







President/ Editor Dave Barbuzzi

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



Employees of all crafts, as well as management at the Peabody installation raised \$2000 and donated it to No Child Goes Hungry in Peabody. As reported last month, Brian McCarthy and Joe Lourenco spearheaded the effort to raise funds when it became apparent that the NALC Food Drive would not take place as planned this year. Great work !!

"Be The Good"

Much has taken place since last month's issue of the Wake-Up! was published. The world witnessed a brutal murder up close over social media on May 25. The 8 minutes 46 seconds that it took to snuff out the life of George Floyd have set in action a worldwide response. There have been protests in over 2,000 cities across the United States and in 60 countries worldwide.

I am not a black man. I am not a police office. I don't claim to understand what either has gone through historically, or what either is going through now. How could one understand such a raw stereotypical hatred without having experienced it? I just hope that out of tragedy, any tragedy, positive change can be effected. For my part, I have tried to raise my awareness, tried to do more reading and gain more understanding. As the President of this Branch I would simply like to ask the membership to do the same. For years, I have been wearing "Life is Good" t-shirts. I figure that if I have one on just about every day, the expression is bound to rub off. My favorite one has the following written on it:

BElieve THEre is GOOD.

"BE THE GOOD." How simple is that? We all, by virtue of our jobs as letter carriers, are given the opportunity to be the good each and every day. From the time we arrive at work in the morning until the time we punch out at the end of the day we are given the opportunity to attempt to have a positive impact on those around us.

When you punch in in the morning you are working alongside (albeit socially distanced) your brothers and sisters for a brief period of time. As brief as your office time may be, you still have time to say good morning or to offer words of encouragement. You'd be surprised at the domino effect such a small gesture can have. Your effortless act could trigger a "pay it forward" chain of events that is limitless.

Out on the street we have similar opportunities. I realize times have changed quite a bit regarding how much ability management has to watch and track our movements via the scanners, but there is still the opportunity to hold a door open for someone. There is still the opportunity to make a positive impact on your customers. The children and the elderly immediately come to mind.

Again, social distancing notwithstanding, we can still say hello to the kids on the route. We can still tell them "nice shot" when we see them make a basket as we're driving through their neighborhood. We can leave a positive impression on them that they will hopefully carry into and through their adult life. I can still remember my childhood mailman. He was also a little league umpire and I thought it was so cool that my mailman was calling balls and strikes at my baseball games.

Some of our elderly, especially now with the COVID social distancing requirements, don't see their families at all. Maybe they're sitting on their porch, maybe they're out for a walk. Is it too difficult or time consuming to say hello and have a nice day? Sure, some people might not respond to it but most people do.

I'm not naïve, I realize that some (hopefully very few) of you are reading this and laughing. Some are cynical and are thinking "Sure Dave, and what world are you living in?" That's fine. You're entitled. It's just that I'm in a position to try to have an impact and I believe that I would be derelict in my duties if I didn't try to make that impact positive. I guess my t-shirts have rubbed off on me.

One other thing that I would like to talk about is heat stress/stroke. The effects that heat and humidity can have on someone are no joke. Twenty-four years ago this August, my father passed on a 90 plus degree morning after taking out the trash. He had underlying issues, congestive heart failure and he was overweight. But, had it not been for the gross heat and humidity of that morning, that day would not have been his time.

On the back of this month's Wake-Up! is another graphic dealing with heat exhaustion and heat stroke. If you take a look at it you'll notice that in a large, bold font under "Treatment" it says "DIAL 911". It does not say "call your supervisor". It does not say "struggle through as far as you can". It does not say "making the numbers is more important than your life." It says DIAL 911.

The mail can wait. Treatment for heatstroke may not be able to wait. It is NOT your supervisor's decision whether or not you continue delivering the mail when you are suffering symptoms. It is NOT your postmaster's decision either. YOU ARE THE ONLY ONE THAT CAN MAKE THE DECISION WHETHER YOU SHOULD DIAL 911 OR NOT.

It is not weakness to ask for help. You could be the most physically fit person around and still suffer heatstroke. Don't ever be embarrassed if you have to call 911 and receive treatment and possibly an ambulance ride to the hospital. Unfortunately, if you make the wrong decision, you'll never know but your family and loved ones will. Don't take any chances.

Stay informed,

Dave Barbuzzi

Executive Vice-President's Report

As we are heading into July, the weather has turned hotter and the humidity has been rising also. We are getting reports that carriers are feeling the effects of the weather and continuing their routes regardless. Carriers should be taking frequent breaks and drinking fluids as needed on a hot day to insure they do the best they can to avoid getting sick. This should be done before you start to feel the effects of the heat. A quick break in the shade or an air-conditioned building when possible is suggested by the Postal Service in their training material as preventative to heat illness. If you are feeling as if you may be getting dizzy or ill from the heat or becoming dehydrated, please stop delivering and seek shade and fluids. You have to be the one to decide when you don't feel right. I know some managers are trying to pile the carriers with work and absorb what they consider "down time", but this is no reason to rush. Don't jeopardize your health or safety in order to make a number.

So far there has not been any activity to make any judgement on the new Postmaster General. There were 2 members of the Board of Governors confirmed recently by the Senate, so there are now enough members of the Board to form a quorum. One of the new Governors is Donald Moak, a former president of the Airline Pilots Association and the other is Bill Zollars, a former chairman of a logistics company. Both are new to the Postal Service and say they have the best interest in preserving the business but what that means remains to be seen. Along with them we have a new Postmaster General from outside the Postal Service that could have his own agenda. My guess is the NALC legislative department will be very busy and will notify the membership of any issues that need to be addressed via the NALC app or the website. Stay informed.

As of today, we do not have any route inspections scheduled for the Fall. This could change any time, but as we have seen already, the Covid-19 has changed how business has been conducted. It is difficult to inspect what is supposed to be a typical day when we are not conducting ourselves in a typical manner. If inspections are scheduled, we will notify the offices involved. Hopefully, everyone takes the proper precautions to stay healthy and keep others healthy, but until we see either a vaccine or some therapeutic medicine, things will not be what I consider "normal". The number of hospitalizations are getting better in Massachusetts but that is no reason to let your guard down. It is not a lot to ask to wear a mask when you can't social distance at work. The states where the numbers are rising have open all the businesses and every indication is that people have not been following the recommendations of health officials in order to stay safe.

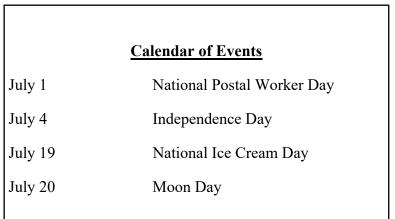
Well we still can't meet as a branch because of the restrictions due to the Covid, but hopefully we will be

able to soon. The National Convention, scheduled for August, was cancelled and there is no indication that there will be a national meeting this year. A meeting of that size would be impossible to pull off given the current restrictions and health concerns. If anyone is having issues with an on the job injury, please call the union office for help. It is always easier to help with an injury and the paperwork at the beginning of the process, before it gets messy. If you get hurt on the job and are seeking medical care, let us know as soon as you can in case there is some advice we could give. Remember, all physician's reports must be signed by a doctor (MD) to be approved by the Department of Labor. Even if you are treated by a Physician's Assistant or a Nurse Practitioner, you still need the doctor's signature.

It seems as if the NBA and the NHL are attempting to finish their seasons and baseball is looking at starting up soon, with football planning a Fall start. I don't know if these leagues can or will be able to play and also keep everyone involved safe. I hope so, because it would give a sense of normalcy, even though there may not be any fans in the stands. Watching hockey in August would be strange but OK with me.

Keep your head up!

Paul Desmond



Branch 25 Directory of Officers

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Richard Donlon	Asst Health Benefits Rep
Ron Noviello	Workers' Comp Rep.

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

Just For The Health Of It

As I write this column in early June I'm having strong feelings that the worst is still ahead of us regarding COVID-19 virus. I hope I'm wrong about this, but the fact is the highest daily number of deaths world-wide from this virus took place on June 8, 2020. The death of George Floyd is a tragedy. Plain and simple. It is also true that the response to his death has been magnificent throughout the world. Unfortunately, this same response has potentially posed a threat to all of us. According to medical experts in the field, the response (the gathering together of tens of thousands of people in close contact) will almost certainly result in a resurgence of the virus. For your sake, that of your family and all others, don't let your guard down. Continue to follow the guidelines as recommended by the Center for Disease Control.

Hall of fame New York Yankee catcher Yogi Berra perhaps said it best: "It ain't over 'til it's over."

Natural disasters, extremely difficult weather challenges, anthrax threats, pandemics, you prove it over and over again - you're as good as it gets.

You may recall that in the last issue of the WAKEUP I touched on a couple of aspects concerning prescription drugs and I indicated that more information would be forthcoming in the next issue. I chose to forgo that subject in the interest of timeliness. That information will be the content in the following issue. Keep on truckin' Rich Donlon

3	RANCH 25 RETIREE GRATUITY VOUCHER
	Name:
	(as it will appear on plaque)
	P.O. Retiring from:
	Phone number:
	Retirement date:
140	Please note: Retiree must be a member is 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

Retirement resources



Dan Toth There are lots of places to get information these days, especially about retirement. Whether it's co-workers, stewards and branch officers, management, scores of online resources or directly from the Office of Personnel Management (OPM), there are many ways to get the answers to your retirement questions. This article will talk about some of the resources available, and how to get correct and reliable information.

The No. 1 source for retirement information is OPM, since it is the government agency that administers FERS, CSRS, FEHB and FEGLI, to rattle off a few acronyms. OPM produces a wealth of information that is available online. This comes in the form of Q-and-As, booklets,

pamphlets, slideshows and manuals. All the resources are valuable, but which resource you prefer depends on your current knowledge, how much you are looking to learn or how technical you want to get. You could even go straight to the laws that implement the above programs, but I generally do not recommend that. The laws, although they lay out a foundation for these programs, do not always get into the fine details and can be harder to read and understand.

Generally, OPM's Q-and-As will get you the information you need in an easy-to-understand format. Just make sure you are asking the right questions. But if you are looking for more, I recommend heading to the CSRS/FERS Handbook. This is a handbook available online that contains almost 50 chapters of specific topics. For instance, if you wanted to read about return-of-excess contributions (FERS employees who were transferred from CSRS), you would head to Chapter 33. This chapter explains who may receive a return-of-excess contribution, the amount of return, employee responsibility, agency responsibility and OPM's responsibility. These CSRS/FERS Handbook chapters are indispensable for the aspiring retirement guru and will expose you to topics you did not even know existed. You can find the *Handbook* online at opm.gov/retirement-services/ publications-forms/csrsfers-handbook.

OPM also produces a *FEHB Program Handbook*, which is the go-to resource for all your Health Benefit Program questions, including eligibility, enrollment and leave-without-pay status. It can be found online at opm.gov/healthcare-insurance/healthcare/reference-materials/fehb-handbook.

Information about the Thrift Savings Plan (TSP) can be obtained directly from the TSP. The TSP does a great job helping participants get the information they need through a well-organized website and comparison tools, as well as

fact sheets and other useful publications. Additionally, the TSP ThriftLine (877-968-3778) has good customer service and will help you get the right forms and information you need. The website for the TSP is tsp.gov.

The Social Security Administration (SSA) has valuable information and tools online. Additionally, SSA has brickand-mortar offices across the country (approximately 1,230 field offices) that are a great resource, especially for those who are less inclined to jump on a computer. But if you can, be sure to head over to ssa.gov to create an account, if you have not already done so.

The Postal Service also provides resources targeted to employees preparing for retirement. These can be found in LiteBlue via eRetire. It even has hours of video clips viewable online to cover the most common topics, along with associated workbooks. These can be found online at uspsretirement.connectlive.com.

In addition to information and resources, the Postal Service is obligated to provide retirement counseling. This obligation is echoed in the *Employee and Labor Relations Manual*, Section 589 (see Section 569 for CSRS employees). This provides carriers with an important opportunity to get help with the application and any final questions they may have.

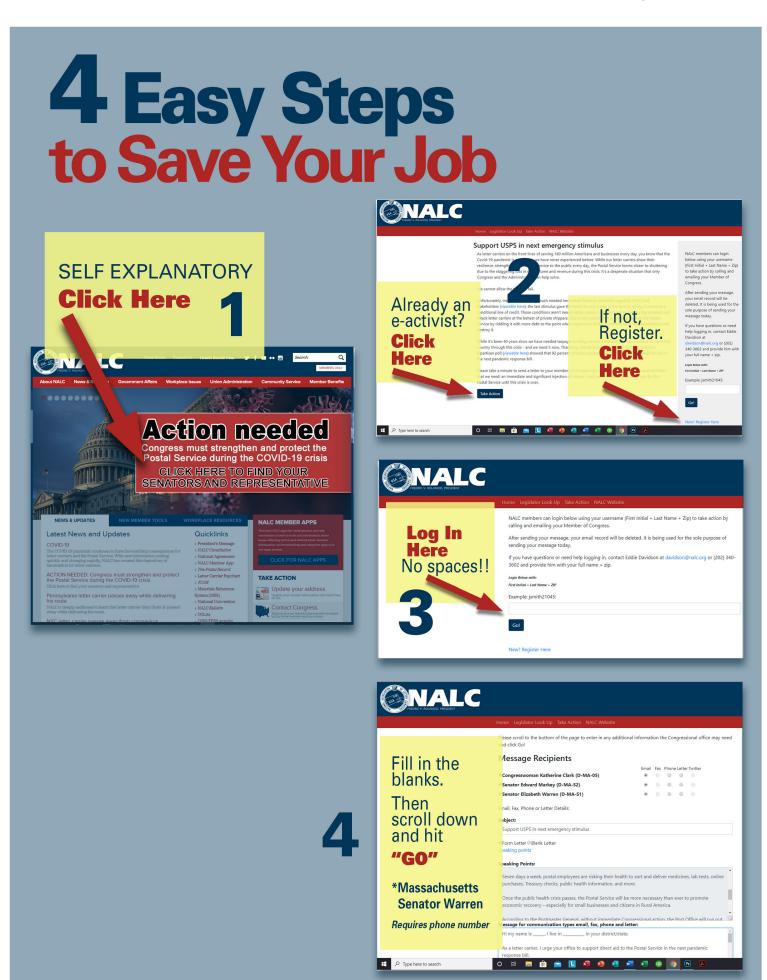
Of course, NALC also has produced many retirement resources over the years, which we continue to improve and update. I would recommend these resources for the one-stop shopper. The NALC *Questions and Answers on FERS* is an 80-page booklet available online at nalc.org/workplace-issues/retirement that compiles all the need-to-know information specific to carriers. This booklet is broken down into four parts that cover Social Security, FERS, the TSP and general retirement information. There is a booklet for CSRS as well. It is a useful collection of easy-to-understand information that every carrier should review prior to retirement.

Also, other useful publications such as the *Survivor's Guide to CSRS, FERS, and Social Security* and *When a Retired Letter Carrier Dies* might be helpful for a loved one someday.

Additionally, you can always talk to your local retirement guru. Some branches and regions have experts that either provide retirement trainings or can provide direct assistance in completing the retirement application. Be sure to use and appreciate these valuable resources that can help you through a major life transition.

The Retirement Department is always here for you as well. We can be reached by calling 800-424-5186 (toll-free) Monday, Wednesday or Thursday, 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. or 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. (Eastern time), or by calling NALC Headquarters at 202-393-4695 from Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. (Eastern time) and asking for the Retirement Department.

Every letter carrier in the country should follow the steps below. Start at nalc.org



Please have friends, family, and anyone else go to heroesdelivering.com to take action.

LATEST NEWS

TAKE ACTION



EXCLUSIVE: News Ads Launched

Have You Seen Our New Heroes **Delivering Ads? New** ads began airing today promoting funding to support our heroes who deliver every day and the US Postal Service. Check them out below: Our letter carriers need your help to continue delivering for America. Click here to take a stand and demand action from Washington... [Read More]



The new normal

A day in the life as told by the letter carriers living it In the face of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Postal Service is providing an essential service. and letter carriers are recognized as heroes for delivering during this crisis. Millions of people are in isolation or quarantine in their homes and disconnected from jobs,... [Read More]

Read more

Z – **Y**

Our letter carrier heroes need your support. Take action and email your legislators to support funding for our U.S. Postal Service.

Title	*	Y		
Full Name				*
Address				*
Zip		*	city and state not required	
Phone				*
Email				*

Send Email

I urge you to support funding for our U.S. Postal Workers. These heroes deliver critical goods to those in need and we cannot afford to not fully fund the USPS. Take action now!

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Read more

Vice President's Report

the Postal Service is facing due to the Coronavirus Postal Service-emerged as a potential solution to the pandemic that hit earlier this year. Hopefully, everyone problem created by the 2003 CSRS funding reform law has reached to their representatives to let them know how and the troublesome escrow account. Congress decided important it is to provide us with the funding we need as to make the Postal Service prefund its retiree health they have done for many other businesses already. Most benefits with its pension savings and thereby avert an everyone is also aware of the pre-funding mandate which increase in the budget deficit. Between 2007-2016 the has weighed the Postal Service down for the last 13 years Postal Service was to make yearly payments of between and the need for real postal reform. I would like to get 5.4 and 5.8 billion dollars. into the weeds a little bit more this month on postal The Postal Service was given one last chance to raise finances and give some history and current information rates to build the cost of pre-funding into postage rates. that many may not know about our operation.

July 26, 1775 by the Second Continental Congress. The Service decided not to raise rates. The worst recession first postmaster general was appointed under the new since the 1930s was in full effect and due to losses U.S. constitution in 1789. In 1790, the first year in which created by the weakened economy the Postal Service revenues and expenses were reported for the whole year never could catch up. Without the pre-funding mandate they took in \$37,935 in revenue and had \$32,140 in the Postal Service would have averaged 600 million in expenses. By 1815 income reached one million dollars profits over the last 13 years. 92% of losses since 2007 for the first time and by 1944 income and expenses had have come from those pre-funding requirements. both increased to over one billion dollars per year. In So where does that leave us now? To answer that let us 1970 the strike took place which led to the Post Office compare some numbers from 2007, when things peaked, Department being transformed into the United States with 2019. Postal Service with revenues and expenses over nine billion dollars per year.

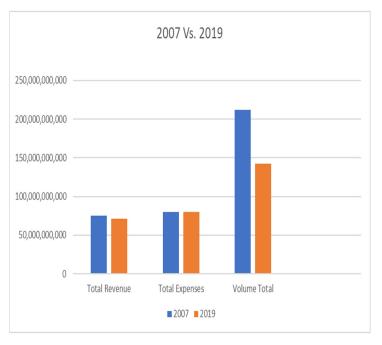
Revenues, expenses, and pieces of mail processed increased through the years all the way up until 2006.

Year	Pieces	Income	Expenses
1847	124 million	3.8 million	4 million
1901	7.4 billion	111 million	115 million
1944	34 billion	1.1 billion	1 billion
1971	86.9 billion	8.7 billion	9 billion
1984	131 billion	26.1 billion	26.3 billion
2001	207 billion	66 billion	65 billion
2006	213 billion	73 billion	72 billion

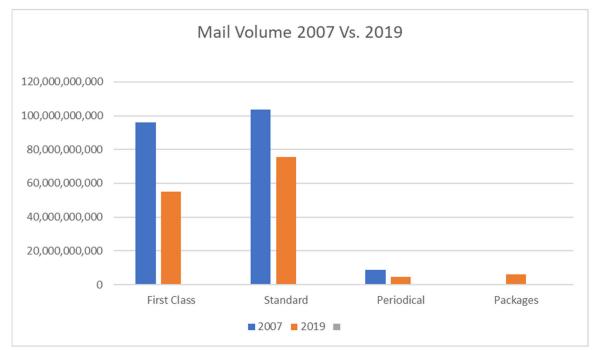
2007 was a pivotal year for the Postal Service. In 2006 mail volume had reached its highest point and the Postal Accountability and Enhancement Act of 2006 was passed. In 2006 the Postal Service was coming off a run of good years. In 2003 congress had reformed the Postal Service's funding of the Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS), reducing the cost of funding retirement by billions of dollars. The savings for the self-sufficient Postal Service caused a deficit for the federal budget and the savings were put into a sort of escrow account. An idea was proposed to require all federal agencies to prefund their future retiree health benefits-effectively, to apply pension funding rules to retiree health benefits. For various reasons, this proposal made little sense-and it was rejected by both the White House and Congress in the ordinary budget process in the years before 2006.

We are all aware of the current financial dilemma that Unfortunately, the idea—this time applied only to the

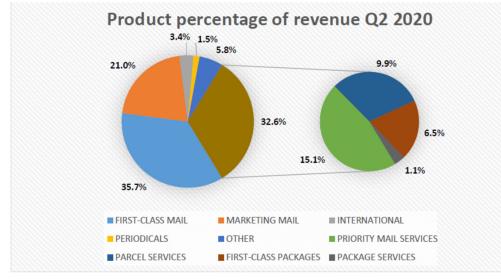
Unfortunately, the recession hit before this could happen. The first postal system in this country was created on Mail volumes and revenues plummeted, and the Postal



Total revenue dropped from a little over 74 billion to just over 71 billion dollars. Expenses went up slightly, but mail volume took a big hit dropping from over 212 billion pieces in 2007 to 142 billion pieces in 2019. Let us look at a breakdown of some of the major categories of mail as a comparison.



The big hits were First Class mail which dropped by 40 billion pieces and Standard Mail which dropped by 28 billion pieces, 41 % and 27% decreases, respectively. Periodicals (formerly Second Class, magazines) dropped by over 4 billion pieces. The big gain was packages which increased by over 4 billion. That is an almost 200% increase. To look beyond the numbers, we will look at the most recent quarterly breakdown based on revenue percentage. This shows what percentage of revenue is made up by which services.



The surprising thing here is how much of the Postal Service's revenue is still made up by First Class Mail. Combined with Marketing Mail (the new name for Standard Mail since 2017), that is almost 58% of current revenue. Despite the big increase in packages that revenue only accounts for around 30% of current revenues. After seeing these numbers, it is easier to see why we have been hit so hard with the big drop in First Class and Marketing Mail due to the recent pandemic. Even with the increases in package volume that revenue is nowhere near enough to make up for the other losses.

That leads us back to postal reform. What we need is a responsible postal reform. We need to repeal the prefunding mandate and achieve more reasonable rate setting abilities. We need to have cost saving measures like Medicare integration. We need to be able to adapt more quickly to changing market influences such as rising fuel prices. We need to fill postal board of governor positions with people who have the willingness and ability to lead the Postal Service forward and not hold us back. I am hopeful we will have enough support to achieve these goals as we continue in our fourth century of operation.

In solidarity, Dan Wheeler

NALC Br 25 Monthly Treasurer's Report James P Nutter, Treasure**f**

Total Beginning Bal	376,846.07			
Check Book ba	119,993.32			
Money taken in	23,748.71			
	23,748.71			
Money spent d		18,977.91		
Breal	kdown Time on union business Mileage Reimbursed Expenses	Net	8,590.61 211.04 5.30	
	Per Diem		0.00	
	Payroll Taxes and W/H Tran FICA Tax Med Tax Fed w/h FICA W/H Med W/H State W/H DUA FUTA MA PFML Paid To Affiliates Mass AFL-CIO NSLC NALC Operating Expenses Condo Fees Copier Lease Office Supplies Postage Retiree Gratuite Telephone Utilities Website	1,374.54 321.45 2,710.00 1,374.54 321.45 1,045.15 360.00 795.69 38.61 1,007.73 200.00 330.03 141.77 150.00	7,147.13 - 3,023.83	
-	Book Balance as of May 31,	, 2020	=	124,764.12
Total Ending Balance Other Accounts	e as of May 31, 2020		For Month	381,649.48 4,803.41
	256,852.75 32.61 256,885.36			
Total All Account	S			
	-	May 31, 2020 May 31, 2020 31, 2020		256,885.36 124,764.12 381,649.48
	Salem Five Scholarship Acct Beginning as of April 30, 2020 Interest For May 2020 (0.15%)	17,63	8.25 2.24	

17,640.49

Ending as of May 31, 2020



Exercising Respect and Sensitivity Following Community Violence

Following any tragedy or act of violence in your community, there will be varying opinions, viewpoints and a wide range of feelings among peers in response to the event. It's important to keep in mind that heightened feelings of any kind can directly affect relationships in the workplace.

Emotional reactions, such as increased anxiety, anger and stress, may continue for many days and even weeks following a violent event. Heightened feelings of any kind can increase conflict between co-workers and others and can negatively affect relationships at all levels in the workplace.

Share viewpoints with care

It's tempting to assume that each of us has the 'correct' viewpoint and that our feelings are shared by others with whom we interact at work. In reality, our co-workers may not share our points of view about what happened. Our feelings may be different and possibly upsetting to co-workers or others.

Some people process their feelings and thoughts privately and it can be upsetting to hear a 'heated' conversation in their workspace. Talking about what happened can be helpful, but not for everyone. Please be aware that community violence affects everyone differently. In order to maintain a positive workplace that thrives, we need to remember to have respectful conversations with others.

Guidelines to help you be aware, respectful, sensitive and polite as you go through your workday:

- Avoid conversations that can cause concern or offend others.
- Ask if it's OK to talk to someone about what has happened.
- Remember this is a work environment; personal conversations shouldn't dominate. Work is the priority.
- **Be aware that others can overhear** your conversations. Please keep private conversations private. Others don't need to know your opinions and feelings.
- **Respect others** and their right not to share their thoughts and opinions.
- Be aware of non-verbal reactions. If someone turns away, it may be time to end a conversation.
- **Be sensitive,** compassionate and respectful regardless of anyone's personal opinions. Maintaining civility, courtesy and respect for others can help foster safety in the workplace.

Your EAP is here for you. We're available to talk 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

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Web: www.nalcbranch25.com

I WANT YOU... at the next meeting July Meeting Cancelled

HEAT EXHAUSTION

Symptoms

- Faint or Dizzy
- Headache
- Profuse Sweating
- Irritability
- Weak, Rapid Pulse
- Shallow Breathing
- Pale, Co<mark>ol, Clammy Skin</mark>
- Nausea or Vomiting
- Muscle Cramps

Treat<mark>ment</mark>

 Have victim lie down in a cool shaded area or air conditioned area.
Drink water if victim is conscious.
Use caution when victim stands up, apply cold compresses.

HEAT STROKE

Symptoms

- Absence of Sweating
- Pulsating Headache
- Hot, Red, D<mark>ry Skin</mark>
- High Body Temp: Above 103
- Nausea or Vomiting
- Strong, Rapid Pulse
- Confusion
- Convulsions
- May Lose Conciousness

Treatment 1) DIAL 911

2) Take action to cool victim by any means. Place victims in a cool area, wrap in wet towel, sponge victim with cool water.