



WAKE UP!

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Publisher
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Volume 41 Issue 3

March 2017

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KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS - MAIN STREET, TEWKSBURY

March 26th 8am - 11am

President's Message

“History Shouldn't Repeat Itself”

Seniority is a cherished commodity. As our careers progress, we keep looking at the seniority roster to see where we stand, wondering if and when we'll be able to claim the coveted number 1 spot. When we do, we know that provided we submit a slip timely, we'll get whatever vacation time we want. If a route comes up for bid, we own it if we want. Of course, sometimes a career ends before the carrier ever reaches number one. People retire as soon as they can while others hang around as long as they can. But, even without ever making it to number one, we all gain benefit as a result of seniority.

The benefits, however, in most cases have been hard fought. Carriers all do their time. Whether we started as casuals, TE's, CCA's, PTF's, we all started at some point and many of us were overwhelmed during our early careers. Thirty years ago, it was the sheer caseload volume and relentless circulars that we had just about every day. Often, two or three sets a day.

Twenty plus years ago it was the rollout of DPS. How were we supposed to deal with this extra tray of mail? Where are we going to put it? Geesh, our backs sure hurt from all this twisting and reaching!

Six years ago FSS is rolled out. Are you kidding me? They still haven't fixed DPS and now they're going to automate the flats too? What do you mean collate? There's no way we can arm-carry two sets of flats! By the way, I still don't have to arm-carry even one set of flats so don't try to tell me anything different! FSS didn't change that no matter how much you want to tell me it did!

Right after the roll out of FSS, staffing started to really thin out. Forced overtime was the norm, and carriers went for years without being able to comfortably plan their days off, and these are the non-odl carriers.

Those are the lumps that senior carriers that have been around have experienced. Those lumps are what makes it so sweet to know that any day is available in non-choice period and any week is available in choice.

For the last couple years, there's another great big lump. Amazon. Now, don't get me wrong, I realize that in many ways Amazon is the salvation of the postal service. But, don't get me wrong, in many ways it could turn out to be its damnation.

When the senior carriers were putting in their time, the only thing that happened at the post office on Sunday was a collection or two and the delivery of Express Mail. If you were a PTF or TE, chances are you did not work each and every Sunday. Chances are, you looked forward to Sunday to relax, to see your family, to chill.

That's not the case anymore. We have become a seven day full time operation and the new employees, the CCA's, have become 7 day a week employees. Unfortunately, some of them are not warned of this during their job interviews, so they are slapped with the harsh reality when they've been around a month or so and still haven't had a day off.

I know that letter carriers are all over the place on how they feel about this. I've spoken to carriers that have said that they started as a casual or a TE and they had to work god-awful hours and do god-awful work so now it's time for the new hires to experience the same. I've talked to carriers that view the new hires as temporary, just warm bodies to hopefully lessen the load for awhile. Fortunately, I've also talked to carriers that have attempted to take the new hires under their wing, to mentor them if you will.

New hires (and established veterans) make mistakes. They misdeliver mail, they don't fill your gas tank, they may not “clean up” the route if they're filling in. Maybe, they even get assistance because they haven't become proficient yet.

Most of these things will work themselves out with experience. Some will not. The “deficiencies” that remain should be addressed. Hold on now, I know, I'm the Union guy so why am I talking about addressing “deficiencies”? They should be addressed by the mentors, by the veterans that have paid their dues. There's a right and several wrong ways to deal with a new employee that has potential but isn't quite cutting it.

Many will just ignore it, the “not my problem” crew. Some will sing to management, and what lovely canaries they are, could never understand those birds. Some, for no reason other than compassion and good will, will ask the new employee if they knew what they did was wrong and if they'd like to know the right way. We need more of these people.

We were all pushed to go faster. Some of us did and some of us didn't. Some of us cut corners and some of us didn't. What's the difference? I can't speak for everyone, but I smartened up when some of the “old-timers” took me under their wing and told me what they had to go through to get to where they were. Take 'em under your wing, don't kick 'em to the curb.

Stay informed!

Dave Barbuzzi

Executive Vice President's Report

Well, we have been telling the members to do your route every day the way the manuals tell you to. Be safe, efficient and don't skip breaks or lunch or else it could come back to bite you in the future. The thought behind this is, if you are rushing through your route for any particular reason management would use the data against you in a future route inspection. We have just got the data for one of our stations that was inspected in January, and management chose to use the 1840B times instead of the week of inspection data for 11 out of 17 routes. In all cases the 1840B time was less than the week of inspection data and management's only explanation is that the 1840B time is more representative. Management eliminated some days during the 1840B times without explanation to the carriers. Obviously, if these days were not eliminated the times would be greater and closer to the times for the week of inspection. This is not a coincidence but purely an attempt at management to eliminate as much time as possible without regard to what is right for the routes. Our concerns will be brought to management and in the end, it may turn out that the routes get adjusted properly, but be aware that if you are taking shortcuts to finish early it will be used against you in the future. It seems management has decided they are going to go back to the ways of the past when OPS tries to sneak as much past the carriers as they can. Don't let them, do your route the way you should before, during and after an inspection and it won't matter what data they use to adjust your route.

At the last Branch meeting we gave out four retirement plaques and had three others made up but the retirees could not make the meeting. Congratulations to all those that are eligible to retire or that have retired. Because of the great number of carriers retiring we have had a lot of conversions to regular status from the CCA ranks. If you are one of these newly converted carriers, you should immediately inquire about health care benefits. I believe you will get communication in the mail from the Postal Service, don't ignore it. You have a limited time frame to obtain these benefits. You also should be considering contributions to your Thrift Savings Plan. The Postal Service matches up to five percent of your contributions and if you don't contribute five percent yourself, this is money left on the table that will multiply over the years. Obviously, if you can contribute more that is great, but five percent gives you another automatic five. Also, the NALC Mutual Benefits Association is something that should be considered. They have good products such as IRAs and Roth IRAs that have guaranteed rates. You can call the MBA at NALC headquarters, the phone number is in the Postal Record.

Last month it was up in the air if President Trump's hiring freeze for Federal Employees applied to the Postal Service, but it was determined shortly after the freeze that the Postal Service is not included. Good news for us, but that does not mean our benefits and retirement packages are untouchable. As previously discussed, there are those in congress that plan to try to reduce these benefits if possible. Keep an eye on this through the NALC website and sign up to E-activist for automatic updates. Usually there is a link to email your Congressman or Senator when a harmful bill is being filed to ask him/her not to support it. Keep your head up!

Paul Desmond

Calendar of Events

March 5	Region 14 RAP Session; Biltmore Hotel, Providence, RI
March 7	8PM Branch Meeting @ Knights of Columbus 27 School St. Ext. Wilmington Food served @ 7:15
March 12	Daylight Savings Time Begins
March 17	St. Patrick's Day
March 26	Branch 25 Pancake Breakfast Knights of Columbus, Tewksbury 8am-11am

Branch 25 Directory of Officers

David J. Barbuzzi	President
Paul G. Desmond	Executive V.P.
Bob Cronin	Vice President
Andy Coan	Secretary
James P. Nutter	Treasurer
Kenneth Dusombre	Health Benefits Rep.
Rick Dauphinais	Safety Officer
Jack Lyman	Sergeant At Arms
Ron Noviello	Chmn. Board of Trustees
Dan Raske	Trustee
Dave Ferris	Trustee
Bruce Johnson	Trustee
Anthony Bossi	Assistant Secretary
John McNulty	Assistant Treasurer
Dan Wheeler	Wake-Up Publisher
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.

Last Punch Bunch



Dave Sicard has been a familiar face at many Branch 25 events. Whether volunteering at the Breakfast, or the golf tournament, Dave helped out quite a bit!!



Charlie Hill retired after 37 years of carrying mail in Winchester

Last Punch Bunch



Steward Tony Bossi described Dave Swift as the kind of guy that would volunteer to do Christmas Express so the younger guys could spend it with their families. He'll be missed!



Paul Nastasia is looking forward to spending more time in Florida and at the Cape.



Bill Eno is hanging up the satchel after a 31 year career.



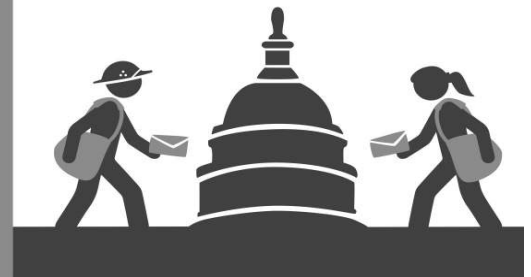
Winchester carrier Paul Niles retired after 31 years. Paul and Charlie both look forward to spending more Time on the Cape.

What is the Letter Carrier Political Fund?

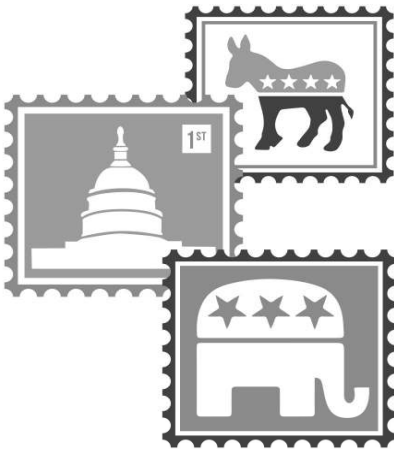
The Letter Carrier Political Fund is a non-partisan PAC established for the purpose of electing qualified candidates who support letter carriers, and who are committed to maintaining a strong and innovative Postal Service.

Federal PACs raise and distribute campaign funds to candidates seeking federal office. PACs allow corporations, associations and labor unions to raise money for political purposes by soliciting voluntary contributions from individuals to help advance common policy interests.

PAC money is strictly regulated by the Federal Election Commission. It is used to support endorsed candidates by helping to defray campaign costs.



**DELIVERING NALC'S
MESSAGE TO WASHINGTON.**



*When you support
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to Washington.*



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100 Indiana Avenue NW, Washington, DC 20001
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JOIN US TODAY!

Delivering NALC's message to Washington.

As a federal employee, your career and livelihood are stringently controlled by government policies and legislation. Members of Congress wield absolute power when it comes to collective bargaining rights, worker protections, job security, retirement benefits, and a strong Postal Service that provides quality, universal service to all Americans.

There are many ways to be a part of the NALC's network of legislative and political activists. Giving to the Letter Carrier Political Fund is one of the simplest.

Just as your shop steward guides you on the workroom floor, NALC must navigate the political process, working to elect candidates who will protect us and promote our issues.

NALC works to educate letter carriers about the candidates and the issues to help ensure that, when we cast votes, we are making informed decisions. And NALC works to educate members of Congress so our message gets delivered to Washington.

These efforts are reinforced by building and using political capital to elect—and re-elect—those who stand by us.

Why give to the NALC Political Fund?

Under federal law, labor unions are strictly prohibited from spending dues money on contributions or expenditures in connection with federal elections. So in 1975, the NALC established a PAC to become proactive in the electoral process.

Support for letter carriers and the Postal Service comes from all political parties, so the fund is committed to supporting pro-letter carrier candidates, regardless of their political affiliation.

Every year, our PAC grows and NALC's voice in Washington gets stronger.

How can I contribute?

As a member of the NALC, there are several easy ways to give to the Letter Carrier Political Fund!

Payroll deduction

Contribute automatically, using PostalEase to set up an allotment deduction from your USPS paycheck.

Direct bank withdrawal

You can authorize the fund to withdraw a monthly electronic contribution directly from your personal checking account.

Annuity deduction

Retired letter carriers can elect to give monthly via an automatic deduction from your monthly annuity.

Choose which method works best for you, fill out this pledge card and return it to your local PAC coordinator or mail it to NALC Headquarters:

Mail to:

The Letter Carrier Political Fund
100 Indiana Ave NW
Washington, DC 20001

I, _____
from branch _____,

want to become a member of the **Letter Carrier Political Fund**. I elect to make my contribution to the **Letter Carrier Political Fund**:

- Every pay period via my USPS pay check (Postal Ease)
- Monthly via my bank account (I have attached a voided check)
- Monthly through my OPM annuity
- One-time personal check or cash contribution (cash cannot be more than \$100)

Amount \$ _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Detach here to make your voice heard in Washington!

By making a contribution to the National Association of Letter Carrier's 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 may 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.



Postal Reform and Politics

We are two months into 2017 and a little more than a month into the Donald Trump presidency. What is the current state of the Postal Service politically speaking? Almost immediately after President Trump was sworn in he announced a hiring freeze for most federal employees. No one was quite sure if that included the Postal Service or not. On January 31, the USPS got word that they were exempt from the freeze. That was good news for the USPS, with an aging workforce and increasing parcel business, to be able to continue hiring new employees.

Also on January 31 there was a new Postal Service reform bill introduced in Congress. H.R. 756, Postal Service Reform Act of 2017 is a bill co-sponsored by six representatives. There are three democrats and three republicans, including Rep. Stephen Lynch, D-Mass on board. This bill follows in a long line of postal reform bills which have been introduced in the last few years. None of the previous bills have gone anywhere but there is a feeling among some that this one may have some legs.

There is a lot that is covered in this bill. You can go to congress.gov to read the complete text. I will hit on a few of the issues here. The biggest issue that it covers is the retirement prefunding issue that has faced the Postal Service. That is the biggest issue we have. The bill would bring the funding of postal pensions back in line to what is appropriate and away from the ridiculous situation we are in right now. The Postal Service has kind of gone along the last few years putting that issue of to the side but for the continued and future success of all of us it needs to be addressed. This bill would also address the expiration of the Exigent Increase which allows the USPS to raise the rate of a First-Class Stamp price. A couple of other issues that are addressed are door to door delivery and the health care plan for employees.

The door to door delivery part of the bill initially seems to be a step back from what the NALC previous position. It would allow for some future deliveries to be

converted to centralized and some existing based on percentage of customer agreement. The health care part of it would put all the postal employees into a separate group within the FEHB (Federal Employee Health Benefits Program). Both provisions have already caused much discussion. I won't debate the merits either way here. I will say that this is just the beginning of this bill and we are a long way from where it may end up. President Rolando testified on postal reform before the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee hearing on February 7. He testified on behalf of all four of the postal unions.

Currently there is no one on the Postal Board of Governors. There are supposed to be nine appointed members along with the Postmaster General and Deputy Postmaster General. The last appointed governor vacated his seat on December 8, 2016. Currently the Postmaster General and Deputy Postmaster General are acting as an emergency temporary committee. There are six outstanding nominations going as far back as 2010. It remains to be seen what the Trump administration's interest in filling these vacancies is. H.R. 756 would also reduce the Board of Governors from nine appointed members to seven.

The one constant thing regardless of what happens is our responsibility to help ourselves as much as we can. We can help shape our future by donating to the Letter Carrier Political Fund (LCPF). LCPF is a way that members can help the NALC support the political candidates, Republican or Democrat, that support the issues that are important to us. The NALC can't use member's dues for that purpose. Donating to LCPF is voluntary and there is no open season. You can start donating at any time.

"The best place to find help is at the end of your own arm." Swedish Proverb

In Solidarity,

Dan Wheeler

By now, most of us veterans should have received a pin from President Rolando. If you have not, please stop at the union meeting and fill out the paperwork to join the veterans' group so you can get yours.

March is a big month for veterans. It is buddy check time. Buddy check time is a time to reach out to old buddies and see how they're doing. I personally enjoy this and have people that I served with in this program. We stay in contact constantly and us veterans torment each other!

I did get the last laugh with a great Patriots victory!!!

Strength in numbers.
Andie Coulter
Veterans' Group Representative

Tasos Apostle	Lowell
Bridget Ball	Peabody
Michael T. Beckwith	Ipswich
Lucille Boria	Tewksbury
Joseph P. Bouthiller	Tewksbury
Shane Hubert	Lowell
Christopher C. Hundhausen	Ipswich
Jennifer A. Lane	Gloucester
Peter E. Murphy	Rockport
Bryan K. Perreault	Tewksbury
Timothy B. Rideout	Peabody
Elizabeth Urena	Salem

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*at the next meeting
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