



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



We had two branch meetings in June due to our cancelled meeting earlier this year. Beverly's Doug Murray and Lowell's James Metilinos helped grill burgers and dogs for the members at the second June meeting.

President's Message

At just about the time that this issue of *The Wake Up!* is hitting your mailbox the NALC's 73rd Biennial National Convention will be kicking off right here in Massachusetts. This year's convention will be held at the Boston Convention Center from August 5th through the 9th. Branch 25 is sending 22 delegates. The National Convention is held every two years and is where the future direction of our Union is discussed and planned. Each branch around the country elects delegates to attend. Each elected delegate can vote on the proposed constitutional amendments, resolutions, and appeals that are brought forward to the floor. Every other convention there is an election held for National Officers. However, this year is not one of those years. The next National elections will be held at the 2026 National Convention. I'm not sure how many delegates will be in attendance in Boston, but usually there are somewhere around 6000 at each convention.

Each day there is a general session during the day. This is where all of the business of the convention is conducted. Additionally, before and after the general session each day there are classes and training sessions where delegates get information on a number of different issues. The delegates from Branch 25 run the gamut this year. There are some first-time delegates and some who have attended many previous conventions. Expect more information on the convention happenings from some of the delegates in the next issue of *The Wake Up!*

This year is an election year for branch officers and shop stewards as well. According to the Branch 25 by-laws elections for shop stewards are to be held this October. Any member who has not served in a management position within the last two years is welcome to run for shop steward in their office. I would love to have a shop steward in all our offices. If you are interested in running for steward in your office or even just want to get some information on what the position entails and if you may be interested in representing the Brothers and Sisters in your office, please let me know. The following offices have no steward at the moment:

Amesbury	Andover	Gloucester
Holliston	Manchester	Maynard
Merrimac	Peabody	Topsfield
Woburn		

Many members have been asking what is going on with route adjustments in the branch. The TIAREAP process which was in place for the last two years is no longer in effect. The MOUs expired on June 1 of this year and were not extended. That means, at least for now, we are back to route inspections the old fashioned way according to the M-39. Currently in the branch we have had a few routes getting special inspections on route which have requested them. I am not aware of any plans that the Postal Service has to conduct full blown route inspections in any offices.

There have been rumors that some sort of process similar to TIAREAP will return in the near future, but those are just rumors at this point. There has also been talk that there will be a new agreed upon route adjustment process as part of our next collective bargaining agreement. Time will tell the tale. Until then I would encourage each carrier to deliver their routes as if the data may be looked at for the purpose of evaluating and adjusting their route.

Unfortunately some of the numbers that postal management gleaned from TIAREAP such as 22 minutes loading time and 1-hour office time are still being pushed on letter carriers. These numbers were never mandates on letter carriers. You will not find them in any handbook or manual. Even when TIAREAP was live they were only parameters for evaluation teams to look at. If local management is pushing these made up numbers in your office please keep in mind that they are just that...made up! I hope everyone enjoys the rest of the summer and we hope to see you at the branch meeting in September!

In Solidarity,

Dan Wheeler

Executive Vice-President's Message

I was hoping by this time to be able to report on the details of a new national contract, but as of this writing, no such luck. It would be nice if the agreement was resolved or arbitrated by now, but it is not out of line with the time frame of previous negotiations. Please, don't trust what you may hear on social networks about the negotiations or any possible agreements as accurate, until you hear it from the NALC. Information sometimes gets misinterpreted as it gets passed on. The last update on the NALC website said that the parties have reached agreement on many issues and are working to resolve the few remaining issues, although they are not releasing more details at this point. Hopefully, we will have good news soon. Until then we will still work under the current contract.

All carriers, both active and retired, will be receiving information about signing up for one of the Postal Service Health Benefits Program during open season this year. The NALC plan and Blue Cross plan have been included along with many others. The full list will be available and there will be more information on how to sign up coming to everyone by October we are told. The list of the plans that have currently been approved to be in the PSHB is on the OPM website. Everyone will be required to sign up for a plan or you will be assigned to a plan like what you currently have. We have a National Convention in Boston the week of August 5-9, and I expect there will be more information on this subject at the HBP seminars. I would hope that everyone picks the plan they desire and does not leave the choice up to OPM.

We have many carriers inquiring about transferring from one office to another. The rules apply differently from local transfers to transfers to other geographical regions. In order to be eligible to transfer locally, you need to be a career employee for 18 months. If you would like to transfer to another geographical region, you are required to have 1 year as a career employee. PTFs are eligible to transfer. Transfers are offered on a first come first serve basis, not based on seniority. When you do request a transfer there is a questionnaire that is sent to a manager in your station. There are 3 criteria that are looked at. Performance, Safety and Attendance. One of the questions asked is also whether the carrier has live discipline. All requests should be made on Liteblue, and you can request transfers to multiple stations. Any current vacancies are not listed on Liteblue, so if you

would like to transfer somewhere you should make the request. Transfers are generally not done overnight, so expect to have to wait, but the sooner you make the request, the higher you will be on the list for each station. Transfers can be denied by the gaining station, but the denial can be the subject of a grievance if the transfer is denied without good reason.

I hope everyone is staying hydrated, it has been a hot summer. A lot of our stations have been good about supplying bottles of water to carriers as they leave the office, but usually that is not enough. I always advise carriers to have their own supply of water and/or sports drinks in a cooler. We probably still have a couple of heat waves left so stay safe. The next branch meeting is on September 10th at the Knights of Columbus in Wilmington. There should be updates from the delegates to the national convention and as always food will be served at 7:15pm.

Keep your head up and stay safe!

Paul Desmond

Calendar of Events

August 5-9	NALC National Convention Boston, MA
September 2	Labor Day
September 8	Patriots Opening Day 1:00 PM @ Bengals
September 9	Regular Branch Meeting K of C Wilmington 8:00PM Food served at 7:15 PM
September 22	First Day of Fall

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.



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.

Luis Gonzalez	Lawrence
Joshua Montanez	Lawrence
Richard Perron	Merrimac
Jacob Scatterday	Rockport
Ryan Silva	Lowell
Matthew Tichnor	Wayland
Egil Desousa	Haverhill
Julie Clark	Haverhill
Sean Curran	Gloucester
Janice Denincourt	Haverhill
Anthony Dietz	Lawrence
Thomas Gibney	Beverly
Zoraida Gonzalez	Sudbury
Justin Kassiotis	Peabody
Miguel Rivas	Lawrence
Nancy Morris	Methuen
Rodriguez Carrasco	Lawrence
Domenic Ricci	Haverhill
Gisell Rodriguez	Lawrence
Faith Barrett	Salem



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 Secretary's Desk

First off I hope everyone is having a great summer and was able to enjoy the Fourth of July. If you have already had vacation I hope it went well and to those still to come enjoy your time we have all earned and deserve it. The heat and humidity has already reared its ugly head. I know in my office we had a carrier who had to have an ambulance come out to get him for heat stroke. Please be careful, stay hydrated, take your breaks and lunch in as cool a place as possible, and don't take any chances. If you feel any symptoms at all, stop what you are doing and access yourself. If you need to call 911 and get help. This is no joke so be careful and watch yourself and your fellow carriers.

I would be remiss if I didn't mention the senseless murder of Chicago letter carrier Octavia Redmond. She was on the job for only 5 years and was only 48 years old. All my thoughts and prayers go out to her family and loved ones in their time of loss. These senseless acts of crime have got to stop. I mentioned it last month but will do it again here. Please call your Congress person or Representative and tell them to support the **"PROTECT OUR LETTER CARRIERS ACT"** HR7629 in the house and S4356 in the senate. It has gotten completely out of control that we have to worry about not being attacked on the street or even killed. If you have friends and family in other states send out a text, email, social media post, or whatever way to get this message out and ask them to call their reps as well. Tell these politicians if they want your vote you need their vote and support for this bill. I know this will not stop everything, but the mechanics of this bill will help deter and actually help prosecute the individuals committing these crimes.

As you read this *Wake Up!* a group of delegates will be attending the NALC biannual convention in Boston. It is being held from Monday August 5th thru Friday August 9th. If this gets to you in time remember you can attend the convention as a guest if you want to check it out. Just come to the BCEC convention center and go to the NALC office there. Go in and show your ID and they will give you a guest pass. You can check out the exhibits and see how things work or attend a workshop where you can learn about various issues. They have a guest seating area inside the main hall to sit in. Check out NALC.org for any and all info about the convention. Also, on the NALC website check out the summer edition of the NALC Activist, it has information about the convention as well

as other vital items important to letter carriers. Should be lots of pictures and information to report back to you in September's *Wake Up!*

Something I wanted to touch on here is correct names and spelling. What I mean by this is when I get everyone's 1187 form that signs you up for the NALC they aren't always legible. It is usually the fact I am getting the third copy of this form. Sometimes these are very hard to read, and I do my best to get the address and name spelling correct. I know some of you have had the privilege of hearing my tender beautiful voice (yes I will not hear the end of that) to ask if I have it correct. Also, I have to compare with the NALC files, and they will have different spelling or even names than I do. So please check the wake-up you are reading and see if I have your name correct and the spelling, and verify the address is correct. When you get your Postal Record from the NALC do the same there. If it is incorrect you can call National or notify me and I will pass on the correct info.

Lastly, our next meeting will be September 10th and the council is looking forward to seeing you there. This fall is a busy one, we have nominations in October and elections in November to the state convention for next year. We also have nominations in October and elections to follow if needed for the officers of the branch. These positions would start January 1st, 2025, and be for a 3-year term. All positions are up for election.

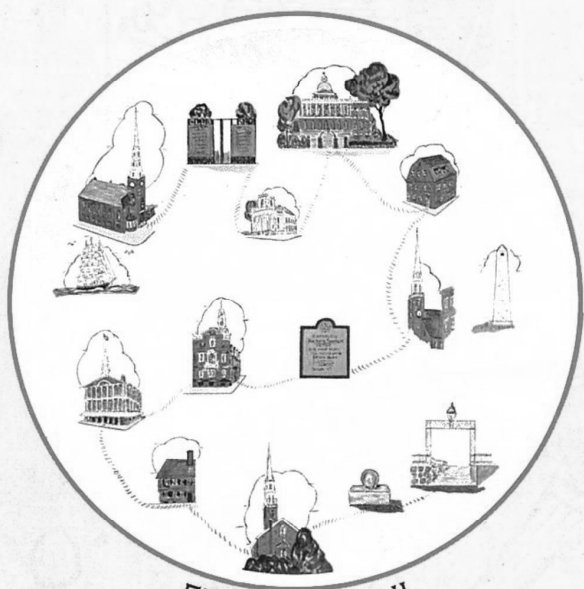
As I always end this, if you have moved, please update your address with the branch. You can call, write, or email me at JESBR25@gmail.com. See you at the branch meeting September 10th.

Snapple Fact # 1234 The Flamingo can only eat when its head is upside down.

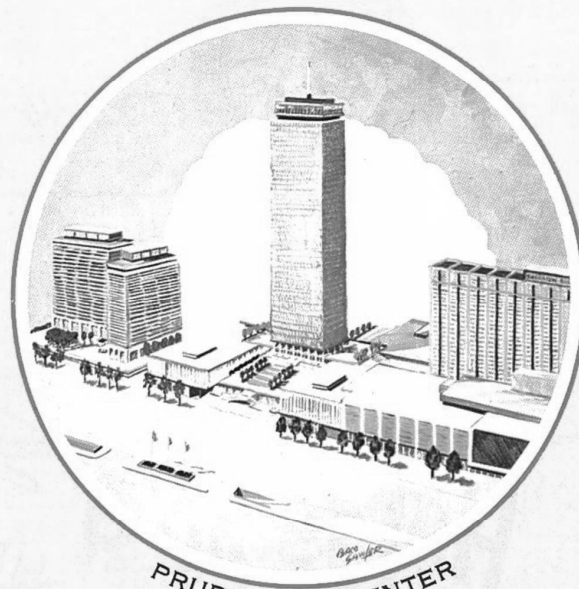
Joe Stearns



THE POSTAL RECORD



FREEDOM TRAIL

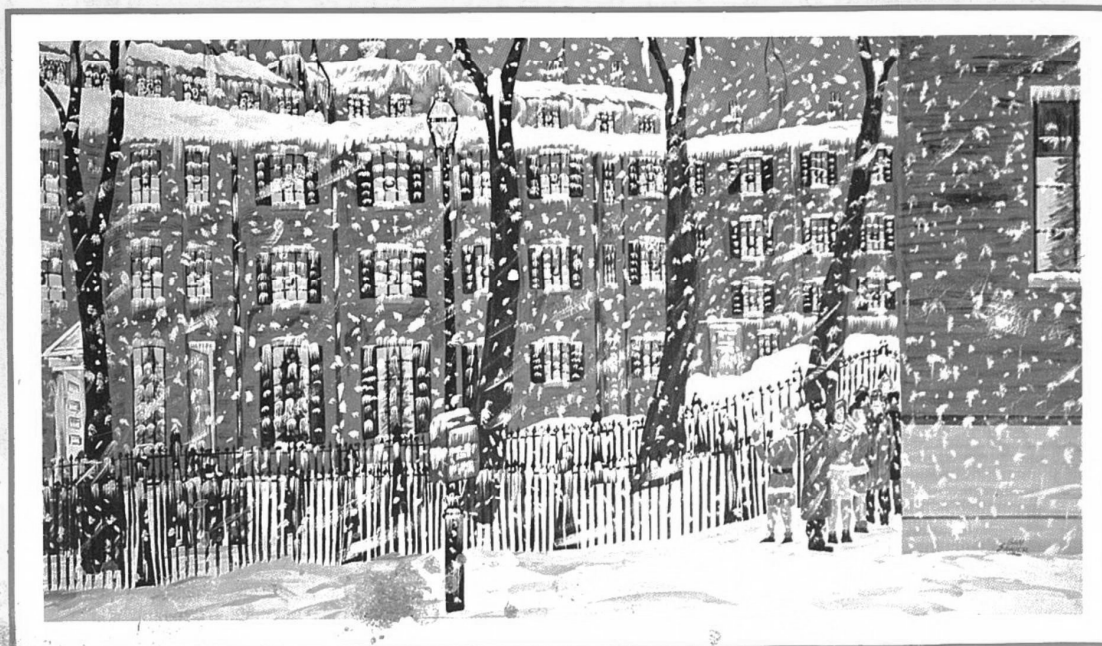


PRUDENTIAL CENTER

46th CONVENTION

National Association of Letter Carriers (AFL-CIO)

BOSTON, MASS. • AUG. 18-24, 1968



CHRISTMAS EVE CAROL SINGING—LOUISBURG SQUARE

From the Treasurer's Desk

First and foremost, I'd like to apologize for not getting it out in my previous article, but a belated Happy Pride Month to all my brothers and sisters. Generally speaking, we've made many strides forward to help create an accepting and welcoming environment for all people and I've made many friendships with people from many different family and relationship dynamics. I was very happy to see the Postal Service sending out messages acknowledging Pride Month and encouraging celebration of who we are. I have a lot of respect for every LGBTQ+ carrier coming in and braving what can be a very divisive environment at times and being true to themselves. I hope it inspires others to do the same.

Obviously 2024 is a big year. Why? Elden Ring's Shadow of the Erdtree just dropped. And I guess the presidential election as well. We're about to see a massive influx of political mailings coming into each installation. Many installations are full of new hires in the last two or three years, so safe to assume, some of us might not know how political mailings are handled. Before I touch on that, I would like to preface this by saying that we are all bound by The Hatch Act of 1939 which keeps government functions and its employees nonpartisan. Federal law restricts the political activity of federal and postal employees while on duty, on postal property, wearing an official uniform or using a government vehicle. Many installations have been pretty lax regarding political opinions and things like hats, mugs, smaller flags and more with political affiliations. Just know that these items aren't permitted and your installation may (rightfully) instruct you to remove them. Now, with that out of the way; what are our responsibilities as letter carriers handling political mail?

First, ensure all available election/political mail is taken to the street for delivery on the day it is received. We treat all political mail as "first class", meaning we should not curtail it and it should be delivered with priority. Currently, 23 states hold some form of mail-in voting, with eight states requiring mail-in ballots be sent out. Massachusetts is not one that mandates mail-in ballots be sent out, but this should demonstrate the urgency to ensure our commitment to accurate and timely delivery.

Second, all balloting materials, including ballots, with or without sufficient postage must be delivered. Most of us are used to bringing parcels and mail with insufficient postage to a supervisor so they may collect what is properly owed. When it comes to ballots, this goes out the window. Democracy and exercising your right to vote is a constitutional guarantee. In 1870, African Americans were granted the right to vote through a constitutional amendment. In 1920, women were granted that same right, and as of 1971, the voting age was reduced to 18. We deliver ballots to those who are unable to go to a poll and exercise this right. Please, I cannot stress how

important it is, ensure these ballots are delivered in a timely and accurate manner. Many people will argue back and forth in favor of their political candidate they endorse, but in the long run, the only thing that truly matters is if you vote.

Lastly, ensure collection points and your vehicles are empty and no political mailings or ballots are left behind. Something I do at the end of my day is go to every door on my vehicle and open them. This ensures that if any mail or parcel has fallen or shifted, I'll find it. This becomes increasingly more important when election season is upon us. Some of us might remember, but back in June of 2020, President Trump put out a highly controversial tweet reading, "RIGGED 2020 ELECTION: MILLIONS OF MAIL-IN BALLOTS WILL BE PRINTED BY FOREIGN COUNTRIES, AND OTHERS. IT WILL BE THE SCANDAL OF OUR TIMES!" While this claim was unfounded and no evidence was ever produced to indicate the truth in President Trump's claim, we can counter these arguments by being proud of our work and taking the necessary steps to further ensure our election season is efficient and accurate.

By the time you receive this newsletter, our Biennial Convention will be taking place in Boston. If you find yourself with some time off, please, come down to the convention and see what the NALC is all about. We will likely hear about the status of collective bargaining for our new contract and the executive council will be addressing the membership on many, potentially controversial, things. We welcome all of our members to attend if they can. Enjoy the rest of your summer and prepare for the political mailings. I know during peak season the Postal Service loves to use the slogan, but when it comes to the presidential race and ballots, this is truly our season. Also, get out there and vote!

Foul Tarnished, in search of the Elden Ring. Emboldened by the flame of ambition.

James Metilinos

Pictured on the previous page is the cover of the Postal Record from August 1968, the second time the NALC's biennial National Convention was held in Boston. This year's convention will be held in Boston from August 5-9. This will be the fourth time Boston has hosted. The very first convention was held in Boston in 1890 as well as the 1968, 2008 and this year's.

Vice President's Report

The Letter Carrier Political Fund (LCPF) is an essential advocacy tool for the National Association of Letter Carriers (NALC), significantly influencing the legislative landscape for us letter carriers across the United States. By pooling resources from all us members, the LCPF supports pro union political candidates and legislation that prioritize the welfare of letter carriers, ensuring our voices are heard in the corridors of power.

One of the critical roles of the LCPF is to engage in effective lobbying efforts. This involves maintaining a sustained presence in Washington, D.C., and building relationships with key policymakers. These efforts ensure that the unique challenges faced by us letter carriers, such as labor rights, wages, health benefits, and retirement plans, are well-understood and addressed in legislative discussions. For instance, the Postal Service Reform Act of 2022, a significant legislative achievement supported by the LCPF, addressed the financial burdens of the U.S. Postal Service by eliminating the requirement to pre-fund retiree health benefits and integrating postal retirees into Medicare. These changes alleviated financial pressures and ensured the sustainability of benefits for letter carriers.

Another notable legislative victory influenced by the LCPF was the preservation of six-day mail delivery. Proposals to reduce delivery to five days a week have been periodically introduced as cost-saving measures. However, the LCPF's advocacy efforts have been instrumental in maintaining six-day delivery, which is vital for both the public and the job security of letter carriers.

While the LCPF is crucial for political advocacy, it is essential for us letter carriers to avoid violations of the Hatch Act. The Hatch Act restricts federal employees, including postal workers, from engaging in certain political activities to maintain the neutrality of public service. Letter carriers must be cautious to avoid partisan political activities while on duty or in uniform. Adhering to these restrictions ensures that letter carriers can effectively support the LCPF without risking getting in trouble for violating the Hatch Act.

The Letter Carrier Political Fund also fosters a sense of solidarity among us letter carriers. By contributing to the fund, individual letter carriers join a larger movement dedicated to protecting and advancing their collective interests. This unity is empowering, reinforcing the notion that collective effort can lead to significant changes and safeguard their profession.

The Biennial Convention will be taking place in Boston August 5th through the 9th. If you have the time, please come to the convention. If you would like to know more about the Letter Carrier Political Fund, this would be the perfect opportunity as there will be National Officers providing information about it.

Have a great rest of the summer and stay safe,

Gilbert Paredes

Note: By making a contribution to the Letter Carrier 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 employment by the Postal Service, nor is it part of union dues. You have a right to 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. Federal law requires us to use our best efforts to collect and report the name, mailing address, occupation and name of employer of individuals whose contributions exceed \$200 per calendar year. Any guideline amount is merely a suggestion, and an individual is free to contribute more or less than the guideline suggests and the union will not favor or disadvantage anyone by reason of the amount of their contribution or their decision not to contribute.

Branch 25 Scholarship Winners



Congratulations to this year's Branch 25 Scholarship winners: Ricky Wong (above) and Alex Wheeler (below). Ricky is the son of Georgetown Carrier Jeff Wong. Ricky will be attending the University of New Hampshire this fall. Alex is the son of Branch 25 President Dan Wheeler. Alex will be attending Framingham State University.



Retirees and Awards



(above) Eric Jean, pictured with fellow Lynnfield carriers, received his Branch 25 retirement gratuity at the June branch meeting. Eric retired after 40 years! Best of luck in retirement Eric!



(above) Peabody Carrier Dave Barton pictured on his last day after a 34-year career

Bedford Carriers Kien Lam and Ted Chisholm (below) both recently received their 30 Service Awards from the Postal Service.



Branch 25 Health Benefits Rep and retired Haverhill Letter Carrier Ken Dusombre (below) received his 40-year NALC Membership pin at the June branch meeting.



Developing Grit



Developing grit is a process that involves building resilience, perseverance, and passion for long-term goals. The following is a guide for how to develop grit:

Identify Your Passion: Reflect on what truly excites and motivates you. Discovering your passion will provide the foundation for developing grit, as it fuels your perseverance and commitment to your goals.

Set Goals: Define specific, measurable, and achievable goals that align with your passion. Break down larger objectives into smaller, manageable tasks to create a map for success.

Cultivate Resilience: Embrace challenges as opportunities for growth rather than viewing them as obstacles. Develop resilience by reframing setbacks as learning experiences and focusing on solutions.

Practice Perseverance: Commit to your goals with unwavering determination, even when progress is slow or obstacles arise. Stay focused on the long-term vision and persistently pursue your objectives.

Develop Self-Discipline: Cultivate habits that support your goals and help you stay on track when motivation wanes. Practice self-control and develop the discipline to consistently work towards your objectives.

Seek Support: Surround yourself with mentors, peers, and coaches who provide guidance, encouragement, and constructive feedback. Leverage their insights to enhance your own development.

View Challenges as Opportunities: Embrace the belief that your abilities can be developed through effort and perseverance, rather than being fixed traits.

Acknowledge Progress: Celebrate achievements, no matter how small. Recognizing your progress boosts confidence and reinforces your commitment to your goals, motivating you to continue striving for excellence.

Stay Flexible: Remain open to adjusting your approach and strategies based on feedback and changing circumstances. Adaptability is key to navigating challenges and overcoming obstacles on the path to success.

Reflect and Learn: Regularly reflect on your experiences, successes, and failures. Extract valuable lessons from your journey and apply them to future endeavors, continuously refining your skills and strategies.

By consistently practicing these principles and strategies, you can cultivate grit and develop the resilience, perseverance, and passion needed to achieve your goals and thrive in the face of adversity. For additional support, your EAP is here to help. Contact us today at 800-327-4968 (800-EAP-4YOU) | TTY: 877-492-7341 or visit us online at EAP4YOU.com.

WAKE UP

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First Class Mail
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TEWKSBURY, MA



at the next meeting
September 10
K of C Wilmington
8:00 PM



Peabody's Dave Barton was joined by fellow Peabody carriers at the June branch meeting to celebrate his retirement after a 34-year career.