



WAKE UP!

President/ Editor
Dave Barbuzzi

Publisher
Chris Bruno

Volume 45 Issue 6

June 2021

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

363.1 Policy

Whether Postal Service employees choose to participate in social media *on their own time* is their decision. However, when using social media in a personal capacity, employees may not speak for or act on behalf of the Postal Service.

f. **Be responsible.** Abide by existing Postal Service privacy, information security, ethics, and copyright policies. No employee shall post content included in the below listed categories:

1. Information that infringes on another individual's privacy rights.
2. Personally identifiable or sensitive information, including sensitive business information (e.g., information on Postal Service contracting agreements, disciplinary actions, pending administrative hearings, and internal memos).
3. Personal attacks, accusations, threats, or discriminatory comments targeting specific individuals or groups.
4. Endorsements of political parties, candidates, or groups.
5. Discussions of topics unrelated to the Postal Service's mission.
6. Profanity — any content that is generally considered obscene, deceptive, or defamatory.
7. Content advocating unlawful action.
8. Material that violates copyright laws.

The excerpt to the left is referenced in Vice President Dan Wheeler's article this month

President's Message

“450”

If you guessed that's the number of days between in-person branch meetings, you are correct. To borrow a phrase from former Patriot's coach Pete Carroll, I'm "pumped and jacked" to get back to meeting in person. Don't get me wrong, I'm going to miss seeing some of the kids that were sitting on your laps as you attended the zoom meetings, I'm gonna miss my beer-sipping, recliner-sitting, tv-watching friend. I can't thank those of you that have attended the ZOOM meetings enough. BUT...I'm not going to miss the reason that kept us apart!

Your participation has allowed us to conduct the business of the branch without missing a beat. I am proud of all of you and I am proud to represent you. It's been a long 15 months. The pandemic is not over, and we can't let our guard down, but we can attempt to restore normalcy. I have spoken to the management at the Knights of Columbus. The hall will be set up for 100 people, so there should be ample space to spread out. We will have pizza for dinner, the only difference is that we will have a couple volunteers serving the pizza.

As you are probably aware, with the ratification of the 2019-2023 National Agreement on March 8, 2021, there was a local implementation period from April 28 - May 28. Thanks to the help of Assistant Secretary Tony Bossi, Vice President Dan Wheeler and Executive Vice President Paul Desmond, we were able to address the 29 locals in the branch. At press time, all but three of the locals have been signed. Once all of them are signed, the branch website will be updated with the new 2019-2023 LMOU's. I would like to thank all the letter carriers that made suggestions and I would also like to thank the managers that worked in good faith to wrap things up.

On the next page, you can read Paul Desmond's article where in part he writes about the Postal Reform Act of 2021 (HR 3076) that has been introduced in the House. On May 19, a companion bill was introduced on the Senate floor. This bill, S 1720 was introduced with 19 bi-partisan co-sponsors. There are 10 Democratic and 10 Republican Senators that have shown their support for the bill by acting as sponsor and co-sponsors. This is significant in that 60 votes are required to break a filibuster. This initial strong bi-partisan support is encouraging. Please contact your representatives in Congress to ask that they support HR 3076 (House of Representatives) and S 1720 (Senate).

I want to again remind everyone that this fall there will be steward elections throughout the branch. Our by-laws dictate the election procedure and the by-laws state as follows:

During the month of October, of election years, an election of Shop Stewards shall be held in each station or unit. The President shall appoint an election committee of three (3) members, in good

standing, in each station or unit. The committee shall organize and receive nominations during the second week of October, and no later than the 15th of the month they shall post the names of all the nominees (in alphabetical order) for a period of seven (7) days, after which the vote shall be taken by secret ballot. The election committee shall supervise the election, count all ballots and declare the nominee receiving a majority of votes cast, the elected Shop Steward and then notify the Branch Secretary at the Union office. The nominee receiving the second highest vote shall be the Alternate Shop Steward.

If you would like to volunteer to serve on the election committee in your office, please contact the Union office as soon as possible. If you are interested in serving as steward and would like to know what that entails or would like training, please contact the Union office.

As I mentioned last month, we have a busy fall coming up. At the October branch meeting we will have nominations for branch officers, and nominations for the National Convention that is currently scheduled to take place in Chicago in 2022. The branch has gotten younger during the course of the pandemic with the addition of James Metilinos as Trustee and Chris Bruno as Wake-Up! Publisher. That is a good trend that I would like to see continue.

There are currently two special route inspections scheduled in the branch. One will take place in Amesbury while the other is scheduled in Beverly. I am glad to see that there are carriers willing to take the initiative to address their overburdened routes. In case you aren't aware, if your route shows 30 minutes or more of overtime or assistance 3 or more days a week over 6 consecutive weeks, you qualify for a special route inspection and said inspection must be completed within 28 days of your request. There is a form on the branch website (nalcbranch25.com) under the "Carrier Resources" tab. It is listed as "SRI Request Form". You can print the form off of the website, fill it out in duplicate and turn it in to management and be sure to get a copy of the signed form for yourself. If you do request a special inspection and are denied, please contact the branch office so that we can investigate. If you request an inspection and are approved, please contact the branch office so that we can arrange to provide you with training and answer any questions that you may have. I recently had a zoom meeting with a letter carrier to answer his questions about the special inspection process.

Finally, it gives me great pleasure to announce the winners of this year's Branch 25 Scholarships. They are Madison McKeon and Julia Stearns.

Once again, I hope to see you at the branch meeting on June 1.

Stay informed!

Dave Barbuzzi

Executive Vice-President's Report

It probably is coming quicker than most people expected, but the state of Massachusetts is dropping most Covid restrictions at the end of May. The original prediction was by the Fall. Restaurants and stadiums will be open at 100% capacity on May 29th if they choose to. This also means meeting halls can open and we will be having our monthly branch meeting in person on June 1 at the Wilmington Knights of Columbus. I hope many of you can attend. Businesses can have their own restrictions but it seems like things will be as close to normal as we have seen in the last 18 months. With a high percentage of completely vaccinated people in the state, I am expecting a good and safe summer.

By the time you get this it will be very close to Memorial Day and into choice vacation period in most of our stations. The vacation calendars should be posted and all PTFs and CCAs should be checking them to see what is available for summer hold downs. If there are any questions about how to bid on these temporary vacancies, ask your steward or call the Union office. Some Local Memorandums cover the process, otherwise it is a verbal bid. If the vacancy is going to be for 5 scheduled work-days, then it is available for a hold down. Any CCA with 60 days of service is eligible. One thing to keep in mind is that a CCA on a hold down should not be scheduled to work in any other office on a scheduled day of the hold down. If this happens call the Union office.

A bipartisan bill was introduced in the House Committee on Oversight as Postal Reform Act of 2021 (HR 3076) on 5-11-2021. The Act included a repeal of the mandate of the Postal Service to pre-fund retiree health benefits into the future. The service would be required to make fair and realistic payments on a yearly basis, not pre-fund well into the future. This is a difference of billions of dollars each year to the Postal Service. The NALC has been advocating for this for years. The Act, as it is currently written, would also reform the Federal Employee Health Benefits to maximize Medicare for active Postal employees that retire and reach 65 years of age. How this would affect active and retired employees financially is yet to be determined. The Act has advanced out of the committee but has yet to be discussed on the House floor. If the bill is discussed on the House floor, there will probably be changes in the form of amendments, and it could end up very different. If there is something you like or don't like about this bill, contact your rep in Congress. There are other aspects to the bill that can be seen on the NALC website such as mandatory 6-day delivery. There is no guarantee that this bill will be enacted as law, but it is positive news that there is a bipartisan bill to improve the financial situation for the Postal Service. How it all ends up remains to be seen.

We have had questions about the Postal Service offering voluntary early retirements for carriers. The easy answer is no. I know there are a lot of carriers that want a different answer but the reality is there is not a surplus of carriers. If anything, we need more and I don't think I am saying anything you don't already know. There was an offering, without any financial incentive, for managers because of the re-alignment of managerial positions, but this really doesn't have an effect on us. There probably will be changes to some Postmaster and supervisory positions but as of now there is no early retirement offers for carriers.

Enough about work, the Red Sox are on almost every night and there is nothing like Bruins playoff hockey. I hope to see many of you at the branch meeting June 1, Bring someone along with you. Enjoy the weather and have a nice summer.

Keep your head up!

Paul Desmond

Calendar of Events

June 1	Regular Monthly Meeting K of C Wilmington, 8:00PM School Street Extension <u>IN PERSON MEETING!!</u> Food will be served 7:00PM
June 6	D-Day WWII
June 14	Flag Day
June 18	Go Fishing Day
June 19	National Kissing Day
June 20	Father's Day
June 23	National Let It Go Day
June 25	Take Your Dog To Work Day
June 28	Paul Bunyan Day
June 30	Meteor Day

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
John McNulty	Trustee
James Metilinos	Trustee
Anthony Bossi	Assistant Secretary
Chris Bruno	Wake-Up Publisher
Bob Cronin	MBA-NSBA Rep
Steve Pickett	Assistant Safety Officer
Richard Donlon	Asst Health Benefits 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 Wednesday April 28, 2021 trustees Bruce M Johnson, Daniel J Raske, James Metilinos and John K McNulty audited the financial books and found them in order.

Beginning balance as of June 30, 2020 \$406,359.11

Ending balance as of December 31, 2020 \$434,277.81

Daniel J Raske *John K McNulty*

Bruce Johnson *James Metilinos*

Telehealth (noun) healthcare facilitated by telecommunications technology. It's important to note that the operative word in the definition is facilitated, that is, to assist or make easier. Telehealth is by no means an end all and be all in itself. Obviously, there are times when a personal visit to a health care professional is essential. There are other times, however, when telehealth can be an extremely useful tool (COVID-19 concerns, or your doctor is not available). You can visit with a board certified doctor in minutes, 24/7, on your smart phone, tablet or computer. Telehealth visits are covered by the NALC Health Benefit Plan.

Using the visits you can:

Get care for common health problems like the flu, fever and more.

Feel better faster. Doctors can assess your condition, provide a treatment plan and, if appropriate, send a prescription to the pharmacy of your choice.

Note 1: You'll pay just a \$10 copay through our plan.

Note 2: According to recent survey data from American Well, almost 90% of people who have used telehealth are satisfied and would use it again.

For computer savvy plan members you can download the mobile app at www.nalchbptelehealth.org or call 888-541-7706 to access this service.

A couple of quick afterthoughts:

COVID-19 is still with us.

Shedding winter clothing means more skin exposed to UVA and UVB rays. Take the necessary precautions. Sunscreen is helpful but not foolproof. Dermatologists recommend SPF lotion of 30 or higher, although higher than 30 is of dubious value.

Keep on truckin'

Rich Donlon

“Bug Game”

“It should have been treated as a rain delay.” That’s what Roger Clemens said about the game on October 5, 2007. Clemens wasn’t pitching that night in Cleveland, but in the 7th inning his Yankee teammate Joba Chamberlain was. It was game 2 of the ALDS. The Yankees were winning 1-0 when Chamberlain came in for relief. He was having a great rookie season and if he could get the Yankees to the 9th inning the ball would be given to Mariano Rivera, the best closer in MLB history, to win it.

Chamberlain got the 3 outs in the 7th. It was in the 8th when he faced his challenge. Rain? No, bugs! A swarm of bugs! They are called midges, small, mosquito-like bugs that show up in the Great Lakes region. The bugs don’t bite they are just very annoying.

On that night, the temperature was 81 degrees and dew points had reached the 60s meaning there was an excessive amount of moisture in the air. Thanks to the growing October heat wave, the temperature of Lake Erie had become just warm enough for the midges to hatch. Though midges typically don’t travel far, according to Kelly Dobeck, a Cleveland-based meteorologist, the swarm could have been nudged toward the stadium by a light northern wind and then were attracted to the stadium lights.

“I just remember Joba grabbing the back of his neck to wipe off sweat and his hand was black, full of bugs,” says Doug Mientkiewicz, the Yankees first baseman. The swarm effected all the infield players, including Derek Jeter, but none as much as the pitcher. The theory is that the bugs went for the highest person on the field. One walk and two wild pitches later, the rookie had allowed the Indians to tie the game at one. He made it through the inning but Cleveland won the game in the 11th. They went on to win the series in 4 games.

I share this story so we can all feel sorry for the Yankees. Just kidding. I share it to remind us that anything can happen outdoors so be prepared. Have bug spray with you. (Although it was so humid during the bug game that spray made the bugs stick to the skin even more) Have a first- aid kit to treat cuts. Have some Tylenol or other pain reliever with you too. As Cleveland manager Eric Wedge put it, “I’ve seen some of

the strangest things happen, with bugs or bees or other animals, but it’s the mindset that you have overall that allows you to make your way through something like that.

Stay safe,

Jim Salvati

Baseball Trivia: What two teams were in the other ALDS and what was the series score?


Notes From The Publisher

Hello fellow brothers and sisters, I wanted to thank everyone who has reached out with helpful tidbits to help me succeed at publishing the Wake Up. My way to return the favor is as follows. If anyone has something interesting going on in the office with other employees and wants to spread the word on it please contact me and let’s get the news out there.

I feel like it would be a good way to connect some different offices to a certain goal such as a charity, a sporting event, an activity or anything like that. Please feel free to email me with ideas at chrisbrunob25@gmail.com and we can talk about it.

Keep Reading

Chris Bruno

 **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



Vice President's Report

“TMI”

When I was younger my sister used to be fond of saying the phrase TMI, as in too much information, when someone was oversharing personal information. Recently, I am seeing a lot of things online that have me thinking TMI to myself. There was one carrier who posted a plea for advice on what he feared would be his pending removal. The carrier, who said he had been a CCA for 2 years, was placed on Emergency Placement for live streaming himself while driving a postal truck. For those who may not be familiar with the term live streaming, it means someone is taking a video of themselves and it is playing live on the internet. He said he loved his job and was worried about the future of his employment. If you are asking yourself why one may need to live stream themselves while driving a postal truck, the answer is you do not!

The other post which caught my attention was from a 25-year letter carrier. She had been sent home for leaving her vehicle running when she got out of it. This letter carrier claimed she had been working for 25 years and “I always leave my vehicle running when I exit”. If you are asking yourself why someone would document the fact that they have been leaving their vehicle running for the last 25 years, the answer is you should not be! Neither of these carriers is from around here and I will most likely not ever hear of what becomes of them after these incidents. I do not have great hope for the CCA's future employment. The veteran carrier may fare better, but the fact she is essentially writing a statement online about her past safety history is not helpful for sure.

A letter carrier's job is vastly different than when I started. I started my career in the time before scans, scanners, barcodes, MSPs, GPS or RIMS. Management has so many more ways to keep track of where we are and what we are doing nowadays. Unfortunately, many letter carriers are helping management out by providing them with information on what they are doing free of charge. This can be especially damaging when what they are doing is not what they are supposed to be doing. We are living in an online world. That is a fact of 2021. Most everyone reading this article is online to some extent. According to a 2019 social media study by The Manifest shows that 86% of Baby-Boomers (born 1946-64), 81% of Generation X (born 1965-79), 88% of Millennials (born 1980-95) and 89% of Generation Z (born 1996 and

after) use some form of social media daily. Nearly 30% of all users interact more than 10 times per day. More and more of our newly hired letter carriers are younger people who have grown up communicating their daily lives on social media. Everyone has a smartphone and can instantly post a picture, video or thought for the world to see. As letter carriers and postal employees, we need to be aware that what we post, or share could possibly hurt yourself or someone else. The Administrative Support Manual (ASM) which is incorporated into the National Agreement through Article 19 was updated in 2011 to cover social media. Here are a couple of excerpts from section 363 of the ASM: (see front cover)

I would guess that most of what gets posted on social media that may get someone in trouble goes unnoticed, but I would still encourage letter carriers to be in the mindset that anything they share may be seen. This could be seen by management or any other person who decides to pass it on. I do not believe that there is any specific operation to monitor employees' social media posts but who knows? You may have seen the Yahoo News report that came out last month about the Postal Inspection Service's iCop program. It was reported that they were running a covert program which monitored social media for inflammatory content. They monitored social media accounts regarding planned protests occurring internationally and domestically in March, when the World Wide Rally for Freedom and Democracy was scheduled to take place, according to the report. Although this was not focused on employees it is not a big jump to think that something could be done in that regard.

Social media has become such a part of everyday life for most of us we do not always stop to think twice about it. As letter carriers and postal employees, however, we do need to think about what we are putting out there for public consumption. I am sure the CCA who was live streaming himself never gave it a thought it might end his career before it really got started. The veteran letter carrier probably never thought what she was continuing to say after her incident could do her more harm. Hopefully, things work out for these carriers but a little thought ahead of time would have helped.

In Solidarity,
Dan Wheeler

Your EAP is *versatile.*

The USPS Employee Assistance Program offers wide-ranging services to support Postal employees and family members.

Your EAP has the counseling tools and resources designed to help you face life's challenges. The tools we offer can help address issues ranging from anxiety and addiction to insomnia, chronic pain and stress. We also offer mindfulness and meditation training, assistance in coaching to improve leadership skills and tools to increase overall wellness.

- Face-to-face Counseling
- Video Counseling
- Telephonic Counseling
- "In the Moment" Support
- Web-based tools
- Online Counseling
- EAP Orientations
- Suicide Prevention
- Work/Life Balance
- Coaching
- Training
- Consultations
- Critical Incident Response
- Eldercare Resources
- Childcare Resources
- Mentally Prepare for Retirement

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 and professionals are ready to take your call at:

800-327-4968 (800-EAP-4YOU) or TTY: 877-492-7341.

WAKE UP

2500 Main Street
Suite # 201
Tewksbury, MA 01876
Phone: (978) 658-5820
Fax: (978) 658-0888
Web: www.nalcbranch25.com

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



at the next meeting

June 1st

8:00 PM

K of C Wilmington!!



A motley crew of retired Lynnfield employees: Kneeling front and center Mike Kavanagh. Standing l-r: Dave Haight, Nancy Chrisos, Joe Luciano, Jim Gemma, Tony Rauseo, John Psehoyas, Lefty Mintz (clerk), Pat Rafferty (clerk), Steve Starkey, Bill Mongno, Tony Pandolf.