



WAKE UP!

President/ Editor
Daniel P. Wheeler

Publisher
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Acton , Amesbury , Andover , Bedford , Beverly, Billerica , Burlington , Chelmsford , Concord , Danvers,
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Salem , South Hamilton, Sudbury , Tewksbury , Topsfield, Wakefield , Wayland , Wilmington , Winchester



Follow the rainbow into 2023.

*Thanks to Andy Coan for this amazing shot of the rainbow in
Peabody.*

President's Message

"New Year, Same Challenges"

I start this month's President Report by wishing all the members of Branch 25 a Happy New Years! Aside from January being the start to a new calendar year, January is also a new start to things here in Branch 25. This is my first article titled President's Report instead of Vice-President's Report. I will once again like to thank outgoing Branch 25 President Dave Barbuzzi for all of his hard work in that position over the last 12 years. I hope to continue with the hard work and dedication he has brought to that position in his time here. We have 2 other members of the Branch 25 executive council starting in new roles as well. Tony Bossi, of Billerica, has been appointed a s Vice-President and Joe Stearns, of Marblehead, has been appointed as the new branch secretary. Congratulations to Tony and Joe on their new positions!

Unfortunately, not everything starts fresh just because the calendar changes. One of the biggest problems that the Postal Service is facing is the lack of hiring and keeping new CCAs. Proper staffing is pretty much where it all starts. If the Service can't get enough employees in place to get the job done then everything else is strained. In sports they say "Winning cures everything." You could say that in the Post Office staffing cures everything. That is not to say if the offices were properly staffed we would never have any other problems. We would still have contractual violations, mismanagement, and safety concerns among other issues, but things would be better.

Why can't the Postal Service hire or retain more employees? There are probably many different answers to that question. I think one of the biggest reasons is the CCA designation. CCAs were created as part of what is referred to as the Das Award. Arbitrator Shyam Das chaired the arbitration board that settled the 2011-2016 National Agreement. The NALC would always prefer to have an all-career workforce but at the time the Service had a good argument they needed flexibility. That is not really the case anymore. In fact, in May the Service agreed to skip CCAs and start hiring all career carriers in certain locations. They have since added more locations to the original list. If we had the ability to hire career employees, we would be drawing from a bigger pool of candidates. If you need benefits immediately, the Postal Service is probably not on your radar as a potential landing spot.

Carrying mail is a hard job, when compounded by the additional pressures and challenges placed on carriers by management, it doesn't make the job any easier. If you are going to take a job that doesn't offer immediate benefits are you going to work at the Post Office or someplace like Target or Dunkin? Are you going to do a physical job where, unfortunately in too many places,

you're getting beat down by management, or the easier work? My hope is that sometime soon we will go back to hiring all career employees everywhere, and not just in

certain locations. Will that be a substantive change in keeping employees? I like to think so, but we will see.

For now, we press on, doing the best we can. The contract is still the contract. We still need to push back on management where we need to and file appropriate grievances. Unfortunately, there is not always a perfect answer. In a perfect world they would not need to force non-overtime list carriers to work their days off or to carry extra off their routes. The fact is there are many offices without enough carriers on the OT list to be able not to force. Some carriers also end up getting off the OT list because it becomes too much. This is where CCAs and PTFs should come in. The problem is when we look around in many offices there are none to be found. We still need to make sure management is doing things properly. Just because they need to go "off the list" doesn't mean anything goes. They still need to follow the contract and force properly. Please talk with your steward or the branch office if things are not being done properly.

A couple of months ago I wrote about carrier safety and the increase in robberies and assaults on letter carriers while delivering mail. I will end with two stories regarding safety. On December 21, police arrested two teenagers for a December 10 armed robbery of a Melrose letter carrier. The carrier had made a delivery where two teenagers were sitting on an outside step. When the carrier returned the vehicle, the teenagers pointed an airsoft pistol and knife at her and took her key. Police later saw a suspicious vehicle at a collection box and found the two teenagers with stolen mail and the key and made the arrests. Fortunately, for the Melrose letter carrier the outcome was not tragic. Unfortunately, a carrier did lose his life on December 9 in Milwaukee Wisconsin. Aundre Cross was shot and killed while delivering his route. It's not clear if this was an attempted robbery or not but it's another tragic death none the less. My condolences go out to Brother Cross' family and his co-workers. Stay safe out there Brothers and Sisters!

In Solidarity,

Dan Wheeler

Executive Vice-President's Report

I hope this finds all well after the holidays. I know it has been an incredibly busy season and the winter has only just begun, but at least the days will be getting longer. If the carriers are allowed to start early, then we will have more daylight to work in. Usually by MLK Day, we begin to notice a welcome increase in daylight hours. I want to thank all who showed up at the December branch meeting, it was well attended, and a special shout out to Chef Doug Murray for another fantastic meal. We had some new members attending their first meeting and that is great. I know it is not possible for all members to make every branch meeting, but it would be good to see some new faces every month. The meetings generally take about an hour and food is served prior to the meeting.

I want to congratulate former President Dave Barbuzzi on his new assignment working as a compensation specialist for the NALC. This promotion comes straight from NALC headquarters and is a great compliment to Dave and the branch. Dave has held many positions with Branch 25 before serving as President for the past 12 years. The branch has always focused on sending as many stewards and branch officers to the training offered by the NALC to be prepared for whatever comes next, and this has served us well. The result of this is the branch is well prepared for Dan Wheeler to take over the position of President and Tony Bossi to assume the position of Vice-President. Joe Stearns will assume duties as branch Secretary. I am confident that the branch will remain well prepared for the future and the training will continue, as we are sending 4 members to Branch officer training in January. Dave may no longer be the President, but he is not retiring and is not going away. Once again, good luck to him on a well deserved promotion, the same goes to all the officers serving new positions.

The next COLA letter carriers receive after the release of the January index will be the last pay increase under the current contract. The contract will expire in May 2023, and negotiations will officially begin approximately a month prior to that, but negotiations are always in the works. The new leadership at NALC headquarters will be prepared for the next round of negotiations as always. After a new contract is either negotiated or awarded through arbitration, there will be a 30-day local negotiation period for LMOUs. It is a good time to take a look at your local agreement, to see if anything could possibly be improved upon. All the branch LMOUs are on the branch website. If so, contact the branch with any ideas. It takes 2 to negotiate, so not all LMOUs will change, but we will attempt to make any improvements necessary.

This next coming year should be interesting, seeing that we expect to have at least 2 more stations moving into the Woburn building. What we are being told, without any hard facts, is to expect the move to happen

in late February. More on that to come when we know. One fact most carriers do not know or remember, is that Woburn was the GMF when carriers like myself, started working as a PTF in the late 1980s. All of the delivery units currently working out of the Woburn building were working out of buildings elsewhere at the time. They all eventually moved there from the main offices where they deliver, or buildings that were strictly delivery units. The last one to move in was the Reading unit, prior to the Reading post office being sold.

There is also a new route adjustment process that should be underway sometime soon after the New Year. At this point I can't say which stations will be evaluated first, but we will keep the members updated on both of these developments as they occur or when we get more information. I hope to see more of you at the branch meeting in January, remember it is now the 2nd Tuesday of the month. Keep your head up!

Paul Desmond

Calendar of Events

January 1	New Year's Day
January 4	National Spaghetti Day
January 10	Regular Monthly Meeting K of C Wilmington 8:00PM Food served at 7:00PM
January 13	National Rubber Duckie Day
January 17	MLK Day
January 21	National Hugging Day
January 25	Opposite Day
January 26	Spouse's Day
January 27	Punch the Clock Day
January 31	Backward Day

Branch 25 Directory of Officers

Daniel P. Wheeler	President
Paul G. Desmond	Executive V.P.
Anthony Bossi	Vice President
Joe Stearns	Secretary
James P. Nutter	Treasurer
Kenneth Dusombre	Health Benefits Rep.
Jim Salvati	Safety Officer
Jack Lyman	Sergeant At Arms
Chris Bruno	Wake-Up Publisher
Dan Raske	Chairman, Board of Trustees
Bruce Johnson	Trustee
John McNulty	Trustee
Gilbert Paredes	Trustee
Bob Cronin	Trustee
Andy Coan	Assistant Secretary
James Metilinos	Assistant Treasurer
Jeremy Provost	Assistant Safety Officer



Your "Wake-Up!" is produced in-house at the Branch 25 Union office each and every month.

BRANCH 25 RETIREE GRATUITY VOUCHER

Name: _____
(as it will appear on plaque)

P.O. Retiring from: _____

Phone number: _____

Retirement date: _____

Please note: Retiree must be a member in good standing at date of retirement. Retiree has 4 months from retirement date to remit this voucher to the branch office. Please mail to: NALC Branch 25
 2500 Main St, Suite 201, Tewksbury Ma, 01876

The Grinch and Santa do get along! This photo was taken Christmas Eve out of the Billerica office and shows carriers Corey Irons and Jackie Zacchini dressed up for the holiday. Well done you two!

MEMBER ADDRESS UPDATE

MEMBER NAME: _____

NEW ADDRESS: _____

If this is a temporary change please fill-in the beginning and ending dates: FROM ___/___/___ TO ___/___/___

Please mail this form to:
 NALC Branch 25
 2500 Main St Suite 201
 Tewksbury Ma, 01876-3185



“Baby, It’s Cold Outside”

I just learned that cold stress is a thing. I was on the CDC website to learn about hypothermia for this article, and I came across a page for cold stress. Who knew?

According to cdc.gov, workers who are exposed to extreme cold may be at risk of cold stress. The website also says, “extreme cold weather is a dangerous situation that can bring on health emergencies in susceptible people, such as those working without shelter, outdoor workers, and those who work in an area that is poorly insulated or without heat.” That would be letter carriers.

Cold stress is actually a collection of four illnesses and injuries brought on by cold weather. Hypothermia, frostbite, trench foot, and chilblains.

Hypothermia is the most severe of the cold-related illnesses. Early symptoms include shivering, fatigue, loss of coordination, confusion, and disorientation. Symptoms can develop to become lack of shivering, blue skin, dilated pupils, slowed pulse, slowed breathing, and loss of consciousness. One of the most dangerous things about hypothermia is that the victim may not realize they have it. If you have hypothermia, request IMMEDIATE MEDICAL ATTENTION, then get dry, and get warm. Use loose, dry layers of clothing, and blankets. Warm beverages can also help raise the body’s temperature.

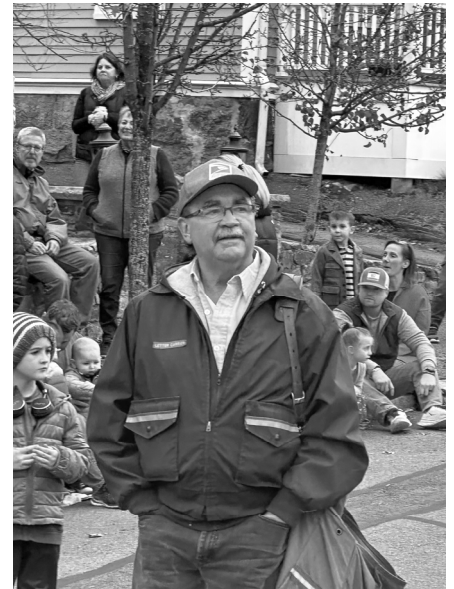
Frostbite, trench foot, and chilblains are less dire, but still may have lifelong effects. First aid for these three injuries is similar. Get out of the cold, and slowly warm the affected area.

When working in cold weather it is critical that you protect yourself. Monitor your physical condition throughout the day. Dress appropriately for the weather. Tight clothing restricts blood circulation to the extremities, so several layers of loose clothing is best for insulation. Be sure to protect the ears, face, hands, and feet. Wear boots that are insulated and waterproof, and a hat will reduce the loss of body heat from your head. Take your breaks in a warm place. Finally, avoid touching metal surfaces with bare skin... even if someone triple-dog-dares you.

Some other good ideas are to carry some extra clothes with you. Heat conducts heat away from the body 25 times faster than air, so it is crucial to stay dry. A thermos of warm liquid can help to maintain your body temperature. Use hand warmers, and bring extras to the street with you.

Stay Safe,
Jeremy Provost

Retired Beverly Letter Carrier Jim Bursey



Beverly letter carriers preparing to march in the Beverly Holiday Parade on November 27,2022.



Beverly letter carrier
Mike Martin



Wishing You
A Brighter Mood
this Holiday Season

As the seasons begin to change, many people experience changes in mood. Feeling low energy and moody for days at a time could be a case of the “winter blues” or Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD). This type of depression is related to changes in the seasons and begins and ends about the same time every year. Most symptoms start in the fall and continue into the winter months.

Signs and Symptoms of SAD may Include:

- Feeling listless, sad, or down most of the day, nearly every day
- Losing interest in activities once enjoyed
- Having low energy and feeling sluggish
- Having problems with sleeping too much
- Experiencing carbohydrate cravings, overeating and weight gain
- Having difficulty concentrating
- Hopelessness, worthlessness or guilt
- Having thoughts of not wanting to live

It's best to plan ahead to help manage depression symptoms as they come along. Addressing symptoms early can often lead to quicker resolution and shortened duration of feeling down.

SAD Prevention Tips

- **Get plenty of natural light.** Open the curtains; go for a morning walk. Drink your coffee outside.
- **Eat right.** Avoid simple carbohydrates like sugary foods, white bread and pasta.
- **Exercise regularly.** Try to get 30 to 60 minutes of activity, most days.
- **Connect with others often.** Isolation can intensify SAD symptoms.
- **Take up a hobby.** Having something to look forward to can help improve your mood.
- **Maintain a healthy sleep schedule.**
- **Talk to your doctor about treatments such as light therapy, counseling or medication.**

If you or someone in your family is dealing with symptoms of Season Affective Disorder, your EAP is here to help. Contact us today at 800-327-4968 (800-EAP-4YOU), TTY: 877-492-7341 or visit EAP4YOU.com.



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

Vice President's Report

“Postal Prison Blues”

Many senior Carriers will tell you there has been more change in the Post Office in the last decade or so than the rest of their entire career. During my career many USPS initiatives have been failures. Disregarding parcel delivery years ago, FSS implementation (which appears to be going the way of the dinosaurs), the consolidated casing “test,” and more. Back when we had the IMDAS scanners USPS even purchased flip phones so we could connect the devices via Bluetooth and deliver near real-time scan information to customers. Don't get me wrong, trying to stay competitive is critical to a business, but spending thousands or millions of dollars today on technology you know will be obsolete within months seems counterproductive to me. One disease USPS can't seem to cure, and one that burdens Carriers every day, is staffing.

As you've probably noticed by past Wake-Up reports I've written, staffing is near and dear to me. My attitude is Carriers on the list can always be made “whole” on the overtime list by receiving monetary awards from grievance settlements, but non-odl Carriers will never get the time they missed while at work back. In the past year the NALC and USPS agreed to and expanded M-01986. This MOU requires USPS to convert all CCAs in identified installations to PTF career status, as well as hire new PTF City Carriers in these installations in order to reach and maintain an identified number of PTFs on the rolls for each installation. Multiple offices in Branch 25 have been impacted by this MOU, and I believe this is a step in the right direction. In addition to being Career Carriers with benefits, according to indeed.com PTFs make \$3.23 more an hour than the average Amazon delivery driver. This competitive starting wage may start to pull those looking for a career towards USPS.

The harsh reality is many of those off the overtime list are overworked day in and day out, with little or no regard for their preference for overtime. In some offices supervisors do rotate overtime to the non-odl Carriers appropriately, and the lack of staffing is the root cause of our hardship. I am by no means saying none of the supervisors care or don't wish they could go a week or

even a few days without “requiring,” “mandating,” or “forcing,” Carriers off the list to work OT. But if you work in an office where a supervisor or member of management does not care or seems to always have an excuse for failing to appropriately assign OT, your answer must be to file a grievance.

Whether you have 3 years or 30 years as a City Carrier, it is time to accept that a member of management will almost never change the way they operate without intervention from the union. As a steward representing a single Carrier or a group of Carriers, I've heard most of the excuses. It is usually whatever convenient one they can conjure up once they are confronted about the issue, or whichever one they think will get you off their back. I've also seen them target Carriers who they think are quiet or won't speak up for themselves. Look no further than your morning pivot board for all the evidence you need. By the time you read this Article it will be around the beginning of 2023. I can't think of an easier new year resolution than to commit to utilizing our union to protect our contractual rights. Don't convince yourself you're being difficult when requesting union time. This is a contractual right those before us worked hard to earn!

Maybe you've filed a grievance previously and were frustrated the result was “only” for management to “cease and desist” violating the contract. Maybe you were frustrated the process took weeks and the result was a small monetary award, which made you think requesting union time wasn't worth it. I'm writing this now to tell you to try again and stay the course. Become familiar with our contract through the union. Go to monthly meetings, contact the Branch Office, and request union time with your steward.

File these grievances each time it happens. Tell your steward and write a statement about the harm you suffered from being required to perform overtime in violation of the contract. There may be times when there is not a violation; that should not stop you from seeking union time in the future. A key focus of arbitrators is how frequently violations occur. If it can be shown the violations are repetitive and egregious a stronger remedy may be awarded to not only you but your fellow Carriers in your installation.

In Solidarity,

Tony Bossi

WAKE UP

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Fax: (978) 658-0888
Web: www.nalcbranch25.com

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at the next meeting
January 10th
K of C Wilmington
8:00 PM



The figurative passing of the torch. Outgoing President Dave Barbuzzi and incoming Branch 25 President Dan Wheeler. Thank you Dave and congratulations on your new job as RWCA. You left this branch in better shape that when you got it and you will never be forgotten.

THANK YOU!

C.B., Publisher