



WAKE UP!

President/ Editor
Dave Barbuzzi

Publisher
Dan Wheeler

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Acton , Amesbury , Andover , Bedford , Beverly, Billerica , Burlington , Chelmsford , Concord , Danvers, Dracut , Gloucester, Haverhill, Holliston, Ipswich, Lowell, Lynnfield, Manchester, Marblehead, Maynard, Merrimac, Newburyport, North Chelmsford, North Reading , Peabody, Reading, Rockport, Salem , South Hamilton, Sudbury , Tewksbury , Topsfield, Wakefield , Wayland , Wilmington , Winchester



GO PATS!!!

President's Message

Years ago, there was a slogan drilled into our heads: "The heart of health and safety is you." We were given key rings in the shape of a heart showing a fastened seatbelt that contained that slogan. I'm pretty sure that the slogan most recently adopted is: "Safety, who gives a s@#%?"

Seven years ago, when I became President of Branch 25, there were quarterly District Safety Meetings. The District Manager and the Manager of Human Resources attended just about every one. Craft employees were represented and Union officials received an invitation. For the record, I attended just about every one and often times I was accompanied by the Branch Safety Officer.

Fast forward a couple years when the then District Manager retired and you had the same meetings, but there was no District Manager or Manager of Human Resources in attendance. With their departure, you saw fewer and fewer craft employees in attendance. Local management didn't have to put on a show for the District Manager, so they stopped bringing the craft.

Fast forward a couple more years still and the craft disappeared entirely, and the Union stopped receiving an invite. Does this sound like a management that wants to engage their employees to try to improve safety by hearing their concerns? Like I said, "Safety: Who gives a S@#%?"

Each month our own safety officer publishes a brief, helpful article in an effort to remind you to perform safely. This month, he reminds you to be sure to use your breaks for what they are for, to relax and recharge, clear your head if you will.

The slogan on those old key rings still applies today, but it is up to each of us to enforce it for ourselves. Do you get a safety talk in your office each week, or better yet more than once a week? Is it relevant? Do you pay attention and take the talk to heart? I hope so.

What do I mean by enforce the slogan? I mean that it is up to you to make sure that management lives up to their obligation to provide you with a safe work environment and the tools that you need to do your job safely. Some of you reading this may think that that's just a pain in the butt, but better to have a figurative pain in the butt than a career ending life changing pain somewhere else.

One of my biggest and longstanding pet peeves has been letter carriers being told to take vehicles to the street that don't pass the safety check in the morning; and the carriers take them! It DOES matter if your windshield wipers aren't working on a clear day. It DOES matter if one of your headlights is out. It DOES

matter if your directional will not turn off by itself. All of these things should disqualify a vehicle from going to the street. Often, when a carrier reports these types of deficiencies, the vehicle is simply passed off to someone else who either isn't as observant, or isn't aware of their rights.

These vehicles should be grounded. If they are not, fill out a 1767 and send it to safety in BOSTON. If you've already spoken to your manager about it, why give him or her a chance to offer some lame excuse? Don't simply fill out the 1767 either, request Union time and file a grievance. If the violation doesn't put you in imminent danger, you have to obey. BUT, once you obey and grieve, we will pursue the grievance in order to force management to cease and desist the same violation in the future. This isn't a family business where people actually care about you and would miss you if you're gone. Postal management is more heartless than Bill Belichick and his "next man up" philosophy.

I don't want to paint all managers with a broad brush. There are those that actually care, so calm down. You know, and they know who they are.

There is still some winter left and undoubtedly there will be more snow. Is the parking lot clean when you go out to load up? Do you push your hamper through the snow? Do you think that's safe? I don't. If there is snow on the ground you should buddy up with someone to get your hamper to your vehicle. Yeah, it's a pain, but again, better that pain than another. Think about everything you do and how you could do it more safely. It could mean the difference between retiring on your own terms or being forced out with a disability.

Finally, I would like to ask for your help with scanning. Specifically, it has been reported that at least 2 offices in the branch are being instructed to scan parcels "no access" if they aren't delivered, even if the roadway is clear and the house has cleared the walkway and stairs. "No access" stops the clock and is legitimate if there is "no access". It doesn't apply to parcels when the route doesn't leave the office or when the carrier has to come back to meet a truck or a clocking off time. It means no access and nothing else. Our national Director of City Delivery is aware of the two offices; I would like to know if there are more offices involved. Thank you for your assistance. By the time you read this, I hope the Patriots are Superbowl Champions again!

Stay informed!

Dave Barbuzzi

Executive Vice President's Report

We are just about into February now and the Pats are back in the Super Bowl, the Bruins and Celtics are both doing well, and the Red Sox will be heading to Spring training soon. Someone reminded me that Spring is only 6 weeks away, but until then be safe. The weather could return to nasty at any time. We are in the midst of a huge flu epidemic throughout the country. If you think you have the flu, check with a doctor for medication, and it is never too late to get a flu shot.

More and more of our members have been having problems with their paperwork and getting paid properly when they get hurt on the job. It is extremely important to keep an eye on your paychecks if you suffer an on the job injury. If it is a traumatic injury and you supply the proper medical documentation, you are entitled to continuation of pay for up to 45 days. You must indicate this on Form CA-1. If you are unsure of what forms to fill out, if any, call the Union office. If you are not seeking medical attention, you do not have to fill out any forms, you simply need to inform management of a possible injury. Some of the supervisors are not familiar with the proper codes entered into the system, in order for you to get paid properly, and end up charging the employee for Leave or LWOP. I'm not saying they do it on purpose, the OWCP system is as difficult for them as it is for the carriers. Please check your paystubs carefully and if there is a mistake it can be fixed. Don't hesitate to call the Union office with any questions on Workers Compensation. It is a difficult system to navigate and the longer you wait if something goes wrong, the more difficult it can be to fix.

The above being said, everyone should be checking their paystubs regardless if you get hurt or not. You never know when your sick leave could inadvertently be charged to annual or vice-versa. Supervisors are required to correct office and street moves that weren't originally recorded properly, if they make a mistake it could affect your pay. I always suggest to carriers to keep a log of what time you punch in to work and what time you punch out. You can easily check it with your stub for the proper pay.

When I first started carrying mail 30 years ago, the last thing that would ever cross a carrier's mind would be to not finish delivering our route, unless instructed so. The only time we were instructed to curtail delivery would be because of severe weather, usually associated with a state of emergency. Of course, we would sometimes get auxiliary assistance, but the routes almost always got delivered. These days in some stations it is not unusual to curtail delivery of parts of, or of entire routes. We have had carriers inquire if this is proper. Management

in these instances sends carriers out first thing in the morning to finish or gives the carrier assistance in order to deliver the entire route. In some cases, the carriers simply curtail other sections of their routes in order to get the previously curtailed mail delivered. Either way we don't like it, but as long as management is reporting the mail as curtailed, then they can delay the mail. It seems like the priority is to get the parcels delivered, no matter what else has to be curtailed in order to do so. If you are told to curtail delivery inform your steward. He/she can look into it to see if there was any assistance available. If you are told to curtail delivery you should always record it on Form 1571 and get a copy.

The inspection schedule is out for this Spring and so far the only stations that are scheduled for inspection are Lowell and Peabody. Of course, this could change at any time. Both stations are scheduled for May inspections, and management will be required to compare the inspection times with the times of 7 random weeks of the previous 7 months leading up to the inspection. As always you should not skip breaks or lunch. You should not be rushing in order to make some unrealistic time set by management. If you do, it could be used against you in the future.

Stay safe and keep your head up!
Paul Desmond

Calendar of Events

February 2	Groundhog Day
February 4	Super Bowl LII Minneapolis, MN
February 6	8PM Branch Meeting @ Knights of Columbus 27 School St. Ext. Wilmington Food served @ 7:15
February 12	Abraham Lincoln's Birthday
February 13	Mardi Gras
February 14	Valentines' Day Red Sox Spring Training Starts
February 16	Chinese New Year (Year of the Dog)
February 19	Presidents' Day
February 22	George Washington's Birthday

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

Trustees' Report

In accordance with Article 6 Section 9 of the NALC Constitution for the Government of Subordinate and Federal Branches, on Tuesday December 12, 2017 trustees Ronald J. Noviello, David M. Ferris, Daniel J. Raske and Bruce M. Johnson, assisted by Treasurer James P. Nutter and Assistant Treasurer John K. McNulty, audited the branch financial books and found them in order.

Beginning balance as of December 31, 2016

\$307,319.48

Ending balance as of June 30, 2017

\$309,566.61

Branch 25 Board of Trustees

Ronald J. Noviello

David M. Ferris

Daniel J. Raske

Bruce M. Johnson

If you saw Paul Blart: Mall Cop (and who didn't?) You know how Paul spends his half hour lunch; he eats in 20, which leaves him 5 minutes for social time and 5 minutes to refocus. Whether you follow Paul's advice or spend it your own way, the important thing is to take your lunch. And your two 10-minute breaks. If you have had a 3999 done on your route, you know this time is included in your total time.

If you've been to a branch meeting, you've heard this said often. It is important to include the lunch and breaks on your route because it's part of your total route time just as scanning parcels and MSP's and everything else we do everyday.

But our lunch and breaks are also for our health and safety! This is our time to have something nutritional to eat (Light snacks are better than a big meal. Apples are great to keep you alert and awake.*). It's a time to hydrate, to make a phone call, or to do nothing. It's not a time to touch or think about mail! Take a break for safety sake!

Jim Salvati

Safety Officer

*<https://www.thesafedriver.ca>

Lyrics Trivia – Hint: Song is in Paul Blart Mall Cop!

I feel uptight on a Saturday night
 Nine o' clock, the radio's the only light
 I hear my song and it pulls me through
 Comes on strong, tells me what I got to do

Momentum



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Resilience resources

- ✓ Support groups (focused on specific illnesses, grief, special needs, substance abuse, etc.), social service resources and faith communities can provide timely help when you're struggling.
- ✓ Talk with trusted family, friends and colleagues. They can help you navigate difficult situations by providing encouragement and additional perspectives you might not have considered.
- ✓ If you're feeling overwhelmed and need new ways to be resilient, contact your program toll-free anytime. Licensed professional counselors can help you develop coping strategies.

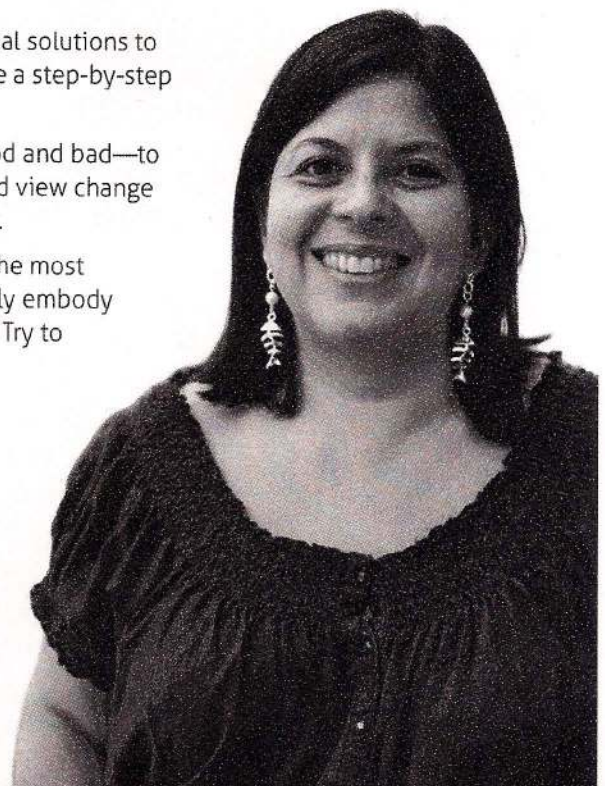
Don't go it alone! There are many easy-to-use outside resources you can turn to for support when you're facing a major life challenge, misfortune or other setback.

Enhancing your resilience

Have you seen someone withstand a hardship that seemed overwhelming, and you wondered if you could handle it as well? The truth is everyone can improve their power to bounce back from setbacks—to be more resilient.

Life can throw some upsetting curves like career setbacks, relationship problems, serious health issues or the passing of someone close to you. These major changes can be confusing and discouraging, especially when they're not expected. The good news is you can learn to build your inner strength and be more resilient in the future.

- Be patient with yourself. Remember even the most resilient people need time to process a new reality.
- Remind yourself that you're a strong person, and you've gotten through tough times before. Reuse those successful strategies.
- Brainstorm and list potential solutions to your challenge, then create a step-by-step plan for action.
- Expect changes—both good and bad—to occur constantly in life, and view change as a way to learn and grow.
- Look for the humor. Even the most unwelcome changes usually embody something zany or absurd. Try to laugh when you can.

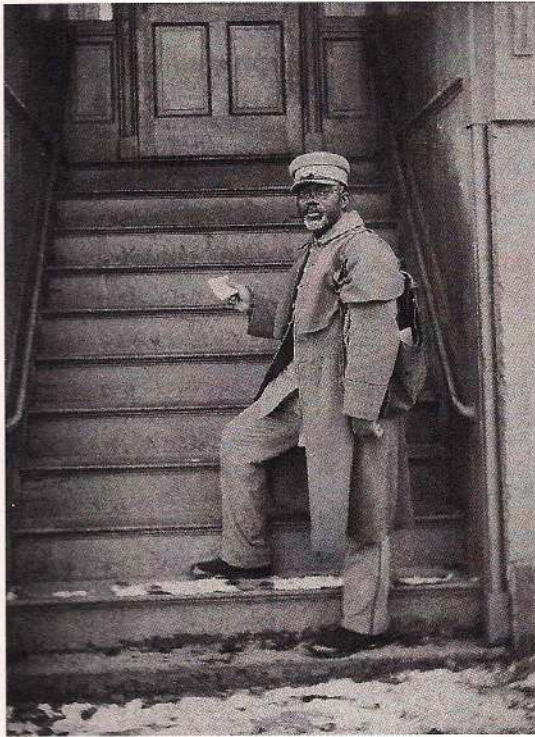


Log on to www.EAP4YOU.com today!

Magellan
HEALTHCARESM

Black History Month

February is Black History Month. Black workers have carried mail for the United States Post Office going back to the beginning of city delivery service. The first known black letter carrier is thought to be James B. Christian from Richmond, Virginia, who started carrying mail in 1869. Shortly after that William Carney, a founding vice president of NALC Branch 18 in New Bedford, Massachusetts.



*William H. Carney on his postal route, c. 1887
(Photo courtesy of National Postal Museum)*

Carney was born a slave around 1840 in Norfolk Virginia. It is unsure how he made his way to Massachusetts but it is thought that it may have been via the underground railroad. Carney joined the 54th Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry at the start of the Civil War. Carney is considered the first black soldier to win the Medal of Honor. During the Battle of Fort Wayne in 1863 he showed extreme gallantry in saving the regimental colors. He was awarded the Medal in 1900.

Upon returning to New Bedford he took a job maintaining the city streetlights. After a brief time in California he returned to Massachusetts and took a job as one of the first letter carriers in the city. He continued to make his appointed rounds for another 30 years.

Accurate information about black carriers is hard to find but it is thought that there were around 1400 black NALC members by the 1920's. At the 1917 National Convention in Dallas a resolution was passed approving "dual charters" for separate white and black branches in the same city. This was repealed at the 1919 National Convention but the practice continued for many years. In 1941 the pro-dual charter movement won out and dual charters were once again approved. The belief was that white carriers were being kept out of black controlled branches and blacks were being kept out of white controlled branches. The dual charters were again removed in 1954 but continued to exist until the 1960 National Convention in Cincinnati when all segregated branches were compelled to merge. By 1962 only two segregated branches existed and both surrendered their charters.



*The Committee on Separate Charters reports success at the 1962 National Convention in Cincinnati. Chairman Lloyd Nowak makes the report as committee members look on (left to right): Oscar Durant, Frank Werschka and Walter Staples.
(Photo courtesy of National Association of Letter Carriers)*

The end of the dual charter system began the full integration of African American members in the NALC. Until then all of the national officers had been white. Starting in the mid 1960's black members were appointed as national field directors, now called business agents and from the 1970's on occupied leadership roles at every level of the union.

"If you want to play lumberjack you've got to learn to hold up your end of the log." A corollary to these words of wisdom spoken by Clint Eastwood in his role as "Dirty Harry" Callahan in the classic movie series of the seventies and eighties is that if you want to enjoy a long life of good health, you've got to be your own best advocate for your health care. The following advice, courtesy of the NALC Health Benefit Plan, will serve you well in helping you to realize that goal:

- A) Read the information the Plan provides you and ask us questions when you need to know more.
- B) Make sure you understand your benefits under the NALC Health Benefit Plan, including your costs for services as outlined in Section 4 of our brochure.
- C) Accept personal responsibility for any charges not covered by this Plan, if applicable.
- D) Provide information the Plan needs to process your claims (to the extent possible) including other health insurance coverage your family may have.
- E) Keep your provider informed about your medical history and your current health status including the medications you take so they can effectively treat you and manage your care.
- F) Inform your provider about any living will, medical power of attorney, or other directive that could affect your care.
- G) Participate with your provider to understand your health condition and develop mutually agreed upon treatment goals to the degree possible.
- H) Follow your provider's instructions and treatment plan, ask questions if you don't understand them.
- I) Treat your health care provider, their staff and others respectfully and honestly.
- J) Voice your opinions, concerns or complaints to our customer service and/or your health care provider.
- K) Make sure you obtain authorization required under the Plan for certain services.

Special Note: Medicare enrollees, look for new Medicare Cards in April.

Keep on Truckin'

Richie Donlon

Assistant Health Benefits Representative

Veteran's Update

This month I would like to mention some important information every veteran should have. The first one is DD Form 214, Certificate of Release or Discharge from

Active Duty. This provides proof of your military service and the type of military discharge. It is also important to have proof of what awards and/or medals that have been earned.

These documents will help veterans with acquiring health insurance, VA loans and other benefits. To acquire copies you may need to contact your local veteran's representative in your city or town.

Semper Fi,
Andie Coulter

Check Out Our Website

Did you know that Branch 25 is online? You can find us online at nalcbranch25.com. You can find the latest branch and national NALC news, branch calendar, a ton of useful links and branch contact information. You can even read the Wake Up online and get Jim Salvati's lyrics trivia answer for this month.

Life Insurance Info

Life insurance can be confusing. Do I need it? What amount do I need? Can I still get a worthwhile plan at my age? What's the difference between Term versus Whole Life plans? Life insurance is an important part of planning for your financial future. There are many different options out there and you may have questions about which kind is right for you depending on your specific goals or needs.

Regular carriers are covered by FEGLI (Federal Employees Group Life Insurance) automatically with basic coverage. The premiums are paid by the Postal Service with additional coverage available with those premiums paid by the carrier. CCA's are not covered by FEGLI but are able to buy insurance through the NALC's Mutual Benefits Association (MBA).

The MBA has been around for over 120 years and offers many plans even if you are enrolled in FEGLI already or not. Everyone has different needs but chances are there is an MBA plan that is right for you. There is a good article explaining the MBA's products in the January *Postal Record* starting on page 12. You may also check out the MBA on NALC.org under the Members Only tab.

WAKE UP

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