



WAKE UP!

President/ Editor
Dave Barbuzzi

Publisher

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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



Branch 25's Officers were installed by National President Fredric V. Rolando on January 8. Seated l-r: Jim Nutter, John McNulty, Rich Donlon, Ron Noviello, President Emeritus Randy Keller, Bruce Johnson, Peter Godino, Dan Raske and Ken Dusombre. Standing l-r: Region 14 NBA Rick DiCecca, National President Fred Rolando, Jack Lyman, Tony Bossi, Andy Coan, Dave Barbuzzi, Bob Cronin, Paul Desmond, Jim Salvati and Dan Wheeler.

President's Message

"And the Beat Goes On..."

380,000 federal workers are furloughed and not being paid. 420,000 federal workers are forced to continue working without pay. Tens of thousands of contractors that perform work for the federal government, but are not full-time employees, are not being paid and are not likely to receive back pay. Some TSA workers have engaged in sickouts. WIC and food stamps are currently funded only through January and February respectively. Federal prison workers in Florida, commuting 400 miles due to Hurricane Michael, are now doing so without pay. The Department of Housing and Urban Development is unable to renew some 1,650 contracts with private building owners that rent apartments to thousands of low income families who rely on the federal government to help pay their rent. Border Patrol Agents are still working, but without pay. Some have sued President Trump. Employers can't confirm whether immigrants are in the country legally. Environmental Protection Agency pollution inspectors aren't on the job. The IRS isn't staffed to answer questions regarding changes in the new tax law. About 41,000 **active-duty** Coast Guardsman who are working without pay were advised they should consider having garage sales, or walking dogs, or being mystery shoppers while they're working without pay. Wildfire prep work and firefighter training has been put on hold as several thousand US Forest workers have been furloughed. NTSB investigations into fatal accidents have been put on hold. FBI agents have been working without pay since January 11. People missing immigration court dates are being given dates years from now. Joshua Trees at Joshua Tree National Park have been chopped down by vandals so people could get their off road vehicles past a barrier. Security checkpoints in airports in Miami and Houston temporarily shut down and flights diverted due to lack of staffing of TSA agents.

Those are the things that I personally find most alarming about the government shutdown. That is only my perspective. Had I decided to list every agency and every horror story, I would have had to dedicate this month's entire edition of the Wake-Up!

You may wonder why I have included anything. I have done so because the people that are responsible for this shutdown, the President and the Congress, could wreak similar havoc on our livelihoods if they ever got the inclination.

In 2006 the government saddled the USPS with the pre-funding of future retirees' health benefits. This shouldn't be news to anyone reading this newsletter. That act required an annual payment of \$5.5 - \$5.8 **BILLION** from 2006 through 2016. Since then, two Presidents have taken misguided positions to recommend fewer days of delivery for the USPS. Presently, the

President's task force has recommendations in their report that would have severe negative impacts on our jobs and way of life.

The easiest recommendation to understand, and to rally against, is the recommendation to strip postal unions of their rights to negotiate wages. Think about that for a moment would you? Who would decide our wages if our union couldn't negotiate? Congress would decide.

Take a look at that column on the left again. The President and Congress are responsible for everything that you read in that left column. Could you imagine being advised to hold a garage sale if you were having trouble making ends meet? Do you think that our current contract negotiation process is long and drawn out now? How quickly do you think Congress would act to improve our pay and benefits if they were in charge?

Most of the calls that come into the Union office are not from carriers telling me how much they love their job. And, at the risk of drawing the ire of some of you I'm going to say that at least in this messed up crazy economy we have jobs, and those jobs have rights and benefits, now...

In order for us to preserve our rights and benefits, and to keep the wolves at bay, we have to ensure that we acquire and maintain friends in Congress, regardless of political party. The only thing that matters is whether or not we can count on them not to support measures that are detrimental to our livelihoods and the well-being of the postal service and to support measures that allow the postal service to continue to provide good middle class jobs and benefits to its very large work force.

Presently, less than 10% of Branch 25 letter carriers contribute to the Letter Carrier Political Fund. That has to change. It would only take about 50 more carriers making contributions to reach a double digit percentage. I'm not asking you to break the bank either. Five, or even three dollars a paycheck would make a difference. The Letter Carrier Political Fund is our PAC. It is how we are able to make campaign contributions, regardless of party, to those that support our jobs and the postal service. Contributing is simple. You can go to our website, www.nalcbranch25.com, click on the "Politics" tab and then click on "Letter Carrier Political Fund." Once there, you can choose from the four ways of signing up for automatic contributions. Do it now and consider it an investment in your future.

Stay informed!

Dave Barbuzzi

Executive Vice President's Report

Thanks to everyone that came to the January branch meeting to hear President Fred Rolando speak and install the branch officers. After the installation, Fred spoke for about an hour and one thing that stands out to me was the way he simplified the explanation of why it is necessary for the Union to be so involved in the political arena. Basically, the 2 houses of Congress have control over all Postal issues and Reform, which includes access to our wages, benefits and retirement. At this moment there is legislation proposed that could have a terrible result to our rights to bargain for wages and benefits, and also effect our retirement benefits. We have friends in Congress that oppose this. Providing votes and donations to campaigns are the 2 simplest and most effective ways we can have influence on the politicians and keep them on our side. Getting the NALC app provides you with updates for legislative action. The money part isn't something anyone likes but it is part of the process in order to get our friends in Congress re-elected. There was a good turnout for the meeting, and I hope everyone enjoyed listening to Fred and will try to attend more meetings.

At the end of January, I will have completed 31 years as a letter carrier. When I think back to what the attitude of management was back then compared to the attitude now it is obvious. Yes, management wanted carriers to be efficient and were always concerned about time involved, but in my opinion, most managers then actually did care about service to the customers. The vast majority of managers had been carriers in the stations that they were working in, and they understood the job and the community. Local management still reported to OPS Support and this was way before any kind of scanning of packages as delivered or attempted. There was no percent of packages attempted based on scans. It was about service. The new carriers hired as PTFs back then could see that their manager cared about the service as much as the carriers did. What about today? Well I don't have to tell anybody that the attitude of management right now is not geared toward service as a priority. Do the carriers hired as CCAs see that? Yep. Ever hear of a carrier being told to scan packages attempted that never left the building? I have. Ever see a carrier casing mail off the clock in full view of a manager? Until the last couple of years, I would have said no, but it happens and the manager knows it's wrong, but is probably glad it may save him/her from reporting some OT. I never thought I would see a manager watch a carrier work off the clock and allow it. I can't imagine why anyone would want to work for free, but two wrongs do not make a right. Managers are supposed to lead by example, but it comes from the top down and that is what we are dealing with. It's all about the numbers.

We are preparing as a branch for the upcoming route inspections in Wayland, Holliston and Wilmington starting in early February. The inspection of the Bedford station was cancelled for now. There has been no mention of re-scheduling that station's inspection. As long as the carriers do their routes the way it is described in the manuals, they should be OK. As always, carriers should not be skipping any breaks or lunch or dropping parcels without attempting delivery to the customer. Street times prior to the inspections will always be reviewed by management to compare to the week of inspection. Make sure all assistance you provide or receive is properly recorded on a 3996 and punched right on the clock. This will assure all routes receive proper credit. I know it might seem trivial, but keeping track of all the assistance you get on your route can be helpful when it comes time for route adjustments. It is good to be ready in case management's numbers do not match.

Keep your head up!
Paul Desmond

Calendar of Events

February 2	Ground Hog Day
February 3	Super Bowl LIII, Pats vs. Rams
February 4	Thank a Mail Man Day
February 5	Chinese New Years
February 5	8PM Branch Meeting @ Knights of Columbus 27 School St. Ext. Wilmington Food served @ 7:00
February 8	Boy Scout Day
February 18	Presidents' Day

JOINING THE CLUB

That's right, on January 4th I officially joined the retirement club from the Postal Service. After almost 36 years I delivered my last letter. I look back with pride that, at least in my eyes, I served the public well, and gratitude that the job was good to me.

I started in May 1983 as a Part-Time-Flexible (PTF) carrier in the Billerica station. I believe a salary of around \$18,000. Now at the time of my retirement a salary of over \$64,000. Thank you NALC. The ability for me to have supported a household, raised a family, provided their healthcare, and now have a pension to retire on is a result of the union's ability to bargain, fight for, study, project trends, and partake in the political atmosphere to protect and further the interests of letter carriers, myself included. Many union members mention only the grievance procedure in belief of the union's function. Hopefully these few words open their understanding that labor's function is exponentially more involved than that. If up to the USPS our standard of compensation would be nowhere near what we are now entitled. If up to Congress we may not even exist never mind having a livable wage and benefits and access to a pension. Private industry is always seeking to undermine our financial status for their ability to siphon off the profitable products and services of our industry to the expense of the unprofitable areas that would be greatly harmed.

Having foresight to see where the delivery needs are evolving, and being a part of shaping and preparing for the future, has been an integral part of our success to maintain our foothold of being prepared for a changing business. To these ends, I am indebted to the NALC. Which translated means I am indebted to you my brothers and sisters (or maybe that should be my sisters and brothers). In truth you, we, are the union. It is a collective endeavor to achieve that which could not be achieved alone. I can only hope you are as proud as I to be recognized as a union letter carrier. My prior thanks to the NALC, therefore, is my expression of thanks to each and every one of you.

On a more personal address my thanks to Wayne Morgan, Evans Bubanes, and more particularly to John "Yanni" Janowicz, who greatly aided and guided me in the beginning of my career at the Billerica P.O. I transferred to the Lowell Station in December 1984 and with the support of many carriers there became a steward in February 1985. Much thanks to those who supported me then including Bill Brooks, Bob Jezak, Tom Sheehan, Tom Bemish in not only being involved as a steward but as a treasurer of Branch 25 in 1988. One special moment was while in performance of duties as a steward a particular unscrupulous supervisor tried to discipline me with a seven day suspension, when you actually served the suspension. The evening it was issued to me, I received a call at home from Bill Brooks.

He assured me that he would guarantee, that even if I had to serve the suspension, before a decision on the grievance could be rendered, either the carriers in Lowell, or he himself would make sure I never miss a dime. Although at a later time Bill became part of management and we had some differences, I never forgot that phone call. Thank you Bill Brooks.

I cannot go further without expressing a love for my fellow steward throughout most of my career, Patrick D. Sullivan. Pat was a great friend and colleague in our representing letter carriers. We spent many hours and days together, trying to foster the interest and protections of letter carriers. When Sully ended his Postal Career for personal reasons, I greatly missed him. Many thoughts and thanks are always with you Mr. Sullivan.

Many friends will be overlooked in this article, unfortunately, and I wish I mentioned you all. A quick shout out to former USPS Jim Mills, Lewis Langathianos, Paul Bertolino, George Merrill, Mike Morris. From the Union Jack Barry, Randy Keller, Dave Barbuzzi, Fred Mulno, Tom Sheehan, Tom Bemish, Mike Kav, George Payzant, Ron Noviello, Mark Gangi, Dan Raske, John McNulty and all my other officers too many to state.

Lowell employees Charlie Brady, Jack Aylward, Bob Jezak, Gator Nutter, Joe Suslovitch, Kathy Nutter, Ken Goscila, Bob Faneuf, Doreen Bisson, Steve Callahan, Marty Lorrey, Brian Desruisseaux, Shawne Smith, Wally O'Neill, Elaine Romanowski, Tony Bossi, Jim McHale, my dearest buddy Mike Deveau and all those too numerous to list here.

To my wife Eileen who never missed a chance to ask why something is decided a certain way and forgave me most of the time when it didn't go her way. To Dracut carriers for making the last 3 years of my career very enjoyable and memorable especially Jack Lyman. Thank you Lowell/Dracut

Jim Nutter

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 is 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

See The Light

Recently I had an LLV that did something I never saw before. When darkness came I turned on the headlights and nothing happened. About 10 seconds later, they came on! Apparently, if the headlight switch is broken the regular low beams don't work but the day time running lights still come on. It was quite disorientating driving in the dark even for a short time. The experience made me appreciate the importance of headlights.

½ of traffic deaths occur either in the dark or at dawn or dusk. (Insurance Institute of Highway Safety- iihhs.org). Number one in headlight safety is to make sure you have two functioning headlights; low beams, high beams and daytime running lights. Headlights last between 500 and 1,000 hours. Secondly, if the headlight casings are foggy, they can be cleaned. Check out YouTube for easy, inexpensive ways to clean them using soap and water, baking soda or even toothpaste! The idea is a mild abrasive that will clean without scratching. Thirdly, if you're scraping frost or ice off your windshield scrape your headlights too. Keeping headlights clean and clear will maximize visibility.

Headlights on during adverse daytime weather can really make a difference in seeing and being seen on the road. We've all experienced the gray car on a gray day with headlights off that we can hardly see! Most state laws do not require headlight use during the day unless poor weather decreases visibility. (DMV.org). However, using your headlights during the day regardless of weather can improve visibility and safety. As of April 7, 2015 Massachusetts became one of 18 states to make it illegal to have your windshield wipers on but headlights off! Headlights should be turned on ½ hour before sunrise and ½ hour before sunset. Doing so also turns on taillights reducing the chance of rear end collisions.

Keep your lights on and be safe,

Jim Salvati

Lyrics Trivia

Hey, come on try a little
Nothing is forever
There's got to be something better than
In the middle
But me and Cinderella
We put it all together
We can drive it home

David J. Barbuzzi	President
Paul G. Desmond	Executive V.P.
Dan Wheeler	Vice President
Andy Coan	Secretary
James P. Nutter	Treasurer
Kenneth Dusombre	Health Benefits Rep.
Jim Salvati	Safety Officer
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John McNulty	Assistant Treasurer
Bob Cronin	MBA-NSBA Rep
Peter Godino	Assistant Safety Officer
Richard Donlon	Asst Health Benefits Rep
Ron Noviello	Workers' Comp Rep.

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

Just For The Health Of It

Before I present still another benefit of membership in our high option plan, I'd like to remind readers, that taking the health assessment is an annual opportunity. That means, that whether or not you have taken it in the past, the incentives are still there for you. If you need help, contact me through the branch office.

The NALC Health Benefit Plan continues to offer "**Your Health First**", a disease management program available to all plan members. This program relates to ongoing health problems, e.g. heart disease, diabetes, behavioral concerns, ...etc. The program is available both by telephone and on-line, and provides you with professional advocate support 24/7 to help meet your needs. For more information call 877-220-6252. Every phone call is private, confidential, and at no additional cost. As always, if I can help, you can reach me through the branch office.

Keep on truckin',
Rich Donlon

VETERANS' CORNER

One of the changes to Acts of 2005 for veterans. This is for our newer veterans and can be opened if not claimed.

Welcome Home Bonus (Ch. 130 of the Acts of 2005)

The State Treasurer's Office, Veterans' Bonus Division, will administer the Welcome Home Bonus to veterans of the Global War on Terrorism. You are eligible if you meet the following criteria: six months domicile in Massachusetts immediately prior to entry into the armed forces service, beginning September 11, 2001 and discharge under honorable conditions.

Service members who served active duty in Iraq or Afghanistan receive \$1000.

Service members with six months or more active service, stateside or outside the continental limits of the United States, receive \$500. (Note: Active service shall not include active duty for training in the Army or Air National Guard, or active duty for training as a reservist in the armed forces of the United States.)

Next-of-kin of eligible service members killed in action may receive the Welcome Home Bonus if the veteran had not already received it.

Ch. 132 of the Acts of 2009, Section 11-Subsequent Deployments

Notwithstanding any general or special law to the contrary, a resident of the Commonwealth who is sent overseas as a member of the Armed Forces and is eligible to receive Ch. 130 of the Acts of 2005 above may receive such benefits each time s/he is deployed, provided, however, that an eligible resident shall receive the full bonus allowed upon return after his/her first deployment and 50 percent of the bonus after each subsequent deployment, provided that appropriated funding is available and the state treasurer certifies that the relevant account has sufficient funds to maintain such an initiative.

How to Apply - See Veterans' Resource Office

Applications are available on the mass.gov website. Proof of residency must accompany the application. Some ideas for proof of residency could include:

Census documents, School diploma or transcripts, W-2 form, Vehicle excise tax bill, Notarized rental agreement.

Next-of-kin must provide documentation establishing a connection to the deceased.

Do not hesitate to contact the Treasurer's Office with questions or concerns about your application and accompanying documents at 617-367-9333, Ext. 859.

Contact: Office of the Treasurer
One Ashburton Place, 12th Floor
Boston, MA 02106
617-367-9333, Ext. 859
Fax: (617)227-1622
www.mass.gov/treasury/veterans

Always Semper Fi

Andrew Coulter

Look for something positive in each day. You have to look harder. Let the challenges make you stronger.

Wonder Woman.

MISCELLANEOUS

By making a contribution to the Letter Carrier Political Fund, you are doing so voluntarily with the understanding that your contribution is not a condition of membership in the National Association of Letter Carriers or of employment by the Postal Service, nor is it part of union dues. You have a right to refuse to contribute without any reprisal. The Letter Carrier Political Fund will use the money it receives to contribute to candidates for federal office and undertake other political spending as permitted by law. Your selection shall remain in full force and effect until cancelled. Contributions to the Letter Carrier Political Fund are not deductible for federal income tax purposes. Federal law prohibits the Letter Carrier Political Fund from soliciting contributions from individuals who are not NALC members, executive and administrative staff or their families. Any contribution received from such an individual will be refunded to that contributor.

Momentum

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(800-EAP-4-YOU) TTY: 877-492-7341
www.EAP4YOU.com



EAP facts

- ✓ If you're struggling with an issue, you shouldn't feel anxious about seeking help. Accessing your EAP benefit is convenient, confidential and safe.
- ✓ When you want to make changes in your life—whether personal or professional—your program helps you create a practical plan of action.
- ✓ Getting the perspective of a qualified, experienced, non-judgmental coach or counselor is a valuable component in making the self-improvements you seek.

The value of your Employee Assistance Program

Did you know there's a program in place that can partner with you in navigating whatever life challenges you may face? As 2019 kicks off, it's a perfect time to get expert help with overcoming obstacles and reaching your goals.

Staffed by licensed clinical professionals, the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) helps with a wide array of issues:

- Behavioral health issues like depression, anxiety, panic, phobias and obsessive compulsive disorders
- Stress caused by home or work
- Insomnia and other sleep difficulties
- Alcohol or drug misuse
- Relationship and parenting issues
- Weight loss challenges
- Major life transitions

The EAP provides **confidential help** accessible through coaching, counseling and online self-paced programs on topics you select. As well, you have access to extensive educational resources on your member website. The program is provided at no cost to you and your household members, and is available 24/7/365.

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WAKE UP

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I WANT YOU...

*at the next meeting
February 5, 2019*

