



WAKE UP!

President/ Editor
Dave Barbuzzi

Publisher
Dan Wheeler

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Branch 25's newest retiree Tom Soracco of Burlington receives his retirement gratuity and plaque at the September meeting. From l-r are John McNulty, John Carrabino, Jim Lecessé, Tom Soracco, Dave Barbuzzi, Dave Sicard, Dan Raske, and Mark Gangi.

President's Message

Fasten your seatbelts, it's almost that time of year again. We didn't have the extreme oppressive heat this summer that we often do, but, the summer is over. Holiday displays will be popping up in the stores any time now and the Christmas sales will be revving up. By the time you read this, Black Friday will only be 8 weeks away!!

What does that have to do with anything? More and more holiday shopping is done online. More and more online retailers are realizing that we are economical and dependable. By sheer necessity, our parcel volume goes through the roof.

Are you doing everything that you can do to protect yourself, your job (route), and to enhance the postal service's standing with our customers? If you read the Wake-Up!, you have read this before. Proper parcel delivery is paramount to your success, the customers' happiness, and the success of the postal service.

Do you deliver parcels properly? Before you read on, stop for a moment and think about what you do when you pull up to a mailbox or walk to a delivery and that delivery has a parcel...

OK, now that you've thought about it, read below to see if you are delivering properly. **"For any parcel that does not fit into the customer's mailbox or parcel locker (when available), an attempt to deliver must be made at the customer's door. If no one is available to receive the parcel, follow the procedures in 322.311 and 322.312."**

I'd like everyone to pay particular attention to the word "must". It is not optional to go to the customer's door. There is no option to leave it at the foot of the stairs, in the carport, on the deck, or anywhere else. You "must" go to the customer's door. The next phrase I'd like you to understand is "If no one is available to receive the parcel..." How does one find out if someone is available to receive a parcel? The answer is simple. You ring the doorbell or knock on the door. Again, this is not optional.

The mailer and the customer are each paying for a service. We "must" provide that service. Service takes time. Unfortunately, in some instances, with the increased load of parcels that we have realized, some carriers are not going to the door and if they are going they are not ringing the bell. Why? Because your boss is telling you every morning that your route is only 8 hours or worse that you have down time. Although the office time may be greatly reduced as a result of declining mail volume, I can't imagine that anyone's road time hasn't increased.

The only way you're going to get the boss off your back is to consistently provide customer service. If you are doing so, and you can't finish your route in 8 or even 8 1/2 hours, then request a special route inspection, NOW! Management has 28 days to COMPLETE an inspection that is requested by a qualifying letter carrier. You have the opportunity to control your own destiny. Management seldom conducts inspections during this period. There's a reason. The mail is heavier now. Don't shy away from an inspection, embrace it. The branch will provide training for you and we will also have someone present in your office when the inspection takes place.

I just talked about getting the boss off your back. Many of our "bosses" realize and even appreciate the hard work you do. Many of their "bosses" do not. I was shocked to hear what took place the day after the Labor Day Holiday.

Apparently (I wasn't in the room so I'm only reporting what was reported to me), Operations Programs Support is so convinced that letter carriers are screwing the system, that they ordered managers to walk with a carrier the day after the holiday. That's right, OPS thinks that letter carriers put in ridiculous 3996's on the days after holidays simply because it is the day after a holiday. They are so far removed from reality that they don't acknowledge that an additional day of mail, additional parcels, and in the case of business routes all the businesses that were closed on the holiday and are receiving extra mail the day after, require a letter carrier to spend more time delivering the mail. I couldn't make this up. If you were at the last branch meeting you would have heard Dan Wheeler report on it and you would have seen other carriers nodding their heads acknowledging that it happened in their office as well.

Elsewhere in the Wake-Up! you'll read about Congress' attempts to attack our benefits and management's attempts to attack our rights. Please take the time to read these articles and more importantly please engage us should you have any questions.

Stay informed!

Dave Barbuzzi

Executive Vice President's Report

It seems like in some stations management feels they can ask for documentation for sick leave requests anytime they like. The contract is very clear that documentation is required for sick leave requests of more than 3 days.

For requests of 3 days or less, management can request documentation if the carrier is on "restrictive sick leave", which is very rare and the carrier has to be notified of, or if management deems it necessary for the protection of the interest of the Postal Service. The protection of the interest of the Postal Service basically means that management has a reason to believe the carrier is not actually in need of sick leave. The fact that it is a Saturday or a day that management is leaving routes vacant does not make it necessary to request documentation for a 1-day sick call.

Usually every trip to a medical provider results in a co-pay. That doesn't mean all requests are exempt from documentation requests. For instance, a manager may hear a carrier say they are calling in sick the next day because annual leave was denied. In this case, the request for documentation may be proper. Any carrier required to produce documentation for sick leave requests of 3 days or less should request time with their steward and file a grievance if necessary. Part of the remedy requested should be the reimbursement of any out of pocket expenses including co-pays. Every instance is different but, either way, management is taking too many liberties in regard to documentation requests for sick leave.

Congress returned to work after Labor Day and it is expected that they will attempt to reduce our benefits in order to eliminate costs elsewhere. It is expected they will aim at the elimination of our FERS COLAs. Also expected is the attempt to eliminate the FERS Social Security supplement from our retirement package. It is expected that Congress may attempt to reduce the CSRS COLAs. Another item on the chopping block is the current high-3 average for the FERS annuity to change to the average of the high-5 years to determine annuities. These things are just a few of the items targeted by Congress as budget cuts, but are not automatic.

We have a lot of friends in both houses of Congress that do not want to eliminate any of our benefits, but we need to make sure they know how we feel about any negative legislation. We need to be ready to inform our Congressman and Senators that our benefits should not be touched. Our contract has been ratified but these items aren't open to negotiation by the Union. Congress can eliminate anything at any time, if we let them.

We still have some stations in the branch that do not have stewards on the work floor. In these stations we usually send Dave Barbuzzi, myself or Bob Cronin in to represent the carriers when necessary, whether it be to investigate grievances or sit in on pre-disciplinary interviews. If someone requests a steward's presence in one of these stations, it is management's obligation to call the Union office and arrange for one of us to be there. It is Dave's decision who goes. Management does not get to assign a random carrier of their choice to represent you. If there is no steward in your station and you request representation, please notify the union office also. If anyone is interested in being a steward in one of these stations, contact Dave Barbuzzi at the Union office to discuss it.

We have a few stations scheduled to be inspected this fall. Please remember that a lot of documentation is used in evaluating your route, not just the week of inspection. Make sure you punch to the street properly including any assistance provided. The times you use today could be used to evaluate your route next year.

Keep your head up!

Paul Desmond

Calendar of Events

October 1	New fiscal year starts
October 3	8PM Branch Meeting @ Knights of Columbus 27 School St. Ext. Wilmington Food served @ 7:15
October 4	National Golf Day
October 5	Do Something Nice Day
October 6	World Smile Day
October 9	Columbus Day
October 13	Friday the 13th
October 16	LMOU negotiations begin
October 24	United Nations Day
October 31	Halloween

Branch 25 Directory of Officers

David J. Barbuzzi	President
Paul G. Desmond	Executive V.P.
Bob Cronin	Vice President
Andy Coan	Secretary
James P. Nutter	Treasurer
Kenneth Dusombre	Health Benefits Rep.
Jim Salvati	Safety Officer
Jack Lyman	Sergeant At Arms
Ron Noviello	Chmn. Board of Trustees
Dan Raske	Trustee
Dave Ferris	Trustee
Bruce Johnson	Trustee
Anthony Bossi	Assistant Secretary
John McNulty	Assistant Treasurer
Dan Wheeler	Wake-Up Publisher
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.

Article 12 Withholding

Article 12 of the National Agreement gives management the right to withhold positions for full time employees who may be excessed out of their positions. Article 12 doesn't just give management the right but states it as an obligation. Article 12.5.B.2 states:

Withholding full and part-time residual vacancies under this provision is not merely a management right, it is an obligation in order to keep "dislocation and inconvenience" to full-time and part-time flexible employees to the minimum consistent with the needs of the service.

Management does not, however, have the right to hold more positions than they reasonably expect to be needed or to hold them for an excessive length of time. Withholding is a protection for full time employees when done right. Unfortunately, management does not often get it right. There are no specific rules that determine the right of management to withhold positions. Each case must be looked at on its own merits. Of course, that means time and effort so often it's easier to just hold everything under the umbrella of Article 12.

The reason for the current withholding is due to the reduction of positions within the clerk craft. Management has thrown out a number of more than 900

clerks to be excessed within Region 14 to the NBA, but that seems to be an unrealistic number.

According to the JCAM:

Number of Withheld Positions. Management may not withhold more positions than are reasonably necessary to accommodate any planned excessing. Article 12.5.B.2 only authorizes management to withhold "sufficient ... positions within the area for full-time and part-time flexible employees who may be involuntarily reassigned."

The part of Article 12 that is clear is the fact that carrier technician positions, also known as T-6 positions may not be withheld in anticipation of excessing employees from the clerk craft. The reason is because clerks do not meet the requirements of carrier technician positions. Article 12 requires that employees excessed into another craft must meet the minimum qualifications. These qualifications for a carrier technician include one year of experience as a city carrier. Management also does not have the right to withhold carrier positions in anticipation of excessing from lower level positions.

Please report any withheld positions in your station to the branch office so they can pass the information along to the NBA office. It is worth remembering that regular city carrier positions may be withheld but T-6 positions cannot when carriers are considering which positions to bid on. It could have an impact on CCAs getting promoted or not. As always, if you have any questions about anything to do with withholding don't hesitate to call the branch office.

In solidarity,

Dan Wheeler



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TOO OURSELVES,
FOR WHATEVER WE
GIVE COMPLETES
THE CIRCLE AND
COMES BACK TO US.

FLORA EDWARDS



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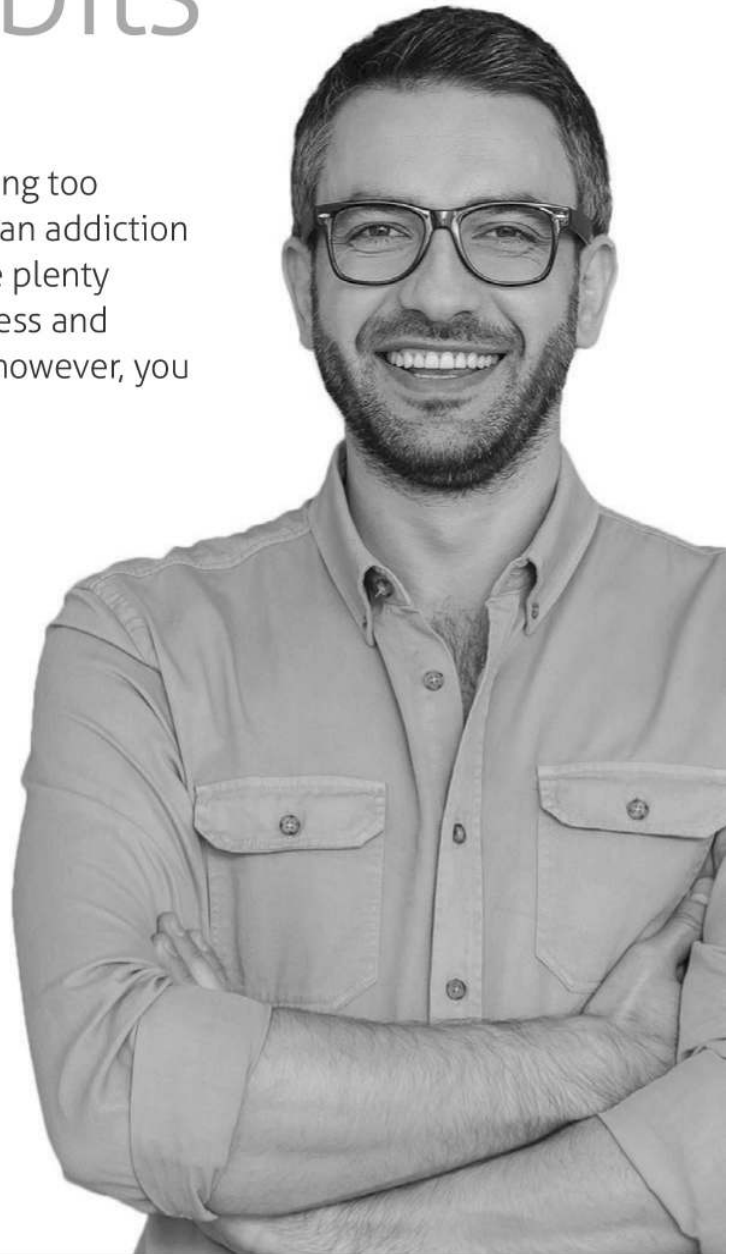
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HEALTHCARESM

Contract ratification Letter Carrier Pay Schedule City Carrier Wage Schedule

The following salary and rate schedule is for all NALC-represented employees.

1. This pay chart includes the following increases for career carriers:

- Sept. 3, 2016: COLA of \$21 annually (paid beginning Aug. 19, 2017, reflected in paychecks Sept. 8, 2017)—back pay will be calculated from Sept. 3, 2016, through Aug. 18, 2017.
 - Nov. 26, 2016: 1.2 percent general wage increase (paid beginning Aug. 19, 2017, reflected in paychecks Sept. 8, 2017)—back pay will be calculated from Nov. 26, 2016, through Aug. 18, 2017.
 - March 4, 2017: COLA of \$333 annually (paid beginning Aug. 19, 2017, reflected in paychecks Sept. 8, 2017)—back pay will be calculated from March 4, 2017, through Aug. 18, 2017.
 - Sept. 2, 2017: COLA of \$270 annually (paid beginning Sept. 2, 2017, reflected in paychecks Sept. 22, 2017)—back pay not applicable.
2. The next increase, effective Nov. 25, 2017, reflected in paychecks Dec. 15, 2017, will be as follows:
- 1.3 percent general wage increase
3. Back pay adjustments referenced above will be calculated and paid by USPS as soon as practicable.

Table 1: City Carrier Schedule

This schedule applies to all carriers with a career appointment date prior to Jan. 12, 2013

RSC Q (NALC)

CC Grade	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	<i>MOST PREV. STEP</i>
Full-Time Regular Employees - Basic Annual Salaries																
1	48,406	52,337	53,863	56,785	57,188	57,593	57,988	58,390	58,794	59,191	59,594	59,995	60,398	60,803	61,201	403
2	50,415	54,597	54,693	57,686	58,120	58,557	58,986	59,417	59,855	60,277	60,715	61,151	61,580	62,022	62,454	438
Part-Time Flexible Employees - Hourly Basic Rates																
1	24.20	26.17	26.93	28.39	28.59	28.80	28.99	29.20	29.40	29.60	29.80	30.00	30.20	30.40	30.60	
2	25.21	27.30	27.35	28.84	29.06	29.28	29.49	29.71	29.93	30.14	30.36	30.58	30.79	31.01	31.23	
Full-Time/Part-Time Regular Employees - Hourly Basic Rates																
1	23.27	25.16	25.90	27.30	27.49	27.69	27.88	28.07	28.27	28.46	28.65	28.84	29.04	29.23	29.42	
2	24.24	26.25	26.29	27.73	27.94	28.15	28.36	28.57	28.78	28.98	29.19	29.40	29.61	29.82	30.03	
Step Increase Waiting Periods (in weeks)																
Steps (From-To)	A-B	B-C	C-D	D-E	E-F	F-G	G-H	H-I	I-J	J-K	K-L	L-M	M-N	N-O	YRS.	
Grades 1 - 2	96	96	44	44	44	44	44	44	44	34	34	26	26	24	12.4	

Table 2: City Carrier Schedule

This schedule applies to all carriers with a career appointment date on or after Jan. 12, 2013

RSC Q7 (NALC)

CC Grade	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	<i>MOST PREV. STEP</i>
Full-Time Regular Employees - Basic Annual Salaries																
1	37,640	39,321	41,005	42,687	44,372	46,054	47,737	49,419	51,104	52,785	54,468	56,152	57,836	59,519	61,201	1,682
2	38,410	40,126	41,845	43,561	45,279	46,996	48,714	50,432	52,150	53,867	55,585	57,301	59,019	60,736	62,454	1,718
Part-Time Flexible Employees - Hourly Basic Rates																
1	18.82	19.66	20.50	21.34	22.19	23.03	23.87	24.71	25.55	26.39	27.23	28.08	28.92	29.76	30.60	
2	19.21	20.06	20.92	21.78	22.64	23.50	24.36	25.22	26.08	26.93	27.79	28.65	29.51	30.37	31.23	
Full-Time/Part-Time Regular Employees - Hourly Basic Rates																
1	18.10	18.90	19.71	20.52	21.33	22.14	22.95	23.76	24.57	25.38	26.19	27.00	27.81	28.61	29.42	
2	18.47	19.29	20.12	20.94	21.77	22.59	23.42	24.25	25.07	25.90	26.72	27.55	28.37	29.20	30.03	
Percent Step O																
	61.50%	64.25%	67.00%	69.75%	72.50%	75.25%	78.00%	80.75%	83.50%	86.25%	89.00%	91.75%	94.50%	97.25%	100.00%	
Step Increase Waiting Periods (in weeks)																
Steps (From-To)	A-B	B-C	C-D	D-E	E-F	F-G	G-H	H-I	I-J	J-K	K-L	L-M	M-N	N-O	YRS.	
Grades 1 - 2	46	46	46	46	46	46	46	46	46	46	46	46	46	46	12.4	

City Carrier Assistant Schedule

**Hourly Rates
RSC Q4 (NALC)**

Applies to CCA hires with no previous TE service.

CCA Grade	CC	BB	AA
1	16.41	16.91	17.41
2	16.75	17.25	17.75

Applies to CCA hires with previous TE service after Sept. 29, 2007, who were on the rolls as of Jan. 10, 2013.

CCA Grade	CC	BB	AA
1	17.78	18.28	18.78
2	18.13	18.63	19.13

Step Progression Criteria:

- Step CC until 12 weeks of service as a CCA
- Step BB following 12 weeks of service until 52 weeks of service as a CCA
- Step AA after 52 weeks of service as a CCA

The Postal Service has informed the NALC that due to the complexity of implementing a new pay scale, including step increases, that the new pay rates for city carrier assistants will go into effect Sept. 16, 2017.

1. This pay chart includes the following increases for city carrier assistants:

- Nov. 26, 2016: 2.2 percent general wage increase (paid beginning Sept 16, 2017, reflected in paychecks Oct. 6, 2017)—back pay will be calculated from Nov. 26, 2016, through Sept. 15, 2017.
 - Nov. 26, 2016: CCA step increases of \$0.50 per hour when you reach 12 weeks of service as a CCA, another \$0.50 per hour increase after 40 more weeks of service as a CCA (paid beginning Sept. 16, 2017, reflected in paychecks Oct 6, 2017)—back pay will be calculated from Nov. 26, 2016 through Sept. 15, 2017.
2. The next increase, effective Nov. 25, 2017, reflected in paychecks Dec. 15, 2017, will be as follows:
- 2.3 percent general wage increase
3. Back pay adjustments referenced above will be calculated and paid by USPS as soon as practicable.

One of the many things letter carriers know about is bathrooms. We know where they are on our route and usually on other routes as well. We know which ones require getting a key and which don't. Which ones usually have soap and paper towel, which are clean and not so clean. The question is how do the restrooms in our respective offices compare to others.

In my office, the men's room is pretty bad. It has vents that don't work and are covered in dust. I don't think they ever worked! There are no wall soap dispensers. There are rusty pipes. You get the picture. I am planning to get more involved with my office safety and health committee and see what can be done. I encourage anyone to do the same in your office whether it's the bathroom or something else that could use some work. We all deserve to work in a sanitary and safe workplace. Lyrics Trivia: "Clean this mess up else we'll all end up in jail".

(answer: Kid Charlemagne, Steely Dan)
 Jim Salvati
 Safety Officer

Nominations for delegates for the National Convention for 2018 shall be held at the October 3, 2017 regular meeting for Branch 25, NALC, 8:00 PM at the Knights of Columbus-Wilmington, MA. Election for delegates will be held by secret ballot at the November 7, 2017 regular branch meeting, also at 8:00 PM at the Knights of Columbus- Wilmington, MA.

Expenses for elected delegates shall be voted on at the November meeting. All elected delegates must have attended 60% of the regular monthly meetings, held between delegate elections, to be a paid delegate to conventions.

Any member who has not been a member for the prior two (2) years will have their attendance prorated from their date of membership. In addition to the provisions of Article 5 of the Branch 25 by-laws, which designates the President and the Executive Vice-President as automatic delegates of these functions, Article 5 of the NALC Constitution shall prevail.

Andrew Coan, Secretary
 Massachusetts Northeast Merged Branch 25

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*at the next meeting
October 3, 2017*

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