

National Association of Letter Carriers

Branch 782

E.A. Baker Union Update



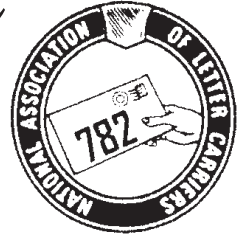
ARVIN
CALIFORNIA CITY
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MOJAVE
TEHACHAPI

BAKERSFIELD
EDWARDS AFB
RIDGECREST
TRONA

BORON
LAMONT
SHAFTER
WASCO

CHARTERED FEBRUARY 25, 1901



NUMBER 8

WEB VERSION

AUGUST 2020

We Will Deliver No Mail Before Its Time

By Eric Ellis,
CSALC District 4 Officer



Sometime in the mid-1980s, *60 Minutes* did a piece on the Postal Service in which the agency was criticized for its first-class mail delivery scores. At the end of the story, Mike Wallace stated the new motto of our employer should be “We will deliver no mail before

its time”. My father — who at the time was postmaster of Marina, California — was furious. When my mom and I laughed, he stood up, pointed at my mother, and shouted, “Gloria, don’t you ever say anything bad about the post office! **EVER!!!**”

It goes without saying that my old man is rolling over in his grave now that Louis DeJoy is Postmaster General. By now, most of you are aware that he is attempting to completely change not only how we do our jobs, but the trajectory of the United States Postal Service itself. So why is he forcing Clerks and Carriers to curtail (read DELAY) first-class mail at the plants and stations if it doesn’t arrive at a certain time? Why is he mandating that Carriers at certain stations in a new pilot program case first-class residual mail in the afternoon when they return from the street, as opposed to delivering it that very day?

CHOOSE FROM THE FOLLOWING:

- 1) He is preparing postal patrons for the supposed inevitability of losing a day of delivery.
- 2) By slashing costs (overtime), he presents the appearance of efficiency.
- 3) He is creating doubt in patrons’ minds of the reliability of delivery timeliness, attempting to eliminate vote-by-mail as an option, or at least get fewer people to use it in order to depress voter turnout.
- 4) He is simply following instructions of the people who put

him there — and their agenda is to weaken, gut, and privatize the USPS.

5) All of the above.

For those who follow social media such as Facebook and Twitter, there are comments aplenty about our new PMG, which could be rolled into the phrase “*Every piece, every other day*”. And it goes without saying that postal patrons from all over the country now vent their frustrations to their elected representatives, a good thing. And before long, the postmaster general will probably be hauled before House and Senate committees and ordered to explain the slowing down of mail processing and delivery. I would love to see Senator Elizabeth Warren question him as she did the bank executives.

But here’s the thing: You really have to consider Number 4 above. Who put him there? Senator Chuck Schumer wants to know if the president and Steve Mnuchin maneuvered to put him there. After all, Mr. DeJoy gave hundreds of thousands of dollars to the president’s re-election campaign. And you have to ask yourself if it mattered who was installed as Postmaster General under this president. If President Trump nominated the members of the Postal Board of Governors and they were confirmed by a Republican Senate, and then they turned around and appointed Mr. DeJoy, do you really think that any other PMG they chose would have acted any differently? We have seen how DT meddles in the affairs of supposedly “independent” agencies of the federal government to further his interests. Why would he treat the USPS any differently?

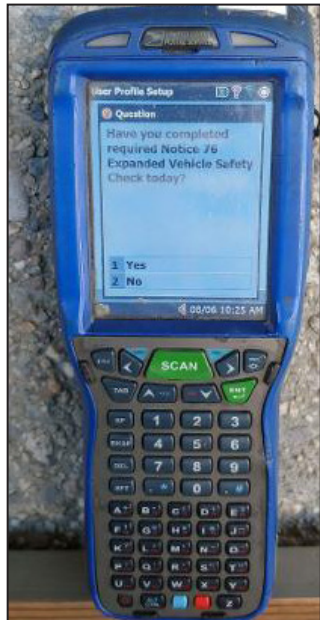
And if you believe the president when he says that postal workers will be taken care of, you may want to talk to people who’ve worked for him in the past. For us, “taken care of” means slashing our retirement benefits by eliminating COLAs and the special retirement supplement for employees under the Federal Employees Retirement System. In budgets submitted to Congress, he proposed such things. Ask yourself, “*Has Donald John Trump proposed anything that benefits you as a Letter Carrier or federal employee?*”

Remember **THAT** when you vote in November, hopefully by mail.

You are creating a record

By Paul Greenfield,
NALC Branch 782 Assistant Editor

Branch 782 Vice President John Ortega had mentioned in past months that he had heard of a vehicle check question coming to our scanners. Fast forward to August 3, 2020; and, such a command appeared on my scanner following the set-up. John was on annual that particular Monday; and, I later texted him, “You’re always right!” What can I say?



Brundage Letter Carrier and DSI Emma Castruita reminds everyone, “Do **NOT** forget to check front and rear lights, horn, windshield wipers, and properly functioning hand-brake!”

Dole Court Letter Carrier and DSI Jeff Harrington points out that, “A Notice 76 Expanded Vehicle check is a twenty-seven item checklist that **ALL** Postal employees are required to perform on any type of postal vehicle *before* taking it out to the street.”

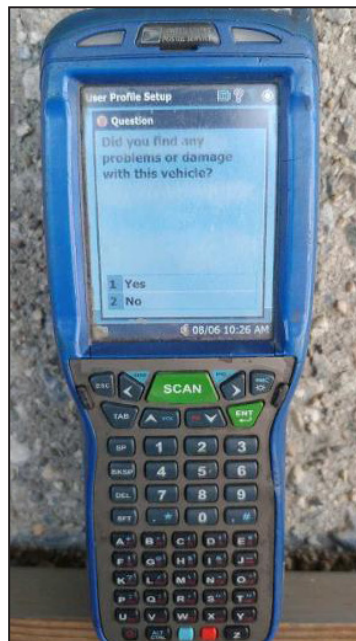
Jeff also adds that it wise to always use the buddy system while performing our daily vehicle inspections. Lastly, he suggests that everyone utilize the mirror stations located at our Postal facilities to insure proper mirror alignment.

Please do not hesitate to contact a DSI member with any vehicle operation/safety questions that may arise.

Thank you all for your service during this pandemic!

Postal management has updated our delivery scanners to verify via a “Yes/No” input that Letter Carriers have conducted their required daily USPS notice 76 vehicle expanded vehicle check. This particular vehicle inspection is required daily before a Carrier leaves to deliver his/her route.

Branch 782 is fortunate to have a number of DSI (District Safety Instructors) to help employees with any postal vehicle operation questions.



If we can all take the proper safety steps in advance, we will help ensure a safe work environment for all Postal employees and the communities that we serve.

Have a safe day!

PAUL GREENFIELD
93307 Letter Carrier
Safety Captain-Captain



UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE®

Expanded Vehicle Safety Check

1. Inspect under vehicle for fluid leaks.
2. Inspect front tires for uneven wear and under-inflation.
3. Check that hood can be latched securely.
4. Check front for body damage.
5. Check left side for body damage.
6. Check left door lock (check for complete accident report kit if stowed on inside left of vehicle).
7. Check for rear-end leaks.
8. Inspect rear tires for uneven wear or under-inflation.
9. Check rear for body damage.
10. Check rear door lock.
11. Check right side for body damage.
12. Check right-side door lock(s).
13. Open door and move into driving position.
14. Check for complete accident report kit.
15. Start engine.
16. With assistance, adjust pot-lid mirrors and rear-view mirrors.
17. With assistance, check headlights, taillights, brake lights, flashers, and directional signals (front and rear).
18. Adjust center rear-view mirror.
19. Check operation of windshield wipers and washer.
20. Check operation of horn.
21. Inspect gauges for proper operation.
22. Check foot brake.
23. Check emergency brake.
24. Check seat belt and fasten.

Note: This checklist has been designed to take the driver in a logical sequence around a RHD vehicle with a minimum of lost motion. For LHD vehicles, move from the front to the right side rather than to the left side. For Items 16 and 17, if no assistance is readily available, handle personally.

See Additional Instructions on the Reverse

Notice 76, July 2003

UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE®

Instructions

Check the items shown on the other side of this form on the initial use of each vehicle each day.

Report deficiencies, body damage, or inoperable items to your supervisor using Form 4565, *Vehicle Repair Tag*, so the conditions can be corrected or another vehicle can be provided.

If there are no vehicle deficiencies, proceed to your first assignment.



As technology increases our ability to communicate, NALC must stay ahead of the curve. From websites to email to social media, this union has continually developed the tools to put the most up-to-date information and resources into the hands of our stewards and members. We've now taken the next step with the NALC Member App for iPhone and Android smartphones. The app was developed at headquarters with the needs of the average member in mind.

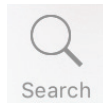
The app contains links to workplace resources, including the National Agreement, the JCAM, the MRS, CCA resources and more. It also includes legislative tools, such as a bill tracker, an individualized list of your congressional representatives and PAC information. And one of the coolest features: an Interactive Non-Scheduled Days calendar.

NALC Member App

Installation instructions for Android and iPhone

Apple iPhone and iPad

1. On Apple iPhones, find the App Store (the letter A in a circle on a blue button) on your phone's home screen.
2. When it opens, go to the search button (with the magnifying glass) in the lower right and click it.



3.

In the gray search bar at the top, enter "NALC Member App." Then hit the blue search button in the lower right.

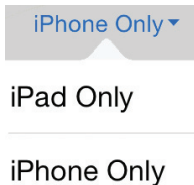
4.  **NALC Member App**
National Association...

When you see the app, click the blue "Get" button at the right, and then it will turn to a green "Install" button. Click that. You will be asked for your password or touch ID, depending on how you've set up your phone. Once you authorize the installation, it will begin.



5. When completed, there will be a blue "Open" button, if you want to use it immediately. The NALC Member App also will appear on your home screen for whenever you want to use it.

While the app was built for phones, it can be used on iPads as well. Follow the instructions above, but your search will not find the NALC Member App. Simply go to the top left where it says in blue, "iPad Only" and change it to "iPhone Only." You should now be able to download the app with the instructions above. Once the iPhone app is installed, you'll notice that it will automatically scale up to display full-size on the iPad screen, causing the buttons, fonts and graphics to look proportionately larger than normal.




Android and other devices

1. On Android phones, find Google Play (sometimes called Google Play Store or Play). It looks like three overlapping triangles pointed right.



2.

When it opens, go to the search bar at the top and enter "NALC Member App."

3.  **NALC Member App**
National Association of Letter Carriers
5.0 ★

Click on the entry with the red, white and blue NALC logo, and then click on the green "Install" button. If it asks if you'll give the app access to your location, click the "Accept" button (location is used only to personalize push notifications and to give you a precise congressional directory).



4. After it has been installed, there will be a green "Open" button, if you want to use it immediately. The NALC Member App may appear on your home screen. If it doesn't, go to your phone's Apps function to find it and drag it to the home screen.



While the app was not designed for Amazon or BlackBerry devices, some features do function on these and on other devices that can install an Android APK file. The NALC Member App APK file is available at www.nalc.org/member-benefits/nalc-member-app for those who know how to manually install the file onto their devices. NALC does not offer technical support for installing the app on these or other devices.

At this time, NALC does not have an app for the Windows Phone.



NALC Fact Sheet

Department of Legislative and Political Affairs — National Association of Letter Carriers, AFL-CIO
100 Indiana Ave. NW — Washington, DC 20001-2144 — 202-393-4695 — www.nalc.org © NALC

The 2020 General Election: America Can Count on the U.S. Postal Service

The United States Postal Service, founded in 1775, is one of America's greatest democratic institutions. It has been central to our democracy from the beginning when it served as a disseminator of the Federalist Papers and promoted widespread citizen literacy via the low-cost distribution of newspapers and books. Starting during the Civil War, Americans have used the mail to vote, and the Post Office has been essential to our system of elections ever since.

In the Covid-19 Election of 2020, the Postal Service will be more important than ever when tens of millions of Americans will stay safe by casting ballots distributed by mail. Indeed, at least ten states and jurisdictions (CA, DC, CO, HI, MT, NV, OR, UT, VT and WA) will send all registered voters their ballots by mail this fall, while most other states will permit absentee voting without any "excuse." Further, several of the 15 states that require such an approved excuse to vote by mail have either waived the requirement this year or explicitly authorized "concerns about the Covid-19 pandemic" as a legitimate excuse to vote by mail.

The Postal Service's role in American elections goes far beyond the distribution of mail ballots, however. The 8,500 election boards that oversee and conduct our elections rely on the Postal Service for the entire process. They use it to register voters, certify candidates, provide voter guides, distribute sample ballots, notify citizens of their polling places, and to inform voters of their early voting options. Meanwhile, candidates, parties, civic groups and organizations of all kinds use the Post Office to disseminate information and campaign literature – a function that will take on added importance in a year in which physical canvassing will be difficult.

USPS has the capacity to deliver

In 2016, 139 million Americans voted in the general election – and nearly one-fourth (32 million) voted on mailed-out ballots. This year, total turnout could surpass 150 million voters and vote by mail volume could double or more. Although millions of Americans drop off their ballots in person (in drop boxes, at polling places or at voting centers), millions also return their ballots by mail. This has raised questions for some about whether the Postal Service has the capacity to deliver such a high volume of ballots this fall. But even if every American voter returned his or her ballot by mail, the Postal Service has more than enough capacity to deliver the extra volume. Consider the facts:

- In 2019, the Postal Service delivered an average of 470 million pieces per day, six days a week – and scaled up to deliver more than 650 million pieces of mail per day during the peak holiday period in December.
- Currently, with the economy depressed by the coronavirus pandemic, USPS is delivering about 350-400 million pieces of mail per day – meaning that it has considerable excess capacity to handle any surge in mail volume.
- There have been neither lay-offs nor any kind of downsizing of our processing or delivery networks during the crisis – barring any adverse decisions by postal management, the Postal Service can meet any increased demand this Fall for political mailings and mail ballots.

The Postal Service affirmed its capability in a statement issued on August 3, 2020: "The Postal Service has ample capacity to adjust our nationwide processing and delivery network to meet projected Election and Political Mail volume, including any additional volume that may result as a response to the COVID-19 pandemic."

Although the recession and the public health crisis have reduced its letter mail revenues and raised its costs for personal protective equipment and other safety measures, the Postal Service has cash reserves that are more than enough to permit uninterrupted services through the election. Meanwhile, Congress is debating proposals to appropriate funds to the Postal Service to help it weather the negative impact of the pandemic.

USPS election mail protocols

The Postal Service has always given election mail priority treatment, and postal employees have embraced an ironclad commitment to ensure every ballot is delivered safely and securely to voters and returned to election officials.

USPS has [well-established protocols](#) in place for handling election mail. There is a National Election Mail team based in Washington that oversees a network of state and local election mail coordinators who work election boards. They help design mailed ballots, aiming to speed delivery by encouraging the use of Intelligent Mail Barcodes and special visual identifiers that improve mailed ballot visibility in the mail stream. This allows election boards and voters to identify and track ballots and improves the public's confidence in the vote by mail process.

Every election cycle, the USPS distributes an official [Election Mail tool kit](#) to election boards and maintains a special [website](#) for local and state election officials to report Election Mail concerns directly to USPS, allowing a rapid response team to resolve such concerns. It also conducts training for employees that come into contact with election mail and monitors its service performance for election mail, aiming to surpass its normal 96% on-time goal for First Class Mail delivery.

Earlier this year, the Postal Service affirmed its commitment to deliver any mailed ballot back to its destination election board, even if it does not have proper postage. (USPS generally seeks reimbursement from election officials, budgets permitting.)

Ballot safety and security

American voters can have complete confidence in vote by mail, both in how the Postal Service handles ballots and how election boards manage the process.

Within USPS, protecting the sanctity of the mail, regardless of the type of mail, is the highest priority. Tampering with any piece of mail – ballots included – is strictly prohibited. Employees who do so face federal prosecution and risk being fined and/or jailed. Indeed, the USPS polices its commitment to mail security with an internal security workforce, the [Postal Inspection Service](#).

As a result, the Postal Service is among the most trusted companies in America when it comes to [protecting privacy](#) and is by far the public's [favorite agency in the federal government](#), with an approval rating of 91 percent.

Election boards have also developed methods to minimize the possibility of voter fraud with mail ballots. Such fraud is [exceedingly rare](#) according to data compiled by the Heritage Foundation. In most states there are more security checks on mail-in votes than on in-person votes, according to Neal Kelley, the Republican Registrar of Voters in Orange County California. When it comes to ballot security, there is no discernable difference between “mail-in” ballots and “absentee” ballots. Ballots mailed to all registered voters, like those sent to voters who have applied for absentee ballots, are handled with all the same strict security protocols. For more information on how election boards use tried-and-true methods to make vote by mail safe and secure for all American voters, see the attached [FAQ sheet](#) or visit the [National Vote at Home Institute](#) website.

Federal action needed

America's 210,000 city letter carriers and their union are totally committed to performing at the highest level when our country votes this fall. NALC is urging the U.S. Postal Service to create a special joint task force with the postal unions to overcome the unique challenges of serving America's voters and election boards during the current public health crisis. As we did during the primaries this year – when about

half of all votes cast involved mailed out ballots – we intend to meet these challenges.

Of course, the sudden and unplanned shift to the use of absentee voting in response to the Covid-19 crisis did not occur without logistical problems for local election boards and the USPS. In many cases (in Wisconsin, Maryland and Georgia), the surge in demand for absentee ballots overwhelmed under-resourced election boards, causing many such ballots to arrive late or not at all. Some voters were disenfranchised, even as overall turnout increased dramatically. It is imperative that these boards – and, where relevant, the Postal Service – learn from and correct any shortcomings in their operations before the November general election. **But state and local election bodies must have the resources to do so.**

The federal government must act. Congress must provide states the funding they need to make in-person voting safe in November and to expand their election boards' capacity to efficiently and expeditiously process the surge in mail ballots expected this year. The HEROES Act adopted by the House of Representatives in May provided \$3.6 billion for elections support. The Senate should embrace this funding proposal to protect our democracy, and the Trump Administration should approve it. With the loss of local tax revenues hammering state and local government budgets, only the federal government can fill the gap. At a minimum, Congress should take two actions:

- First, the U.S. Treasury should pay for or reimburse all American election boards for the cost of postage for all domestic mail ballots, both outgoing and return postage, using the excellent system we have in place for overseas voters under the Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act (UOCAVA). This would cost no more than \$150 million.
- Second, to promote faith in our democracy and to prevent destructive political polarization, Congress should use its Constitutional authority to regulate the conduct of federal elections to ensure that all votes cast by Election Day are counted. That means that all ballots in the possession of the Postal Service at the end of November 3, 2020 should be counted, regardless of when they are received by election boards. Any funding approved for the 2020 election should mandate this.

Conclusion

The United States is one of the world's greatest and oldest democracies, of which every American can be proud. The peaceful transfer of political power following elections has been a hallmark of our democracy for more than two centuries.

Voters in the United States can count on the Postal Service and its employees to honor that heritage in November. But Congress must do its part too to ensure a smooth 2020 election. The future of our country and the health of our democracy depend on it.

Source: NALC Website

Out there

President's Page

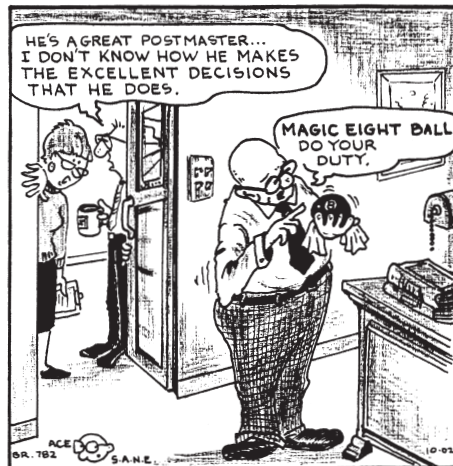
By Michelle Decker, NALC Branch 791 President

"Out there"



Originally published January 2003

"Out there"



Originally published February 2003

"Out there"



Originally published October 2003

As we are all aware, many events and meetings have been cancelled due to the pandemic.

On Sept 3rd, our monthly branch meeting will be held via Zoom. This will be our first monthly meeting since March (and our first ever "online" meeting). If you are able to, please join us at 7:00 pm on September 3rd. As we haven't had a meeting in such a long time, there will be an abundance of things to go over and discuss. We will keep this meeting to 2 hours or less.

Many Carriers have recently seen information going around on social media and the internet on what proposed plans and change the new PMG has in store for the USPS. These changes will affect all of us. It is unclear as to what district this information came from or who wrote it, but it seems to have been implemented in various places.

They wrote: The new PMG is looking at cost. Making the USPS financially solvent which we are not at this time. Here are some of HIS expectations and they will be implemented in short order. Some of the things that would affect us as letter Carriers are:

Penalty overtime will be eliminated.

- 👉 Overtime will be eliminated.
- 👉 SDO overtime usage will be decreased dramatically.

The POOMs are the only ones that can authorize SDO overtime. Any PM from this point on that uses an SDO on their own will have to answer for it.

If we cannot deliver all the mail due to call offs or shortage of people and you have no other help, the mail will not go out and you (management) will have to report this in CSDRS.

- 👉 All routes will have no more than 4 park points.
- 👉 DUOs are on the table again.
- 👉 All routes will not start before their DUT. (distribution up time) So if you are getting the DUT up late because of the work staff, you will change their start times. DUTs must be met or you will move your Carriers to the DUT. This means we may have Carriers starting as late as 0900.
- 👉 Any employee who is not working

Continued on next page...

"Out there"



Originally published May 2004


"Out there"



Originally published September 2006

Sometimes the more things change, the more they seem the same...look at dates on the cartoons.

a full day, regardless of craft or EAS and you are abusing time this will be reported and investigated.

 Workers Compensation cases will be looked at to either get them back to work or find another avenue for them. NALC President Rolando said in his July

15th statement: On the operational front, it is my understanding that supervisors are conducting stand-up talks to all employees on initial transportation phases of an operational pivot plan based on some internal documents regarding cost reduction. None of these changes or plans have been discussed or explained to NALC, and we

will closely monitor the provisions of their plan for contractual compliance.

Talking with local Management, they say these new changes will be coming soon to our offices. They have received information on some of these changes but have not yet been instructed to implement them.

Title 39 U.S.C. § 101 (a)

The United States Postal Service shall be operated as a basic and fundamental service provided to the people by the Government of the United States, authorized by the Constitution, created by Act of Congress, and supported by the people.

The Postal Service shall have as its basic function the obligation to provide postal services to bind the Nation together through the personal, educational, literary, and business correspondence of the people. It shall provide prompt, reliable, and efficient services (emphasis added) to patrons in all areas and shall render postal services to all communities. The costs of establishing and maintaining the Postal Service shall not be apportioned to impair the overall value of such service to the people.

Mission Statement Adopted by the USPS Board of Governors on April 1, 2020

- To serve the American people and, through the universal service obligation, bind our nation together by maintaining and operating our unique, vital and resilient infrastructure.
- To provide trusted, safe and secure communications and services between our Government and the American people, businesses and their customers, and the American people with each other.
- To serve all areas of our nation, making full use of evolving technologies.

CARRYING OUT OUR MISSION

To meet this Mission we will: Remain an integral part of the United States Government, providing all Americans with universal and open access to our unrivalled delivery and storefront network.

Maintain and enhance our reputation and role as a trusted face of the federal government in every community and provide all levels of government with access to our network and services.

Provide frequent, reliable, safe and secure delivery of mail, packages and other communications to all Americans.

Use technology, innovation and where appropriate private sector partnerships, to optimize and adapt our network, operations and business model to meet the changing needs of our customers and delivery recipients, while maintaining our core mission.

Operate in a modern, efficient and effective manner that allows us to minimize what we charge for our services, consistent with meeting, in a fair way, our obligations to our current and retired employees and other stakeholders.

Remain an employer of choice, able to attract, retain and develop high quality employees that possess the skills necessary to excel in a rapidly changing business environment.

This mission statement seems to be missing the “**provide prompt, reliable, and efficient services**” *that is written into Law.*

The Postal Service said in a statement that it was “developing a business plan to en-

sure that we will be financially stable and able to continue to provide reliable, affordable, safe and secure delivery of mail, packages and other communications to all Americans as a vital part of the nation’s critical infrastructure.”

All in all, it looks like our customers will be the ones yet again suffering from these changes. Delayed mail — medicine and goods they expect in a timely fashion. We will see in the upcoming future what does or does not change...

Courtesy of the Everett, Washington August 2020 NALC Branch 791 *Monthly Report*

Vice President's Report

By Dan Wheeler,
NALC Branch 25

In the June edition of the *WAKE UP!* I wrote about then incoming Postmaster General Louis DeJoy. At that time, he had not taken over the job yet. He officially started on June 18.

Many Carriers probably were shown his video message to the employees in their office. He said all the right things about how great the Postal Service's long history and how great the employees were and everything else you would expect a new boss to say about his company.

His first month on the job has been relatively quiet.

Just recently there has been talk on the Internet of a memo the PMG sent out to some upper postal management. This memo was titled **PMG Expectations and Plans**.

It seems like his directives are being rolled out somewhat sporadically. It's unclear whether that is intentional or not. Some offices have gotten stand-up talks and there are reports of offices starting to put into practice some of his plans. In some offices, such as mine, management has said nothing and it has been business as usual up to this point.

The first thing the memo addresses is overtime — specifically penalty overtime.

According to the memo, the plan is to eliminate all penalty overtime because it is costing the Postal Service too much money. It is management's right to try to minimize penalty overtime but they are obligated to do so while following the National Agreement. Article 8 of the National Agreement covers the administration of overtime.

Just because the new PMG may want to eliminate penalty overtime he may not do so by violating the contract.

As of now, there does not seem to be any official directive about this but we will see what happens going forward. Another part of the memo talks about canceling all postal details and 204B positions. Every management employee would go back to the job they own on their Form 50. This has been talked about before at various levels but never really gone anywhere.

Honestly, if they did that they may find a lot of these management positions are not actually needed. Sometimes, as the old saying goes, you've got to rattle the grass to shake out the snakes. I will believe this one when I see it.

“ So many of the Postal Service's policies seem to counteract customer service instead of aiming for it. ”

Carrier start times are mentioned as well. The memo talks about making sure no Carriers start before their unit's "Distribution Up Time" — but no later than 9AM.

Carriers' work hours — including start times — are covered by Article 8 of the National Agreement. Management must follow the contract the same as in any other instance.

One of the topics this memo talks most about is mail flow, from the plant and in the offices.

It says if the plant runs late they will just keep the mail and not send it out to the offices. If the mail arrives late at the offices it will not go out for delivery that day unless this can be achieved without using overtime.

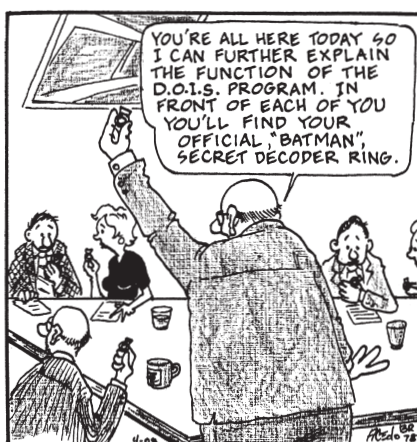
Most of us deal with late arriving mail to varying degrees. It doesn't seem that the solution should be to just say "Forget it. We will deliver the mail when we feel like it."

"OuT tHeRe"



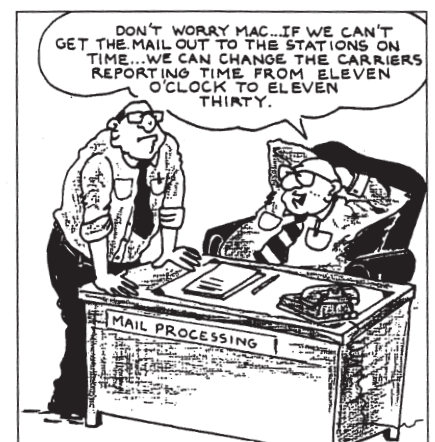
Originally published May 2007

"OuT tHeRe"



Originally published May 2008

"OuT tHeRe"



Originally published in 2002

CARRIERS SHOULD BE FILLING OUT FORM 1571 AND REQUESTING A COPY FOR THEMSELVES IN ANY SITUATION WHERE MAIL IS NOT DELIVERED BUT ESPECIALLY IF INSTRUCTED BY MANAGEMENT TO WILLFULLY DELAY MAIL.

So many of the Postal Service's policies seem to counteract customer service instead of aiming for it.

The PMG makes reference to other companies in the memo: U.S. Steel (once the biggest company in the world) no longer exists. Ford has had to shut down many plants to adapt.

There is no doubt that the USPS needs changes.

The NALC has been pushing for meaningful Postal reform for a long time. Coming at the problem with unilateral slash and burn directives, especially ones that violate the Contract, does not seem to be the best plan of action.

It is unclear whether these are official directives to be carried out everywhere or whether local management is doing their own thing to comply with the spirit of this memo. There is certainly nothing new to the post office deciding to focus on

This graphic shamelessly stolen from the cover of the August 2020 NALC Branch 25 WAKE UP!

*I never thought I'd see the day that a postal form would grace the cover of the "Wake-Up!". However, that day has come. In the coming weeks and months, the postal service is hellbent on eliminating overtime. In and of itself, eliminating overtime is a great thing for any company. However, when the elimination of overtime is at the expense of basic customer service and/or the provisions of the National Agreement, **THAT IS NOT A GREAT THING.** We need each and every letter carrier to complete the form shown at left, the PS Form 1571, to document any delayed or curtailed mail. You have the right to do so and you have the right to receive a copy of same. If you don't get a copy, there will be no proof that you ever completed one and there will be no accountability to the postal service. We are accountable, we must hold the service accountable. It is a small ask but one that could prove very important in the near future.*

certain areas of the operation or coming out with unilateral directives. Understanding where the PMG came from, his previous history and who appointed him this is worth paying attention to.

We hear a lot of rumors around here...Did someone say early out? If you receive any notice or instruction that doesn't seem right to you please let your Steward know.

Abridged article courtesy of the August 2020 Tewksbury Northeast Merged Massachusetts NALC Branch 25 WAKE UP!

"OuT tHeRe"



Originally published January 2009

"OuT tHeRe"



Originally published March 2010

"OuT tHeRe"



Originally published October 2011

Pancakes and A Shell Game

By John J. Pfiffner,
NALC Branch 373 V.P.

Pancake Program

By the time you read this article, the West Station Carriers in Cedar Rapids will be guinea pigs in a new test pilot program. Not sure of the exact name of it; but, I am going to call it “The Pancake Program” since it involves flipping street and office time just like you would a pancake.

Here are the nuts of bolts of the pancake program that I got during a recent Labor-management meeting: Carriers will begin at 8:30 am. They will clock to office time. Carriers will collect their accountables, route their SPRs into trays, pull the trays of flat mail, make a sweep of the hot case, then clock to the street.

On street time, the Carriers will pull their DPS parcels and then go load their LLVs. There will be a strict distribution cut-off time. *If parcels are not finished being sorted, they will be curtailed to the next day.*

Carriers will then deliver their routes.

Upon completion of street duties, they will return to the office and then case all mail that is available. Once the mail is cased, it is then pulled down and put into trays so that it is ready for the next day. Once the office duties are done, the Carriers go home.

If a Carrier is not on the Overtime Desired List (ODL), he/she goes home in 8 hours. If a Carrier is on an 8-hour restriction, then they will be done in 8 hours. If the restricted Carrier does not have time to case the mail, an ODL or CCA will case the afternoon mail for him/her.

Hence, office duties and street duties are flipped in order — just like a pancake.

Will there be problems? Is the Pope a Catholic? Does a bear crap in the woods?

The postmaster said that any parts that need to be carried, will be done by the ODL and CCAs. Work-Assignment Carriers will only work overtime on their own routes if it exists. If there are sick calls, those routes will be pivoted by the ODL and CCAs.

Right now, non-ODL Carriers are being mandated to carry parts on other routes.

Why?

Because there is a staffing shortage.

I asked some obvious questions: How does flipping street duties and office duties address the staffing shortage? How does it resolve the issue of Carriers no longer being mandated?

Consider this: ***Non-ODL Carriers are being mandated to carry parts because there are open routes.***

I told the postmaster, “Sometime during the day, office duties must be done, and street duties must be done. How does changing the order of those duties resolve the mandated parts?”

His response — in a nutshell — was: **UNDERTIME!!**

I cannot tell you the exact number of times that the postmaster said that all routes are 6 hours on the street. Management believes that since all routes are 6 hours on the street, then routes are configured to two hours of office time. With the current precipitous drop in mail volume, Carriers no longer have enough

volume for the need of two hours of office time. Hence, **ALL ROUTES HAVE UNDERTIME.**

It is the belief of the postmaster, and those up the food chain, that when Carriers return by 2:30 every day, they will quickly case the afternoon mail, then case on other routes until their 8-hour shift is over.

The postmaster believes that by capturing all this “undertime”, Carriers will no longer have to be mandated to carry parts on the street.

What do you think?

First off, the postmaster referred several times to Carriers returning to the office by 2:30.

I am no mathematician; but, starting at 8:30 with 6 hours of street time puts you at 2:30. Right? So obviously, the postmaster has NOT considered that it will take anywhere from 40 to 60 minutes to get your mail and parcels loaded in the morning before you leave for your routes.

That puts you at a return time of 3:30. Then casing up your mail in the afternoon could put you right at 4:30 *IF you do a “no-lunch.”*

“OuT tHeRe”



If this happens to most Carriers, where is the UNDERTIME?

So, flipping the office times and street times like a pancake, I just don't see how that is going to resolve the issue of manpower and mandated parts.

I wish it would! At least Carriers who don't want to carry parts on other routes will no longer have to.

We will just have to wait and see...

Shell Game

One of the directives from this new Postmaster General is that there is to be

**NO PENALTY
OVERTIME
WHATSOEVER.**

But remember this: Carriers on the ODL should be working up to 12 hours per day until they incur 20 of hours of overtime for the week before those not on the list are mandated.

Instead management is only working the Overtime Desired List up to 10 hours. It then forces non-ODL Carriers to carry parts.

For the sake of discussion let's use the figure of \$20 per hour for easy math.

Carriers on the ODL would make \$40 per hour for two hours of penalty overtime for a total of \$80. Instead management mandates a non-ODL Carrier to work the two hours instead. The non-ODL carrier will be paid time-and-a-half of \$30 per hour for a total of \$60. So, at the end of that day the Postal Service only paid out \$60 instead of the \$80.

However, the grievance procedure now kicks in.

Since the ODL should have worked the penalty overtime, a grievance will be filed.

August 07, 2020

NALC files national-level grievance regarding USPS delivery initiative

Earlier this week, pursuant to Article 15, Section 3.F of the National Agreement, NALC initiated a national-level grievance regarding the Postal Service's unilateral implementation of the delivery initiative test called Expedited Street/Afternoon Sortation (ESAS).

On July 16, 2020, USPS notified NALC of the ESAS test that was scheduled to begin on July 25 in approximately 400 test sites. On July 28, USPS provided us with revised guidelines for the test. The ESAS initiative substantially alters delivery practices and procedures outlined in the Handbooks M-39 and M-41. These changes directly impact terms and conditions of employment of city letter carriers in violation of Article 19 of the National Agreement.

The ESAS test imposes restrictions on letter carriers' morning casing duties which conflict with M-39 Section 121.211. Similarly, the ESAS test prevents carriers from withdrawing mail in violation of M-41 Section 223.11. Additionally, letter carriers do not obtain accountable items until after they have pulled the mail from the case in violation of M-41 Section 262.1.

The ESAS test raises the same fundamental interpretive issue that NALC has raised in previous national level disputes: whether the Postal Service may suspend compliance with the National Agreement or applicable regulations under the guise of conducting a "test." It remains our position that management may not unilaterally implement tests which are inconsistent with regulations outlined in handbooks and manuals without first reaching an agreement with the Union.

NALC has requested a meeting with the Postal Service to discuss this interpretive dispute.

Source: NALC Website

The ODL carrier will be paid the \$80 he was entitled to—had he/she worked the two hours. The non-ODL will be paid an additional 50 % per hour for a total of \$30 for the two hours he/she was mandated to carry.

So — when the grievances are settled — here is the total cost of those two hours of work: The original \$60 that the non-ODL was actually paid for the two hours, plus \$80 that the ODL was entitled to, plus the \$30 for the non-ODL Carrier being mandated. **The total cost then is \$170 after all the grievances are filed.**

So, in the end the Postal Service paid over two times more than it should have for those two hours *if* it had followed the

contract. But, on paper, the postmaster, or whoever can puff his chest out and claim that he has no penalty overtime on the books for his office.

But in the end the Postal Service paid out quadruple overtime instead of penalty overtime and no one sees it because it came out of the GATS system.

It is truly just a numbers game. No manager or anyone else up the food chain considers the bottom line. In a private company, this type of shell game would never exist.

This article courtesy of the Cedar Rapids, Iowa NALC Branch 373 Eastern Iowa Reporter published in August 2020

A Guest Editorial —

Don't Drink the Drano

By Don Nokes,
NALC Branch 79

With age and experience comes wisdom.

Well...there *is* at least one old guy out there full of dumb ideas... Guess who.

I — for one — am **NOT** injecting any disinfectant. *I don't care who's touting it.*

And I'm certainly **NOT** taking any partial-pill "Coronaviruscure"!

"What have you got to lose?" Well, your life, for gosh sakes!!! Some things are just dopey. **DON'T DO THEM!**

Mostly today, growing old can mean diabetes, dementia, arthritis, Alzheimer's and Parkinson's disease, just to mention a few. Not to make light of these things, but they can lurk out there in "the dark days ahead" like the boogie man. It's that bend in the curve that you didn't see coming.

But, before anyone goes around passing out dope about remedies, I would want to make sure it's not fake news!

Nothing like chug-a-lugging a quart of Drano to kill what ails you. Well, **IT WILL KILL YOU** — that's a given.

With the virus running rampant, there are more than a few snake oil salesmen out and about. **BEWARE!** Be cherry about what you pick to put inside yourself, both physically and mentally.

(There are a lot of people out there who can break down an AR-15 in 20 seconds; but, they can't operate a bar of soap...)

**Choose to be safe! Choose science!
Everyone wants to get back to normal;
but, PLEASE, SAFETY FIRST!!!**

*To be told by the person who holds the highest office in the land that defeating the pandemic is about letting the "strong light" enter the body to cleanse away the virus... Well, what is **THAT** anyway? An ultraviolet enema????!?!?!*

Personally, I believe, that spitballing ideas in the middle of a pandemic is counterproductive *and* dangerous — most especially when your loyal listeners (your lemmings) can literally hang on your every word.

Many of his political pundits have tried to explain away his posturing of poor ideas as sarcasm — as if most of what gets said by him is *supposed* to be a joke. Well, I certainly don't get the humor.

(The most I've ever heard about jokes is: *If you have to explain the joke, it's not funny.* And yet, this person must be constantly explained and interpreted.)

*And that's **NOT** funny.* It's sad...

His minions have to be incessantly sent out in front of the microphones to Moon Walk his words. They are constantly straining his message through rice paper, and filtering it through cheese cloth to where it's palatable for human consumption.

His constant posturing I also don't understand. Do we really need sarcasm?

WHAT WE NEED IS LEADERSHIP, not snarky comments. **America needs proactive leadership, not reactive mewling and defensive tweets!**

Donald, get over yourself! It's **NOT** about you, **IT'S ABOUT THE NATION.**

Leadership should not well from a defensive posture. **PLEASE,** just lead.

Then, this person dares to say "the Postal Service is a joke." While basically knee-capping the USPS by stiffing them on the bailouts, and placing a quid pro quo on an

eight billion dollar loan that would require the dismantling of our collective bargaining rights? Well that seems rather harsh.

What **WOULD** help is removing the five billion dollar pre-funding mandate! *The mandate has hobbled the Post Office since 2006. It has essentially made the USPS an indentured servant of the federal government.*

How can you pay off a debt when the debt itself causes more and more indebtedness? It's like trying to dig a hole at high tide. You can't get out.

No wonder the Post Office is drowning in debt. It's not the fault of the USPS, **IT'S THE FAULT OF THE PREFUNDING LAW PASSED BY A LAME-DUCK CONGRESS.** It's the Elephant in the Room that is crushing the Post Office.

Let the Postal Service get out from under that mandate and then we can see whether or not it's still viable.

But to have this one person call the Postal Service a joke — *after the government has hog-tied it with an unserviceable mandate* — borders on cruelty.

And to deny it stimulus aid when they've all but gifted gobs of money to the hedge-fund owners is wrong to the point of being torturous.

The Post Office **IS** a necessary service. It can be a viable and reliable institution, once again — if given the chance to succeed and given an equitable share of stimulus funds sans hand-cuffing it with Union busting restrictions.

"The Postal Service is a Joke." This statement coming from an individual whose every word needs to be prefaced with "What he was trying to say..." Or "Obviously, that was sarcasm..." or "He meant that as a joke..."

Unfortunately, his joke is at our expense.

This insightful "Guest Editorial", courtesy of the July 2020 Seattle, Washington NALC Branch 79 *Seventy-Niner*, is a gift from Don to each of us...

ARE YOU REGISTERED TO VOTE? ARE YOU SURE YOU ARE REGISTERED TO VOTE?

By Gary Bottoms, NALC Branch 231 Editor

👉 It's not too early to prepare for the upcoming election, both to ensure that you yourself can vote, but to get **YOUR** route in shape for the Mail-In-Ballots that will be coming through the mailstream!

👉 Be sure of your polling location. It's usually on the sample ballot you receive.

👉 Get your route in shape by keeping up on your pink cards as well as the gang boxes in your apartment complexes. **Mail In Ballots are more secure if you are sure who you are delivering them to.** And you DON'T want to delay a ballot because a viable name is not on the box.

👉 The Branch 231 *Postman's View* will be including information and articles in issues leading up to the election that hopefully will help us do what is needed to keep our election safe. **And, JUST AS IMPORTANTLY** – to do what we can to ensure that those who have requested Mail-In-Ballots receive them and that the ballots that have been filled out and mailed are postmarked in a timely manner!

During this election season, if the Postal Service looks good, we look good. And – maybe – they'll let us stick around a little longer. **The VOTE is the bedrock of our democracy and WE are a vital link in the chain for Mail-In-Ballots. LET'S DO OUR JOB!**



Article and artwork courtesy of the August 2020 Fresno, California NALC Branch 231 *Postman's View!*

Heat-related Safety

Independence, Missouri Letter Carrier John Watzlawick died while in the performance of his duties on July 24, 2012.

His death was determined to have been caused by the heat. The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) issued USPS a citation because it failed to protect him. A judge from the OSHA Review Commission determined that:

...From the very top of the management chain down to the floor supervisor, the message was clear: heat is not an excuse for performance issues...The problem, of course, is that this message flies in the face of long-established industry knowledge...Considering the amount of information available to [USPS] regarding heat hazards, the Court also finds that [USPS] should not be entitled to any credit for good faith...

What should you do in preparation for the heat of summer before it arrives?


Letter Carriers should first educate themselves on heat safety by reading available information. OSHA maintains a website displaying its heat safety material at OSHA.GOV/HEAT which instructs employers as follows:


Under OSHA law, employers are responsible for providing workplaces free of known safety hazards. This includes protecting workers from extreme heat.


An employer with workers exposed to high temperatures should establish a complete heat-illness prevention program that includes the following:

 Providing workers with water, rest

and shade.

 Allowing new or returning workers to gradually increase workloads and take more frequent breaks as they acclimatize, or build a tolerance for working in the heat.

 Planning for emergencies and training workers on heat-illness prevention.

 Monitoring workers for signs of illness.

Go to the OSHA webpage (WWW.OSHA.GOV) and read all of the information available on heat safety. This information will give you a full understanding of the dangers of working in the heat.

Here, Letter Carriers also can download and install the OSHA and the National In-

stitute of Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH)'s Heat Safety Tool Smartphone App. Once the app is installed, it can detect your location and provide you with the current temperature, humidity and heat index (combination of temperature and humidity). It also will provide the expected heat index for the balance of the workday.

(See app screen capture on page 13.)

The NALC Safety and Health page on the NALC website (NALC.ORG/WORK-PLACE-ISSUES/SAFETY-ANDHEALTH) also provides material on heat safety.

Under the heading "Extreme weather" are sections titled: "Safety in extreme heat," "Enforcing heat safety rules," "OSHA/NIOSH Heat Safety Tool" and "OSHA citations relating to heat safety." Each section contains information important to Letter Carriers working in the heat of the summer.

Local NALC representatives should also initiate a conversation with their supervisors/managers/postmasters asking that they share their plans to prevent Letter Carriers from suffering a heat injury, including copies of the training materials that will be used in stand-up talks. If there is pushback, Shop Stewards have the right to investigate what management plans to do to prevent you from suffering harm.

In the event a Letter Carrier suffers a heat-related injury, the following steps should be taken:

1. The first thing that needs to be done is to provide the injured employee with medical attention by transporting the employee to a medical facility or immediately calling 911 for emergency care. Bringing the employee back to the office to fill out paperwork before medical care is provided could further jeopardize the employee's health and is not required.

An employee does **NOT** need permission to seek emergency treatment. Section 866.1 of the Employee and Labor Relations Manual (ELM) provides that "In the event of a medical emergency, immediate and appropriate medical care must be provided." (August 2017 *Postal Record* article by NALC Director of Safety and Health.)

2. The employee, a union representative or a member of the family should request a CA-1 and complete the form to request continuation of pay. Once the form is submitted to management, we should immediately obtain the receipt of the CA-1 from them.

3. Obtain a Form CA-16, signed by management, and then provide the form to the treating physician.

4. After medical care is provided, NALC requests that the employee or a union representative fill out an NALC Initial Heat Injury Report. NALC seeks contact information for the injured employee as well as for the Branch President. We then need a description, from the employee, as to what happened leading up to the injury.

When filling out the form, please share what type of delivery is involved (mounted, park-and-loop, centralized, conditions) and the temperature (humidity and heat index).

Once the form is completed, it should be forwarded to the NALC Director of Safety and Health and to the appropriate national business agent (NBA). A copy of the form can be found on NALC's safety page in the section titled "Enforcing heat safety rules."

Once the form is received at NALC Headquarters, it will be tracked and a copy will be forwarded to the appropriate NBA so that they can follow up as necessary with the injured employee, make sure that they have received the necessary medical care, and to assist, if necessary, with workers' compensation paperwork and processing, a service that is provided to NALC members only.

5. The local representative should then investigate the facts leading up to the injury. The following represent some of the issues that need to be explored, though other questions also may need to be asked:

☞ Did the employer properly train all letter carriers (including the injured employee) on how to prevent a heat injury? If so, when was this training last provided?

☞ Did the employer provide water, rest and shade, as recommended by OSHA and NIOSH?

☞ If the employee or someone else communicated with management to advise of the employee's condition, did management act appropriately and get the employee out of harm's way, or did they fail their responsibilities to the employee? If they failed, what were their actions?

After making a determination of the facts leading to a Letter Carrier's injury, an NALC representative may need to do some or all of the following things depending on the circumstances:

☞ A PS Form 1767 should be filled out to report the hazard (keeping a copy for your records).

☞ A grievance may need to be initiated.

☞ A complaint may need to be initiated with the U.S. Department of Labor. The fifth panel on the OSHA-NIOSH Heat Safety App provides contact information.

You can press the "Contact" button and call or connect with the OSHA webpage. Scroll down to the "Take Action" section, press "File a safety and health complaint." This takes you to the page identified as "How to File a Safety and Health Complaint". This link will list your options. As an alternative, you also could do the same by going to this site: OSHA.GOV.



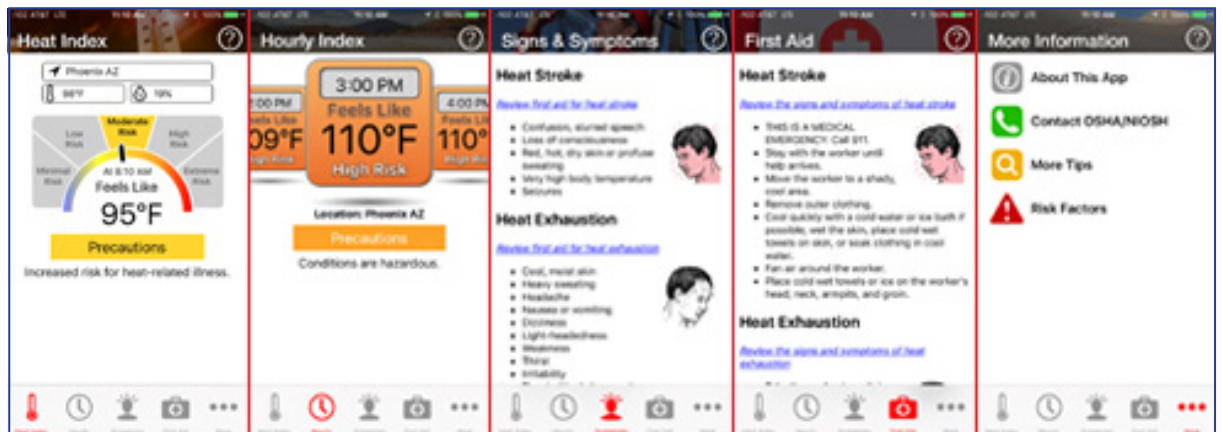
Originally published April 2008

If you do file a complaint and/or grievance, please forward a copy to NALC's Director of Safety and Health.

It is recommended that every Letter Carrier use the OSHA/ NIOSH Heat Safety Tool App each morning during the heat season to help determine what should be done each day to prevent heat injuries.

Courtesy of the Oklahoma City, OK NALC Branch 458 Sooner Script published in in June/July 2020

Screenshot capture of the Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH)'s Heat Safety Tool Smartphone App.



Most recent www.cdc.gov update:

As of August 16, 2020, there have been 5,340,232 Covid-19 cases identified in the United States and the U.S. territories. There have been 168,696 deaths — twenty have been NALC members. On April 16, there were 632,548 cases and 31, 071 deaths.

Executive NALC VP Renfroe delivers regular updates on COVID-19 to you on the NALC's "You Are The Current Resident" Podcast. To listen on your smart phone, we recommend downloading the PodBean app. Then, more information can be heard @ [HTTPS://WWW.NALC.ORG/NEWS/NALC-AUDIO](https://www.nalc.org/news/nalc-audio).

March 20, 2020 – Branch 450 gold card member passes away from Covid-19
89-year-old retired Letter Carrier and NALC gold card member Robert Moe, a member of Branch 450 in Bellingham, WA, died Friday, March 20, from complications related to COVID-19. Brother Moe began his 30-year career with the Postal Service in 1956.

July 4, 2020 – Branch 157 member passes away from coronavirus
70-year-old retired Letter Carrier Raymond "Doc" Dougherty, a member of Branch 157 in Philadelphia, died on Saturday, July 4, from complications related to COVID-19. Brother Dougherty began his 34-year career with the Postal Service in 1977. For many years, Doc served Branch 157 as a Shop Steward, a Lead Route Inspection Team Member, and the Assistant Recording Secretary.

July 30, 2020 – Branch 576 member passes away from coronavirus
59-year-old Letter Carrier Olivia Meraz, a member of Branch 576 in Phoenix, passed away Thursday, July 30, from complications related to coronavirus. Sister Meraz worked at the Arcadia Station of the Phoenix, AZ Post Office. She began her USPS career in 2004.

August 11, 2020 – Branch 36 Letter Carrier passes away from coronavirus
48-year-old Letter Carrier Michael Hunt Sr., a member of Branch 36 in New York City, passed away Tuesday, August 11, from complications related to coronavirus. Brother Hunt worked at the FDR Station of the New York Post Office.
This October he would have celebrated his six-year anniversary with USPS.

Source: NALC Website "Latest News and Updates" <https://www.nalc.org/>

COVID-19 Health Care Benefits

The NALC HEALTH BENEFIT PLAN is here to support our members in getting the care they need.

As a result of the rapidly evolving COVID-19 pandemic, the Plan has made it a priority to remove any barriers that would prevent our members from getting the necessary testing.

We will now cover physician ordered diagnostic testing at 100% for patients that meet the CDC guidelines for COVID-19. We will also cover the associated office visit at 100%. If you use a PPO provider, your office visit copayment will be waived. If you use a non-PPO provider, we will pay 100% of the Plan's allowance for the office visit.

CVS Pharmacy is now offering the option of home delivery, where available, of all prescription medications at no charge. We are also waiving early refill limits on 30-day prescriptions for maintenance medication prescriptions ahead of their normal fill schedule. Please take advantage of our 90-day prescription benefit for maintenance medications and be sure to refill any eligible 90-day maintenance medications to be sure that you stay adherent during this pandemic.

Latest Covid-19 updates from the NALC? See the national NALC website. Also, stay in touch with your Branch 782 Officers if you have questions!

2020 NALC HBP Info

At a glance...



NALC Health Benefit Plan
 *Hospital Pre-Certification
 Mental & Substance Precertification
 Prescription Drug Program
 CVS/Caremark Specialty Pharmacy
 Durable Medical Equipment
"24/7 Nurse Hotline"
 CVS/CareMark Pharmacist
 Solutions for Caregivers (24/7)
 CIGNA PPO Locator Line
 CIGNA Organ Transplant Approval*
 Quit for Life (Tobacco Cessation)
 CIGNA Health Rewards (Discounts)
CIGNA Plus (Dental Discount)
 Disease Management Program
 OPM Retirement Info Center
 Federal Information Center
 Social Security Administration Info
 PostalEase Human Resources USPS
 Quest Lab Services (Bakersfield)
 LabCorp Lab Services Bakersfield
Shared Services Option 5 live person
 Medicare
 Suicide Hotline
 Suicide?? Talk With Someone...

1-888-636-6252
 1-877-220-6252
 1-877-468-1016
 1-800-933-6252
 1-800-237-2767
 1-855-511-1893
1-877-220-6252
 1-888-636-6252
 1-877-468-1016
 1-877-220-6252
 1-800-668-9682
 1-866-784-8454
 1-800-558-9443
1-877-521-0244
 1-800-227-3728
 1-888-767-6738
 1-800-333-4636
 1-800-772-1213
 1-877-477-3273
 (661) 631-8520
 (661) 631-9258
1-877-477-3273
 1-800-633-4227
 1-800-784-2433
 1-800-273-8255

NALC Health Benefit Plan
 20547 Waverly Court
 Ashburn, Virginia 20149

NALC Prescription Mail Order Drug Program
 P.O. Box 94467
 Palatine, Illinois 60094-4467

NALC Drug Prescription "Claims" Filing
 P.O. Box 521926
 Phoenix, Arizona 85072-2192

OptumHealth Behavioral Solutions
 P.O. Box 30755
 Salt Lake City, Utah 84130-0755
 Questions: 1-877-468-1016

NALC Consumer Driven Health Plan and Value Option*
 P.O. Box 18223
 Chattanooga, TN 37422-7223
 Phone: 1-855-511-1893

* Call for approvals Organ Transplants,
 DME Surgeries InPatient

Preferred Provider (PPO)
 Cost: \$20.00 Co-pay per office visit

PPO Deductible: Per Calendar Year
 \$300 "Individual"
 \$600 "Self & Family" or "Self Plus One"

Many immunizations are Free (Adult/Child) when
 administered at a PPO pharmacy/facility.
 Some will require a prescription from the Doctor.

URGENT CARE

Sendas Urgent Care: 9450 Ming Ave., Bakersfield (661) 587-2500
 M-S 8 a.m. - 9 p.m. Saturday/Sunday 8 a.m. - 8 p.m.
ASK FOR OTHER LOCATIONS

Accelerated Urgent Care: 9710 Brimhall, (661) 829-6747
 9500 Stockdale Hwy, (661) 735-3943 8 a.m. - 9:30 p.m. daily
ASK FOR OTHER LOCATIONS

*Our PPO doctors and facilities—through (OAP Network)
 CIGNA—save us and the Plan thousands of dollars
 and it is top notch care at a discount rate. You don't lose
 anything! You are saving money for the best care!!!*

MARK RAMIREZ

NALC Branch 782 Health Benefit Plan Representative

(661) 204-5592

How do you find NALC/CIGNA (PPO) (OAP) Providers and Pharmacies?

Go to NALC.ORG.

**Under "Member Benefits"
 NALC Health Benefit Plan,**

Click on HBP Website (Center of Page)

Under Quick links,

**Click on "Locate Network Retail
 Pharmacy" - or CIGNA.**

**Click on Healthcare (OAP) Online
 Provider Directory**

The NALC Consumer Driven HP and the Value
 Option HP can utilize this **CIGNA PPO/OAP
 NETWORK** or by calling 1-855-511-1893.

**OPTUMHEALTH BEHAVIORIAL
 SOLUTIONS** is also available to the Consumer Driven/
 Value Option. You must pre-certify.
 Call 1-877-468-1016.

**We DO have a Dental Discount Program!
 Call Mark Ramirez for details...**

The death of anyone can be stressful. There are so many things that need to be addressed and so many different people who need to be informed. The following two pages offer guidance and also provide an opportunity for you to do some advance planning...



National Association
of Letter Carriers

When a
retired
letter
carrier
dies...

Step-by-step instructions for survivors to notify appropriate entities and apply for federal benefits such as survivor annuity, health and life insurance.

The NALC Retirement Department provides advice and assistance to retired and active members regarding retirement issues. This support does not end when an NALC member dies. Guidance to spouses and other survivors is also provided.

The steps to be taken when a retired Letter Carrier dies are as follows:

Notify the retired Letter Carrier's NALC branch.

If the retiree was a veteran, notify the Veterans' Administration 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 or write to MBA, 100 Indiana Ave. NW, 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 continue to receive health insurance through the FEHB as long as he or she was 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.

Save this page with your important papers...

Source: NALC Website <https://www.nalc.org/.../retirement/.../when-a-retired-letter-carrier-dies-2014.pdf>

Save this page with your important papers...

Notify the employee's immediate supervisor, postmaster and personnel section (if any):

Give the supervisor the Letter Carrier's locker keys and badge as well as information on time and place of memorial services.

Check with USPS Human Resources Shared Service Center at 877-477-3273 for benefits for spouse and any dependent children.

Fill out forms (obtain from USPS personnel section or postmaster): application for death benefits under the retirement system; claim for unpaid compensation; claim for FEGLI death benefits. You should notify HRSSC by calling 877-477-3273.

Notify the Thrift Savings Plan for Death Benefits Claims (only):
Fax Number: (703) 592-0170 Mailing Address: TSP Death Benefits Processing Unit, Fairfax Post Office DEDIS, P.O. Box 4450, Fairfax, VA 22038-9998 or call the ThriftLine, Toll-Free 877-968-3778

Notify the Carrier's NALC branch.

If veteran, notify the Veterans' Administration local office or call toll-free 800-827-1000.

Notify banks and other financial institutions.

Call the local office of the Social Security Administration or toll-free 800-772-1213.

Notify insurance companies (life, health, home, automobile, etc.).

If the Carrier had a policy with NALC's Mutual Benefit Association, write to 100 Indiana Ave., NW, Room 510, Washington, DC 20001-2144 or call 202-638-4318 or toll-free 800-424-5184.

If the Carrier was enrolled in the NALC Health Benefit Plan, write 20547 Waverly Court, Ashburn, VA 20149 or call toll-free 888-636-6252.

Note: Health benefit coverage for a surviving spouse and dependent children continues automatically if Carrier had Family Coverage at time of death and if a monthly survivor annuity is payable.

Have mortuary officials obtain enough certified death certificates for your needs (they can suggest how many).

The days following the death of an active Letter Carrier can prove to be quite traumatic. Many forms and notices must be obtained from the Postal Service and completed at this extremely stressful time. The NALC stands ready to assist our members and their families during these difficult times.

Source: NALC Website https://www.nalc.org/workplace.../50499_NALC_Active_WEB-1.pdf



**National Association
of Letter Carriers**

When an
active
letter
carrier
dies...

Step-by-step instructions for
survivors to notify appropriate
entities and apply for federal benefits

Here are excerpts from a number of articles from various NALC newsletters from all over the country. Your Letter Carrier world is larger than just your case...

snippets

Covid-19 Panic

By Paul Desmond,
NALC Branch 25 Prez

“...The Postal Service was woefully unprepared for an outbreak of this nature. As a toilet paper shortage developed, there were some offices that didn’t even have a backup supply of toilet paper. Forget about hand sanitizer, gloves and face masks...”

By way of the Tewksbury, MA
NALC Branch 25 *WAKE UP!*
published in August 2020

Grievance Numbers

By Dave Skowronek,
NALC Branch 2 V.P.

“...I know the number of grievances doesn’t mean much to the average member. Usually, the only grievance a member is concerned with is one that affects them or their work location. To put the grievance numbers in perspective though, *the grievances worked for one of our represented locations in the last nine months is more than double the grievance total for the other thirty-four locations the Branch represents in all of 2019...*”

By way of the July 2020 Milwaukee, WI
NALC Branch 2 *Pioneer*

We Have Been Devastated by Covid-19

By Richard Montesarchio, NALC Branch 693 Prez

“...We have been devastated by the COVID10 Virus that has hit the entire world. A terrible bad dream for all of us.

All the essential workers in New York have been hit the hardest — many living in congested neighborhoods — where it is hard to social distance, commuting on subways or buses just to get to work to service the people.

The Postal Service has been hit extremely hard. Our Branch lost two of our brothers: Martin Harris of Scarsdale and John Consilvio of White Plains. We also lost the wife of Jarrod Hannon, another Scarsdale Carrier.

I have been embarrassed and humbled to go to offices and stand in front of employees and tell them to report to work, and that their buildings would be cleaned and sanitized. *None of our offices have experienced the cleaning of floors and cases being disinfected to where we can visually notice it.* Many years of cutbacks in maintenance are now very evident.

And now on top of it all, we are still being harassed and intimidated by incompetent supervisors. We have Letter Carriers working seven days a week, a lack of proper staffing, an increase in parcels (to where numerous veteran Carriers are expressing to me that volumes are higher than at holiday time. There are reports of Carriers making 200 scans in a day and delivering 160 small parcels and 90 large parcels and working till 7 - 8 PM...”

By way of the Summer 2020 Peekskill, New York NALC Branch 696
Volume 12 Issue 25 *Westchester Carrier* published in August 2020

On Top of Covid-19, We Get Slammed Again

By Patrick Mullen, NALC Branch 2008 V.P.

“... The coronavirus is spreading among us and our families. Every day we get word of more employees testing positive. On the day I write this article, we have been informed that there were THIRTY cases in the Suncoast District. We all need to do what we can to keep our families and ourselves safe.

The virus is having a severe effect on staffing. Every day in a lot of our offices non-ODLs are being forced because of the shortage. This is certainly not helpful for Carrier morale. Yet it’s not the case in every office. Take New Port Richey, for example. Almost all the CCAs that went through the Academy in February and March were sent to New Port Richey. At one point in early June they had 16 CCAs for an office with less than 30 routes. We have tried to get answers from management as to how this happens but unfortunately all upper management just buries their heads in the sand. It is absolutely incredible that we are run this way! No wonder our finances are in such bad shape. In the meantime, Palm Harbor, an office just 15 miles down the road, is forcing their non-ODLs on a daily basis. They are paying overtime at a rate of \$45 an hour and

indeed are paying V time at a rate of \$60 when — with the right management — they could be paying \$17 an hour if the CCAs were distributed correctly.

They split multiple routes every day and send out emails looking for CCA help. Some days they do get help in the form of CCAs from, get this, Brandon over in Hillsborough County. *That’s almost 40 miles each way.* So mileage is now being paid at a rate of 55 cents a mile, not to mention the time spent driving to and from. Who allows this to happen? Shouldn’t somebody have to explain how it is allowed to happen?...”

By way of the Tarpon Springs, FL
NALC Branch 2008 *Suncoast Letter Carrier’s Update* published in July 2020

Crossing Crafts in “Emergency Situations”

By Jack Lopez,
NALC Branch 133 Second V.P.

“...In addition to its Article 7 rights, management has the right to work Carriers across crafts in an “emergency” situation as defined in Article 3, Management Rights.

Article 3.F states that management has the right:

To take whatever actions may be necessary to carry out its mission in emergency situations, i.e. an unforeseen circumstance or a combination of circumstances which calls for immediate action in a situation which is not expected to be of a recurring nature.

This provision gives management a very LIMITED right to make cross-craft assignments. Management’s desire to avoid additional expenses such as penalty overtime does not constitute an emergency.

So not only does management have very limited rights to cross crafts on any particular Sunday, but they should not be instructing Rural carriers to cross crafts to deliver city parcels at any time.

There should be no emergency if management knows how to manage their office.

REMEDY FOR VIOLATIONS. As a general proposition, in those circumstances in which a clear contractual violation is evidenced by the fact circumstances involving crossing of crafts pursuant to Article 7.2.B & C, a “make whole” remedy involving the payment at the appropriate contractual right to the work would be appropriate.

As stewards when we ask questions it’s amazing how we find out what management is up to. Unfortunately, many do not bargain in good faith even when it’s evident. Check with CCA’s who work Sunday and help them understand management is violating the contract when other crafts work in our craft. This is taking work hours away from them which is rightfully ours.

Teach all Carriers knowledge is power and the sooner we learn this power the more rewarding our jobs as Carriers will be. Watch out for each other. Veteran Carriers teach the young Carriers how you overcame issues with management. *THAT’S* how you survived. Make it positive and educational...”

By way of the North Highlands, California
NALC Branch 133 *Swing Room Gazette*
published in June 2020

“Out tHeRe”



Management Rumblings?

By Gerald “Jerry” McCarthy,
NALC Branch 34 Prez

“...Since day one management has been working with us during this pandemic.

Now about two months since the restrictions started, there are rumblings about stationary events and attendance issues. I have explained some of these issues with phone calls to Area Managers and Postmaster Leroy Middleton during the telecons.

The answer to these questions is simple: *You cannot do your route in the same fashion you were doing it prior to this pandemic.* Comfort stop locations are closed. Authorized lunch locations are closed. So, travel and stationary time will go up unless you want to take the scanner into the toilet with you.

If you explain yourself on Monday, you should not have to re-explain the same situation on Thursday...”

By way of the Boston, Massachusetts
NALC Branch 34 May - June 2020
BRANCH 34 CLAN

No Minutes from the July 2020 General Meeting. It was cancelled. Also cancelled, August meeting.

One Day Counts — 1838-C and 3999s

By Michael Levering, NALC Branch 3 Executive V.P.



Recently the Postal Service issued guidelines to its supervisors and managers regarding proper social distancing protocols due to COVID-19, which must be followed while conducting a PS Form 3999, when performing a street inspection of a letter carrier's route, and while conducting a PS Form 1838-C, when counting a letter carrier's mail volume and office time. Some of these procedures include:

- Examiners always remaining at least six feet away from letter carriers at all times.
- Examiners and carriers wearing face coverings in accordance with local ordinances and when social distancing cannot be maintained.
- Using disposable gloves and other personal protective equipment.
- Examiners avoiding direct hand-to-hand contact of the mail or inspection related documents with the letter carrier.
- Mail being counted by examiners prior to the letter carrier reporting for work.
- If a vehicle is needed, examiner must always utilize a separate vehicle.

For some carriers the mere mention of a route count being performed on them evokes feelings of intimidation, fear and then being mad. Why are they counting me? I'm not doing anything wrong. WTH!! These are normal reactions. However, being knowledgeable and aware of your rights will eliminate any fears or worries one may have and will build confidence in their abilities. Do not be afraid. Management should notify carriers of the count and provide at least one days notice of this. The following is relevant:

M-39 section 141.2 Special Office Mail Counts:

When management desires to determine the efficiency of a carrier in the office, a count of mail may be made. The carrier must be given one day's advance notification of this special count. Use Form 1838-C to record count and time items concerned. The carrier must be advised of the result of the office mail count.

See your Steward to file a grievance if the above does not happen. If management does provide proper notification. Then no problem, come in that day and perform the normal duties. Clock in and check your vehicle, go to your case and ask the person who is performing the count, if they counted the mail? When they state yes, ask for a copy of the 1838-C, tell them you want to verify their count and note any discrepancies. The following step-4's support that position:

M-00536:

Based on the intent of Section 221.131 of the M-39 Handbook, the carrier may, upon request, verify the entire mail count.

M-00814:

Normally, a spot verification of the mail volume is adequate to determine that the mail count is accurate. However, the parties agree that based on the intent of Section 221.131 of the M-39 Handbook, the carrier may, upon request, verify the entire mail count.

M-01216:

The issue in these cases is whether management violated the National Agreement by not allowing carriers to count the mail counted by the supervisor during a "one day count". During our discussions, we mutually agreed to the following: **On the day of a "one day count" when management performs the mail count the carrier serving the route, upon request, may verify the count.**

The carrier should verify every piece of mail including but not limited to all letters and flats, FSS, DPS, Parcels, accountables. **Verify everything.** Record the time it took to count and verify all of this mail and write it on your 3996, requesting auxiliary assistance if necessary. From the NALC Route Protection Program/Policy in relevant part:

Upon request, you have a right to verify the inspector's count. This is an important right and you are strongly encouraged to insist that you be allowed to verify the count. This includes all DPS, S999 and any machine counted mail as well.

With the summer and prime time vacation in full swing, under-time attempts and forcings are a common occurrence. We need to remind ourselves to utilize 3996's and include specifics like high parcel volume, number of accountables, extra comfort stops due to heat and humidity. Remember comfort stops are in addition to your 30 minute lunch and 2-ten minute breaks. Stay safe and stay hydrated, do not let management bully you. Make sure to write "copy requested" at the top and have management address the 96's. If they do not, see your Steward to file a grievance. If management denies the time, don't panic, just ask them for instructions on what to do if you are going to be over the authorized time. Then utilize the scanner to text back at the required time. Do not use your cell phone as they are for emergencies and authorized break times only. Text management that you are going to be over and what are their instructions. If they tell you to finish the work, then they have authorized the time and you have a record of it on the scanner. If they do not respond, text back that your last instruction was to be done in 8 hrs or whatever your instructed return time was, and you will be bringing the time back to remain within the instructed time frame. Make them do their jobs.

Again, as stated above just relax, do your assignment the same way, every day, like you should have been doing. Do not speed up, or slow down, work to your volume. Don't think because "you're

being counted or watched” this is the time to start changing your habits. Your performance on that day should not be used against you as the following agreements have been reached:

M-00005:

Data from the (one day) counts were not, nor will they be, used as a basis for disciplinary action.

M-00111:

A one (1) day count of mail should be utilized for the purposes intended by the M-39 Handbook and local officials are to ensure that one (1) day counts are not used for the purpose of harassment.

M-00829:

Under Article 16, no employee may be disciplined except for just cause. In this instance, the parties agree that a one day count and inspection may not be used as the sole basis to establish a standard against which a carrier's performance may be measured for disciplinary purposes.

Do not let management take away any of the rights our brothers and sisters have fought so hard for. Stand up for yourself and let your Steward know if this happens. Read the contract, ask questions from other carriers and become more knowledgeable of your job. Believe in the process and like the old adage states, Knowledge is Power! Utilize It!

This article, shamelessly copied “as is”, is courtesy of the Buffalo, New York July 2020 NALC Branch 3 BUZZ

Mrs. G. Makes it Three

By Mark Esbjerg, NALC Branch 2008

I know it is routine that Letter Carriers interact with customers in all sorts of good and sometimes bad circumstances. Today, I had what I think is an unusual streak: THREE spouses getting Certified letters for deceased partners.

The first was a lady who asked me to help her close her husband’s tool box in the driveway as she was getting ready for an estate sale.

The second was a gentleman who had lost his wife recently and was trying to figure out how to function without someone who, I think, pretty much ran the house for the course of their marriage. His porch and doorway was mostly takeout food boxes and disarray that I never saw when I started this route a few weeks ago.

The third was Mrs. G. I have to admit, I kind of dreaded coming down Mrs. G’s street, as she was almost always meeting me at the box, asking about the whereabouts of the “Regular Carrier” (who is on sick leave), striking up a conversation about anything. I kind of resented her being a “Time Bandit”. ***DIDN’T SHE KNOW THAT I WAS BUSY AND ON A SCHEDULE?***

When I started this career, I had to quickly learn the professional Letter Carrier technique of: Be Polite. Have a Quick Word. And, Keep Moving! If you don’t keep it short and sweet, you can be stuck for WAY too long.

I did not know Mrs. G. was a recent widow. The Certified letter was for her husband. She said, “Oh, they told me at the bank to just sign for these and bring them in.” When I asked her what she meant, she looked me in the eye and explained, “My husband died, one month ago today. I’m still trying to figure out all the paperwork.”

I gave her my condolences, and she continued, “It’s OK. He was really bad. He had Parkinson’s and dementia. When they put him in the ambulance the

day before he died, I said ‘Honey, I don’t know how much longer I can take care of you like this.’ He’s had all this since 2004. But, we both made it to 82 years old, so...no complaints.”

It hit me that this woman was the primary caregiver for a gravely ill spouse, in their home, for 16 years! No wonder, her daily interaction with the mail person, or a neighbor – or ANYBODY – helped her try to survive what must have been a lonely difficult life...

Well, we ended that delivery with Mrs. G. getting a heck of a hug before I headed back to the truck. She thanked me for letting her “sign for John’s letter.” – like I was doing HER a favor.

She did **ME** the favor of reminding me how you never know what someone is going through, and how a few seconds of kindness might really be the best part of someone else’s day. TRULY!

No... Thank YOU, Mrs. G!

And, I’ll see you tomorrow.

By way of the Tarpon Springs, FL
NALC Branch 2008 *Suncoast Letter*
Carrier’s Update published in March 2020

We work in a Looney Toons

By Renee Guerrero, Branch 231
Director of Education

The month of July...wow. I don't even know where to start...I'm speechless. Without getting into too much detail, I can say this: In my 27 years with the postal service I have never seen anything like what happened last month.

The parcels, the sick calls, covid leave, bad operational decisions, and THE PARCELS! We had so many packages and not enough bodies that management started curtailing.

It was mortifying to see priority packages — a USPS product — being delayed prior to Amazon deliveries. Where are our priorities to this company? **Obviously not being delivered.**

I compare it to a Looney Toons Cartoon. You know — Wile E. Coyote with his great ideas to catch the Road Runner only to fail.

“OuT tHeRe”



This cartoon was originally published August 2009

Well. We failed and we failed horribly. Times really got desperate when management asked “Not So Speedy Gonzalez” to case up on other routes. Hell, I even stepped up to show off my old Carrier tech skills just to prove why H.D. called me the “best Carrier” he ever supervised!

I have to give it up to CGonzalez@CR37 though! When called upon, that dude is ALWAYS there to help! Without complaints, and customer friendly, Mr. Gonzalez is a REAL professional.

His only flaw — he was a Jose Canseco fan.

By now we've all heard about our Postmaster General's grand idea. Afternoon casing (more like night casing) and pull down for the next day.

Our office actually tried it one morning. We were instructed not to touch the case, load up our SPRS, parcels, and DPS and leave.

This of course led to an unpleasant conversation with our MPOO. We went back and forth but in the end came to an agreement. During a stand up, actually. In front of the whole office she stood there and said, “Yes Rene, you're right!”.

I agree! FINALLY some recognition.

There were numerous violations for that decision, but I'll point out the one that really disturbed me: Sorting SPRs on the street.

Not only is it time consuming, but it is a violation of our M-41.

SPRs are directed (in Section 2 “Office Time — Preparation”: M-41 section 225.2 Modified One-Bundle System: 225.21 Fold all mail (except stiff cardboard articles, X-ray pictures, large greeting cards, and large newspapers and magazines) and sort it in letter separations.

225.22 Sort stiff cardboard articles, X-ray pictures, etc., and large newspapers and magazines on ledge, usually by relays on foot routes, and then route them in sequence of delivery.

A letter may be reversed in the letter separation for a customer receiving a parcel or odd-sized article which cannot be routed in the letter separations. This will serve as a reminder when on the route that there is a large or odd-sized piece for customer.

M-00409 A carrier has the option of reversing a letter in the letter separation as a reminder of a parcel or odd-sized piece of mail for delivery.

The word “parcel” in Section 225.16 of the M-41 concerns mail matter which cannot be routed into the flat or letter separations and does not include parcels weighing two pounds or more.

Section 322.3 of the M-41 addresses parcels weighing two pounds or more and provides the method of reminding a Carrier of the next parcel for delivery.

I fear some of the new Carriers will be accustomed to this operation. But, in reality, it is **NOT** normal to bring back mail for the next day delivery. *Nor is it normal for every Carrier in the office to be mandated to work 12 hours everyday.*

And it's definitely not alright for management to leave full routes uncovered only to be delivered days later.

Yes, we did have multiple carriers out sick but we are four months into covid 19 and there wasn't a plan for this? Oh wait, the NALC agreed for the postal service to hire Temporary Carrier Assistants.

But management didn't take advantage of the opportunity. Yet again, another operational failure.

As I said at the beginning of this article, I'm speechless.

This article is courtesy of the August 2020
Fresno, California NALC Branch 321 Postman's View

Thrift Savings and Retirement

By John Rubio, NALC Branch 504 Retiree

The Thrift Savings Plan is an essential retirement benefit especially for FERS employees. It works like a 401K in the private sector. Employees can save and benefit from employer contributions. New Carriers are automatically enrolled and, unless the employee choose not to participate, contributions are taken from their paycheck. Millions of federal workers participate as members, keeping administrative costs as low as savings are passed on to us.

CCAs don't have access to the TSP until they convert to career status. The NALC Mutual Benefit Association offers a savings account to help them get a head start. It is called "CCA Retirement Savings Plan" Once the CCA converts to career status, the account can be rolled over to the TSP.

Once a person retires, there are outside "financial advisors" who tell people to withdraw the TSP funds and invest them elsewhere. This is almost always a bad idea. Some "advisors" are predatory and enrich themselves by charging higher fees than the TSP.

This abridged article is courtesy of the July/August 2020 Albuquerque, New Mexico NALC Branch 504 *El Sol*

COVID -19 in the Suncoast District and "What's happening on the workroom floor?"

By Al Friedman, NALC Branch 2008 President

The latest numbers of positive cases in the district are climbing higher by the day and the numbers last week more than doubled over the previous week.

The very first case here in the district was March 31 in Largo. Right now, there are over 70 confirmed cases, 10 just this past weekend. The district-confirmed cases have doubled in less than a week, with more than 212 employees still out under quarantine.

Dealing with the workroom floor on a daily basis, the issue we are having is giving estimates when all the mail is still being worked. The M-41 Section 131.42 states that on your final receipt of mail you must notify management of any needed overtime.

In our Branch we have had five confirmed cases with eight Carriers in self quarantine as of this writing. We have several Carriers returning from quarantine due to testing negative and one Carrier returning after being positive and now testing negative.

As the numbers increase, we must take all necessary precautions not only to protect ourselves but also what we may bring home to our families. Most of our cases are from family and friends, gathering on the weekends and not social distancing. Pasco, Pinellas, and Hillsborough Counties have issued mandatory face mask ordinances.

The Postal Service is asking all employees to wear a mask when walking around the

workroom floor, but not while you're casing the mail or while delivering mailbox to mailbox. It is required when you're going into a business, or anywhere you are unable to have safe distancing.

What's happening on the workroom floor?

Management is using new tools, like the workhour workload (DOIS) report and the new PET program. Most of the time, they are misused and the information is worthless. All these tools do not set your daily estimates. Only Carriers have the responsibility with knowledge of the route based on what they know.

These tools are not the sole reason to determine a Carrier's leaving and return time or daily workload. No Carrier shall be disciplined for failure to meet standards, except in cases of unsatisfactory effort *which must be based on documentation.*

I have noticed in multiple stations that the common theme is requesting your estimates while you are still receiving mail and packages are still being thrown. The DPS for your routes are not being riffled through on the clock in the morning to confirm: Is it in order? Full coverage? And now all your certified mail is run through DPS and that number of certified letters *can* affect your final estimate.

The other issue is filling out 3996s when you do go into overtime.

Whether you fill one out in the morning

(or afternoon when you come back due to conditions beyond your control), take the time to fill it out *completely.*

There is office policy that allows Carriers to call by 2-3 p.m. to change or refine their estimates to more or less time. That time should be for reasons needed.

If you do a piece from another route you must be given a filled out 3996. That 3996 should already have the information needed, such as: Are keys needed? Accountable mail?

The 3996 should also tell you where the piece starts and what streets you have. When you do that piece, you fill out the bottom of the 3996 with travel to and to the end.

When a 3996 is filled out by the Carrier, it is a request for the time needed to complete the route including p.m. duties.

The supervisor has three options: first, approve the OT providing the Carrier is on the overtime desired list (ODL); Second, if the Carrier is non-ODL, take a piece off the route and hand it off to an ODL Carrier or available PTF or CCA; Third, curtail the mail to avoid the overtime.

If mail is curtailed, Form 1571 (Undelivered Mail Report) must be filled out.

The bottom line on all this is to know your route and always be professional Carriers!

Every day brings us new challenges to deal with. Do your job safely every day.

By way of the Tarpon Springs, FL NALC Branch 2008 *Suncoast Letter Carrier's Update* published in July 2020

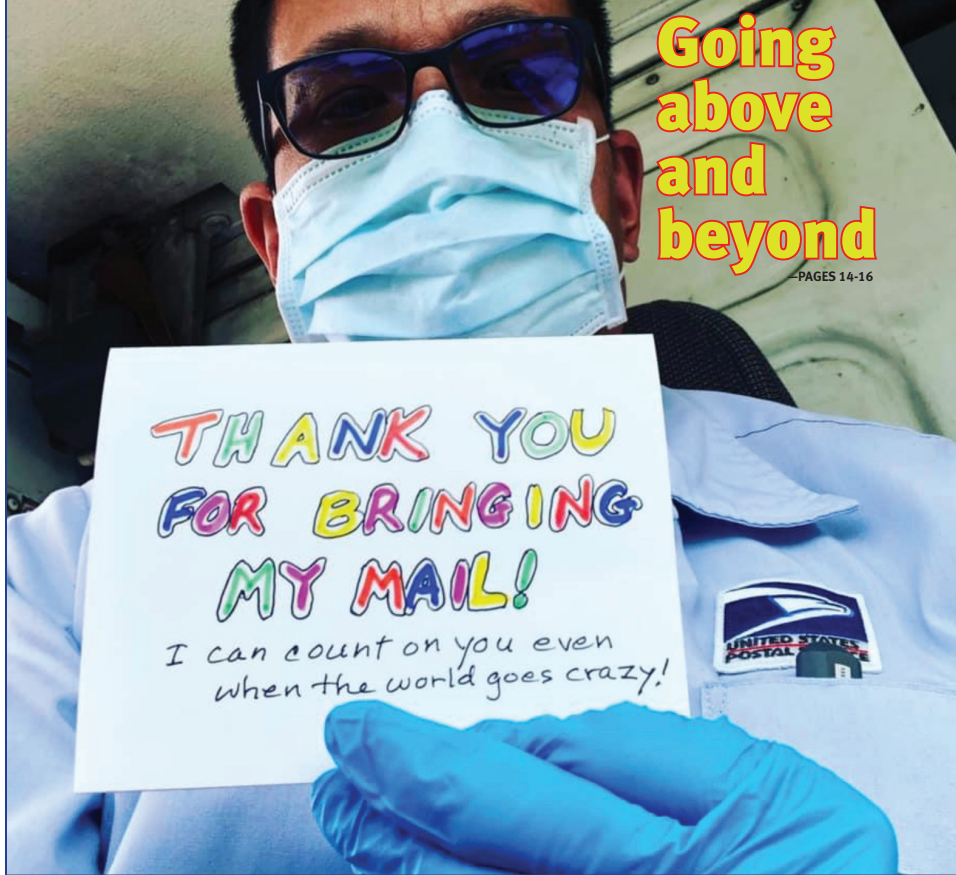
Volume 133/Number 7 July 2020

The Postal Record

The monthly journal of the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF LETTER CARRIERS

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Going above and beyond

PAGES 14-16



The Mailman

Every time a cold wind hits my face, Or a gust almost takes my letters,
Or the rain pours where I can't see
I think of all my mailman friends out there,
Out there on the streets.
We deliver mail through rain, snow, and sleet
Natural disaster, man-made disaster,
war times
Even a worldwide pandemic.
Thank you brave men and women
for your service.
A brief moment of silence for those who
have lost their life on the job
Or due to job related illness or injury.
Thank you brave mailman.
Mailmen are the toughest people that I've
ever been honored to know.
Ohhhhhh and I am one tough lady,
I'd like you to know.
I've walked through many negative thirty
degree days
And have simmered in that tin can.
I have warded off the dogs.
I survived through the hazing faze
Searching for that damn box.
Thank you brave mailmen for being some of
my best friends!
I have enjoyed all of our union beers
And seeing you at those meetings.
We wake up early to gather in the union
room.
Here there is nothing but smiles,
coffee, and waking eyes.
I'm sure every office has a couple of
class clowns
I enjoy hearing our whole office giggle as
they joke around. To me this small chatter
is so important because

All day I walk alone.
Our union is very strong
And the friendships feel right at home.

Letter carrier Jade Wong is the regular on Route 12 in Superior, Wisconsin. She offers this poem as encouragement to our Branch and other Branches during these hard times. She has previously had poetry published in an anthology.

GRAHAM GARFIELD
NALC Branch 337 Scribe

Source: July 2020 NALC Postal Record — Branch Items



*Letter Carriers — much like the unknown,
masked superhero “Deadpool” —
just do what needs to be done!!*

*This picture, courtesy of a friend of Deadpool,
was captured in an unnamed USPS station.*



from the editor-guy

The *NALC Editor Resource Book* is Volume II of Fred Acedo cartoons. It presents almost 1100 of Fred Acedo's cartoons published in our newsletter from 2003 - 2016. This book builds on the almost 500 cartoons in the original **Out tHeRe** book which featured his work from 1993 through 2002. *Welcome to Volume II!*

You may have questions about how this book can be used or whether or not it will be a good investment. You can call me at the phone number listed below. You can write to me, or you can e-mail me at BRZIII@AOLCOM. I would be glad to answer your questions or give you an idea of how this product can be a creative tool for your current or future NALC editor in presenting information to NALC members. *(Please follow this trail ***)*

This book is an excellent book of clip art designed specifically for, by and about NALC members and our world. (Yes. I am biased. I believe that this **IS** an excellent book of clip art! I hope that you agree...)

Additionally, an index is provided that links ALL of the cartoons in both the original **Out tHeRe** and in Volume II to assist editors in searching out cartoons by topic (e.g. dogs, injuries, supervisors, etc.).

BASIL ZUNIGA

Please send me one or more NALC Editor Resource Books! I want Fred's cartoons!

Base cost is **\$30** but you can donate more. (Cost covers wear & tear, paper, toner, etc.)

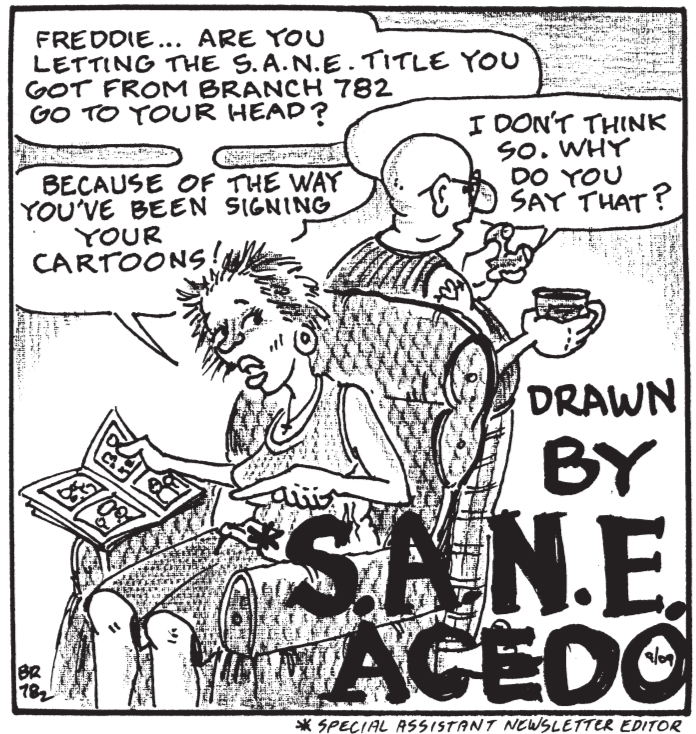
***** SPECIAL OFFER:** I will include a copy of **Out tHeRe** with this order. **500 more cartoons!**

When you order, please indicate if you are an NALC Editor!

Please make check payable to Basil Zuniga, Branch 782 Editor-guy

Please include \$7.90 for USPS Priority Mail postage.

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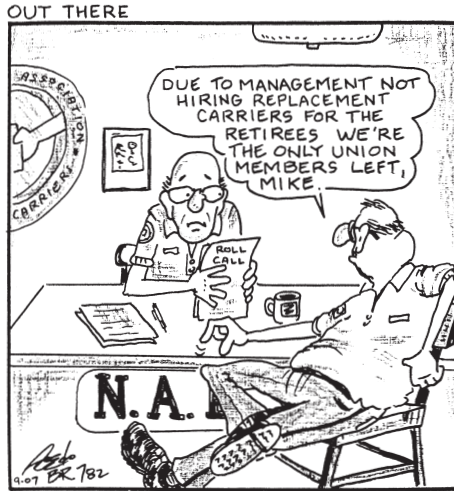


Curious about what you might be getting? Check out the sample featured on the following page.

This is a sample. You are looking at page 74 in the *NALC Editor Resource Book*. There are 176 pages in this book that explore glimpses into our lives as Letter Carriers from January 2003 to July 2016...



Originally published April 2009



Originally published April 2009



Originally published May 2009



Originally published May 2009



Originally published May 2009



Originally published May 2009



Originally published May 2009



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Y' think we can be our own worst enemies even in an **Out There** world??

"OuT tHeRe"



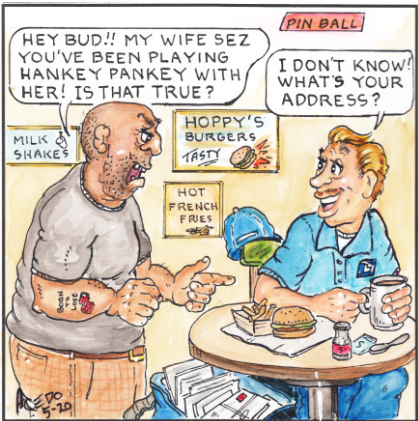
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"OuT tHeRe"



"OuT tHeRe"



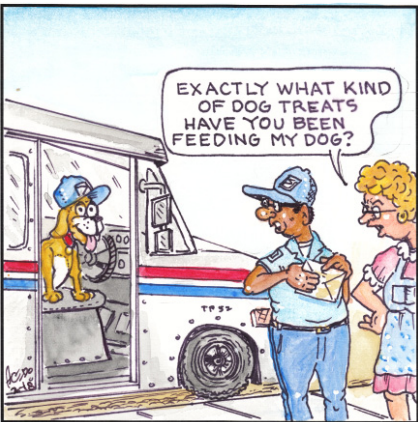
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"OuT tHeRe"



"OuT tHeRe"



"OuT tHeRe"



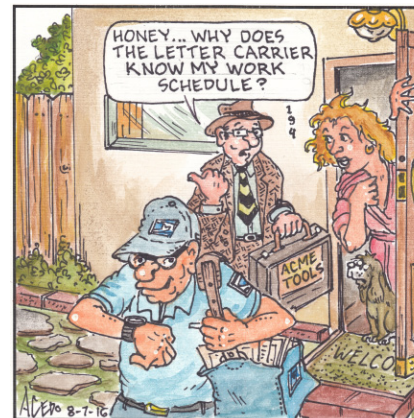
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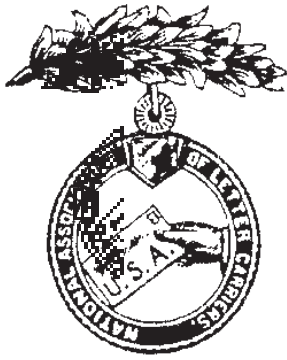
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Have an thought for a cartoon? Mail your idea to Fred Acedo, S.A.N.E., P.O. Box 6532, Bakersfield, CA 93386-6532



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The Editor retains the right to edit, delete, or reject the article for the good of the Branch (and even this is subject to persuasion).

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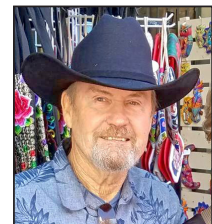
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Latest Covid-19 updates from the NALC? See the national NALC website. Also, stay in touch with your Branch 782 Officers if you have questions!

DUE TO THE CONTINUING COVID-19 PANDEMIC, AND FOR THE SAFETY AND HEALTH OF ACTIVE AND RETIRED LETTER CARRIERS AND THEIR FAMILIES, IT IS NECESSARY TO CANCEL THE GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING SCHEDULED FOR WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 26

"OuT tHeRe"



"OuT tHeRe"



"OuT tHeRe"



"OuT tHeRe"



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Each and every Branch 782 newsletter is a monthly snippet of time — a chapter in the history of YOU, the NALC Branch 782 Letter Carriers. Some day, what you are going through each day as you deliver the mail today will become "The Good Old Days" that you and others were able to survive. Yup.....

If you're looking at this page, you've made it to the web version of the Branch 782 newsletter!