



WAKE UP!

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



(Left) Lawrence Letter Carriers John McColley and Marisol Gonzalez recently received their 25-year service awards from the Postal Service. (Right) John and Marisol with Lawrence Steward John Bradley.

President's Message

Many letter carriers may have noticed more certified mail pieces in their DPS over the last month. The increased certified letters are not by accident but by design. Of course, like they usually do, the Postal Service has dropped the ball in their messaging. You would think if there was going to be a significant change in how certified letters would be handled going forward, the service would make an effort to notify us letter carriers...the people who deliver them. That does not seem to be the case from what I am hearing. The Postal Service announced on March 29, 2023, that procedures would change for handling certified letters. They will no longer be held out of the DPS and will be processed as any First-class letter will be. According to the Postal Service, 170 million certified mail pieces were processed last year. They have determined the fact that certified letters were given special handling by pulling them out of the DPS led to poor delivery performance. Letter carriers are being given incorrect information in many offices. Perhaps, local management is too lazy in many instances to find out what is happening, so instead, they just tell the carriers that certified mail is no longer considered accountable mail.

In some cases, management is even giving service talks about this. This is not true. **Certified mail is still accountable mail, the same as it always has been.** Certified mail arriving in the DPS should be handled per Section 335.16 of Handbook M-41. The fact that the letter came in the DPS does not change the requirement of getting a signature for the letter and a signed return receipt if necessary. The number of certified letters you find in your DPS on any given day may be enough to change the time it will take to complete your route on that day. If this is the case, you should send a message through your scanner to your supervisor notifying them of the additional time required. I have been saying for a few years that management does not seem to care about the mail anymore unless it has a barcode on it so they can "clear" their lists. It should not surprise me that many managers tell carriers that certified letters are no longer accountable and carriers should just scan and deliver them. We need to remember that we are the United States Postal Service. We must follow the correct procedures when the customer has paid for a specific service. If anyone gets incorrect instructions from their local manager, please inform your shop steward or the

branch office.

The 2023 Letter Carriers Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive is approaching. I encourage every letter carrier to participate in this year's Food Drive. Many of our fellow community members are struggling, even in some of the more affluent communities in Branch 25. Everyone in the Postal Service supports this Food Drive, and it is an excellent way for letter carriers to help in the communities where they work and live. 2023 is the second consecutive "in-person" Food Drive since the COVID-19 Pandemic canceled the regular drives for a few years. I would encourage every senior letter carrier to make a point to speak with one of our newer carriers who may not be fully aware of what the Food Drive is all about to let them know its importance.

We receive quite a few calls regarding OWCP at the branch office. Often, one of our first questions to the member is, "Have you registered for ECOMP yet?" or "Can you log in to ECOMP and check?" ECOMP is the Employees' Compensation Operations & Management Portal. ECOMP is where an employee's work-related injury information, a CA-1 or CA-2 you filled out, medical bills, and medical documentation, among other information about your claim, is uploaded and stored digitally. ECOMP is a great tool and much better than the old system of funneling everything through your local management and hoping they do what they are supposed to do. Every letter carrier should sign up for ECOMP whether they have been injured or not. You may never need to use it, which would be great. However, if you do need it, as many of us eventually do, it is easier to submit a claim if you are already signed up. If you have previously filed paper claims, it is helpful to sign up also because you will have instant access to that information if you need it in the future. You can go to www.ecomp.dol.gov to sign up or scan the QR code on Page 3 on your mobile device. Feel free to call the branch office if you have any questions regarding signing up.

In Solidarity,

Daniel P. Wheeler

Executive Vice-President's Report

As I write this, we are only a couple weeks from the Food Drive. This year it will be on May 13th. The cards are in and we will be distributing them throughout the branch. Retired carrier Bruce Johnson will be helping out once again to distribute a large chunk of the cards. If your office doesn't receive the cards by Monday May 8th, let us know at the Union office. They should be delivered the Wednesday before the drive, if possible. Also, if you need any Food Drive posters, let us know, we will have some at the branch meeting on May 9th. Unfortunately, we don't have bags to distribute, these are usually donated by the food pantries or through private donations. If your office has a total of the weight of collected food, please let the branch know as soon as possible after the food drive.

The National Agreement we are currently working under expires on May 20th. The parties have been negotiating but my guess is it will be a while before we hear any news. I would hope that the Union and management can agree to hire as PTFs in more and more installations, and then we should go nationwide hiring PTFs. It only makes sense if we are going to be able to retain employees. I'm sure retaining the COLA's and contractual raises is on the top of the list of items being negotiated also. The NALC website should have updates as negotiations continue.

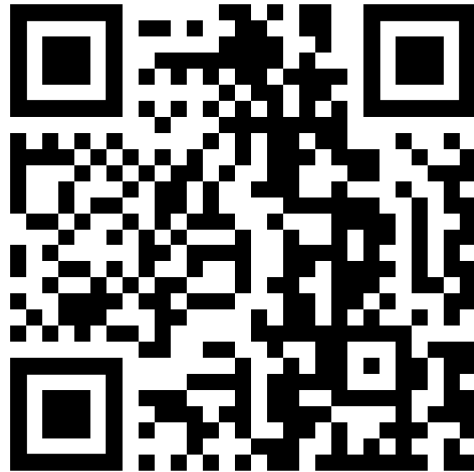
I can't stress enough the importance of identifying what may be possibly FMLA leave. Management seems to be reviewing attendance on a regular basis, which is their obligation, but many carriers have absences they don't realize may be covered by the FMLA. Any absence for a serious health condition may be covered. An absence of 3 consecutive days with subsequent treatment should be covered. Overnight hospital stay and any period of incapacity or subsequent treatment should be covered. Any period of incapacity due to pregnancy should be covered. Chronic conditions requiring treatments and periodic medical visits should be covered. These are just examples of serious but need to be identified as possibly covered under the FMLA. This law protects you from negative job action. When you request leave to be covered by FMLA, it should generate paperwork delivered to your house that needs to be filled out by your medical provider in a timely manner. We also have FMLA paperwork on our branch website that can be

printed off under the "carrier resources" section. If any help is needed with this, or any other FMLA issues please call the Union office.

Stay safe and keep your head up!

Paul Desmond

Scan the QR Code below to register for ECOMP



Calendar of Events

May 1	Global Love Day
May 4	Star Wars Day
May 5	International Space Day
May 9	Regular Monthly Meeting K of C Wilmington 8:00PM Food served at 7:00Pm
May 12	International Nurse Day
May 19	Mass State Letter Carriers' Association Convention Starts
May 20	2019-23 National Agreement Ends
May 28	Hamburger Day
June 27	Make-up Branch Meeting from March

Branch 25 Directory of Officers

Daniel P. Wheeler	President
Paul G. Desmond	Executive V.P.
Anthony Bossi	Vice President
Joe Stearns	Secretary
James P. Nutter	Treasurer
Kenneth Dusombre	Health Benefits Rep.
Jim Salvati	Safety Officer
Jack Lyman	Sergeant At Arms
Dan Raske	Trustee
Bruce Johnson	Trustee
John McNulty	Trustee
Bob Cronin	Trustee
Gilbert Parades	Trustee
James Metilinos	Assistant Treasurer
Andy Coan	Assistant Secretary
Chris Bruno	Wake-Up Publisher
Jeremy Provost	Assistant Safety Officer

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

Assistant Treasurers Report

First, I'd like to thank everyone who had feedback for the last article. There were plenty of comments that were constructive, be it positive or even critical. The point I wanted to convey in my article was that unions are inherently political and we need to remain partisan to the Letter Carrier Political Fund (LCPF) and not necessarily lean in a specific direction; hence my criticism of both parties. If every letter carrier donated \$5 a month, we would have over \$20M a year to lobby congress for legislation that directly benefits the letter carrier. Remember, we've been able to repeal prefunding from the Postal Accountability Enhancement Act which in turn gives the NALC the ability to collectively bargain for much better wages now that the Postal Service doesn't have the specter of massive finance strain from said mandate looming overhead. Please, if you'd like to donate, contact the hall and we will assist you.

Some of us have seen the outcome of the Rural Route Evaluation Compensation System (RRESC) that was to be implemented earlier this month. It's now slated to take effect April 22, 2023. While we are City Letter Carriers and a completely different craft, it's vital that we consider what took place to our sister union.

6% of rural routes remained exactly the same. 28% of routes are evaluated to require additional hours. 66% of routes have received hour cuts.

Let that sink in. 66% of rural routes nationwide have received hour adjustments anywhere from a single hour a week less, all the way up to eight hours less a week. If a rural carrier was making roughly \$25/hour and lost eight hours of pay weekly, this would cost the carrier over \$10,000 a year. How many of us would be handing over thousands of dollars to the postal service?

How does this translate to the City Letter Carrier craft?

Assistant Treasurers Report (cont.)

The RRECS uses a system which is intended to eliminate manual counts of mail and also use the scanner's GPS to evaluate a route. Your scanner uploads data every second with your location and activities to a digital map, called breadcrumbs. From the second you punch in until the second you punch out, you are tracked and monitored and evaluated. Ambiguities in breadcrumbs will result in a consultation with a union and management representative to clear up the discrepancy. This process is virtually the same as the Technology Integrated Alternate Route Evaluation and Adjustment Process (TIAREAP) which the NALC will be using jointly with the Postal Service.

Now if you're cutting corners and taking shortcuts, you put yourself at risk every day. I'm sure every letter carrier is guilty of this at some point; I know I am. So what do we do to prevent this from impacting city letter carriers like it did rurals?

Understand the expectations of your job as outlined in the M-41. For any parcel too large for a mailbox, you're still awarded time in the M-41 to go to the door and leave a notice indicating where you left the package if no one answered. Take the time to ensure boxes are labeled where necessary. If you're delivering a large parcel, understand we are credited to deliver to that customer once. Either grab mail from the tray or skip the property while walking and then return with both the parcel and mail. Those of us who aren't casing SPRs (small parcels and rolls), you are not granted credit to deliver these, but you are given time to case them or line them up in delivery sequence in the office. Stop giving back to the Post Office and case them.

I'm sure many new members of Branch 25 have been (un) fortunate enough to sit through the Carrier Academy while I've instructed. And if you ask any of them who have sit through a lecture from me, they will tell you all the points I've just listed have been brought up in the new hire training. As the job continues to evolve and become more and more autonomous, we need to inform our newer employees who are paving their career to protect routes as much as they can. Protecting routes protects jobs.

Surviving, not thriving,

James Metilinos

By making a contribution to the National Association of Letter Carriers' 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 your employment by the U.S. 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 canceled. 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.

“Wet Bulb Globe Temperature”

As I write this, it is still April in New England. That wonderful time of year when you can wear shorts with a winter hat. Right now the hot topic is, er, heat. Last week the temperature hit the 90 degree mark for the first time this year. There is a lot of spring and summer left to beat that number, and we all know we will.

Today I'd like to talk about something called the wet bulb globe temperature (WBGT). The WBGT originated in the 1950s at Marine Corps Recruit Depot Parris Island, SC. Any East Coast Marine will tell you that summertime at Parris Island is seriously hot. During the 1950s there were so many heat casualties that a new way to monitor temperature was needed. Heat index factors in humidity to tell us what the temperature feels like. The WBGT uses humidity, sunlight, windspeed, and the temperature to measure the effects of heat on the human body. To simplify, the heat index tells you how hot it will be, and the WBGT tells you how dangerous it will be.

Many military installations and sports teams use the WBGT to limit outdoor training as needed. There are many charts available online that use the WBGT and offer suggestions on how to beat the heat. The National Weather Service (weather.gov) has a chart titled *Suggested Actions and Impact Prevention* that uses the WBGT to advise the following:

- 80 to 85 degrees: Take 15 minute breaks each hour if working or exercising in direct sunlight.
- 85 to 88 degrees: Take 30 minute breaks each hour if working or exercising in direct sunlight.
- 88 to 90 degrees: Take 40 minute breaks each hour if working or exercising in direct sunlight.
- 90 degrees and above: Take 45 minute breaks each hour if working or exercising in direct sunlight.

To me this chart really illustrates just how dangerous the heat is. On arielschecklist.com there is a chart that can be used to calculate WBGT using just temperature and relative humidity. Those pieces of information can be found on any weather app.

To piggyback off of what Jim Salvati said last month, YOU are 100% responsible for deciding what is safe and what is not. It doesn't matter what management says. It doesn't matter what other carriers are doing. Take the time to educate yourself on the signs of heat stress and heat stroke, and listen to your body while you're out in the heat. The right decision to make is the one that keeps you safe.

Stay Safe,
Jeremy Provost

“Happy Mother's Day”

To all the great Mom's out there enjoy your day. You deserve it more than you know. I always think about what my “Ma” did for me to raise me right and thank God my daughter takes after her mom and not me. Enough said on that... LOL. This month I want to focus on our makeup meeting for the cancelled meeting in March. We were able to secure the Wilmington Knights of Columbus for June 27th, 2023. Unfortunately, it is only 2 weeks after the June 13th meeting, but we did not want to go too far into prime-time vacation period. It is important that we get as many members as possible to attend the spring meetings. This way we can meet our quorum and have our 10 meetings for the year. I know it is hard that time of year with vacations and more carriers off, not to mention the already understaffing issues we already have. But it is greatly appreciated in advance for anyone that can attend. Don't worry I will be reminding everyone at the meetings and here until then.

A number of us were able to attend the region 14 RAP session put on by our own Rick DiCecca and his office. Next month I will have some pictures and talk about my experience a little more. But “Thank You” now to the membership for allowing us to be able to attend an incredible learning experience.

As usual I want to remind everyone to please send us your address changes. If you know of someone not receiving their wake-up or the postal record from the NALC please tell them to get in touch with us. There are many ways you can get these changes to us. You can use the coupons in the wake-up and mail them to us. You can e-mail me at JESBR25@gmail.com or you can call the office with them. When I receive or find an address correction, I also notify the NALC national office as well each month. This way you will receive any notifications you should receive from both of us at the branch level as well as national. The USPS does not notify us of address changes... Shocking I know. The weather is getting nicer so try to enjoy what you can.

Snapple Fact #61: Pigs can get sunburn.

Joe Stearns

"It's Me, Hi, I'm The Problem It's Me"

I'd like to start out this month's article with some positive news, as Lawrence has been added to the Hiring Part-Time Flexible MOU to the tune of 25 PTFs to achieve. Hopefully the added pay and benefits of the PTF position will catch the eyes of those looking for career opportunities and bring some relief to the carriers in the Lawrence installation. In other good news, the changes necessary to implement rate changes for Step AA PTFs took effect on April 8, 2023. NALC and USPS had settled an interpretive dispute over the Postal Service's method of calculating overtime pay, Sunday premium pay, general wage increases, and cost of living adjustments (COLAs) for Part-Time Flexible (PTF) city letter carriers in Step AA. Before the implementation on April 8 PTFs at Step AA were being underpaid. The new rates for PTFs in Step AA should reflect the following: Sunday premium - \$5.53 per hour, Straight time rate - \$22.13 per hour, Overtime rate - \$33.20 per hour, Penalty overtime rate - \$44.27 per hour. USPS is tentatively planning to compensate the affected carriers their back pay on their July 21, 2023 paychecks.

Sometimes it seems like many of the practices and procedures implemented by management were just made to aggravate us. But with TIAREAP looming and FSS reportedly being phased out, management is receiving directives from higher up to hold carriers to "averages" and made up report standards like DOIS. To be clear, if and when FSS is phased out, office times will likely INCREASE, due to having more flats to case. The M-39 Handbook is clear regarding office standards; 18 letters a minute, 8 flats a minute, (SPRs are considered flats for the purposes of casing them) and 70 pieces of mail pulled down per minute. Beware of supervisors and members of management who tell you the standard is bare minimum and shows a lack of effort by the carrier. The M-39 also states: "No carrier shall be disciplined for failure to meet standards, except in cases of unsatisfactory effort which must be based on documented, unacceptable conduct that led to the carrier's failure to meet office standards." Carriers should also know there are no street standards. National level settlement M-00304 states: "In keeping with the principle of a fair day's work for a fair day's pay, it is understood that there is no set pace at which a carrier

must walk and no street standard for walking." I'm sure I'm not alone when I say I've had days where the mail is heavy but I'm making great pace on my route, and other days where the mail is light but I'm moving like I'm stuck in the mud. As long as you're doing your best and making an honest effort, management should not be harassing you about your performance. If you have questions or concerns about these issues make sure to contact your steward and the branch office.

Another issues that just won't seem to go away is carriers working off the clock. I've said it before and I'll say it again, I don't think we are paid enough for what we do on the clock, so why would you work for free? I certainly don't mean to lump everyone into these comments, but with better weather and longer days comes the opportunity to meet for social gatherings or activities after work. The pressure mounts to finish on time, and we look to get a head start on the day. Working off the clock will not fix our staffing problems. If you want to volunteer, community service, donating blood, or donating to the local food bank (Food Drive May 13!) are more fulfilling options for your extra time. While we're on the subject section 519.51 and 519.52 of the Employee and Labor Relations manual covers management's requirement to grant administrative leave to carriers who wish to donate blood, bone marrow, stem cells, blood platelets, or organs with appropriate management approval.

519.511 Policy

All postal employees are urged to cooperate fully with the public blood donation programs for the health and security of their community. The time necessary includes the time required for travel and the time required by the medical facility to process the blood donations.

519.521 Policy

Career postal employees who wish to donate bone marrow, stem cells, blood platelets, or organs may be granted administrative leave, subject to the limitations in 519.522, with appropriate management approval. Administrative leave is not available to bone marrow or organ recipients.

In Solidarity,

Tony Bossi



Confidentiality and privacy are a priority.

The USPS EAP gives employees and family members confidential access to the programs and services needed to live healthier. EAP counselors have master's degrees and are licensed professionals. Your privacy is protected by strict federal and state confidentiality laws and regulations and by professional ethical standards for counselors. Information you share with the EAP may not be released to anyone without your prior written consent, except as required by law (e.g. when a person's emotional condition is a threat to him or herself or others, or there is suspected child or elder abuse) or the issuance of a court order upon a showing of good cause.

Your EAP is here for you around the clock. Reach out to us 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Our website — EAP4YOU.com — offers a wealth of information, tools and resources available any time. Professionals are ready to take your call at:
800-327-4968 (800-EAP-4YOU) or TTY: 877-492-7341.



CALL US TODAY: 800-327-4968
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WWW.EAP4YOU.COM

Region 14 Training & Rap Session



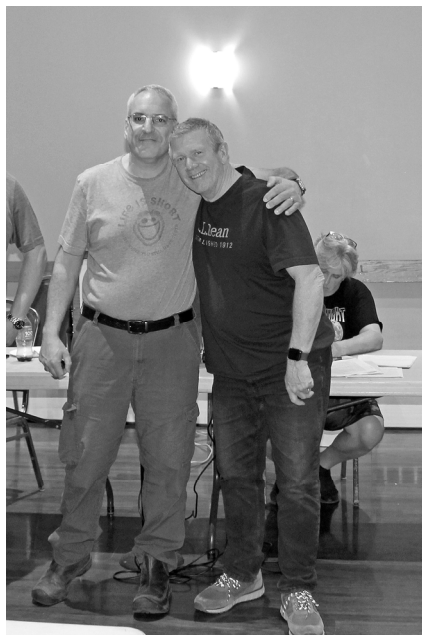
The 2023 Region 14 Training & RAP Session was held in Manchester NH in April. Pictured above is Branch 25 Vice-President Tony Bossi participating in a skit about PDIs. Pictured below is RWCA Dave Barbuzzi during one of his classes on OWCP.



Tewksbury Letter Carrier Pete Marchand received public birthday wishes from one of his business customers.



Dave and Branch 25 Executive VP Paul Desmond both received their 35-year NALC membership pins at the April branch meeting.



BRANCH 25 RETIREE GRATUITY VOUCHER

Name: _____
 (as it will appear on plaque)

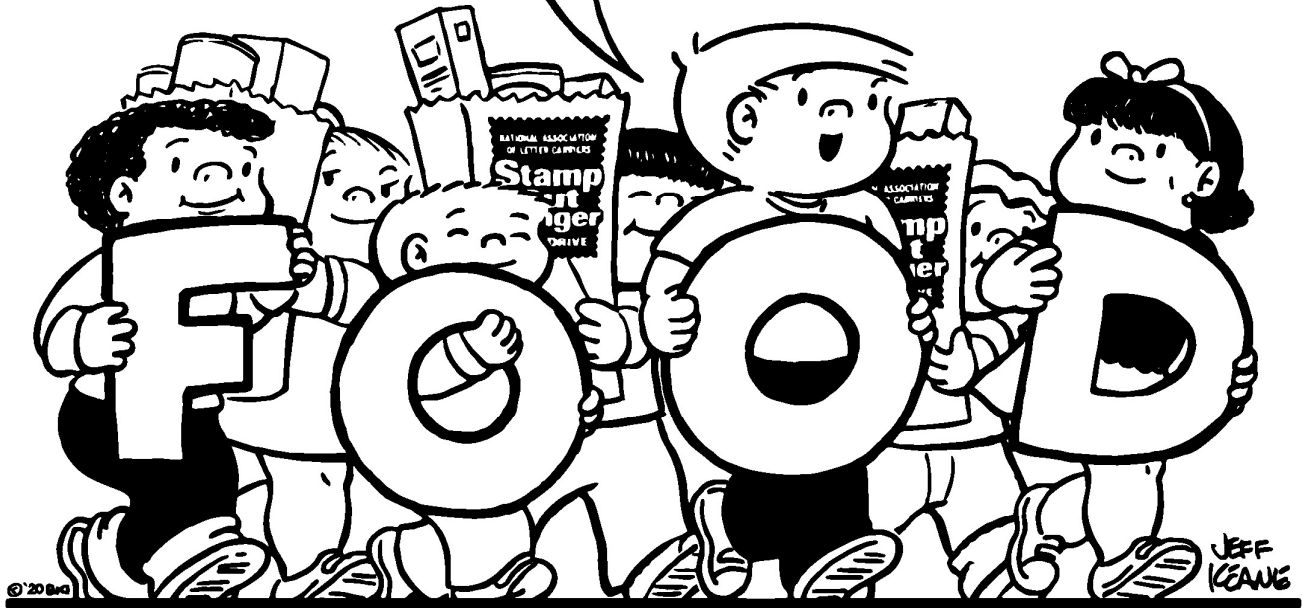
P.O. Retiring from: _____

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

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FAMILIES THIS
YEAR!



LETTER CARRIERS' FOOD DRIVE

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

National Partners



Recent Retirements



Two recent retirees out of Peabody, Kevin Franey & Jim McCarthy received their retirement gratuities at the April branch meeting.



Former Branch President, Dave Barbuzzi retired from the Postal Service after 35 years. Dave continues to work for the NALC as RWCA for Regions 11 & 14

60 Years of NALC Membership



Branch 25 President Dan Wheeler and Trustee Bob Cronin had the pleasure to visit with Donald Nolan to present him with his 60-year membership pin and letter of appreciation from NALC National President Brian Renfroe. Donald was a carrier in Newburyport and former President and Vice-President of Branch 108, Newburyport. Donald retired in 1992 after 30 years of delivering mail. He shared some memories, including those of the 1970 Strike and how the postal Service brought Naval Reservists in to case mail while the letter carriers were out. Congratulations Donald!

Former Danvers Carrier John Paul Jones also received his 60-year pin and letter from Trustee Bob Cronin and President Dan Wheeler. John Paul started in 1962 and spent 36 years as a letter carrier. He was active in Branch 33 for years before retiring in 1998. The picture on the left shows John Paul circa 1970. Shorts for letter carriers had just been approved and the vehicle was the old DJ model Jeep. Congratulations John Paul!



WAKE UP

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Web: www.nalcbranch25.com

First Class Mail
U.S. POSTAGE
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Permit No. 409
TEWKSBURY, MA



at the next meeting
May 9th
K of C Wilmington
8:00 PM

Tewksbury Letter Carrier Andy Coulter and Shop Steward Mike Cahill were recently awarded their 25-year service awards. Pictured left to right are Cliff Faldasz, Joe Richmond, Branch 25 President Dan Wheeler, Shop Steward Mike Cahill, Andy Coulter, and Postmaster Ray White.

