



WAKE UP!

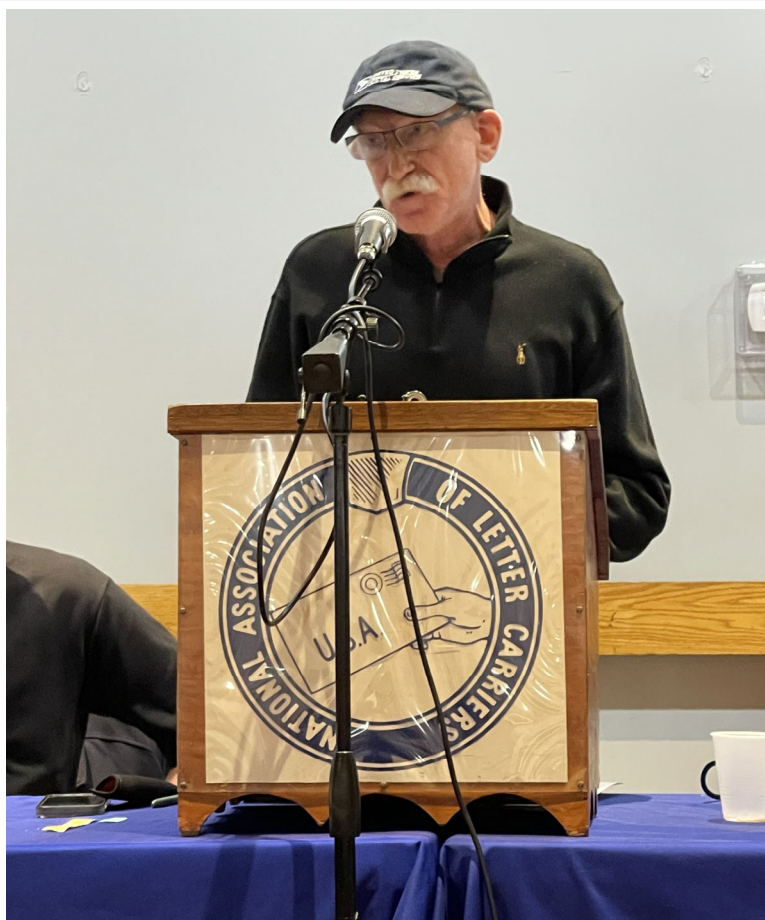
President/ Editor
Daniel P. Wheeler

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



Retired Wakefield Carrier Steve Pickett spoke about H.R. 82 at the April branch meeting. As previously written in the Wake Up H.R. 82 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.

President's Message

I will start this month's message by congratulating Tony Bossi on his appointment to the position of Regional Grievance Assistant for Region 14. Tony, the former steward in Billerica, served the past few years as Branch 25 Vice President. Prior to Tony's appointment to his current position he served Region 14 as their Regional Office Assistant. Tony's new position did not allow him to serve as Branch VP as well and he officially resigned as of April, 1, 2024. Tony will still be around at branch meetings unless his travel for the new job conflicts. I am very excited for Tony and his new opportunity at the regional level and I know he will do great things going forward!

I have appointed Salem Steward, Gilbert Paredes, as Tony's replacement as vice president. Gilbert was previously a trustee for the branch. Tony has left some big shoes to fill but I expect great things out of Gilbert in his new role for the branch!

At the March branch meeting I was able to hand out some more NALC membership pins. Pictured at the bottom receiving his 35-year pin is Trustee Bob Cronin. On the right from top to bottom are: Burlington's Dave Sicard (40 years), Amesbury's Said Bejjani (25 years), Marblehead's Lori Rucker (35 years), Lowell's Eileen Nutter (30 years), and Marblehead's Linda Johnson (35 years).

May 11 is the Letter Carrier's Food Drive. I hope all Branch 25 letter carriers do their part to help make this year's drive as successful as possible. There is a great need in our communities and we can help with that by doing our part !

In Solidarity,
Dan Wheeler



From the Secretary's Desk

I have the privilege to announce the two 2024 Branch 25 Scholarship winners. First, we have Richard Wong who attends Pinkerton Academy, he is the son of Jeff Wong out of the Georgetown office. Second, we have Alexander Wheeler who attends Douglas High School, he is the son of Dan Wheeler out of Holliston and our Branch President. Congratulations to both of these young men and I look forward to meeting them and seeing them get their Scholarships at a future meeting.

May is upon us and with it comes some better weather and hopefully a little drier weather as well. By the time you read this you will have already celebrated Cinco de Mayo and hopefully survived it and have recovered. Happy Mother's Day to all the moms out there, none of us would be where we are without them. So, wish your mom the best. At the end of the month, we celebrate Memorial Day where we honor those who lost their lives while defending their country. While it is a holiday for us, let us remember those who gave their lives to allow us to live our lives the way we do today.

I want to thank Andy Coan for stepping in for me at the meeting in April while I was a little out of commission. We are so lucky to have the officers we have here at Branch 25, where we can cover and help whoever needs it.

This is mostly for the newer members, but also for everyone who reads this. Please look at your name and address on the back page and verify the information. When we get the new employee 1187's sometimes they are hard to read. I might have misspelled your name because sometimes they are hard to read. I apologize if I have but just let me know and I will correct it.

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 April 9th.

Snapple Fact # 763 Tigers have striped skin, not just striped fur.

Joe Stearns



Billerica's Jeremy Provost was the April branch meeting attendance prize winner. Congratulations Jeremy!

Calendar of Events

May 1	May Day
May 5	Cinco de Mayo
May 11	Letter Carrier's Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive
May 12	Mothers Day
May 14	Regular Branch Meeting K of C Wilmington 8:00PM Food served at 7:15 PM
May 27	Memorial Day

Branch 25 Directory of Officers

Daniel P. Wheeler	President
Paul G. Desmond	Executive V.P.
Gilbert Paredes	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
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.

Safety & Health

Recently it seems like management is hyper focused on making sure carriers are regular in attendance. Specifically, they are trying to stop carriers from having any unscheduled absences. Their tunnel vision is making management forget that us letter carriers are human beings. We all know that we're supposed to avoid unscheduled absences and be regular in attendance, but we can't control when we get sick, and we don't know how long we will be sick. We have families. We can't control when they get sick. I have two young girls and it seems like they take turns being sick every other week.

Fortunately, we have tools that can protect us from management's overzealous use of discipline to control our attendance. We have the right to grieve disciplinary action, and we have the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA).

FMLA is not a program offered by USPS. It is a LAW passed by Congress on February 5, 1993. FMLA makes it ILLEGAL for an employer to discharge, discipline, or discriminate against an employee for taking any leave that is covered by FMLA. To be eligible for FMLA you

must have worked for the employer for at least 12 months, and have worked at least 1,250 hours in the previous 12 month period. If eligible, you are entitled for up to 12 weeks of unpaid (bummer) leave during the postal leave year to care for yourself or a family member. The leave entitlement is 26 weeks if the leave is for a covered service member. Carriers can use AL, SL, or LWOP.

There are A LOT of conditions that qualify for FMLA. Things like having a baby, or being diagnosed with cancer are pretty obvious. But things like strep throat can also qualify. I had FMLA get approved for when my youngest daughter had an ear infection. If you are incapacitated for three consecutive days and see a doctor, you may qualify for FMLA. Keep in mind, that doesn't mean you have to miss three days of work. Let's say you get diagnosed with strep throat at an urgent care on Sunday, call in sick on Monday, are still recovering and are NS on Tuesday, and return to work on Wednesday. Even though you only called in for one day, you've still met the three day criteria.

If you think you qualify for FMLA, check it off on the back of the 3971 leave form. You will receive a packet in the mail with the FMLA application. Open it immediately and follow the directions inside. You and a healthcare provider will each have sections to fill out. It's not hard to get FMLA approved, but you have to do the work in a timely manner. I usually drop off the application at the doctor's office with a note asking them to fill out their part of the application and then mail it to HRSSC in North Carolina. If you don't think you will be able to get the application back to HRSSC within the time limit on the application (about two weeks) then call HRSSC at (877)477-3273 option 5 and ask for an extension. I have never had an issue getting an extension. It's important to stay on top of your application. If it comes back needing more information, then get the information required and send it back in a timely manner.

FMLA is the law and it is there to protect you, so use it! If you have any questions you can always talk to your steward or call the branch office.

Stay Safe,
Jeremy Provost

From the Treasurer's Desk

I wanted to take a brief second to thank and appreciate everyone who reads the monthly Wake Up! A handful of carriers in my local delivery unit have approached me to speak about articles I've written personally or what other officers have placed in the newsletter. Regardless of criticisms, compliments, and more, it's evident that our message spreads through Branch 25 and I'm grateful our membership stays informed and involved. Thank you for reading.

Many of you are already aware, but for those of us that aren't, Postmaster General Louis DeJoy recently testified in front of Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs regarding the Delivering for America (DFA) plan and the impediments we've seen across the country. The entirety of the hearing can be found on YouTube and testimonies from DeJoy, and his council can be found online on the hsgac.senate.gov website under hearings. I've taken the liberty of watching and taking notes during the nearly three-hour hearing, so my report this month will be lengthy and touch on what was spoken about. For some ease of reading, I'll break down my report by representative and what the contentions and questions were. DeJoy's present council at the hearing spoke first:


Roman Martinez, USPS Board of Governors, spoke about 2024's first quarter financial losses. While the Postal Service brought in \$500M in controllable income, they still posted a \$2.1B net loss in the first quarter. Martinez contributed this loss to how the Postal Service is required to invest pension liabilities; had pension liabilities been invested in a typical 60/40 stock bond portfolio, pension liabilities wouldn't be at a deficit of \$100B, but a surplus of \$800B. Additionally, the Postal Service is liable to pay all increased costs on CSRS retirements for the predecessor Post Office Department, which combined with the pension liability losses is contributed to 80% of the Post Office's losses in 2023. Lastly, our Worker's Compensation Obligations. The Office of the Inspector General (OIG) notes the Postal Service is unable to adopt cost-saving initiatives regarding OWCP. Had the Postal Service been capable of adopting specific cost-saving initiatives that the private sector was able to do, this would give the Post Office roughly \$300M in cash back to them. To close out his testimony, Martinez claims USPS's full year controllable losses were about \$800M, 80% of which were broken down into salary and benefit costs (70%) and

transportation costs (10%), which were both subject to inflation.

Michael Kubayanda, Chairman of the Postal Regulatory Commission, acknowledged the Postal Service's continuing financial decline alongside efficiency and delivery commitment issues. He further spoke about the Atlanta area mail processing and delivery functions, which currently meet delivery commitments roughly 16% of the time, with the most common delivery of first-class mail being four days instead of two. Additionally, he spoke briefly about increased costs for the DFA, which in turn has caused efficiency nationwide to drop by 4%, the largest drop in postal history.

Tammy Hull, USPS Inspector General, also spoke about DeJoy's DFA plan, which was introduced in 2021. She further emphasized the issues that plague both Richmond, VA as well as Atlanta, GA, making claims that there has been significant oversight regarding transportation that has caused an increase in extra mail trips by 700%. Because of this, they introduced what was called "Local Transportation Optimization" that allows all dispatchable mail to remain in postal facilities if it does not meet dispatch departing deadlines. While this initiative was intended to create leeway for carriers working later than truck departures, an audit conducted in a South Houston facility showed over 384,000 pieces of mail being delayed past delivery guarantees, the vast majority of which were parcels.

(Continued on Page 6)



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



From the Treasurer's Desk Continued...

At this point in the meeting, the floor is opened to allow for senators to ask questions to the council and to understand how the DFA plan will be implemented in their states. There was a dozen or so senators that partook in questioning DeJoy and his council, and because of the hearing being nearly three hours long, I've cherry-picked most of the points and people that questioned the council. Again, I'd advise everyone who is reading this and interested to go watch the hearing, as it's full of great information.

Maggie Hassan, D-NH, began her questioning with DeJoy regarding their plan to repurpose and remove distribution centers across the country. Notably, creating these Sorting and Delivery Centers (S&DC) and Network Delivery Centers (NDC) and moving operations to these facilities will lead to a decrease in service commitments. In New Hampshire, Hassan speaks to the DFA's removal of the Manchester processing facility, where all operations will be shifted to Boston, MA. She further explains that commutes in Boston, MA rank highly regarding the worst commutes in the country and some employees in surrounding areas may be required now to commute up to two hours each way. She also states the DFA plans to remove the White River Junction processing facility in Vermont, where operations will be moved 150 miles south to Hartford, CT. In Northern New Hampshire, rural communities rely dramatically on the Postal Service, as cell service may be unreliable, high-speed internet is unobtainable, and some roads may still not be adequately paved. Additionally, our competitors, like UPS and FedEx, utilize the Postal Service in these areas for last mile delivery. However, audits show these customers (those who live in rural areas), are the most vulnerable to mail delays across the country. Lastly, Hassan states one thing that should resonate with all postal employees alike: "We should listen to our postal employees. They are experts in delivering mail in their respective states and know better than anyone else".

Roger Marshall, R-KS, further emphasized the importance of Hassan's message. He informed the committee of the work local law enforcement has done with the Postal Service to keep his streets safe and drug free, boasting the capture of nearly 66,000 fentanyl pills, a cheap and volatile drug that takes over a hundred lives daily across the United States. He also raised the concern

of the Kansas City metro area where only 34% of mail is delivered within the commitment window and averages a three-day delivery timeframe.

Jackie Rosen, D-NV, continues to echo the sentiment raised by the previous two senators. However, she raises the concern of the DFA removing one of only two processing facilities in Nevada. The DFA would remove the Reno facility and processing operations would take place across the border in California. This would mean any mail that is sent from Reno to Reno would need to travel 260 miles round trip across I-80 and the Donner Pass to California to be processed. DeJoy admitted to being unfamiliar with the Donner Pass and Rosen informs him on average, the Donner Pass is closed 37 days out of the year due to extreme weather conditions. DeJoy currently has no plan on how mail will travel and be processed when these delays occur.

Richard Blumenthal, D-CT, focused his time more so on the Postal Police Reform Act of 2023 which is a bipartisan bill that clarifies authority for Postal Police off real postal property. However, when he asked if he was familiar with the bill, DeJoy responded he was not and has yet to read it. Blumenthal urged him to read the bill as he does not believe the Postal Service is taking enough action to protect their letter carriers. He further asked Hull if enough was being done to protect the employees, and while she did not directly respond to the question, she stated that local law enforcement partnerships are significant in reducing crime, further pushing the narrative that letter carrier assaults are too great to be handled by the service.

Lastly, **Laphonza Butler, D-CA**, asked DeJoy for clarification on a statement he made: "Coming up on an election, I expect the service to slow down". If you're unaware, California has nearly 40,000,000 constituents in the state, which was an "all-mail" ballot state. She further explained her own mother lives in Georgia and was forced to wait in line to vote in the previous election as the Postal Service failed to deliver a ballot to her in a timely manner. She also stated she does not like DeJoy's "acceptance of exclusion", basically claiming his acceptance of lower commitment deadlines and service performance is unacceptable.

From the Treasurer's Desk Cont.

She also further elaborated on an issue she's facing in California that many other states are plagued with. Two postal facilities, one in Bridgeport, CA, and another in Imperial, CA, have been closed for over a year, due to water line breaks and fires respectively. Both facilities have been closed for at least a year and employees are working out of trailers on the site. There is no estimation as to when the facilities will be rebuilt or fixed, and Butler posed the question: How can the Postal Service be confident in delivering ballots successfully when they cannot even operate out of their own facilities?

The hearing was substantially longer than I've given you here. As a matter of fact, Gary Peters (D-MI), Rand Paul (R-KY), Ron Johnson (R-WI), James Lankford (R-OK), Tom Carper (D-DE), Jon Ossoff (D-GA) and Josh Hawley (R-MO) all spoke during this hearing. I've left out questioning and testimonial from these individuals as often times they will touch on delivery delays or service commitment issues, which were previously mentioned from other individuals present at the hearing, or other mitigating factors that might not be applicable (For instance, Senator Paul talks about outsourcing craft bargaining work to the private sector to avoid paying guaranteed benefits [pension commitments] to employees it cannot afford).

If you've made it this far, I appreciate your attention. We're currently still awaiting more information regarding contract updates and how the arbitration process is going. Any information that is received at the branch will be published and available for all the membership to read.

Of the people, for the people,

James Metilinos

Welcome New Members

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.

Mark Devries Tewksbury	Noah Greene Concord
Stephen Herdegen Haverhill	Burk Ian Newburyport
Yasser Khader Peabody	Frank Megan Billerica
George Metros Tewksbury	Coride Pacheco Peabody
Julia Paschal Bedford	Patrick Powell Amesbury
Francis Ratkevicius Haverhill	Caitlin Ramsey Newburyport
Luis Rivera Lowell	Jack Brown Beverly
Ryan Casino Tewksbury	Ashley Chepulis Gloucester
Allison Clarkson Dracut	Taylor Couto Dracut
Carmelo Feliciano Peabody	Derek Goff Peabody
Kevin Harrington Salem	Brian Hayes Peabody
Gary Hewson Merrimac	Michael Howe N. Chelmsford
Grace Kelly Beverly	
Gaven LaValley Peabody	
Kendra Locke Topsfield	
James McNulty Lowell	
John O'Toole Holliston	
Matthew Schmidt Manchester	
Lovina Vezina Haverhill	
Connor Wood Amesbury	

WAKE UP

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at the next meeting
May 14
K of C Wilmington
8:00 PM



Region 14 National Business Agent Rick DiCecca received his 40-year NALC membership pin at the branch meeting. Congrats on 40 years of fighting for our members, Rick!