



WAKE UP!

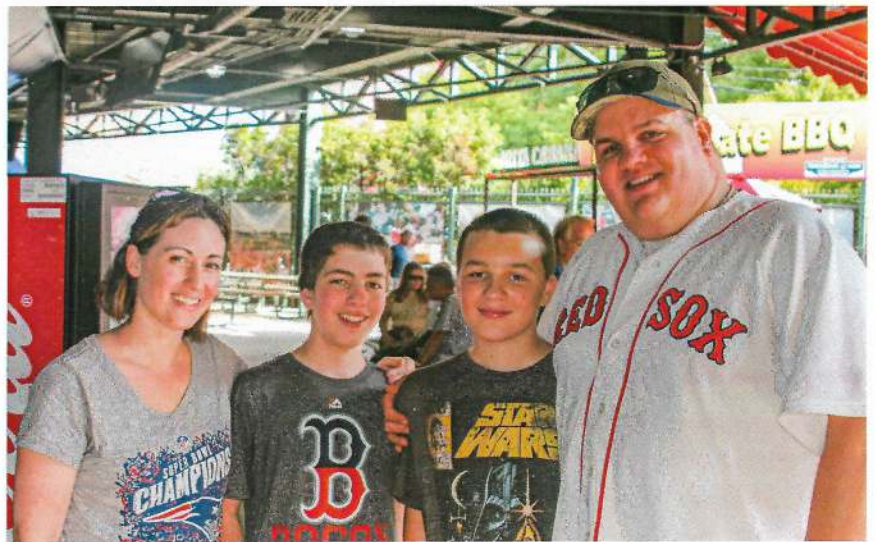
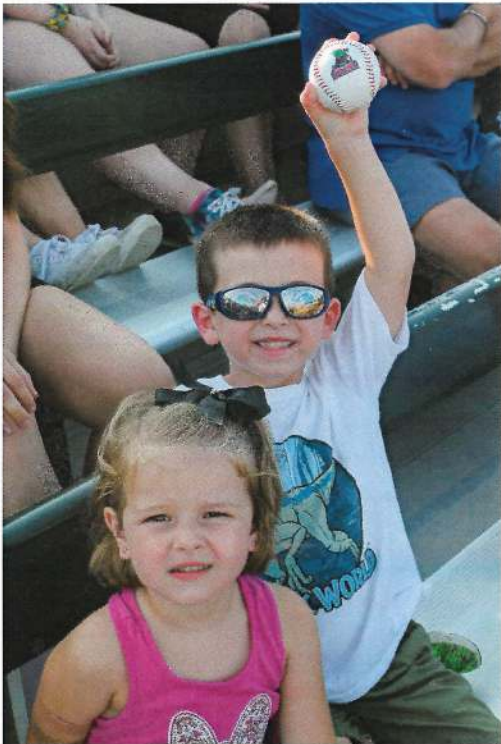
President/ Editor
Dave Barbuzzi

Publisher

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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



Above: Young Anthony Bossi holds up his souvenir baseball and his sister Amelia Bossi just looks pretty as they enjoy the Spinners Game. Dan Wheeler and his wife Shannon brought son Alex (closest to Dan) and family friend Ryan, while Reading retirees Mark McDonough, Marc Massey, Ted Keltgen, George Grilli, and Bill Gramzow took in the game as well. 64 members and family members enjoyed a barbeque and a great night of baseball! Thanks to Vice President Dan Wheeler for putting the event together!!

President's Message

"You Read It Here First"

In the June-July 1997 (not a typo, that's 1997) issue of the "Wake-Up!" I wrote an article about what I called "K-vision". We had a POOM who's name began with a "K" who had issued a memo to Postmasters requiring them to forward to him the following information on late-leaving routes: route number, cased volume, office hours, office productivity, reason carrier left late, if carrier didn't make standard then why, and action taken by supervisor.

I suggested at the time that "Mr. K" should just set up videoconferencing gear at each carrier case and scan the thousands of feeds as he sipped his coffee in the morning. I suggested that carriers fax their 3996's directly to him and he could fax back instructions.

Finally, I said that although the micromanagement wasn't this extreme YET, it was almost here and you read it here first. Some time ago, when I learned of the command station of multiple screens tracking letter carriers movements in real time and watched by higher level management, I thought to myself that they had taken the next step towards "K-vision". Carriers weren't on video yet, and they didn't report directly to someone at the district or area level yet, but they may just as well be. Those managers watching the feeds contact local managers in real time and ask them for explanations for things like stationary time, and of course you know that means those local managers will be asking you for an explanation. Still, no cameras though...

Well, guess what? The Postal Service has informed the NALC that they intend to experiment with cameras attached to various parts of our vehicles, both inside and out. These cameras will be triggered by various actions, such as idle time, and they will record for a certain period of time each time they are triggered. They will also have the ability to be operated manually by someone in a remote location. It only took 22 years for my prediction to come true!

All kidding aside, think about this for a minute. Management will now have the ability to watch you during every single minute of your day. I wonder if they will text "God bless you" over the scanner if they see you sneeze. The branch will keep you posted as we receive more information about this program.

Speaking about programs, the case consolidation program has been slowed down for now. There has been a reduction in offices in phase 3 from over 200 offices to fewer than 60 offices. Peabody is one of the offices that has been postponed...for now. We still believe that the Postal Service will push forward with this program until and unless we are able to prevail through the grievance procedure, or any other means at our disposal. We will be prepared for the day that the program does arrive in the branch, it is urgent that you are prepared as well.

As I write this article, I am looking forward to Branch 25 Day at the Lowell Spinners game. The membership approved a motion to subsidize up to 75 members and their families for tickets to Sunday, August 18 which includes an all-you-can-eat barbeque before the game. I'm happy to report that 64 members have taken advantage of this offer.

I am sorry to report that there was not enough interest in the fundraising calendar for the scholarship fund. Only about 30 members and friends expressed an interest, so the project has to be scrapped. If you sent a check in, we will shred it unless you contact us to let us know that you want your check returned to you.

We will be discussing and voting on the by-laws that were published in the August edition of the Wake-Up! at the September meeting. Take the opportunity to attend the meeting and have a say in the Democratic Union process.

The final COLA adjustment for the current contract is \$624. That means that the seven COLA's for the 2016-2019 national agreement totaled \$2413. At the conclusion of the 2011-2016 national agreement, a top step letter carrier's pay was \$59,859. When the COLA rolls into our pay in September, the same top step letter carrier will be earning \$65,037. Almost half of our pay increase over the life of this contract are the result of COLA's. The postal service always tries to eliminate COLA's in the collective bargaining process and there are those in the federal government (our current president) who would like to see COLA's eliminated as well.

I have full confidence that our national officers will put forth the best arguments possible to preserve the COLA and to gain pay increases for us over the term of the next agreement. Negotiations are underway, and by the time you read this the negotiating period may be just about over. It seems, based on the other crafts and other indicators, that we may not end up with a negotiated agreement. It seems likely that our contract will be decided by an arbitrator.

As far as Congress and the president, we will have to continue to work very hard to protect our interests. One swipe of the pen is all it takes to change the way a COLA is calculated or to eliminate it altogether. We can do our part by contacting our Congress people, working to get our friends elected and re-elected, and contributing to the Letter Carrier Political Fund. Elsewhere in this edition of the Wake-Up! are forms to contribute to this fund, please do what you can.

Stay informed!

Dave Barbuzzi

Executive Vice President's Report

We just got back from the national rap session in Denver that included a long day of training by the national officers on Saturday, and President Fred Rolando spoke to the conference on Sunday morning. Fred made it abundantly clear that the 535 members of the House of Representatives and the US Senate are the most important people to the Postal Service and the NALC right now. They will be the ones to determine what kind of Postal Reform legislation will be passed. Any kind of reform has to be positive. First and foremost, the retiree health benefit pre-funding mandate has to be addressed. The pre-funding can't be done the way Congress mandated in 2006. The payments are unrealistic and are based on an inflated workforce. The most important piece of legislation that needs to be passed is HR 2382, The USPS Fairness Act. It addresses the pre-funding mandate. Also, the budget can not include proposals that include cuts to our benefits and retirements, as the White House would like. The White House also would like to see letter carriers contribute a significant increase to our retirement benefits, resulting in a cut of pay. The White House also wants to eliminate collective bargaining. That can't happen. These are just a few things that Fred mentioned, but I think you get the picture. We have a lot of friends in Congress, but we need to keep them. Postal issues are non-partisan as they affect virtually everyone in the country, and the members of Congress that represent each district of every state will be the ones voting on the legislation. Votes and money are the 2 key components to keeping our friends. Unfortunately, it takes money, but that is a reality today. I'm sure there are plenty of 3999s being conducted on carriers' routes this summer. The wizards in OPS like to instruct managers to do these this time of year, and act as if they can actually adjust routes based on a one-day walk if the time is to their liking. Like any 3999, it is just a one-day walk that can't be used to evaluate your route. It is still important to do your route by the manuals every day. We don't know if the case consolidating test will become widespread, but if so, the times used by the regular carrier will probably be important. Don't skip breaks or conduct any street time in the office or off the clock. Make sure your time punches are as accurate as possible. The NALC has filed many grievances on this project by the USPS, but it may be months before we get any results.

There was a brief presentation in Denver on the new vehicles that are to be built to replace the LLVs. The contractors have finalized their proposals to the Postal Service and now it is time for the service to choose a model. We don't have any idea what the final model will look like, but the delivery of the first new vehicles will probably be about 18 months after a model is chosen. We were shown the final 4 designs that were presented to the Postal Service but they were all very

different from each other.

We have so many newly converted career employees in the carrier craft as of now, it is hard to keep up with it. At the Denver conference we were told that a very high percentage of these carriers are not taking advantage of the Thrift Savings Plan. This is probably the easiest way to ultimately save for retirement without too much pain. The Postal Service will match up to 5 percent of the employees contribution to the TSP. We have 3 components to our retirement package as a FERS employee. The annuity and Social Security are the first 2 and are based on service time. The TSP can grow to a large sum of money if taken advantage of from the beginning of your employment. Please take advantage of the match from the USPS, if not you are losing free money.

Keep your head up!

Paul Desmond

Calendar of Events

September 2	Labor Day
September 3	VJ Day
September 3	Regular Monthly Meeting Wilmington K of C 27 School Street Extension Food Served 7:00 PM Meeting Begins 8:00 PM
September 8	Superbowl Champion NE Patriots vs. Steelers
September 8	Grandparents' Day
September 11	911 Remembrance
September 23	Autumn Equinox
September 29	Rosh Hashana

“We Work Hard For Our Money”

From the day we started our careers with the Postal Service we have been working hard to provide for our families. Forty-hour work weeks to sixty-hour work weeks, it did not matter as long as we were able to take care of our children and our spouses. We also worked hard to save, invest, and prepare for the long-awaited day when we could hang up the satchel and retire.

Knowing we worked to do what we had to do and retire to do what we want to do. In order to achieve this great milestone, we need to be aware of those that would like to take advantage of our money. Many of us have money in the Thrift Savings Plan that supports the third leg of our retirement. But there are companies that will send us information in the mail, disguise themselves as reputable businesses that are associated with the postal service, and attempt to get us to invest our thrift money with them. They sell themselves on the ability to make us more money when, in reality, they are just trying to make themselves more money. Fees, commissions, and penalties eat away at what we have worked so hard at saving. In the end, we have less.

Then there are the lawyers who want to “help you” achieve riches through on the job injuries. Many, if not all of us will suffer an on-the-job injury at some point in our career. If so, we are entitled to apply and receive compensation for those injuries through scheduled awards. If we are not careful and we do not utilize the compensation specialists provided by our union, we could forfeit 25, 30, up to 40 percent of our scheduled

award.

Let’s not forget the politicians in Washington, DC. There are many that wish to balance budgets or pay for tax cuts on the backs of letter carriers. We need to stay educated on what is happening in DC and be aware of how their intentions will affect our ability to enjoy an early retirement. We need to protect ourselves from the current proposal to reduce a CSRS member’s yearly COLA by ½ percent per year and to eliminate a FERS member’s entitlement to a COLA completely.

There is also a proposal to eliminate the FERS supplement that allows a FERS employee to retire at our minimum retirement age with 30 years’ service by providing a supplement that approximates our social security benefit at age 62. This proposal would affect current FERS retirees as well as future FERS retirees.

There are so many more, but most devastating is the current administration’s desire to destroy the Postal Service and take away our livelihoods. We are the ones that need to fight to protect our future. We can not rely on the Postal Service to do it; they seem to work against the protection of service.

In order to protect the hard-earned money and benefits we have worked so hard to achieve, to protect the future of the Postal Service so that others can achieve the same, we need to stay informed. Read the Postal Record, contribute to the Letter Carrier Political Fund, and educate ourselves, our families, and our co-workers on what to be cautious of.

From the Secretary

Are you planning on moving? Have you recently moved? Please take a moment to notify the branch office of your current address. Get everything that's coming to you, the Wake Up and special announcements. Even if you have updated your home address with the USPS, unfortunately that information doesn't automatically filter down to the branch. It only takes a moment to call the branch office and the answering machine can take the message if the office is closed. Also, providing the best phone number to reach you at is a big help as well. Clip the form to the right and return it to the branch at:

NALC BRANCH 25
2500 MAIN ST STE 201
TEWKSBURY, MA 01876

NAME: _____
ADDRESS: _____
ADDRESS 2: _____
CITY: _____
STATE: _____
ZIP: _____
POSTAL STATION: _____
PHONE #: _____



SIGN ME UP!

How to contribute to the Letter Carrier Political Fund using ELECTRONIC FUND TRANSFER

Through a **MONTHLY** Electronic Fund Transfer, NALC members can contribute directly from their bank account to the Letter Carrier Political Fund (NALC's PAC). On the 1st of every month, the Political Fund will automatically (and without a fee) deduct from your bank account the amount you choose to contribute (ex: \$5 donation each month for twelve months, totaling \$60 for the year).

Electronic Fund Transfer Authorization

Fill out and return this form with a voided check to the address below

I, _____ (your name) hereby authorize my bank to deduct from my checking account the **MONTHLY** sum of:

\$25 \$20 \$15 \$10 \$5 Other: \$_____ **PER MONTH** and forward that amount to the Letter Carrier Political Fund (NALC's PAC) (Maximum amount per year is \$5,000). I make this authorization voluntarily and may revoke it at any time by notifying the Letter Carrier Political Fund in writing.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Full Name (please print): _____

Social Security Number: _____ OR Postal Record number: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

ATTACH A VOIDED CHECK HERE.

Please send this completed form and your voided check to:

The Letter Carrier Political Fund
100 Indiana Ave NW,
Washington, DC 20001-2144

Your Postal Record Number (circled):

***** AUTO** 5- DIGIT 54321

XXXXXXXX LC 9876 W 13 08

Letter Carrier
1234 Main Street
Anywhere, US 54321-9999

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 guideline amounts listed above are merely suggestions, and you may contribute more or less than the guidelines suggest and the union will not favor or disadvantage you by reason of the amount of your contribution or your decision not to contribute. 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 cancelled. 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.

Staple your voided check here



SIGN ME UP!

How to contribute to the Letter Carrier Political Fund using PostalEASE — ONLINE Enrollment

Through PostalEASE, active letter carriers can contribute directly from their USPS paychecks to the Letter Carrier Political Fund (NALC's PAC) by designating the Political Fund as one of the three payroll "allotments."

Online Enrollment

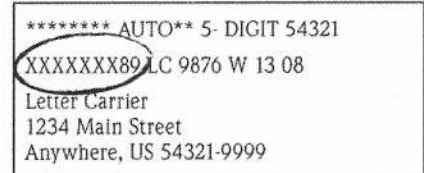
1. Login to USPS's Postal Ease website at <https://ewss.usps.gov>
You may also get to the Postal Ease website through the USPS LiteBlue website See the instructions below
2. Click "I agree"
3. Enter your Employee ID number and Password and click "Submit"
If you have not yet set up a password click the link provided on the page or go to:
<https://ssp.usps.gov/ssp-web/welcome.xhtml>
If you forgot your password click the link provided on the page or go to:
<https://ssp.usps.gov/ssp-web/einVerification.xhtml>
4. Under Payroll click "Allotments / Payroll Net To Bank"
5. Click "Continue"
6. Click "Allotments"
7. Enter the 9-digit Financial Institution Routing Number: 0 6 4 0 0 0 1 7
8. Enter your 17-digit Account Number _____ 0 0 3 4 9 5 2 5 3 5
See instructions in step D at right
9. Enter Account type as "checking"
10. Enter amount of your Allotment: \$ _____
The maximum yearly amount is \$5,000
11. Click VALIDATE
12. Click SUBMIT
13. Print or write down your confirmation number for your records

To get to Postal Ease through Lite Blue:

- Got to www.liteblue.usps.gov
- Enter you employee ID and Password and click "Log On"
- Click "My HR"
- Click "Employee Apps"
- Click "PostalEASE"
- Begin at step 1 above

BEFORE YOU START, YOU'LL NEED:

- A. Your 8-digit Employee ID Number (on your paystub)
- B. Your USPS password
- C. Your Postal Record Number (Located on the back cover of your Postal Record magazine, above your name. Or call 202.393.4695 to get your Postal Record Number). See the example below.



- D. To create your personal account number, insert the seven digits of your Postal Record Number to the spaces below:

_____ 0 0 3 4 9 5 2 5 3 5

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 cancelled. 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.



SIGN ME UP!

How to contribute to the Letter Carrier Political Fund using your retirement ANNUITY

Using your **Annuity**, retired NALC members can contribute directly from their CSRS or FERS annuities to the Letter Carrier Political Fund (NALC's PAC) on a monthly basis. This is a convenient way to make regular donations to the political action fund similar to the payroll system available to active carriers.

Enroll by Phone

Call the NALC Retirement Office at 202.662.2877 anytime or toll-free at 1.800.424.5186 Monday, Wednesday and Thursday from 10 a.m. to noon or 2 to 4 p.m. (ET). (Note: you will need your CSA retirement Claim number.)

Enroll Online

1. Go to www.servicesonline.opm.gov
2. Enter your CSA number, beginning with the letter A and ending with a zero. SAMPLE: A22222220
3. Enter your PIN (Personal Identification Number). If you don't know it, click Using Services Online for help with one.
4. Once you've entered your CSA number and PIN, click Log In.
5. On the next page, click ALLOTMENTS TO ORGANIZATIONS.
6. Click START
7. Select the Letter Carrier Political Fund (Formerly COLCPE)
8. Enter the amount of your monthly contribution. (Maximum yearly amount is \$5,000)
9. Click SAVE
10. On the next page click YES (if correct), then print the next page for your records.

Enroll by Mail

Complete this form and send to:

NALC Retirement Department, Attention: Letter Carrier Political Fund, 100 Indiana Ave. NW, Washington, DC 20001-2144

I, _____ (your name) wish to contribute to the Letter Carrier Political Fund. I authorize the Office of Personnel Management to withhold the amount below from my *monthly* annuity payments:

\$25 \$20 \$15 \$10 \$5 Other: \$_____ (Maximum amount per year is \$5,000) and forward that amount to the Letter Carrier Political Fund (NALC's PAC). I make this authorization voluntarily and may revoke it at any time by notifying the Letter Carrier Political Fund in writing.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Full Name (please print): _____ Branch: _____

CSA or Social Security Number: _____ Phone: _____

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 guideline amounts listed above are merely suggestions, and you may contribute more or less than the guidelines suggest and the union will not favor or disadvantage you by reason of the amount of your contribution or your decision not to contribute. 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 cancelled. 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.

Recovery and Personal Financial Wellness

Support Services provided **last Wednesday of each month 10am -11:30am**
 Building 80, Room 106 (Mural Room)

Kristen Alberino (Social Security Admin) Public Affairs.....877-531-1169 x15720.....Kristen.Alberino@ssa.gov
Jesus Martinez Paralegal Advocate /Student Loans Legal Services Center of Harvard Law School 617-390-2743 jmartinez@law.harvard.edu
 David Baker, Esq. Criminal, Estate, Wills, Trust, P.I.....781-779-1594.....david@davidmbakerlaw.com
 Anne Meeker Veteran Liaison for The Honorable Seth Moulton 6th Congressional District 978-531-1669 Anne.meekeer@mail.house.gov
 Rick Bettencourt (Mortgage Network).....978-304-0818.....rbettencourt@mortgagenetwork.com
 Timothy Rodden Supervisor (Mass Rehab Commission).....978-458-4544 Ext: 335 Timothy.Rodden@mrc.state.ma.us
 Ellen Shaw Peterson, VBA BOSTON Voc Rehab JFK Building 617-303-5541 ellen.shaw-peterson@va.gov
 Michael Medur SSVF Outreach Specialist New England Center and Home for Veterans 781-443-9047 Michael.Medur@nechv.org
 Tracy Claudio (Patient Advocate).....781-687-2612
 Becky Dreifuss, LICSW Suicide Prevention, Coordinator 781-687-2176.....rebecca.dreifuss@va.gov
Stephanie Coppolino, LICSW Women Veterans Program Manager 781-687-3426 stephanie.coppolino@va.gov
Trooper Edmund Hartwell, Military Liaison Officer; MA State Police AHQ 774-217-0905 Edmund.Hartwell@massmail.state.ma.us
Jessica Frost Director, Veterans Resource Center at MCC Lowell, MA 978-656-3282 frostja@middlesex.mass.edu
Jerry Pinsky Director of Self Employment Services, Veteran Small Business 781-687-3338/cell 781-983-3728 jerry.pinsky@va.gov
Ron Paradise Benefits & Employment Specialist Veterans Northeast Outreach Center 978-372-3626 rparadise@veteranbenefits.us
 Joanne Maddock MPH, RDN, LDN Health Promotion Disease Prevention/MOVE Coordinator, Primary Care 11A Bedford VA 781-687-2342
 Tim Driscoll (HCHV Program Mgr).....781-879-6186.....timothy.driscoll2@va.gov
 Charles Hillman My HealtheVet Coordinator Bedford VA 781-687-4660 charles.hillman@va.gov
 Lauren Cameron VA Contact Hanscom FCU Bedford Branch 781-698-2157 lcameron@hfcu.org
 Brian Forsythe (Work Without Limits Benefits Counseling)508-856-2513.....Brian.Forsythe@umassmed.edu
 Jennifer Hayden HUD/VASH Program Manager Bedford VA 781-687-3521 jennifer.hayden@va.gov
Will Hatley VRS CWT Program/Veterans Legal Clinic & Financial Wellness Group.....781-687-3683.....willie.hatley@va.gov
 Kristi Ayer (GPD Grant & Per Diem Haverhill).....781-687-2506.....Kristi.Ayer@va.gov
 Laurel Holland Chief, Voluntary Services 781-687-3074 Laurel.Holland1@va.gov
 Anthony Jackson (Veteran Service Claims).....617-303-4992.....anthony.jackson1@va.gov
 Sue Katz (American Consumer Credit Counseling).....857-6361825.....skatz@consumercredit.com
 Chris Krebs, Ph.D. (Psychologist, VA)781-687-2641.....christopher.krebs@va.gov
 Bill Linnehan (Bedford VSO)781-275-1328.....veterans@bedfordma.gov
 Debra Locke VRS, CWT Program (Child Support contact).....781-760-6758.....Debra.Locke@va.gov
Audrey Patten, Esq. Attorney Federal Tax Clinic, Legal Services Center 617-390-2550 Harvard Law School apatten@law.harvard.edu
 Lou Cimaglia Veterans Service Rep 978-694-2040/cell978-404-0435 Veterans@wilmingtonma.gov
 Derek Alsup Admissions Counselor Heavy Construction Academy 888-772-9002 Ext 304 derek@hcanh.com
 Yanitza Mendez SSVF Intake Specialist VNOC.....978-972-1204.....ymendez@veteranbenefits.us
 Elizabeth Price Social Worker OEF/OIF/OND Veterans Contact 781-687-3067 Elizabeth.Price3@va.gov
 Deb Menton, Team Leader, DOR CSE 781-376-1046.....617-626-2125.....CSEVet@dor.state.ma.us
 Eileen Merisola SSVF VOA.....617-447-4287.....emerisola@voamass.org
 Chris Mills Business Rep. Dept. of Career Services.....508-513-3424.....Chris.Mills@Massmail.state.ma.us
 Alicia Reddin Program Director Veterans Upward Bound Center Suffolk University 617-725-4110 areddin@suffolk.edu
 Ben Whelihan MA Department of Higher Education.....617-994-6925.....Bwhelihan@dhe.mass.edu
 Timothy Quinn (MCC Veteran Coordinator).....781-280-3761or 781-280-3510.....quinnt@middlesex.mass.edu
 Anthony Russo (Community Recovery).....781-687-3322.....Anthony.Russo1@va.gov
 Jorge Morales Lopez Veteran Liaison for the Honorable Congresswoman Lori Trahan 978-459-0101 Jorge.MoralesLopez@mail.house.gov
 Donna Crossman (VITAL) Veterans Integration To Academic Leadership...781-488-8863 Donna.Crossman@va.gov
William (Will) Valliere Transition Assistance Advisor (TAA) Hanscom AFB 339-202-4817 william.valliere.ctr@mail.mil
Carly Wilson LICSW (HCHV) Outreach 781-687-4022/ 781-860-2374 carlv.wilson@va.gov
Bob Walsh Veterans Bonus Outreach Coordinator/Mass State Treasurer 617-367-9333 X497 Rwalsh@tre.state.ma.us



VA HEALTH CARE Edith Nourse Rogers Memorial Veterans Hospital
BEDFORD VA
 200 Springs Road | Bedford, Massachusetts | 01730

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

VETERANS' CORNER

Everyone needs a little help once in awhile. As a veteran, you have many options on where to go. From your local veterans services in your town to sites on the web, there is help for you.

On the preceding page, you will find a list of special services with phone numbers and email addresses. Good luck finding what you need!

Semper Fi

Andie Coulter



"Back To Work"

Getting back to work after having some time off is always tough. Hopefully we all got to relax a little this summer. One thing to keep in mind when we are back to work is our backs. If you are like me you have experienced some back pain before. Usually, it starts with a sudden "tweak" and then it's several days before it starts getting better.

The following is what I have found out about back pain and what can be done to prevent or rehab it. According to the American Chiropractic Association, about 80 percent of the U.S. population will have back pain at some time in their lives. As carriers, we hear enough about improper lifting, but what are some other back pain risk factors?

I was surprised to see smoking on the list. Smoking reduces blood flow to the lower spine, which can keep the body from delivering nutrients to the disks in your back. Smoking also slows healing. Excess body weight, lack of exercise, depression, and anxiety are some of the other risk factors.

What I call a "tweak" is actually a back spasm which is the involuntary contraction or tensing of the muscles in the lower back. Back spasms can be the result of injuries to the muscles, tendons, and ligaments in the back, or they can be related to more serious medical conditions. Of course, seeing a doctor is recommended if the pain is ongoing and severe.

If you do have back pain, there are some things you can do on your own to deal with it. You can apply heat or cold to the back. There is no science as to which is better. It may be best to alternate the two. You can improve posture when standing and sitting. Roll the shoulders back and straighten the spine when you find yourself slouching forward. Over the counter pain medication can help as well. Motrin and Advil are good when you have back pain because they are anti-inflammatories. Tylenol will relieve the pain as well.

Exercise can help us with preventing back pain and healing back pain. When you're healthy, strength training and Pilates are great because they strengthen your core muscles. After an injury, start with stretching and yoga until you feel strong enough to do more physically demanding exercises. Keep yourself and your back safe,

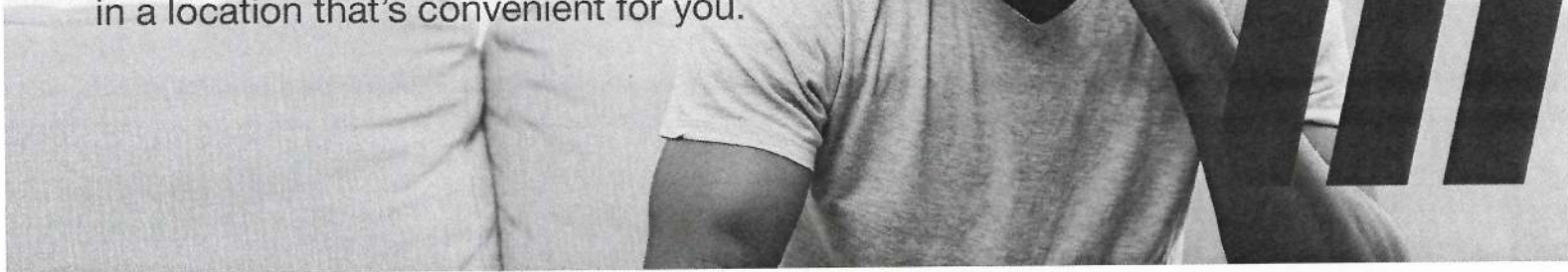
Jim Salvati

Lyrics Trivia:

*"Oh well oh well I feel so good today,
I just touched down on an international runway."*

Counseling by Phone

Access confidential counseling
in a location that's convenient for you.



In a busy world, telephonic counseling often is the ideal fit for many individuals.

Convenient

Your EAP remains dedicated to accommodating the needs of those we serve. You can choose to receive counseling in a place that is comfortable to you. With telephone counseling, some employees can have an EAP counseling session before tours begin or immediately following the completion of a tour without having to worry about traveling to a counselor's office.

Family members are able to have a telephone appointment while the kids are at school, during a break or soon after they get home. In addition, counseling by phone can also be used while traveling or by an older child who is away at college.

Telephone counseling removes many obstacles people face when trying to access services and travel to your EAP's office. Many employees are unable to make or keep appointments due to weather conditions, unreliable transportation or if their schedule is just too busy to get away from demands. Sometimes illness or injury makes it difficult to leave your home. Counseling by phone allows the employee to still receive support despite all of these obstacles.

Making the decision to get help is the first step. Making the call is the next step in getting the assistance that you need. Contact the EAP and let them know you are interested in telephonic counseling. You can find out if the service is right for you and they can help you get started.

Confidential

Telephone counseling has a high-level of anonymity and discretion. While all EAP services are confidential and are held to the highest level of confidentiality at the state and federal levels, some people struggle with self-consciousness or have difficulty verbalizing their feelings in front of others. By working with an EAP counselor over the phone, many people feel more freedom to express themselves than they have face-to-face.

Counseling by phone allows you to get the help you need without having to see a therapist within your community. If you are concerned about the stigma attached to mental health problems or you are worried that someone may find out you are receiving counseling, telephone counseling services offer you a higher level of privacy as well as leaving you the option to remain anonymous.

Some people may feel unsure if counseling is right for them if they have never been in counseling before. Telephonic counseling provides a perfect environment for these individuals to find out if counseling is right for them, sort of like a test drive.



CALL US TODAY: 800-327-4968
800-EAP-4YOU | TTY: 877-492-7341
WWW.EAP4YOU.COM

I'm sure that at some point in our lives all of us have "been there done that". The "that" in this case is making decisions in conflict situations, e.g., should I go to Aunt Clara's 80th birthday or nephew Billy's high school graduation, which are taking place on the same day and time? Somehow, we manage to survive those decisions.

Far more impactful on our lives are the healthcare choices we make, among them whether or not to see a doctor - this cough has been hanging around for almost two weeks or this mean looking skin rash is really bothersome, etc., etc.

Fortunately for NALC High Option Health Benefit Plan members two helpful benefits are available to assist in making a choice:

- Minute Clinic (for more information go to minuteclinic.com)
- 24 Hour Nurse Help Line offers the following:

Care information to members who call with symptom-based questions or concerns.

Guidelines to help determine the recommended level of care.

Help you determine when to call emergency services.

Help you select a course of action and a timeline for seeking recommended care.

The above list is not exhaustive. For more information call 877.220.6252 twenty-four/seven.

This concludes my series about additional benefits provided by the health benefits plan. I hope the information has been useful.

Keep on Truckin'!

Rich Donlon

Some of you know, but most of you do not. After thirty-five years and three months of carrying the mail in Rockport, MA, I retired on August 31st. It's been a helluva run. I bought back seventeen months of casual (non-career) time and amassed sixteen months of sick leave. Do the math. Good 'ole USPS will be crediting me and paying me for thirty-eight years.

During the last seven-and-a-half years of my career, I carried route 6 in downtown Rockport. And, with the use of a keen eye and a curious mind, I have found a lot of coins. The coins were deposited into a bowl and sat there for seven plus years. Tonight I counted the coins, and they added up to \$82.57.

It has been my intention all along to donate this money to the Muscular Dystrophy Association. I will match the total so that a check of \$165.14 is given to MDA. I am wondering if we have members who would also be willing to match the total of \$82.57 and write a check in this amount to MDA.

I am hopeful that several members will do just this and that we can help MDA in some small way. I would like to use this opportunity to help Branch 25 with their MDA fundraising efforts. If you are willing to match this amount, please make your checks out to: MDA and mail them to: Branch 25, 2500 Main Street Suite 201, Tewksbury, MA 01876. When you do this, the branch can tally up how much was donated through this effort.

Kindly, if you will, share this with your friends and families. Post it on facebook. Let's get the word out there. Let's face it, we have all been very fortunate to have the jobs we have. Many, many are less fortunate. Let's step up and help others.

Dana Salo
Rockport, MA


THANK YOU!!

The employees and management staff at the Rockport Post Office would like to gratefully acknowledge and thank Mr. Deo Braga and the employees at the Dunkin Donuts in Rockport, MA. Your donation of coffee and donuts for the post office on our annual food drive in May was very much appreciated.

We appreciated your generosity and your recognition of our efforts collecting food, in order to help feed families here on Cape Ann. The hunger relief programs on Cape Ann, that are provided through the Open Door Cape Ann Food Pantry, sadly, are needed more and more each year.

Your donation helped fuel our letter carriers. Our results this year were up by about 900 pounds! Thank you again so much.

Dana Sala, NALC Steward, Rockport, MA

 **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



WAKE UP

2500 Main Street
Suite # 201
Tewksbury, MA 01876
Phone: (978) 658-5820
Fax: (978) 658-0888
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I WANT YOU...

***at the next meeting
September 3, 2019***

Vice President's Report. I would like to start off this month's report by giving an update on some of the congressional resolutions effecting letter carriers I mentioned in the June-July issue. H.R. 2382 (USPS Fairness Act) may be the most important of them. This would repeal the Postal Service's requirement to pre-fund future retirement benefits. As of now there are 213 co-sponsors; 182 Democrats and 31 Republicans. We will need more Republican support to get where we need to be with this one. That is not always easy but hopefully as more co-sponsors join in other members will see that this makes sense and sign on too. The unofficial goal is to get to 290. At that number a resolution becomes automatically up for consideration on the floor. H. Res. 33 (anti-privatization) is up to 259 co-sponsors. H. Res. 54 (protecting 6-day delivery) is up to 272 co-sponsors. H. Res. 23 (maintaining door delivery currently has 240 co-sponsors. H. Res. 60 (service standards) is up to 188 co-sponsors. Congress is currently on their summer recess until early September so nothing will be happening until then. Hopefully these important letter carrier issues will continue to make progress with the help of our friends in Washington and the support of letter carriers and the NALC.

Some of you may have heard about the USPS program called Case Consolidation. This is an initiative where the Postal Service is looking to save physical space in carrier units and cut office time from carriers' routes. Instead of each route having

its own case there is one case used for multiple routes allowing the Postal Service to take away equipment. They will also be taking away routes as they reduce office time. Carriers are split into 2 groups, "casers" who come in early to case the mail and "streeters" who come in later to deliver mail. This has been going on in Annandale VA for almost 2 months now. By the time you read this it will have started in our region as well. In the last 24 years as a letter carrier I have seen many new things; DPS, FSS, increased parcel volume, scanning and GPS among others. In my opinion this program would change our jobs more than any of these other things that have been introduced! The NALC is working hard to stay on top of this. They have people in the field to make sure things are being done properly and all relevant grievances are being filed. This program is still very new so stay tuned for more information.

Finally, I would like to congratulate a carrier from my office in Holliston on her well-deserved retirement. Dee Jack retired on July 31 after 32 years of delivering mail. Dee was a great carrier and will be missed but I wish her all the best in her retirement.

In Solidarity,

Dan Wheeler