated in the last few years. The slippery slope began with COVID. If a route didn't go out one day, it must go out the next day. I don't have to tell carriers how unimportant letter sized mail has become to management. Management views letter size mail as a nuisance instead of revenue.

It is the law the USPS delivers mail every day. 39 USC 101 provides statutory obligations that mail must be delivered six days per week to all communities across the nation. All mail is treated like we treated bulk rate mail back in the day. Management is only concerned with parcels now. They will not even deny this. They openly remark that we are in the business of delivering parcels not mail.

The union used to be able to go to upper management and reason with them with some of the more absurd things they did. Upper management actually knew the contract and made an effort to abide by it. Now, they don't know the contract, and what's worse, they do not wish to know what it says. It is the wild west. Management is under the mistaken impression that their job is indispensable and that carriers will be the first to go if there are job reductions. There is no Postal Service without letter carriers. Management can be eliminated and mail will be delivered. I sure hope AI will eliminate every one of their positions. They show their disrespect to our customers and their employees every day by ignoring the contract and harassing employees every day without shame.

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. Happy St. Patrick's Day!



MARK YOUR CALENDAR
DON'T SIT ON THE SIDELINES ... GET INVOLVED!

- Mar 12** Regular Branch Meeting
- Apr 1** Retiree Meeting
- Apr 2** Shop Stewards Meeting
- Apr 9** Regular Branch Meeting
- Apr 11-12** 30th Annual Reel in the Cure Bass Tournament for MDA (see ad)
- May 2** 97th Ole Timers Day (Letter Carriers Hall see ad)
- May 9** NALC Food Drive

The following stations were represented at the February Shop Stewards Meeting

- | | |
|----------------|-------------------|
| Carrier Square | Mackenzie Pointe |
| Clayton | Maryville Gardens |
| Des Peres | Normandy |
| Gravois | Sappington |
| Harriet Woods | Southwest |
| Jennings | Weathers |
| Kirkwood | West County |

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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Executive Vice President ... *By Brian Litteken*

SAFETY TIPS AND CRIME REPORTING CRITERIA



The Inspection Service has issued a plastic card listing safety tips and crime reporting criteria. The card can be worn along with your postal identification on your lanyard. A mandatory stand-up talk should have been given in January prior to issuing the cards. The stand-up talk includes the following tips:

- Keep arrow keys chained to your person and out of sight.
- If approached by someone expressing undue curiosity about Postal Service property or operations, report it to your supervisor.
- Report suspicious activity — leave area immediately and move to safe location — call your supervisor; if in immediate danger, call 911 first.
- If robbed or attacked on your route, comply with assailant's demands; call 911 first and then postal inspectors, and lastly, your supervisor.

have agreed to form a union, but their employer doesn't voluntarily recognize it.

The NLRB has been weakened since Trump began his second term. Within a day of taking office, NLRB member Gwynne Wilcox was fired. This left the NLRB without enough members to form a quorum and make decisions. Trump then appointed two Republicans to fill the vacant seats, creating a conservative majority.

The NLRB is currently understaffed. The Board lost about 100 employees due to early retirements and resignation buyouts pushed by the Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE). Roughly 1,100 workers currently oversee collective bargaining and labor practices in the private sector. In 2016, 1,545 employees were working at the agency.

The result of these actions is a 30% drop in the number of union elections overseen by the NLRB in 2025 and a 45% decline in the number of workers participating in union elections.

PHOTO VERIFICATION OF PARCEL DELIVERY

A pilot test of verifying parcel delivery by taking a photo of the parcel once it is delivered has begun on February 9. The testing will be done with city and rural carriers in four locations. Those locations are in Arizona, New York, Minnesota, and Texas. The Mobile Delivery Device screen will display a countdown timer of 30 seconds on the "shutter" button then the image will be automatically captured. The carrier may also tap the camera shutter button to immediately take the picture.

NATIONAL LABOR RELATIONS BOARD (NLRB)

NLRB presides over enforcing labor law in the private sector, including conducting union elections. Workers file to hold an election with the NLRB once they



BRANCH LEGAL PLAN

Advice and Consultation on
General Practice and Civil Actions.

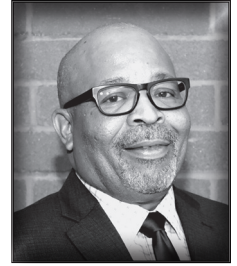


GOFFSTEIN LAW, L.L.C.

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

Vice President Financial Secretary ... *By Marvin Booker*



DELINQUENT DUES

One aspect of the vice president/financial secretary's job is to account for all dues that are being paid into the branch. Each pay period a printout is received, along with an electronic reimbursement from NALC headquarters, that lists each member, their pay location, and the amount of dues deducted. NALC headquarters subtracts and retains every member's national and state per capita tax from the branch reimbursement check.

When letter carriers are injured on-the-job, once the first 45 day period of Continuation of Pay (COP) ends and they are receiving compensation from OWCP, their dues are not deducted and cannot be deducted from their OWCP pay. The member is then considered to be in a "No-Deduct" status. Most carriers are not aware of this fact, and do not realize their union dues are in arrears. This situation also exists when a letter carrier is out on emergency placement, removal, indefinite suspension, or lengthy unpaid LWOP.

NALC headquarters deducts the per capita tax from the branch reimbursement check for each union member, even when that member is in a Leave Without Pay (LWOP) status. Any member in arrears in union dues is no longer a "member in good standing." This can jeopardize your health insurance coverage, if you are covered by the NALC Health Plan, along with other union benefits. You would be ineligible for the Branch Eyeglass Program, the John H. Haake Scholarship Award, voting in local branch elections, or running for branch office. It is incumbent on each member whose union dues are in arrears to pay those dues directly to the branch when they are off work in LWOP status and/or receiving OWCP compensation.

The branch has established a committee that will be tasked with developing a written policy detailing when/how to collect dues from members in a "No Deduct" status. The branch may seek full dues

payment (national, state and local dues) from such members, or it may choose to seek repayment from the member for only the national and state portion of the dues. Once the branch selects a policy, all members under the same circumstances will be treated equally.

Regardless of a branch's policy, headquarters will continue to deduct the national and state per capita tax for all members in a "No Deduct" status as the branch is not exempt from that payment.

However, branches that establish a policy to collect dues from members in a no-deduct status may request reimbursement for per capita tax collected by national headquarters when the branch's attempt to recoup the dues from the member was unsuccessful and their membership was then cancelled by the branch through notification to the NALC Membership Department.

Any back dues owed can be paid in installments until the balance is paid in full. We realize that when carriers are out on OWCP compensation it can take some time before you can get paid for that time. If you are in arrears in dues and having difficulty making payments, please call the branch office and speak to me to make some type of accommodations. The branch also has a OWCP representative available to assist you if you are having difficulty with a compensation claim.

Until next time, be safe and be professional.



Recording Secretary ... *By Richard Brown*

Happy St. Patty's Day to all you leprechauns, tall and short alike. I hope you don't celebrate too hard, as the mail will be waiting for your return to work.



Unfortunately, you cannot control what happens to the mail when you are not present. Do everything in your power to deliver every piece, every day when you are at work. If you don't believe you will complete your assignment in eight hours, please complete a PS Form 3996. If you get no response, return the mail and complete a PS Form 1571. Management is waiting to discipline you for unauthorized overtime or delaying mail. If you find that you will go overtime while on the street, text back on the scanner for instructions. If you are told to keep going, complete the PS Form 3996 upon your return and keep a copy. Again, they will lie.

MAIL DELIVERY

Most of you have experienced the management method of prioritizing the mail that is delivered daily. It seems they have been instructed to curtail mail for a route where the carrier does not report to work for whatever reason, parcel delivery only they say. This method has not gone well in some offices, such as Maryville Gardens. Management is scanning the package being held at the office or some other bogus reason. When the customer complains of not receiving mail, they lie. There has recently been a trend of mail not moving through the system, even if the customer pays a premium for the delivery of their items. Since when does it take a month for Priority Mail to reach its destination? It shouldn't, but somehow that has become the norm.

Even after the June 2025 OIG audits, which exposed delayed mail and packages amongst other house-keeping violations in Maryville Gardens, Southwest, Clayton, and Creve Coeur, to name a few, management continues to manipulate mail processing at some of the same offices. Management at these locations and others are afraid of being reprimanded by the postmaster during telecons, so they lie or give inept instructions to the carrier. In some instances, they are told by the postmaster or MCSO to do some of the things we bear witness to, but either way, it diminishes the public's trust in our ability to serve them.

Yes, there are staff shortages, but this is the service's own doing, not necessarily a lack of applicants. If the PTF speaks up for themselves, which exposes management's BS, management either tries to fire them or send them to another office.

MORE RESPONSIBILITY

You may have heard of the new function we will be tasked with completing. Take a photo of the package with your scanner upon delivery. We're not certain if this will roll out in our market right away, but when and if it does, please complete the process. We know they won't take the time to show us how it's properly done, so do your best. If you don't understand the process, ask for help. It's managements responsibility to properly train you. Don't give management a reason to assassinate your character. Be consistent in your duties and helpful toward the customer, they remember that more than anything.

Who is responsible!

**DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME
BEGINS MARCH 8**



Change your clock.



Change your battery.

Health Benefits Plan/OWCP ... By Barry Linan

March greetings to all of the brothers and sisters of NALC Branch 343. Well, it didn't take long for our new PMG David Steiner, former board member of FedEx, to kneecap the USPS. In case you missed it, the USPS published a **"Final Rule"** to the Domestic Mail Manual that went into effect on December 24, 2025, changing the procedures for postmarking of the mail. In short, the change means the USPS is **no longer committed to postmarking the mail on the same day it is received from the customer.** Previously all mail dropped in a mailbox prior to the pickup time on the box would be postmarked with that day's date on it. This was often-times referred to as the "Mailbox Rule". I don't have to tell you **how important that postmark is to our customers** mailing bill payments, legal documents, tax returns, and election ballots. Once again, USPS leadership is showing its complete disdain for our customers in yet another cost-cutting blunder! To paraphrase, "Please use our services, but we'll postmark your mail and process it whenever we're good and ready." Now that's what I call servicing the customer!

HBP NEWS

As I mentioned last month, one of the big changes to our plan for 2026 that I'm getting a lot of calls about is the change for ALL prescription costs to a **coinsurance** of 20% generic (maximum \$250) / 30% formulary brand (maximum \$350) / 50% non-formulary brand (maximum \$500) of the plan allowance. Those same coinsurance costs previously applied only to network retail pharmacy drug purchases. Previously, you could get a 90-day supply from CVS by mail order or at a CVS pharmacy thru the Maintenance Choice Program for a **copay** of \$15 generic/ \$90 formulary brand/ \$125 non-formulary brand. You can still get your prescriptions from CVS by mail or at a CVS pharmacy thru the Maintenance Choice Program, but the cost is now the same coinsurance as you would pay at a network retail pharmacy.

If you are a retiree and in our Medicare Part D plan SilverScript, the **coinsurance** costs are lower at 10% generic (maximum \$250) / 20% formulary brand (maximum \$350) / 30% non-formulary brand (maximum \$500) of the

plan allowance. Unfortunately, this change is mostly going to result in higher costs to you, the member. Under our SilverScript program and using a commonly prescribed blood thinner brand name drug like "Eliquis" as an example, it is in the SilverScript formulary and previously a 90-day supply would have cost you a **copayment** of \$75. Now, you'll have to pay a **coinsurance** at 20% of the Plan allowance and it will cost you \$150. These numbers are based on a 90-day supply (180) 5 mg pills of Eliquis at a local retail drug price of \$750. Drug prices can vary based on your location. The bottom line is depending upon the retail cost of the drug, you could see a big jump in your out of pocket costs.

As a side note, I found out the FDA did approve a generic version of Eliquis called **Apixaban** back in **2019**. Unfortunately, the parent drug company Bristol Myers Squibb went to court and was able to convince a judge to extend their exclusive patent rights for Eliquis until **April 2028**. Coincidentally, the Bristol Myers Squibb financial reports indicate that **Eliquis is their top revenue generating drug accounting for \$14.4 billion in sales for 2025**.

I have some good news for our retirees in SilverScript regarding your prescription drug costs, they will be capped at \$2,100 in 2026 thanks to the Democrat passed **Inflation Reduction Act of 2022**. Once you spend to the initial coverage limit of \$2,100 on formulary drugs in 2026, you will pay nothing more out of pocket for formulary drugs for the rest of the calendar year. For those of you taking multiple prescriptions, there is a way to track your spending towards the \$2,100 limit on www.caremark.com. You will need to register and set up an account, select "pharmacy benefits," and then "financial summary." You should then be able to see what was spent on your prescriptions "year to date."

That same **Inflation Reduction Act of 2022** also caps your insulin cost at \$35 per month for enrollees of Medicare Part D plans that have insulin in their formulary.



Notes from the Managing Editor ... *By Tom Schulte*



WHAT IS THE "SAVE AMERICA ACT?"

Voter fraud is an expression that's been bandied about for the last 10 years. It has no basis in fact, but it's a fear mongering campaign to sow doubt in the results of national, state and local elections.

The January 6 riots were instigated by stoking this unproven fear to shed doubt on the integrity of ballots cast. Time after time in every court in the 50 states, no evidence was provided to substantiate any election fraud.

The Heritage Foundation, a conservative think tank conducted research and published data over a 44-year span. In Arizona alone and with 107 million votes cast, the number of verifiable fraud cases amounted to 1,415 votes or 0.000013%. This is voter fraud?

Exercising our right to vote is a fundamental right and obligation of our republic and it's central to our democracy. It's our way to elect officials who represent the will of the people and to hold them accountable. The more eligible voters who cast their ballots on election day, the stronger our democracy.

So why did congressional House Republicans pass the SAVE America Act in February of 2026 and what exactly is it?

In a nutshell the SAVE America Act would require people registering to vote or those updating their registration to show specific documents proving American citizenship. Proponents of the bill say it will help prevent non-citizens from voting and protect federal elections from fraud and abuse, but opponents point out that the bill is trying to solve a problem that doesn't exist.

It's already illegal for non-citizens to vote in

federal elections and research provided by the Heritage Foundation as I noted above supports that allegation. In fact, the SAVE America Act would prevent millions of eligible voters who don't have immediate access to specific documents required in the bill to be able to vote. The SAVE Act would require American citizens to show documents like a passport or birth certificate to register to vote. Research shows that 21 million Americans lack ready access to those documents. Roughly half of all Americans lack a passport. Millions lack paper copies of their birth certificates.

The SAVE Act would disenfranchise Americans of all ages and races, but younger voters and voters of color would suffer disproportionately. Likewise, millions of women whose married names are not on their birth certificates or passports would face extra steps to prove their eligibility.

The bill not only requires proof of citizenship, but also proof of residence to register. This could block even more Americans from voting. Statics show that roughly 9% of the population moves within a state in a single year, but many will not update their driver's licenses until they expire. Requirements for everyone to present photo ID would result in making them ineligible to vote in an upcoming election cycle.

The bill is specifically targeted to suppress the votes of women and minorities and is just another click bait attempt to create doubt in an election system which is fundamentally sound in all 50 states.

Take the time to contact your senators now and tell them to oppose this repressive legislation and urge them to get back to serving the American

Region 5 NBA Report ... By David A. Teegarden



public.

TWO NEW USPS INTERPRETIVE DISPUTES

The USPS has declared two interpretive issues and is sending them to national arbitration for resolution.

The **first issue** regards Article 17.4 (Payment of Stewards) of the National Agreement. The service is asserting that any grievance that requests as a remedy additional payment to stewards, branches or a charity is improper under Article 17.4 and thus an interpretive issue. We have been told that this does not include remedies for a steward that is part of a class like Article 8 grievances where the steward is included in the class nor would it include a grievance over a steward being denied steward time and performing the work off the clock where the steward is the grievant. Our current understanding is this applies to additional or what the service deems to be punitive remedies where the request is made to pay the steward for filing a grievance where he/she is not part of the grievance otherwise.

The **second issue** is a dispute over the provisions of Article 8.5.F of the National Agreement. The service asserts that any grievance at all is prohibited regarding Article 8.5.F because it is only a remedy for working carriers beyond the provisions contained in that provision. They believe that it is improper for any grievance to be filed even if all we ask for is an acknowledgement of the violation or a cease and desist.

Both interpretive disputes are currently being discussed at the national level, and we are awaiting instruction to the Step B team on how to handle cases currently in the system and appealed to Step B. We have been given instructions to hold the grievances for the two issues, but it has not been determined how to handle other issues not part of the interpretive dispute in the same grievance. That is being discussed at the headquarters level.



Normandy letter carrier Johnetta Martin receives congratulations on her retirement from Dwayne Hines, shop steward Carmella Jackson, (Johnetta), and Br. 343 Executive Vice Presiden Brian Litteken.

Retiree Report

... By Guest Recording Secretary Nicki L. Prado



Chairman Tom Schulte called the meeting at 12:45 p.m. Chaplain Lawrence McHaynes lead us in prayer and the Pledge of Allegiance. Tom thanked Richard Hatchard Jr. for providing the delicious lunch.

Volunteers: Pamela Stepney and Richard Thurman volunteered to provide lunch for the March meeting. Geno Iberg volunteered lunch for the April meeting and there will be no retiree meeting in May because of Ole Timers Day on May 2.

Introduction of new members: The retirees welcomed Marilyn Krieger from Maryville Gardens.

Minutes from the last meeting: Guest Recording Secretary Nicki L. Prado read the minute from the January meeting.

Treasurers Report: Mike Chenot reported checking account balance of \$958.36 and cash on hand after expenses of \$442.

Presidents Report: Executive Vice President Brian Litteken reported on the upcoming "Fight Like Hell Fair Contract Rally" to be held on February 22 in front of the Main Post Office Downtown at 1 p.m. Brian encouraged all retirees who are able, to join in to show support. The union continues to fight with postal management regarding curtailed and delayed mail. Management appears indifferent to the problem.

Legislative Report: Mike Weir reported that President Trump's approval rating has dipped to 37% and even MAGA Republicans are breaking ranks because of the president's policies and the Epstein file controversies. The president has discussed eliminating Vote by Mail to help suppress the vote in the midterm elections. The delaying and curtailing of mail by USPS are lending fuel to the fire of the lack of efficiency of the Postal Service to postmark ballots on time and thus not count votes. DHS stooge Tulsi Gabbard grabbed Georgia poll records in search of what?

Republicans are panicking over midterm election projections. Give to the PAC Fund.

Health Benefits Report: Barry Linan reported on the prescription costs changing from a set copay to a percentage of cost in our NALC Health Benefits insurance.

Supplemental Report: Vice President Marvin Booker discussed the problems being faced by retirees seeking their 1099s from OPM. OPM has changed its policies where you need to set up an account online with them to access your 1099s. A link can be found on the *OPM.gov* website. You will need your CSA number and zip code to do this. The problem is that many retirees don't have access to computers or how to navigate the system.

Chairman's Report: Tom expressed concern with the retiree bank accounts and the difficulty in providing lunch for the \$5 fee we charge at our monthly meetings. Tom said we haven't had an increase in fees since 2011 while the price to provide lunch continues to go up. A motion was made, seconded and approved to raise the monthly fee to \$6 per meeting beginning in March. May 2, hold the date. That will be the 97th annual Ole Timers Day celebration.

New Business: Geno Iberg said that he would order retiree shirts for anyone interested. \$28 for large and under and \$30 for plus sizes. He also had new veterans' baseball caps for any veteran who does not have one.

Deceased Members: A moment of silence was held for Ronald Hoff, retired.

50/50 Winner: \$16 won by John McLaughlin who donated it to the PAC fund.

Closing Prayer: Offered by Chaplain Lawrence McHaynes.

Meeting Adjourned: 1:30 p.m.

1930

97th Annual Ole Timers Day

2026

JOHN H. HAAKE BRANCH 343
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF LETTER CARRIERS

HONORING

RETIRED MEMBERS AND PAST PRESIDENTS

SATURDAY, MAY 2, 2026

BRANCH 343 UNION HALL

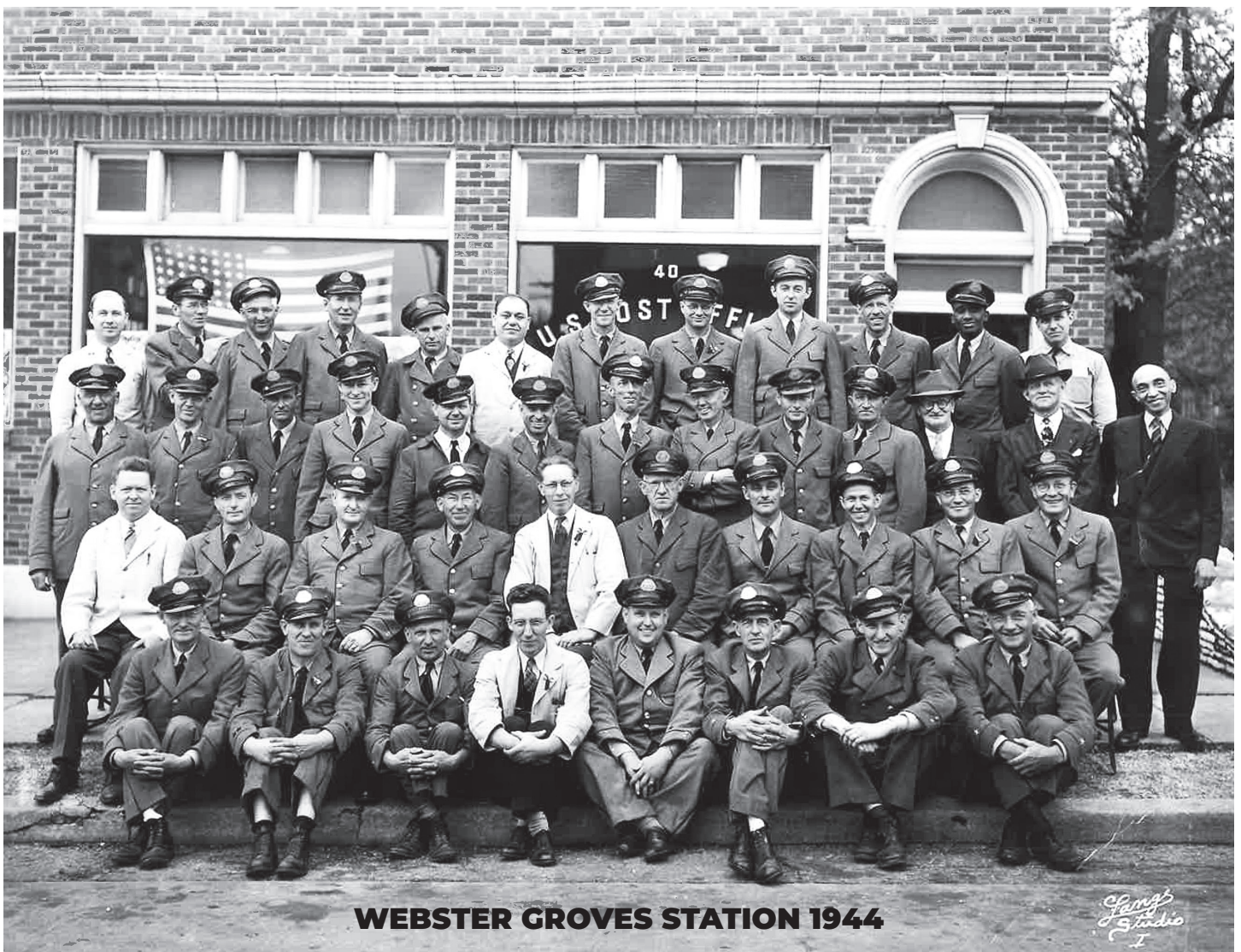
1600 S. BROADWAY

LUNCH SERVED AT NOON
REFRESHMENTS UNTIL 4 P.M.

JOHN McLAUGHLIN
PRESIDENT
Branch 343, NALC



TOM SCHULTE
CHAIRMAN
of the Retirees



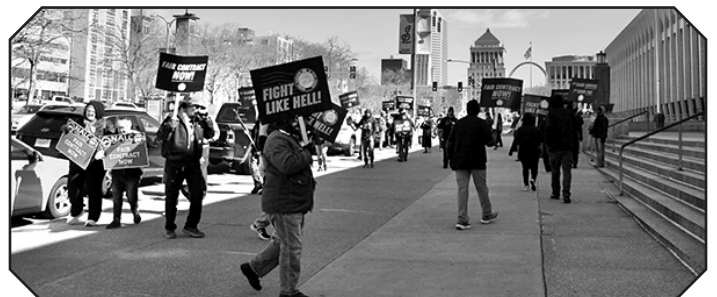
WEBSTER GROVES STATION 1944

Lang's Studio
I

Scenes from the “ Fair Contract Rally”



Sunday, February 22, Main Post Office St. Louis



South County ... *By Matt Gleiforst*

Hello from South County. Last month I described the issues we are facing due to all the DPS misthrow errors that are plaguing our stations right now. It unfortunately has not gotten any better and is in fact only getting worse. On top of that, our station alone is down four clerk positions that for some reason are not being bid on. This has led to the perfect storm of undelivered mail. We have more misthrown DPS mail and working trays than can be sorted by our clerks. New mail is being set on top of old mail and just sitting there waiting to be thrown. It has become a joke now to shout out "make sure you check the hot case." Many of us carriers make sure to bring any first class misthrows to the proper routes if we know where they go, because otherwise they will go to a mail "graveyard."

Our new MCSO was in our station recently and I asked him what was going to be done about this "graveyard" of mail. I even gestured toward the obvious pile of mail that was simply sitting, waiting to be sorted. He brushed me off and said there was a plan to deal with it. He never said what that plan was. It was obvious by his demeanor there was no plan. A couple of weeks later and the same mountain of mail was still sitting there. We even had carriers volunteering to throw some of this mail, which obviously shouldn't be happening. It's truly sad that we seem to be the only ones that care if our customers get their mail.

I have heard the issue is that the DPS is supposed to be run down-town through the sorting machine seven times, but they are only running it through three times which is causing all the misthrown mail. I do not know if this is an intentional decision, but it is creating very serious side effects down the road. This miscalculation creates an enormous amount of work that should be prevented. I also asked the MCSO if he was aware of this issue. You'll be shocked to hear he brushed me off again. He simply said he'd "heard something about it" but did not say that there was a fix in place. I suppose ignoring the first-class mail is just the new normal.



Hopefully at some point enough will be enough and there actually will be a real fix. Sadly, it is out of our hands. All we can do in the meantime is to follow instructions and do the best we can for our customers with what we are given. Take the time to talk to the upset customers and let them know we as carriers are doing everything we can to give them the best service possible. They have every right to be upset about missing mail. Always be honest with them and tell them who they can complain to at the office. Maybe if enough people complain to the right people, things will change.

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

BRANCH 343

CARDINALS TICKETS

For Sale, Thursday, March 12

Immediately following the Regular Branch Meeting



"They're Always Open" ... *By Retired Letter Carrier Mike Laury*

Whenever I go to Denny's or any other restaurant, for that matter, I discreetly search out a well-cushioned seat or booth that is both "prostate proof and butt friendly." After I turned 60 years old, I learned how to strategically cater to my medical issues through finely honed techniques to avoid potential public embarrassment.

I wanted to discuss a true hero of mine, my retired brother, "Ray." Along with prostate and other cancer, "Ray" has faced this four plus year challenge with a matter-of-fact attitude that helped him star as an athlete, engineer, and person. My brother and I also share a morbid sense of humor about our (mostly his) health over the past few years. I've written countless letters to Milton-Bradley about adding the prostate to the anatomy of their game board, Operation, but to no avail. Back when I was a kid, there was no more satisfying feedback than receiving an electric shock through my six-year-old body when I failed to insert or extract the funny bone after touching the "don't touch zone." (Eat your heart out, Ghostbuster Dr. Peter Venkman). We try to go out to breakfast once a month and with Ray's ongoing four-year tussle with cancer, the time we spend together has developed into a sense of quiet urgency trying to slow down our biological clocks. Like unwanted weeds that grow in a garden, his cancer sprouts, then retreats to different parts of his body. Chemo, like weed killer, doesn't always get to the roots of this evil growth. I texted my brother a picture of the "Robert tree" that I planted in his honor four years ago. We shared an awkward hug the next time we had breakfast, following the screenshot of the tree, then he went into a bitching and moaning diatribe about the ongoing struggles of our St. Louis Cardinals and how he would fix the Redbird team and their farm system.

One Friday morning, it was taking longer than usual to get our order, so I pulled out my tool bag of superstitions, and went to the bathroom. Sure enough, once I got back to our booth, my lukewarm breakfast was finally there, waiting for me. So if you've waited an unusually long time for your food, use the restroom, and cosmic coincidence might have the food, impatiently waiting for you upon your return.

Some other restaurant absolutes that I have discovered in my dining career:

The crying baby's family usually shows up five minutes after I have already committed to a dining table.

Second, servers like to embarrass customers by omitting the price of that night's specials as if they were a state secret.

Third, why doesn't the restaurant invest in water pitchers with the spout on the side?

Finally, why do my hand gestures for more bread seem to fall upon deaf ears even after gesticulating like a third base coach, trying to take off the bunt sign?

OK, one more: It's that hacking husband or wife who cuts our dining experience short because phlegm has invited itself to their table for the evening. So now, we must pivot to a "I'll take the rest of our food to go strategy" before we begin gagging through our main course like a seal choking on a fish that gets caught in its "swim pipe."

My very last item on this menu of complaints is, why are crappy restaurants regaled as being "the best meal they ever had" by a few of my friends and fellow parishioners? I have a theory that some people were born with crappy taste buds. Maybe it's a genetic flaw that has them passing off truly lousy food as some palette paradise. I'm from the island of great fried chicken, with mashed potatoes and gravy and delicious buttery biscuits.

Lastly, (again) to the younger generation, maybe "sock away" some of that \$45 you spend each week on places like Starbucks into your retirement account, so you too can bitch and moan like me, 30 years from now, enjoying a "comfortable retirement of complaints and condescending remarks from your La-Z-Boy bark-a-lounger. (Dear God, I'm becoming my dad!) The end of winter is in sight so hang in there fellow carriers.

Sincerely, "the guy who saw both no-hitters."

West County Retiree ... *By Pam Stepney*

Greetings sisters and brothers of Branch 343. How's everybody doing? Fine, I hope.

Hey family, can we talk? When did we become so laid back that we don't want to help raise money for MDA? Yes, I know there are a lot of other charities out there we could look at, but MDA has been the charity of letter carriers for years. When we go to the national convention, we are competing with branches that have as many members as Branch 343. In the past, we've brought home trophies for out-raising other branches — first, second, and third place plaques. That didn't happen by accident. That's why it's so important to participate in 50/50s, purchase breakfast sandwiches and sell them to letter carriers, clerks, supervisors — whoever. Whatever you choose to do is fine with me.

Retired Brother Dan Brauchle did 50/50s all year at Southwest Station and sponsored 18 holes at the Branch 343 MDA golf tournament. Guess what? Every golfer saw Southwest Station signs on every hole. That's how you represent! Doing 50/50s on Saturdays was always fun because someone went home with half the money raised that day. Management always participated — because they wanted to win, too.

Another great fundraiser came from Southwest Station as well. Kenny Young has raised over \$250,000 by hosting a bass tournament every year. You see, if you put your mind to it, you can always come up with a way to raise money — helping your branch bring home a trophy and helping scientists find a cure for children.

If you're the steward in your office, start this week. You'll be surprised how much fun it is. Sometimes the clerks will even sell tickets for you because they know it's for the good of the Union. West County has raised up to \$600 a year in the past. I'm just saying.

Let's not forget Disaster Relief, which helps letter carriers get back on their feet after major disasters — like the EF-3 tornado that hit North St. Louis on May 16, 2025. Nate Markovich from Southwest Station hosted a softball tournament in August 2025 and raised \$500 for Disaster Relief. He's planning another tournament for 2026 — date coming soon — so get your team together and those team uniform colors ready. And yes, Nate's team practiced weekly, wore matching uniforms, and won his own tournament. Now what are the odds of that? I thought for sure Weathers or North County would take it. 😊 I'll admit it — I was hating a little, because once again someone from Southwest Station took home the prize. You know we must talk trash until the last game is played. 😊

While we're talking, let's talk about letter carrier uniforms. I was driving home from a doctor's appointment and saw a letter carrier delivering mail — with no postal pants or shirt on. Now I know we have new employees who haven't received their uniform allowance yet. That's where you, the regulars, come in. Start today. Order your new uniforms. Bring in your gently used ones and put them in the break room. Let the new employees know they're there and have them take what they need until their allowance kicks in. Yes, management may allow you to deliver in whatever — but let's take pride in how we look. When you see UPS, they're in uniform. When you see Amazon, they're in uniform. FedEx? In uniform. You catch my drift?

There was a time when management required neckties from October 1 to April 1, and shorts were allowed from April 1 to October 1 — and we were proud to represent the Postal Service. Some folks have gotten away from looking the part because management comes in dressed like they just left — or are headed to — the club. There's no professionalism in that.

Please, ma'am. Please, sir. Change your ways. Stop wearing non-issued hats. Some sweatshirts and T-shirts have sayings bashing the very company that pays your bills and supports your family. Why put down the company that provides the life you live?

Reminder: The NALC Food Drive is coming up May 9. If you're a steward, select someone to sell T-shirts and coordinate that day. Vice President Marvin Booker already told me the color is purple. Just kidding. 😊

Moving on — we received 17 applications for the John Haake Scholarship, we will be awarding three \$1,500 scholarships. Congratulations to the three winners heading off to college in the fall of 2026.

To all retirees sitting at home on the second Wednesday of each month, come on down to the Union Hall at 1600 South Broadway at noon. Lunch is served for just \$6, you'll get plenty of information, and you'll have a chance to win half of the 50/50.

Thank you to all the carriers who came out to the Fight Like Hell Rally to help our union secure a strong contract for everyone.

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.



Safety & Health ... *By Richard Thurman*

SAFE PRACTICE JUST DOES NOT HAPPEN!

Dog attacks have risen, carriers are reporting incidents, and management is not following the escalation steps that their own manuals require. Most municipalities and states have clear definitions for dangerous, aggressive, or vicious animals. Once an animal meets those criteria, the employer is supposed to take specific protective actions, not just hand out an animal control card and hope for the best.

Why do dog attacks keep rising?

A decade-long doubling usually points to:

- More dogs overall in households.
- More deliveries (especially post-COVID).
- Inconsistent enforcement of leash/fence laws.
- Carriers being pressured to “just get the job done” even when unsafe.

When management does not follow through, the risk compounds because the same unsafe address stays unsafe.

What should management be doing?

Most postal and delivery organizations have nearly identical requirements:

- Immediate documentation of the incident.
- Supervisors follow up with the customer.
- Verification of secure fencing, restraint, or muzzle use.
- Suspension of delivery if the hazard continues.

Formal designation of the animal as aggressive or dangerous when criteria are met.

Once an animal is officially classified, the owner is typically required to use:

- Strong, non-retractable leashes.
- Properly fitted muzzles.
- Locked gates or secure fencing.
- Indoor confinement during delivery windows.

These aren't optional; they're usually written into local ordinances and the employer's own safety manuals.

The safety philosophy of the Postal Service is stated below:

- a. Any occupational injury or illness can be prevented. This goal is realistic, not theoretical. Supervisors and managers have primary responsibility for the well-being of employees and must fully accept this principle.
- b. Management, which encompasses all levels, including the first-line supervisor, is responsible and accountable for the prevention of accidents and control of resultant losses. Just as the organization is responsible for attaining production levels, ensuring quality of performance, maintaining good employee relations, and operating within cost and budget guidelines, supervisors and managers must likewise accept their share of responsibility for the safety and health of employees.

- c. It is possible to safeguard against all operating exposures that can result in accidents, injuries, and illnesses. It is preferable to eliminate the sources of danger. However, where this is not practical, management must use protective measures, including:
 1. Administrative controls,
 2. Machine guards,
 3. Safety devices, and
 4. Personal protective equipment.

1. Administrative controls,
2. Machine guards,
3. Safety devices, and
4. Personal protective equipment.

Missouri law regarding vicious animals focuses on strict liability for dog bites (RS Mo 273.036) and strict regulations for dangerous wild animals (RS Mo 578.023). Owners are liable for unprovoked bites regardless of the dog's prior behavior. Keeping dangerous wild animals, such as lions, tigers, bears, or certain reptiles, requires registration, or it is a class C misdemeanor.

Key details regarding dangerous animal statutes in Missouri include:

Dog Bite Liability (RS Mo 273.036): Dog owners are strictly liable for damages if their dog bites someone without provocation, even if the dog has never shown aggression before.

Dangerous Dog Offense (RS Mo 578.024): It is a crime to own or possess a dog that has previously bitten a person or domestic animal without provocation and subsequently bites again.

Dangerous Wild Animals (RS Mo 578.023): Prohibits keeping dangerous wild animals (e.g., bears, wolves, nonhuman primates, venomous snakes) unless registered with local law enforcement.

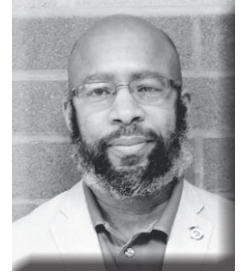
Municipal Authority: While Missouri does not have a statewide breed-specific ban, many cities implement their own ordinances targeting specific breeds like pit bulls or Rottweilers.

Seizure and Euthanasia: Dangerous dogs, or those with a history of biting, may be seized and euthanized by authorities if they cause severe injury or death.

Statute of Limitations: Victims have five years to file a lawsuit for dog bite injuries, according to MO.gov.

There are specific steps to take to safeguard the carrier, regardless of the mail or the customer. The point of delivery should always be evaluated for its safety. What are the safety references point? For example, if a customer has an animal, regardless of his size, it must be properly restrained.

Please, please be your own advocate for your own safety!



Free & Fair Elections Are Under Attack ... *By Mike Weir*

A recent Gallup poll indicated that the president's approval rating is underwater by 24%. Being "underwater" means that his approval rating is 24% lower than his disapproval rating. In this case, 36% approve of his presidency and 60% disapprove. While the numbers vary somewhat depending upon the issue that is being cited (such as the economy, the cost of living, tariffs, immigration & deportations, healthcare, use of military force, etc.); overall, his approval rating is significantly lower than his approval rating in each category. As a result, some Republicans are breaking with the president on certain issues. They are concerned that their positions in the House and the Senate may be in jeopardy in the mid-term elections on November 3. Early indications are that the **Republicans may lose their majorities in the House and even in the Senate.** The president is also worried that citizens across the country are finally recognizing the reality of their living conditions and rejecting his constant (and consistent) lies about how wonderful life is under his administration. That is why the president has become so obsessed with undermining the voting process.

He started by **attacking Vote-by-Mail.** Even though his claims of rampant fraud in this process have been thoroughly discredited, he continues to beat that drum. In the 2024 elections, 30% of voters used Vote-by-Mail. It allowed people with disabilities or an illness, people with no transportation, people working on election day, etc., to access this basic tenet of democracy. And, obviously, continuing Vote-by-Mail is financially beneficial to the Postal Service and to us as employees. The president continued his effort to undermine voting by calling on Congress to "nationalize" elections, thus putting the federal government in charge. The Elections Clause in the Constitution clearly establishes that each state oversees their elections for federal office. To his credit, Senate Majority Leader John Thune decided to uphold the Constitution (at least on this issue) by refusing to go along with Trump's demand to "nationalize" elections.

The president then issued an executive order seeking to exert control over election law that the Constitution does not grant the president (but when has that ever

stopped him?), by demanding that states avoid counting mail ballots postmarked by Election Day but received afterwards. Federal courts have stopped the order from taking effect. However, the PMG, David P. Steiner, apparently decided to assist the president (who had chosen him for the position) by issuing a new rule as to when a piece of mail is postmarked. Mail will no longer be postmarked when it is dropped off; but, instead, when it is processed. Depending upon when voters drop off their ballots, the votes of thousands of citizens may no longer be counted.

Additionally, the president is targeting voting machines as part of his effort to "help bring HONESTY to the 2026 midterm elections." He has also threatened election officials who oversaw the 2020 election with prosecution (while pardoning the January 6, 2021, rioters who sought to interfere with the certification of Joe Biden's electoral victory) and required the Department of Justice to demand states turn over their complete voter registration lists. Besides privacy concerns, this raises the possibility that they may seek to cast doubt on voter eligibility and have people purged from voting rolls. There are already examples of people being falsely identified as noncitizens by federal databases. And recent remarks by DHS Secretary Kristi Noem seem to indicate they are considering deploying ICE agents to polling places to stop noncitizens from voting. (Noncitizens already cannot vote, and the instances of their doing so are extremely rare. Given ICE's history of detaining anyone who doesn't look like a citizen to them, actual citizens could be prevented from voting or intimidated from doing so.) And, of course, Republicans are still pursuing gerrymandering districts to undermine the will of the people in each state. The Democrats are fighting fire with fire on this issue to stop the Republicans from gaining an unfair advantage.

Also, there is a **movement among Republicans to pass legislation called the Save Act** (Safeguard American Voter Eligibility). It would amend The National Voter Registration Act of 1993 to require proof of citizenship (certified birth certificate, U.S. passport, marriage license for women who changed their names, etc.) to register to vote in federal elections and mandates a photo ID for voting. This would disenfranchise millions of citizens (especially the poor, minorities, and married women)

who do not have these documents in their possession or do not have access to such documents. This is, of course, the point. The legislation has already passed the House of Representatives. The 60-vote rule to avoid a filibuster is still in place in the Senate, for now; so, hopefully, this legislation will not reach the president's desk.

It is becoming increasingly obvious that the president and his enablers in Congress do not have our best interests at heart. Their focus is on retaining power and ensuring that the millionaires and billionaires who financed their taking control of the government continue to support them.

Our jobs, our benefits, the well-being of our families and the survival of our democracy are all in jeopardy. We need a change in leadership in Washington, D.C., and we need to be willing to fight to achieve that change. Please join the fight whether it be by calling or writing your representatives and senators, signing petitions, joining rallies, getting involved in the campaign of someone who supports our values, and by contributing to the Branch 343 PAC Fund and the Letter Carrier Political Fund. Unfortunately, money still talks in politics. We need to speak up loudly and clearly for the kind of leaders who will support us and our democracy.

BRANCH 343 CONTRIBUTORS TO THE LETTER CARRIER POLITICAL FUND

Branch 343, St. Louis

4.85%

\$137.89

Thomas Ahlers	\$120	Debra Elder	\$120	William Lister	\$120	Kevin Schafer	\$60
James Anderson	\$55	Robert Evers	\$150	Brian Litteken	\$520	Richard Schallert Jr.	\$125
Jethro Atwater	\$120	William Fisher	\$60	Loren Loerch	\$60	Charles Schenk	\$60
David Bartholomew	\$120	Dennis Flanagin	\$45	Paul Maloney	\$60	Thomas Schreiber	\$125
Mark Bimslager	\$120	Andrew Garces	\$500	Nathaniel Markovich	\$250	Thomas Schulte	\$120
Marvin Booker	\$260	Excell Graham Jr.	\$125	Michael McCoy	\$56	Stacie Scott	\$125
Mark Basso	\$10	Lawrence Graves	\$60	Lawrence McHaynes Jr.	\$100	Charles Sexton	\$520
Daniel Brauchle	\$120	Brian Gray	\$60	John McLaughlin	\$520	Ladebra Simpson	\$45
Raymond Breakfield	\$35	Nicholas Grillo	\$120	Kenneth Meyer	\$60	Trampus Sims	\$60
Audry Brown	\$300	John Haake	\$60	Christopher Miller	\$125	Lucille Snow	\$360
Danielle Brown	\$115	Michael Hafertepe	\$60	Matthew Monken	\$125	Kelly Steinbecker	\$150
Richard Brown	\$500	Marlon Harden	\$125	Michael Mooney	\$125	Pamela Stepney	\$10
Roland Brown	\$60	Andre Hayes	\$60	Casey Moore	\$125	Saronda Sutherland	\$120
Donald Bruegger	\$60	Donovan Hobson	\$120	Derek Moore	\$240	Darlene Tate	\$200
James Bruggeman	\$60	Ronald Hoff	\$120	Jack Oehler	\$120	Kelly Teegarden	\$125
Leona Bryson	\$20	Tina Hunt	\$250	William Osia	\$300	Morris Tellis Jr.	\$75
Arthur Buck	\$360	Carl Iberg	\$60	Terrence Pastchal	\$125	Michael Tharp	\$60
Sharon Burr	\$80	Carmellia Jackson	\$125	Paul Pitts	\$120	Sandra Theismann	\$60
Joseph Canman	\$120	Monica Jeanis	\$125	Steven Powers	\$125	Richard Thurman	\$160
Michael Carranza	\$125	Layoikisha Johnson	\$120	Dennis Querrey	\$120	Richard Turner	\$300
Diane Carter	\$90	Yolanda Jones	\$125	Phillip Rakowiecki	\$50	Michael Tyler	\$60
Michael Chenot	\$60	Laura Keim	\$60	Shonna Randle	\$500	Donald Urbanek	\$60
Walter Clark	\$40	Charles Kell	\$55	Richard Rhyner	\$600	Jerry Wattler	\$75
John Cody	\$120	Marvin King	\$40	Artriece Richardson	\$125	Michael Weir	\$360
Stephen Conway	\$150	Marion Kirkiewicz	\$60	Lucas Rimmer	\$125	Dean Werner	\$120
Cariou Crump	\$75	Alfred Klevorn Jr.	\$60	Harold Robinson	\$45	Kelly Wetherhote	\$115
Dino Dimercurio	\$120	Meaghan Lakey	\$125	Nicholas Roddy Jr.	\$105	Harold White Jr.	\$180
Ramona Droege	\$125	Jerry Layton	\$125	Michael Rucker	\$120	Steven Wogtech	\$60
Stuart East	\$125	Barry Linan	\$120	Frederick Schaefer	\$120	Shawannis Worth	\$20

BRANCH MEETING

**BRANCH 343, ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI
FEBRUARY 13, 2025**

Summary of Branch Action

- MSC To pay the branch bills.
-
- MSC That Branch 343 donates a set of Cardinal Baseball Tickets to the 2026 MDA 30th annual Reel in the Cure, Buddy Bass Tournament on April 11-12.
-
- MSC That Branch 343 purchase a 1/8th page add at a cost of \$439 for the 2026 Workers Memorial Job Safety Issue of the Labor Tribune

New Members

- Sean Barton..... Fenton 1/23/2026
 Justin Bise Mexico..... 1/23/2026
 Carly Bloethner..... Fenton 1/9/2026
 Ryan Casey..... Harriet Woods..... 1/9/2026
 Angela Cauthen..... Carrier Square 1/9/2026
 Torre Dilworth..... Carrier Square 1/28/2026
 Demarcus Favell..... Carrier Square 1/9/2026
 Lidaniz Figueroa Kirkwood..... 1/16/2026
 Karen Greer..... Fenton 1/23/2026
 Tamisha Griffin Maryville Gardens 1/23/2026
 Melody Griggs..... Jennings..... 1/9/2026
 Jordon Hamilton..... Kirkwood..... 1/9/2026
 Isaac Haynes Harriet Woods..... 1/9/2026
 Joshua Hollman..... O'Fallon..... 1/10/2026
 Sheryl Holly-Taylor..... O'Fallon..... 1/23/2026
 Micah Johnson..... Oldham..... 1/9/2026
 Sarah Lendor Affton 1/9/2026
 Canton McCallum Fenton 1/9/2026
 Glennon McDarby Affton 1/9/2026
 Byron McElroy..... Mackenzie Pointe 1/9/2026
 Alyshia Moore..... O'Fallon..... 1/9/2026
 Jeffrey Summers Union..... 1/23/2026
 Julia Trower..... Mexico..... 1/9/2026
 Cortnie Valtierra Salem 1/26/2026
 Michael Ventimiglia Arnold..... 1/9/2026
 Kecley Walker O'Fallon..... 1/23/2026
 Joshua Washington..... Normandy..... 1/23/2026

Recently Retired Members

- Johnetta Martin.....Normandy..... 1/2/2026
 Charles SextonSouth County 1/31/2026

Deceased Member

- Ronald HoffRetired 1/23/2026



Branch Meeting Attendance Prizes

- | | | |
|---|----------|--------------------------------|
| 1. Blues vs. NY Islanders | March 10 | Nathaniel Markovich, Southwest |
| 2. Blues vs. Edmonton Oilers | March 13 | Tom Schulte, Retired |
| 3. Target Gift Card | \$25 | Michael Goheen, Creve Coeur |
| 4. Home Depot Gift Card | \$25 | Jyron Johnson, Weathers |
|  | \$72 | John McLaughlin, Des Peres |

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 and accepted.

NBA Report, Pat Baker: The entire installation in Kansas City is being inspected, and the NBA office just finished training for the stewards. The area has received more interpretive disputes, mostly due to non-compliance issues. Article 8.5.F violations are a big issue again; management thinks only penalty overtime should be paid. Keep filing the non-compliance grievances and ask for escalated remedies.

Retirees Report, Tom Schulte: Greetings from the 35 retirees in attendance. The 97th Ole' Timers Day will be May 2.

Labor Council Report, Pam Stepney: The council is looking for volunteers to help with the Labor Celebration Parade in August. Twelve meetings are planned prior to the parade. They will be interviewing candidates for labor council president.

Health Benefit Report, Barry Linan: Please read the MCC, lots of helpful information inside. Self+1 insurance coverage costs more than self and family, think about that when enrolling or if you have a life changing event.

OWCP Report, Barry Linan: You have two calendar days to file a claim if injured. Be sure to check COP on the CA-1. Management charged the carrier who was attacked at Creve Coeur, sick leave, which is wrong.

Mound City Carrier Report, Tom Schulte: National Day of Action is February 22 starting at 1 p.m. in front of the Main Post Office. Several union branches from Illinois will join us. Cardinal tickets will be on sale after March meeting. The 30th annual Buddy Bass Tournament is April 10-11, see ad in the MCC. Also, congressional contact information is in the February issue.

Haake Scholarship Report, Pam Stepney: Your dues must be paid in full to apply for the Haake Scholarship. We have 17 applications. All information must be returned by March 1.

Safety and Health Report, Richard Thurman: Thurman spoke on crimes against letter carriers (5,500 assaults have occurred across the country. Countless articles have been printed in the MCC about being safe. Tell carriers to safeguard themselves. Devices are being installed in vehicles to measure when you don't have your seatbelt on. Carriers have been thrown from the vehicle due to not having seatbelt on. Dog bites are up, don't put yourself in an unsafe situation.

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

Political Action Committee Report, Mike Weir: Mike read the names of contributors.

Legislative Report, Mike Weir: Mike asked us to call our representatives and senators about Protect our Letter Carriers Act (contact info in February MCC). The Save Act is big, government trying to make you prove citizenship to vote (by birth certificate, passport) could be a problem for many. Barry Linan advised it is also an attempt to stop women from voting. If you changed your last name via marriage, you will be required to show marriage certificate. Partial government shut down due at midnight February 13. Governor Kehoe wants to eliminate state income tax and increase property and sales tax. Contribute to LCPF and PAC funds.

Executive Vice President/Treasurer Report, Brian Litteken: Contract negotiations start February 25. If interested in making your items of importance known, go to NALC.org and take branch collective bargaining survey. There was a mandatory stand-up talk due in January regarding safety and what to do in case of incident. There is pilot testing going on regarding taking photos of packages at time of delivery. There are only roughly 1,100 workers in labor relations (government) overseeing collective bargaining compared to the 1,545 workers in 2016. Cardinal tickets on sale after March meeting.

Vice President/Financial Secretary Report, Marvin Booker: Read report for January. This "interpretive issue" regarding escalated remedies will put hold on the cases being resolved. Management won't comply with the contract and is now seeking protection through interpretive issues. Contacted upper management regarding hold-downs, have not received response.

President's Comments, John McLaughlin: Spoke on the carrier assaulted at Creve Coeur and how they are messing with his pay. Carrier route reinspected and is now longer than before.

The carrier stopped showing up for work. Southwest has about 12 routes reinspected. Carrier fell during December 27 snowstorm, was told to finish route then come back. Management recommended that she not report accident, because she would be fired. After asking for CA-1 management, they said the union doesn't run the post office. The Radar report shows when they violate the NEEMRP program. National Day of Action February 22, expecting Ballwin and Hazelwood to join us.

Respectfully Submitted,

Richard Brown, Recording Secretary

30th Annual



Launching from Water



AT LAKE OF THE OZARKS

First Place \$1,500 Guaranteed! Top teams receive percentage of entry fee. Entry fee is \$165 per boat. Includes Big Bass

Tournament April 11-12, 2026 6:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.

Registration Dinner and Meeting Saturday, April 11, 6-8 p.m. and ...

Meet MDA Ambassadors and Guest Speaker at the Dinner!

Fun - Barbecue - Silent Auction - 50/50 Raffle

Social Distancing Observed at Dinner and Tournament

TOURNAMENT TO BENEFIT THE MUSCULAR DYSTROPHY ASSOCIATION - ST. LOUIS

OFFICIAL ENTRY BLANK

A. BOAT OWNERS NAME: ADDRESS: CITY: STATE: ZIP: PHONE: B. BUDDY'S NAME: ADDRESS: CITY: STATE: ZIP: PHONE:

- YES, I will be attending the dinner. Total attending No, I will not be attending the dinner.

ENTRY BY MAIL ONLY

Entry fee of \$165 must be postmarked by April 6, 2026. Checks, money orders and cashiers checks will be accepted. All entries received after deadline will be subject to a \$25 LATE FEE, accepted in cash only during check-in.

Need Lodging or Have a Question?

Call Ken Young at Southwest Station 314-654-6310 or Check Out 7/24outdoors.com or bassbob.com



MAKE CHECK PAYABLE TO: MUSCULAR DYSTROPHY ASSOCIATION C/O Ken Young 5422 Wilson Ave. St. Louis, MO 63110



Political Action Honor Roll

JOE FITZFARRELL★★★★★	MIKE WEIR★★	JOHN HAAKE★	NICKI L. PRADO★
RICH RHYNER★★★★★	DEAN WERNER★★	GENO IBERG★	LYNN RAY PRATT★
ART BUCK★★★	RICHARD BOIEN★	LAURA KEIM★	SHONNA RANDLE★
CATHERINE CIARAMITARO★★★	MARVIN BOOKER★	BARRY LINAN★	<i>IN MEMORY OF</i> JOSEPH P. REGAN★
JOE POLITTE★★★	JOHN S. CHUDY★	BILL LISTER★	TOM SCHULTE★
LAWRENCE McHAYNES★★	SAMUEL GOODMAN★	JOHN McLAUGHLIN★	DARLENE TATE★
ANDY GARCES	LAWRENCE McHAYNES JR.	LYNN RAY PRATT	SARONDA SUTHERLAND
ROY HATCHARD JR.			

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

Laura Keim

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.

For Retirees Looking for your 1099-R

We have received several inquiries regarding the mailing of your 1099-R tax forms. Some retirees have received their 1099-R's in the mail while many are still waiting.

If you have yet to receive your 1099-R form, you can obtain a copy directly by logging on to the *OPM.gov* website.

1. Go to the *OPM.gov* website and use the 1099-R request tool. No login needed. You will be required to have your CSA number on hand and your Zip code. You can then request a downloaded copy of your 1099-R.
2. You can also request that a copy of your 1099-R be mailed directly to your home, but please note that time constraints can prove to be a factor.

There has been a significant reduction in the number of personnel working at OPM.

Please note that if you wish to contact OPM by telephone, expect substantial wait times.

We are aware that there are many retirees who are not computer literate. We suggest a visit to your local tax office or assistance from your local library. Remember you will need your CSA number and Zip code with you in either case.

John H. Haake BRANCH 343

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MOUND CITY CARRIER

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STAFF

Tom Schulte Managing Editor
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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
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Opinions expressed intend no malice toward anyone
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Articles may be edited for brevity and potential libelous
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1600 S Broadway
 St. Louis, MO 63104-3806
 314-241-4297

President: 314-761-1784
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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
 Kevin Welby, Vice Chairman 573-358-5266
 Mike Chenot, Treasurer 314-779-3356
 Nicki L. Prado, Recording Secretary 314-241-4297

Deadline for articles for the APRIL issue is MARCH 16, 2026

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REGULAR BRANCH MEETING THURSDAY, MARCH 12, 2026 7:30 pm

★ ★ ★

SHOP STEWARDS MEETING THURSDAY, APRIL 2, 2026 7:30 PM

The Letter Carriers Building
 1600 S Broadway



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