



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



Davdai Myagmarjav is all smiles as his daughter Gandi receives one of the two \$1000 Branch 25 Scholarship checks. Dracut Steward Jack Lyman and Branch 25 President Dave Barbuzzi flank the happy father and daughter.

President's Message

"Consolidated Casing Initiative"

On page 4 of this month's "Wake-Up!" I have included a service talk given to letter carriers about the "Consolidated Casing Initiative". I'm sure that by the time you receive this month's newsletter, you will have already heard many things (some true, some false) about this program. The first thing that I can tell you is that as of now, Peabody is the only station in Branch 25 that is slated to participate.

Participate is a misnomer actually. Peabody is the only station in Branch 25 to have this rammed down their throat. I can't speak for management, but I'm pretty sure that they are not happy about this either.

At any rate, it would be pointless for me to speculate and to give information that I don't know to be true or accurate. As a matter of fact, if you go to the NALC website, you can see that our national leaders have submitted 61 questions to the postal service as an information request. I'm sure that when they get the answers to those questions, they will share them with all of us.

What I can tell you, however, is that on April 24, the NALC initiated a national level interpretive dispute regarding this program. My best advice right now is to periodically monitor the NALC website and member app for further updates as they come available.

I have recently spoken to letter carriers in a few different offices and have been very surprised/disappointed to hear that CCA's are being scheduled "on-call". The schedule may literally read "on-call" or CCA's may be being told to stay by the phone on a day that they are not scheduled to work so that management can call them into work if they need them.

The practice of scheduling someone "on-call" is against the national agreement. As a matter of fact, in some states there is a requirement that someone that is placed in such a status must be paid regardless of whether or not they have to report to work. Whether or not an employee wants to stay by their phone, or answer their phone, on their day off is their own choice. I am not telling anyone not to stay home and I am not telling anyone not to answer their phone. I am simply telling you that you don't have to and you shouldn't be bullied into feeling obligated to.

In the last couple months, there have been two letter carriers in branch 25 that have been interrogated by agents of the Office of Inspector General (OIG) and or the local police or both at the same time. If you are ever approached by law enforcement officials of any kind, you should always cooperate AFTER you have requested and been granted access to your steward or if necessary your lawyer.

In most instances, mere suspicion of wrongdoing prompts management to put you on "emergency

placement" without pay. There are instances where management is within their rights to place someone, but there are still procedures that must be followed. Management must still establish just cause and must ensure that your right to due process is satisfied.

The role of your Union representative is to make sure that all parties understand each other. There are facets of our job that police or OIG agents don't understand. They don't understand our relationships with our customers and they don't understand the things that we face every day and therefore things that we consider normal.

If you ever find yourself in such a situation, and you voluntarily offer information, that information can be used against you. The police don't have to mirandize you unless you are "in custody". That means that you are not free to leave, that you are detained. So, if you are questioned on your delivery route as you are walking or even if you sit down with the officer, they don't have to mirandize you. Whatever you say can be used against you. If they take you to the police station, or if they bring you to a police car or van, and you are not free to leave at any time, then they must mirandize you.

I hope that you never find yourself in that situation. If you do, I hope you are innocent. The problem is, however, that even innocent people can act or appear guilty. Even innocent people can forget important details in high pressure situations. The point is, when you're alone, when you don't have a friendly face with you that is looking out for your interests, you will most likely come off looking not as good as you would if you had someone "holding your hand" through the process and making sure that you understand what is happening and that the people that are talking to you understand what your answers mean and what the day to day experiences of a postal employee are.

I suppose the easiest way to sum this up is to say that you are not being questioned in an effort to make you innocent. You are being questioned by someone that believes that you have committed a crime and is now trying to make the facts support their case.

I would like to ask that everyone do everything in their power to have a successful food drive. Essex County Offices will be getting food drive bags, as will Tewksbury and Burlington. These bags are not optional. EVERYONE must take them and deliver them to every customer on their route. In years past, some offices have told carriers they are optional. THEY ARE NOT! They are not free and charities have allocated funds because they have proven to be effective. Thank you for your help in this matter.

Stay informed!

Dave Barbuzzi

Executive Vice President's Report

We are almost done with the scheduled inspections in the branch, with one station remaining in May, but I am sure the Fall will bring a full schedule. The times you are currently working on the street will be used to determine the 1840B time, which is a random analysis of your street time only, to be compared with your week of inspection times. Management will in most cases choose the lower time of the 2 to evaluate your route. This is essentially their right, per the M-39 manual which is the guideline for route inspections.

You can't skip breaks or lunch or rack any automated mail during an inspection, so don't do it now. Any inspection should be conducted just as you do your route every day. It may be more convenient for some to skip breaks and get out of work a little earlier than if you had done the job as the manuals say, but in the long run it will not benefit you.

A lot of carriers don't understand that having leave usage designated as FMLA serves a sole purpose of protecting the employee from action taken against them by the Postal Service. You can have leave designated as FMLA for your own illness or to care for a family member with a qualifying illness. If you are out of work for 3 days with the same illness, you very well may qualify for FMLA protection. There is paperwork that your doctor needs to fill out within a time frame, but they are obligated to fill it out. You still use sick leave or annual leave in order to get paid, but if approved, the leave can't legally be cited for disciplinary purposes. The NALC website has a section covering FMLA protection under the "workplace issues" tab, that includes a summary in the form of a national memo. The memo and summary of the law are too long to print here, but every carrier should know their rights and obligations under the law. It is there for your own protection.

We are at the time of the year that the food drive is approaching quickly. This year the drive is May 11th. This is one of the events that letter carriers get a chance to contribute to the communities that they work in, while actually working. Please make sure that the food drive cards are delivered and if you are given bags, that they also get delivered. This is the largest drive of its kind, and it fills the food pantries every year. It has proven that the offices that receive bags do very well year after year. Most of the offices that get bags, get them through donations or are paid for by food pantries.

Carriers that have been converted to career status have a minimal amount of time to choose their health plans and life insurance coverage. Usually when a CCA or PTF is converted the first thing they think about is that they most likely won't be working any more Sundays. You have 60 days from the day of conversion to choose a health plan. You will automatically be enrolled in the basic FEGLI life insurance coverage and enrolled in the

Thrift Savings Plan. You can waive coverage in these 2 but can only choose additional life insurance coverage for 60 days after conversion. The TSP will allow you to increase or decrease and change your contribution allocations once you receive your TSP account number and password. The 60-day time limit is important for health and life insurance. Health insurance can be changed every year during open season.

It has been great to see a lot of new faces at the monthly branch meetings, please keep it up and bring someone with you. The meetings only last about an hour.

Keep your head up!

Paul Desmond

Calendar of Events

April 30	Executive Council Meeting
May 1	May Day
May 5	Cinco De Mayo, Ramadan
May 6	National Nurses' Day
May 7	Regular Monthly Meeting Wilmington K of C 27 School Street Extension Food Served 7:00 PM Meeting Begins 8:00 PM
May 11	Food Drive
May 12	Mothers' Day
May 19	CPR Training Class 12PM-4PM 200 Unicorn Park Drive Woburn, MA 01801 (10 slots available, first call)
May 27	Memorial Day

TREASURER'S REPORT

"The Godfather"

Branch 25 Trustee and Workers' Compensation Representative Ron Noviello has long held the moniker of "Godfather" of our branch. He grew up in the North End of Boston in a predominantly Italian neighborhood. He was a member of the army reserves for nine years.

Ron began his career in 1968 with the Post Office and retired in 2001. Although he started in Acton, by far the majority of his career was in the Reading station. He was a veteran of the 1970 Postal Strike which gave rise to the U.S. Postal Service and the fruits of collective bargaining which we enjoy today.

Ron was involved in the subsequent mergers under then President Jack Barry in creating Mass Northeast Merged Branch 25 that exists today. Serving as an officer in the branch for in excess of 40 years as a trustee, and more significantly as the chairman, Ron has aided and guided the Branch's growth and development to its successful state that is in existence today.

Until recently, he was a fixture in attending state and national conventions and almost any other function of importance. In the late 1980's he was asked by then President Jack Barry to assume the duties as an OWCP Representative for the members; an assignment he still

fulfills today. He estimates that he has represented over 400 cases with well over a 90% success rate.

Ron served on the committee to create the building fund, which resulted in our purchase of our current office condo, and the creation of the Branch 25 Scholarship fund which provides two scholarships to children of our members up to this day. Almost any discussion and decision of the path Branch 25 has taken, to one degree or another, received an opinion and direction from Mr. Noviello.

Although he will turn 83 years young in August, he still plans to devote his time in serving the members of Branch 25 in his current capacity. He leaves the timetable open but health and time will dictate his future.

In closing, although he at times can exhibit an acerbic and irascible persona, he more than makes up for it with humor and a sincere effort to serve all the members. If you see him at a branch meeting or in the office, or call him on the telephone, thank the "Godfather" for his years of service to all of us.

Jim Nutter, Treasurer

Happy Mothers' Day!!



City Carrier Stand-Up Talk

The United States Postal Service is facing one of the most difficult challenges in its history. Letter and Flat volume has decreased by 7 billion pieces since 2014. This decline has created the need to explore new ways of reducing costs, improving efficiency, and increasing usable workspace within our delivery units. Your office has been chosen to participate in the consolidated casing initiative.

This initiative separates the traditional city letter carrier assignment into two separate components: "Office Casing/Carrier" and "Street Carrier". All routes in the unit will reduce cell sizes for all deliveries. Routes are then combined into casing groups which minimize casing equipment and increase available floor space.

Office Casing/Carrier Responsibilities:

- Casing and withdrawal of manual mail* including small parcels and rolls (SPRs) and Hot Case mail
- Sequencing mail for park and loop deliveries, according to local policy
- Scanning the MSP Hot Case bar code*
- Loading cased mail into the conveyance used for parcel distribution
- Processing undeliverable and return mail, with input from supervisors and Street Carriers
- Placing COA labels on PS Form 3962 for all routes within an assigned casing group, per the unit's SOP
- Preparing Hold mail requests, per the unit's SOP
- Maintaining Edit/Redbooks, DSMART, WebEES and eUARS information with communication/input from Street Carriers, as per management instructions*

*For all routes assigned within a casing group

Street Carrier Responsibilities:

- Delivery: 7 hours and 45 minutes, including two street breaks (office tasks will be significantly reduced)
- AM Office responsibilities:
- Retrieving accountable/special service items, keys/Voyager card and Mobile Delivery Device (MDD) per office SOP, from cage or accountable cart
 - Retrieving conveyance equipment for assigned route and clocking to the appropriate street operation
 - Retrieving DPS, FSS and committed sequenced sets
 - Loading vehicle/return conveyance equipment (such as a hamper) to designated location



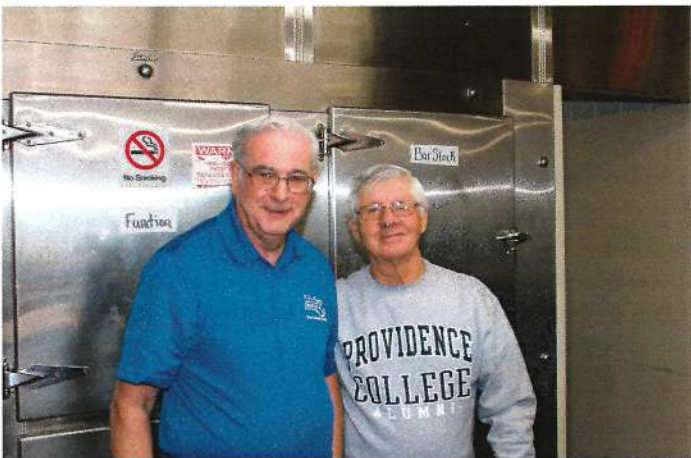
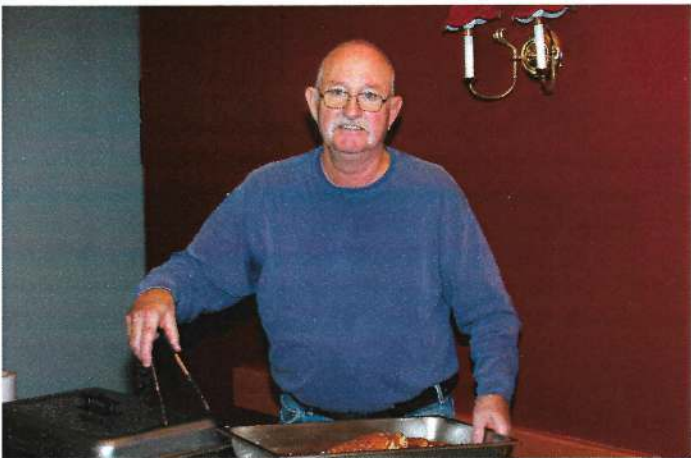
LETTER CARRIERS'
FOOD DRIVE
 SAT., MAY 11, 2019

PUT YOUR NON-PERISHABLE DONATION IN A BAG BY YOUR MAILBOX.
 WE'LL DELIVER IT TO A LOCAL FOOD BANK.

National Partners







VETERANS' CORNER

HAPPY MOTHERS' DAY TO ALL MOMS!
THANK YOU!

Memorial Day is coming and I hope we all remember what brave men and women gave their lives for us.

The best way to explain this is simple. All servicemen and servicewomen are issued dog tags. They have your religion, blood type, and branch of service. They also have your name.

Here is what goes with that name:

1. Each name was a person.
2. Each person had a family.
3. Each person was a life.
4. Each life was given for ours.

Remember the ones who didn't come home.

Semper Fi

Andie Coulter

"We are forever indebted to those who have given their lives that we might be free."

Ronald Reagan



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
\$150	\$50	\$50	\$50	\$50	\$500	\$50
\$50	\$50	\$50	\$50	\$50	\$50	\$500
\$50	\$50	\$50	\$100	\$50	\$50	\$50
\$500	\$50	\$50	\$50	\$50	\$50	\$50
\$50	\$50					

This is the type of calendar that is referenced on page 10 of this month's Wake-Up! Obviously, there is no specific month listed. The calendar will be finalized once 100 people send in payment of \$50. You will be assigned a number from 1-100. At the first branch meeting after the 100th calendar is sold, we will draw all 30 winners using a random number generator from the internet. Your number can come up multiple times. The prizes will not change.

- 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
- Jack Lyman Sergeant At Arms
- Ron Noviello Chmn. Board of Trustees
- Dan Raske Trustee
- Bruce Johnson Trustee
- Anthony Bossi Assistant Secretary
- 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.

TRUSTEES' REPORT

In accordance with Article 6 Section 9 of the NALC Constitution for the Government of Subordinate and Federal Branches, on Tuesday March 19, 2019 trustees Ronald J Noviello, Bruce Johnson and Daniel J Raske audited the financial books and found them in order.

**Beginning balance as of \$335,162.50
June 30, 2018**

**Ending balance as of \$332,977.89
December 31, 2018**

Board of Trustees

- Ronald J Noviello, Chairman**
- Daniel J Raske**
- Bruce Johnson**

Recently in my office we had a service talk about not working off the clock. Allegedly some carriers were on the work room floor handling mail before our scheduled start time of 8 am. My first thought was, "people get to work before 8?" I'm only kidding, I get there at 7:59.

It's not so much that I don't want to be early, it's that I like to take my time driving to work. I notice in the morning that most people on the highway are going faster than me. (Same thing at work, just ask my supervisor!). I'm not so bad that I drive the outdated 55 mph posted limit but I try to keep it around 65 which nowadays means the slow lane. Usually, I'm listening to a CD. (I'm slow AND old!)

Which now brings me to safety. Decreasing your speed from 75 to 65 increases your chances of staying safe. It gives you more reaction time if something happens in front of you. It also can cut your fuel use up to 20%! Now, besides saving some money, using less gas generates less fuel emissions; and when emissions go down, the pace of global warming slows down.

Don't forget, in Massachusetts, it's illegal to travel in the left lane on the highway. It should only be used for passing. It is also illegal to drive too slowly in the left lane. Using the left lane only for passing decreases the risk of an accident and the risk of a road rage incident.

Drive safely,

Jim Salvati

Lyrics Trivia

Gonna write me up a 125
Post my face wanted dead or alive
Take my license, all that jive



SCHOLARSHIP NEWS

Recently, the branch provided an incredible value to our members and friends. We served some 125 omelets, 40lbs of bacon and sausage, who knows how many pancakes, over 50lbs of hash browns, coffee, juice, milk, tea, and even English muffins. When we started doing this over 23 years ago, we charged \$5 for adults and \$3 for children. This year we charged only \$7 for adults and \$5 for children. We made \$400, or just under 1/2 of one scholarship at the event.

I'm not complaining, believe me. I have cooked pancakes or omelets at every breakfast with the exception of one year that I was away on union business. I enjoy seeing the community that is our union and extended family and friends come together to volunteer and to sit and have a great breakfast.

Years ago, a great deal of the food was donated. It seemed that everyone knew someone that would donate pancake batter, sausages and bacon, eggs, coffee. The point is, we had a very minimal expense when it came to food. That expense is now upward of \$400 as we have to pay for everything. The cost of the hall has also increased. This year it was over \$350. So you see, nothing is donated and we have to sell more than 100 adult tickets just to break even.

To make matters worse, we used to have raffles. Kathy Hall busted her butt and solicited donations and put together beautiful baskets that were raffled off. As a matter of fact, sometimes the raffles brought in more than the ticket sales!

Again, I'm not complaining, I'm just putting the facts out there so that people can understand what is/was involved in our efforts to maintain and hopefully one day enhance our scholarship program.

We have been brainstorming at the executive council and we have come up with something that we need your help with. We are asking that when the holiday season arrives, that EVERY CARRIER IN THE BRANCH donate one gift card that you receive for Christmas. It could be a \$5 Dunkin Donuts card, or a \$50 Applebee's card, or a \$10 gas card, it makes no difference. We will take these gift cards and we will use them as raffle prizes at the breakfast and other fundraising activities that we may have throughout the year. The best part is, you won't even miss them.

We would also welcome any of our offices to do things independently for either the Scholarship Fund or if you prefer for MDA. We'd like to step up our game with our MDA fundraising as well. Fundraising in the associate offices can get creative. It could be as simple as someone making home-made cookies or brownies, and selling them for 50¢ or \$1.00. A decent size office, say 30 carriers, could raise over \$1000 easily if they sold cookies or brownies for \$1.00 once a week! Smaller offices could easily raise over \$500 doing the same! That means that the branch could realistically raise some

\$25,000/year! Imagine that! We could raise even more depending on our collective sweet tooth!

If we were able to do this, we could grow the scholarships significantly. We could either give out more \$1000 scholarships, or we could perhaps give out \$2500 or even \$5000 scholarships. Is there anyone in the branch that wouldn't enjoy a cookie or a brownie or a cupcake, especially knowing that that sweet represented assistance in a deserving student's education?

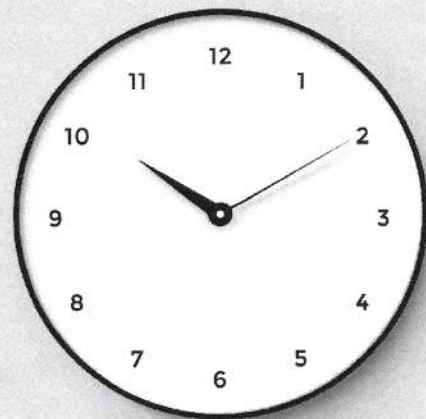
Any individual member can also contribute directly to our scholarship by simply sending a donation to the branch office and writing "scholarship donation" in the memo field of the check or on a note included in the envelope. Although I prefer that funds are raised through activities, I realize that there are those that would simply prefer to make a donation and be done with it. I don't think it would matter to the graduating high school senior whether their scholarship were funded by donations or fundraisers.

Finally, we are looking into the feasibility of doing a calendar like so many other organizations do. We would limit the calendar sales to 100 calendars at the cost of \$50 each. Each day of a 30 day month there would be a minimum of \$50 worth of prizes whether it be cash or gift card. On three of the days, there would be prizes of \$500 cash. This scenario, gift card and cash combination, would yield \$2000, the current yearly value of branch scholarships. Once 100 calendars were sold, we would use a random number generator on a computer at a monthly branch meeting to draw all 30 winners at one time. If you would like to purchase a calendar, knowing that the worst day would have \$50 worth of gift cards and the best day (3 of them) would be \$500 cash, send a check for \$50 to the branch with the memo "scholarship calendar". We would love to have 100 calendars sold in time to draw the numbers at the June meeting, but will continue selling calendars until 100 are sold.

If you have any questions about how you could help us in our scholarship and/or MDA fundraising efforts, call or email the office. Let's try to get this done!



Say Hello



to around-the-clock care.

Welcome to your **EAP** Employee Assistance Program

The USPS Employee Assistance Program has the counseling tools and resources designed to help you overcome life challenges. The tools offered by your EAP can help you and your loved ones begin to address those challenges. Here, you'll find completely free, confidential access to the counseling programs and services you need to live a balanced and happy life.

Say hello to your new services, designed to support you and your loved ones **around the clock, on every device...**

Lots of ways to connect...

- Face to face counseling
- Telephonic counseling
- Text therapy (Talkspace)
- Video Counseling
- Web-based resources (myStrength)
- "In the Moment" support
- Coaching

Are you interested in...

- receiving support when you don't feel like yourself?
- growing your personal skills?
- being a caring friend or family member?
- receiving care after a traumatic event or diagnosis?
- making healthy lifestyle choices?
- improving your communication skills?
- being more present and productive at work?

USPS EAP - A Program you can trust.



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WAKE UP

2500 Main Street
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I WANT YOU...

at the next meeting

May 7, 2019



Matt Cahill receives a \$1000 check from Branch 25 as a scholarship winner. Matt is joined by his father Mike (immediately beside him), Tewksbury Steward Andie Coulter, and Branch President Dave Barbuzzi