



WAKE UP!

President/ Editor
Daniel P. Wheeler

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At the February Branch Meeting, some long-time members were awarded NALC membership pins. Pictured clockwise are Mike Kavanaugh (40 years), Jim Nutter (40 years), Dan Raske (40 years), and Kevin Sullivan (55 years).

President's Message

The topic of this month's President's Report is dignity and respect. It goes without saying that every employee should be able to go to work with the expectation of being treated with dignity and respect, whether by their fellow employees or management. Unfortunately, for many of us, that isn't the case. We deal with many personalities in life and at work. We have differences, and not everyone we work with is someone we necessarily get along with. However, there is no excuse for not treating others with dignity and respect. I want to address the issue of management treating (or not treating) employees the way they should.

Management has a clear responsibility to maintain a mutually respectful atmosphere. Handbook M-39, Management of Delivery Services, states this clearly in Section 115.4 which states:

Maintain Mutual Respect Atmosphere

The National Agreement sets out the basic rules and rights governing management and employees in their dealings with each other. Still, it is the front-line manager who controls management's attempt to maintain an atmosphere between employer and employee which assures mutual respect for each other's rights and responsibilities.

This section of the M-39 clearly says that management is responsible for maintaining this atmosphere. Sadly, many managers don't seem to take this seriously. In fact, some seem to make every effort to counter it actively!

Not all managers are this way. Plenty in the branch do their part and take dignity and respect seriously. Unfortunately, some managers don't know how to and probably shouldn't be managing other people. Local management is under pressure from their bosses for sure, but that in no way excuses their mistreatment of letter carriers on the workroom floor. The Postal Service has always been "about the numbers," as most big businesses are. However, in my twenty-nine years in the business, I have never seen management more driven by the numbers. They are constantly looking to save a few minutes here and there. They try to squeeze carriers. They push "downtime" where it may not exist. They question every little bit of "stationary time."

Much of the harassing behavior letter carriers feel from management stems from these interactions. While

managers may have the right to pursue "downtime" or question a carrier's times or "stationary event" occurrences, they don't have the right to do so in a harassing manner. Many of these interactions are the types that add up over time. Taken as single events, they may not seem like a big deal. Over time, however, this constant pushing and prodding can be threatening.

If management behaves in a way that fails to maintain the dignity and respect they are mandated to uphold, this behavior is unacceptable. Unfortunately, dignity and respect grievances can be some of the toughest for us to succeed. That doesn't mean we shouldn't pursue them or that we can't win them, though. We must have the proper evidence to back up a possible grievance. Witness statements can play a significant role in these grievances. If we can get people who have witnessed management's lousy behavior to attest to it in writing, that goes a long way toward making our case. Often, people don't want to get involved or expose themselves to possible retaliation, which is understandable. I would encourage everyone to stand up for their fellow Brothers and Sisters and give a statement if needed!

If management says that you have under time and you don't believe that you do have any, be clear about it to management. The letter carrier is the only person who knows how long their assignment will take them on any given day. If you feel like management is crossing the line to the point where it becomes a dignity and respect issue, please inform your steward or contact the branch office.

In Solidarity,

Dan Wheeler

Executive Vice-President's Report

I know there are a lot of 3999s being conducted throughout the branch recently, but don't get too worked up about it because there is not much that can be done with the data. The only real purpose of a 3999, is to make territorial adjustments to routes, under a traditional 6-day count and inspection. We currently are not evaluating routes in that manner. Some managers think that the data compiled by a one-day walk holds a lot of weight, it is just one day. It cannot be used to determine the evaluation of your street time, and it does not determine that you have undertime or overtime on any other day. I realize some managers will bring it up if you have a less than 8-hour day, but I wonder how many will refer to the 3999 if you work overtime on the day of the 3999? Management should be consulting with you soon after the walk to explain any "waiting time" or any time deductions and should give you a copy of the 3999 along with their comments if you request it. If management refuses to do so, contact your steward or the branch office. Management can conduct a one-day walk without notice, but if an office count is conducted, they need to notify you the day prior.

Very soon we will be changing the clocks ahead one hour, so there should be daylight for many carriers while they are delivering their routes. Those who are still working in the dark should not be skipping breaks to finish early. Even though we don't currently have any stations being evaluated through the TIAREP process, the data being compiled can be used in the future. I don't have any inside information, but it would surprise me if we went back to the 6-day inspection method of evaluating routes any time soon. I think both parties, NALC and the Postal Service, would prefer to use the current TIAREP system that is in place. I know it isn't perfect, but hopefully the parties will fix any issues that need to be addressed over time. There could be more information on this when the National Agreement is resolved.

There have been many confrontations lately that involve managers telling carriers that they are being given a piece of another route for "undertime". There are times that carriers have OT and there are times that carriers do not have 8 hours of work on their own assignment, and there are times that carriers have an 8-hour day. If your manager tells you he/she believes you have undertime and you do not agree simply tell him/her you disagree. If they tell you they are giving you a piece of another

assignment and you feel it will bring you to an OT status, fill out Form 3996 estimating how much you will be over 8 hours, and include the reason. If they still insist you take the piece, then do not argue. You can text your manager with the scanner at some point in the day and inform him/her that you will require OT. You are not required to use your own phone. If you are on the OT list, you have already informed management of your need for OT. If you are not on the OT list and you work OT, inform your steward that you were required to work OT. If there was someone available on the OT list, then you may have a grievance. It is not our intention to create hostility over undertime, as some managers like to provoke carriers. But if you are instructed to work OT and you are not on the OT list, there may possibly be a grievance. That is our recourse.

There should be more information coming out soon about the one-time chance for retirees to sign up for Medicare with no penalty. We were told it would be in the Spring, but no date has been given as of yet. I hope to see you all at the next branch meeting on March 12th.

Keep your head up!

Paul Desmond

Calendar of Events

March 8	International Women's Day
March 10	Daylight Savings Time Ramadan (begins at sundown)
March 12	Regular Branch Meeting K of C Wilmington 8:00PM Food served at 7:15 PM
March 17	St. Patrick's Day
March 19	Vernal Equinox (First day of spring)
March 28	Red Sox Opening Day
March 31	Easter Sunday

Branch 25 Directory of Officers

Daniel P. Wheeler	President
Paul G. Desmond	Executive V.P.
Anthony Bossi	Vice President
Joe Stearns	Secretary
James Metilinos	Treasurer
Kenneth Dusombre	Health Benefits Rep.
Jim Salvati	Safety Officer
Doug Murray	Sergeant At Arms
Dan Raske	Chairman of Trustees
Bruce Johnson	Trustee
Tony Porciello	Trustee
Bob Cronin	Trustee
Gilbert Paredes	Trustee
Andrew Dencklau	Assistant Treasurer
Andy Coan	Assistant Secretary
Jeremy Provost	Assistant Safety Officer
James Tuttle	Assistant Wake Up Publisher
Wesley Tugman	Assistant Health Ben. Rep.

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

From the Secretary's Desk

By the time you are reading this February with an extra leap year day will have seem to have breezed by. The other day someone mentioned to me that our next holiday isn't until Memorial Day May 27th, but then we have a few in a row to break things up. March is a full month as well. Don't forget on Saturday night the 9th we will need to push the clocks ahead 1 hour. While we lose an hour sleep, say hello to the sun still up at 5 o'clock at night (YIPPEE). St. Patrick's Day is the following week on Sunday the 17th, first day of spring on the 19th, then Easter on the 31st. I think some of us will still have a lot going on.

I made a change this month on the meeting notices that I send out to the offices each month. The address for our monthly meeting spot the Knights of Columbus in Wilmington was listed on it as 27 School St. Extension. When you try to find it in Waze, Google or even their own website it is listed as 112 Middlesex Ave. Please use this address when attending the meeting it will get you right to the building.

While on the subject of the Knights of Columbus and the monthly meetings, we were informed that they cannot allow anyone to bring their own beverages into the hall. This includes water, coffee, soda, or anything else. Let me make it clear that this is not the KoC trying to boost sales, this is a state law, and they could lose their license. So, I thank everyone in advance for honoring and respecting this request.

As Dan mentioned at the last meeting, we will be making up the missed January meeting on June 25th the 4th and last Tuesday of the month. We will do a cookout at that meeting as we did last year. So, keep this date in your calendars.

On Monday, the 26th I received a house-to-house flyer for a north shore store in my wing case. As I was throwing it I looked to see who it was from and noticed it said “Presidents Sale” on the front. Normally this isn't a big deal unless you are following along with the date and realize that Presidents Day was the week before on the 19th. Then I look at the address area where the return address is and it says... Wait for it..... Postmaster, please deliver 2/6, 2/7, 2/8. Yep you read that right, yet I got it from the plant on the 26th. Oh, and did I mention some of the sale dates for certain items said, “sale price good 2/8 thru 2/28”, Glad they still had 2 days to get what they want. Another thing to file in the “you just can't make this S*** up” list.

As I always end this if you have moved, please update your address with the branch. You can call, write, or email me at JESBR25@gmail.com. See you at the branch meeting March 12th.

Joe Stearns

Snapple Fact # 1244 The word utopia – an ideal place – ironically comes from a Greek word meaning “no place.”

Treasurer's Message

I want to point out something that many of us might not know. Less than 14% of offenders who partake in crimes against letter carriers are actually arrested. And the number of those who are actually indicted and tried for crimes is less than half of that. As a matter of fact, when researching the OIG (Office of Inspector General) and USPIIS (United States Postal Inspection Service), a lot is brought to light about these entities that oversee operations and criminal activity regarding the Postal Service. In the past ten years, mail theft prosecution has dropped nearly 47%. That number should indicate to us that crimes against carriers have dropped, right? Well, the facts would tell a different story.

Crime against carriers is currently up 78% across the country. What does this tell us? It tells us that the Postal Inspection Service is no longer prosecuting criminals for their attacks against our brothers and sisters. A Syracuse University study in 2019 shows an audit of the Inspection Service where they claim responsibility for 96 arrests regarding crimes against letter carriers and mail theft. It's important to note that an "arrest" for the Inspection Service is claimed strictly on involvement and case assignment. What does that mean? 38 of the arrests were actually done by the Inspection Service while the majority 58 were done by actual law enforcement.

The number provided by the Inspection Service is misleading. It should also be noted that 31 of the 38 arrests and case files by the Inspection Service failed to include any investigative notes or evidence that may have been seized with the arrest. These are the people who are "protecting" our brothers and sisters. The Inspection Service recently put out guidelines to help prevent mail theft and crimes.


They include lots of suggestions like "don't leave outgoing mail in your box for too long", or "withdraw deposited mail shortly after delivery", and even as far as "start a neighborhood watch program". While these aren't bad suggestions, this removes the Postal Service from having to take any action whatsoever in regards to the safety of the letter carrier. This further shows us they will take as little action as possible. This is completely unacceptable and needs to be addressed.

So, what can we do to protect ourselves? Well, right now we're in the middle of winter. The sun goes down at 4:30pm every day. If possible, adjust your route so that areas that may have higher foot traffic or are less savory than others can be done in the daylight. If issues arise in those areas, cut the delivery completely. Call and check in with your brothers and sisters. I speak to three or four carriers a day easily and I've gone out of my way to call to see if anyone needs water or assistance frequently though the summer. We need to rely on each other because we are our biggest asset.

At any given point, if you feel as though your safety is compromised, you leave the area and return to the office immediately and inform your supervisor of the situation. Hell, call 911 if you're unsure of what action to take. I've had the pleasure of calling many installations for start dates for new hires and based on how often some of these offices pick up, I'd guess there was no supervisor on duty. I've seen the signs in Dorchester Ave in the orientation facility as well as in many installations: Safety Depends on Me. Because it certainly can't depend on the Postal Service. Please protect yourselves and each other.

The only thing they fear.. Is you.

James Metilinos



BRANCH 25 RETIREE GRATUITY VOUCHER


Name: _____
(as it will appear on plaque)

P.O. Retiring from: _____

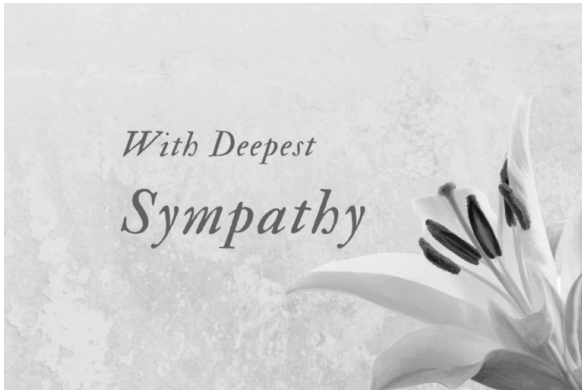
Phone number: _____

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



Branch 25 passes along our deepest sympathy to the families and letter carriers of Salem on two recent passings. On January 30, 2024 Gary Gagne passed away at the age of 68. On February 21, 2024 Cale Weston passed away at the age of 31. Brother Gagne had been a Branch 25 member since 1997. Brother Weston had been a member since 2019.



H.R. 82, Social Security Fairness Act of 2023, would repeal the Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP) and the Government Pension Offset (GPO), which are parts of Social Security law that unfairly reduce or sometimes eliminate Social Security benefits of federal annuitants.

The bill has overwhelming bipartisan support with more than 300 cosponsors. Last November, a successful field hearing was held on repealing the WEP and GPO. There was enthusiastic support from legislators and witnesses for repealing these unjust Social Security penalties.

The next step to move H.R. 82 forward is for the Ways & Means Committee to schedule a markup on the bill. To keep up the momentum during this week of action, NALC is asking all letter carriers to ask their representative to tell the Ways & Means Committee to markup H.R. 82.

Thanks to Ken Bonin for this month's cartoon!



Mark it up !

Panic Attack

What is a panic attack? A panic attack is a physical reaction to the fear of being out of control, or a fear of death or impending doom. Symptoms include racing heart beat, sweating, chills, trembling, difficulty breathing, weakness, dizziness, tingly or numb hands, chest pain, and stomach pain or nausea. A panic attack feels a lot like a heart attack which can make the fear of death, and the panic attack, more intense. Call 911 if you're not sure whether you are experiencing a heart attack, or a panic attack.

If you are suffering from a panic attack, there are some things you can do to help relieve symptoms. First, recognize that it is a panic attack and not a life threatening situation (again, only do this if you know it is NOT a heart attack). Next, pay attention to your breathing. Slow, deep breaths can help regulate your breathing and reduce other symptoms like shortness of breath and racing heart beat. Practice grounding techniques like focusing on your senses or counting the objects in the room. This can help you feel present in the moment. Using muscle relaxation techniques will help reduce tension and anxiety. Try to distract yourself with a soothing activity.

When repeated panic attacks start to cause problems in everyday life, that is called a panic disorder. A panic disorder should be treated by your doctor, or a mental health professional. They will be able to determine the best treatment plan for you which could be therapy, medication, or a combination of treatments. For more information, you can visit the National Institute of Mental Health website at nimh.nih.gov. There you can download the pamphlet about panic disorder called *Panic Disorder: When Fear Overwhelms*.

Stay Safe,
Jeremy Provost

Recently, NALCREST celebrated sixty years of providing retired letter carriers a retirement destination in Florida. Region 14 National Business Agent Rick Dicecca joined the NALC executive council for the celebration. Pictured to the right are NBA Rick Dicecca, Bedford Retiree Stephen Pepe, and former NALC President Fred Rolando.

We would like to welcome the following new members to Branch 25. Please help us in welcoming them and help them out in your stations.

Eric Boles	Haverhill
Kristine Botto	Newburyport
Kseniya Cherezov	Concord
Joshua Fields	Acton
Alan Jones	Peabody
Miguel Rosario	Lawrence
Anthony Strattner	Beverly
Frederick Westbrook	Wayland
Alexander Guzman Traveras	Lawrence
Dani Clark	Haverhill
Liam Plunkett	Haverhill
Shaun Greenlaw	Lowell
Eric Knight	Concord



WAKE UP

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First Class Mail
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at the next meeting
March 12
K of C Wilmington
8:00 PM



Peabody's Jack Murtaugh received his retirement gratuity at the February branch meeting. He was joined by Peabody's Andy Coan and retired carriers Tony Porciello and Bob Cronin.