



WAKE UP!

President/ Editor
Daniel P. Wheeler

Publisher

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



Jack Murtaugh, Trustee Bob Cronin, Exec VP Paul Desmond, Asst. Sec. Andy Coan, Dave Hallinan, Dave Hackett Bill MacPhail, and Mike Little joined Peabody Steward Tony Porciello (fourth from right) in celebrating his recent retirement.



Peabody's Bill MacPhail (left) and Mike Little (right) received their retirement gratuities from Exec. VP Paul Desmond at the September branch meeting



President's Message

Suddenly, the nighttime temperatures are dropping; we notice it is not staying light as long as it used to, and we are even starting to see a few stray leaves falling. These are all signs summer is winding down, and fall is upon us. If fall is upon us, winter will be here before we know it. The coming seasons mean changes in the challenges letter carriers face in their day-to-day routines are coming as well. In the summer, the big issue for us is heat safety. Many of the challenges we face as letter carriers are not seasonal dependent. The constant walking, bending, lifting, reaching, and repetitive motions are present year-round. Fall and winter bring about new challenges and add to some of the existing challenges.

The first challenge is the loss of daylight to work in. Right now, the last daylight is around 7 p.m. By the end of October; the last light will be at just about 6 p.m. By the end of November, it will be dark before 5 p.m. Rapid light loss means more letter carriers will deliver mail in the dark. Delivering mail in the dark as a general principle is not unsafe; however, it absolutely could be. In a perfect world, our offices would be staffed well enough to get most of the carriers off the street promptly, but we know that's not the case in the real world. When it gets dark, we lose the ability to see in our immediate surroundings and greater field of view. Losing the ability to see in our immediate surroundings means we are less likely to see tripping or slipping hazards. Losing our greater field of view means we are less likely to see things such as dogs or other threats coming towards us. Once winter comes and snow and ice are added to the darkness, it becomes an even more significant safety issue.

Every letter carrier should prioritize their safety because, most of the time, management will not! While darkness alone is not a blanket reason for not delivering mail, many contributing factors could make it unsafe. Those factors could be wet leaves, snow or ice covering the walkways, difficulty navigating stairs, or inability to see the actual delivery points. Remember that management will often offer or issue headlamps or flashlights to use. These are not authorized equipment, and you cannot be required to use them.

Inclement weather is always a challenge for letter carriers, whether dark or not. I said it once already, but it bears repeating. Every letter carrier should prioritize

their safety! In the summer, when it rains, the streets dry out when it's over. In the fall, when it rains, the water gets trapped under the fallen leaves and causes slipping hazards. Once the snow and ice come, we all know what kind of challenges that presents. Accidents are unforeseen by definition. Some are unavoidable, but the more we know about our safety, the more chance we have to get through the day safely.

Unfortunately, we get many calls from injured letter carriers at the branch office. I would guess that no letter carrier makes it through their career uninjured. I would also imagine most letter carriers who work long enough don't make it through without filing at least one worker's comp claim. We are lucky to have people trained to assist members at the branch level with their claims and have Regional Workers Comp Assistant Dave Barbuzzi's knowledge to rely on. No one plans on having an accident or getting injured. When injuries occur, it can be a confusing process for those who have never dealt with it. I would encourage all active members to register through the Department of Labor with ECOMP (Employee Compensation Operations and Management Portal). ECOMP makes it much easier than it used to be for injured employees to file claims. Filing a claim through ECOMP instead of filing a paper claim through local management gives the employee more control of the claim process. It takes away the potential of management to delay the process. Registering for an account in ECOMP is quick and easy. You don't need to have an injury claim to sign up. In the best-case scenario, you may never need to use ECOMP, but by signing up beforehand, you can save yourself a step once the need arises. There is a QR Code on the back cover of this issue which will take you directly to the ECOMP site.

In Solidarity,

Dan Wheeler

Correction: In the September 2023 Wake Up Peter Torrisi's name was printed incorrectly as Torissi a couple of times. Our apologies to Brother Torrisi for the error.

Executive Vice-President's Report

At the September branch meeting, four proposed by-law changes were read and presented in writing, which will be discussed and voted on at the next branch meeting on October 10. They are printed below with the proposed changes italicized.

Article 4 Section 4- A quorum shall consist of 25 members.

Article 7 Section 6- Any member nominated for more than one (1) office may accept only one (1) nomination.

Article 7 Section 2- All candidates for nomination present at the October meeting must give assent to their nomination. Any nominee not present at the meeting will have 5 days to notify the Secretary in writing of their assent or must have submitted a letter to the Secretary prior to the October meeting, giving his or her assent to be a candidate. All candidates must be certified in good standing by the Secretary. Accommodations will be made for any member not in attendance, due to being unavoidably detained.

Article 5 Section 2- President- The position of President shall be a full-time position. The President will be Chief Steward and shall be the responsible executive and administrative head of the Branch, Editor-in-Chief of the Wakeup, and shall be a member ex-officio of all committees. He/she shall examine all contracts to which Branch 25 is a party. No obligation shall be incurred, nor a contract made, unless countersigned by the President. He/she shall have the authority to appoint members to fill unexpired vacant terms of office for Branch officers. He/she shall have the authority to appoint all committees and name their Chairperson. He/she shall automatically be a delegate to all National and State Conventions or to any meeting called by the National Association of Letter Carriers, Committee of President's (C.O.P.) meetings, or affiliates. The President shall receive a salary of \$84,403 as of 2-7-2020, the date of the by-law approval by the approval by the Committee of Laws. This salary will constitute the base salary for the President. Any subsequent contractual increases and Cost of Living Adjustments (COLA) will be added to the base salary. At the end of each contract, all contractual and COLA increases will be rolled into the base salary to become the new base salary.

Branch 25 will incur the obligation of employee and employer CSRS contributions, up to 5% matching contributions for FERS employees, the U.S. Postal

Service's share of the Federal Employees Government Life Insurance, and the U.S. Postal Service's share of the Health Benefit Premiums not to exceed the premium charged by the NALC Health Benefit Plan.

As for leave, the position would be granted the same amount of sick and annual leave per year as the person holding the position would earn at the Postal Service, with the requirement that he/she must take 15 days of vacation each year. If the duties of the President require him/her to work on a Saturday or Sunday, or after normal business hours, then he/she shall be granted compensatory time for said hours. No more than thirty-two (32) hours of compensatory time may be accrued at any given time. Unused annual and sick leave will be placed aside in a sick and annual bank. The person holding the position will forfeit leave in the same manner as it is earned. For every 80 hours of LWOP used, 8 hours of annual and 4 hours of sick will be reduced from the total, or that equal to what the person in the position is currently earning. When he/she vacates the office, unused annual leave will be paid and unused sick leave will be forfeited, unless he/she vacates the office to fill another full-time position in the Branch.

The complete by-laws are under carrier resources on the Branch website, nalcbranch25.com. There will be discussion on these proposals and a vote to approve or disapprove the changes at the October meeting. See you there!

Keep your head up!

Paul Desmond

Calendar of Events

October 3	Major League Baseball Playoffs Start
October 4	National Taco Day
October 6	World Smile Day
October 9	Columbus Day
October 10	Regular Branch Meeting K of C Wilmington 8:00PM Food served at 7:15 PM
October 13	United States Navy Birthday (1775)
November 5	Daylight Savings Time Ends

Vice President's Report

"I had strings, but now I'm free; there are no strings on me."

A quick reminder that if you are interested in signing up for the Letter Carrier Political Fund (LCPF), send me an email at tb25lcpf@gmail.com. For the subject of the email, write your name and workstation, and in the body of the email, provide your contact information and the best time to reach you in accordance with the Hatch Act.

As I write this article, the Writers Guild of America (WGA) and Screen Actors Guild – American Federation of Television and Radio Artists (SAG-AFTRA) are currently on strike. A strike is also looming for the United Auto Workers (UAW). Although it is never good for people to be out of work having to fight for decent wages and benefits, amongst other rights, it is refreshing to see such solidarity and support for them throughout the country. If you would like to do some research about why a postal strike is illegal I would recommend reading the Article on page 23 of the August *Postal Record*: "How a Fight with President Teddy Roosevelt Stripped Letter Carriers of Their Right to Strike." You can also read the *Carriers in a Common Cause* book, which is about the history of the NALC. Both of these can be found at nalc.org.

In the workplace we have to look out for each other. As I mentioned in last month's article, management continues to push their agenda on issues like stationary time, sick leave, the 5-minute leeway rule, imaginary load times, and various other violations of postal handbooks and manuals. Newer carriers get so accustomed to hearing incorrect information from management they begin to think it's the proper way to do things. We can't sleep on our rights! Procedures in violation of our regulations could have negative consequences on your route and create a toxic work environment. If something seems wrong, request union time and discuss the issue(s) with your steward or the branch.

With our peak season approaching, make the commitment to attend branch meetings. An educated workplace is our best defense against inept management.

In Solidarity,

Tony Bossi

Note: By making a contribution to the Letter Carrier Political Fund, you are doing so voluntarily with the understanding that your contribution is not a condition of membership in the National Association of Letter Carriers or of employment by the Postal Service, nor is it part of union dues. You have a right to refuse to contribute without any reprisal. The Letter Carrier Political Fund will use the money it receives to contribute to candidates for federal office and undertake other political spending as permitted by law. Your selection shall remain in full force and effect until canceled. Contributions to the Letter Carrier Political Fund are not deductible for federal income tax purposes. Federal law prohibits the Letter Carrier Political Fund from soliciting contributions from individuals who are not NALC members, executive and administrative staff or their families. Any contribution received from such an individual will be refunded to that contributor. Federal law requires us to use our best efforts to collect and report the name, mailing address, occupation and name of employer of individuals whose contributions exceed \$200 per calendar year. Any guideline amount is merely a suggestion, and an individual is free to contribute more or less than the guideline suggests and the union will not favor or disadvantage anyone by reason of the amount of their contribution or their decision not to contribute.

Secretary's Report

I hope everyone was able to enjoy some of their summer this year. I know between vacations, injuries and understaffing it has been a trying summer at best. Not to mention the 7 feet of rain we got this year (or so it seemed). If I hear anyone use the word drought or conserving water they might get a dropkick if I could actually do that. Fall has arrived, school is back in force, the leaves will be turning soon, and Salem is already becoming Halloween chaos. So hopefully everyone can enjoy a part of it in their own way.

First off I want to mention that this month we will have nominations for the 2024 NALC 73rd Convention which is being held in Boston next summer from August 5-9. If you would like to go make sure you come down and get nominated. The elections will be held at the November meeting. Don't forget even if you are not elected or qualify as a funded member you can still attend the convention. There is no cost for your credentials to the convention, so your cost would be your travel/parking and food. The rules for being funded are in the branch by-laws article 9 sec 4, which can be found on the branch website. I have been fortunate to attend 2 conventions myself and they are extremely informative as well as enjoyable. You get to meet fellow carriers from around the country, attend seminars to further your NALC knowledge as well as listen to some of the most inspirational speeches you will hear. I have enjoyed the ones I have been to and look forward to the opportunity to attend more. (continued on Page 7)

Workers of the World Unite

I'm taking time this month to write about a statement that was put out by Postmaster General Louis DeJoy titled "Transforming the Employee Experience". Mainly, this specific portion:

Improving our employees' experience and providing a stable and empowered workforce remain at the forefront of our DFA plan. Our bond with our employees has never been more important than it is today. That bond is represented by the collective bargaining agreements we have negotiated with our unions. As we continue our transformation to meet the needs of a dynamic and changing business environment, we will, by necessity, continue to adapt to more change. There is one aspect of our transformation that cannot change and that is our adherence to the provisions of our labor agreements.

TLDR? Our contracts are the most important thing we can uphold with our unions.

If you're reading this, answer these questions: Have you been required to work overtime when you're not on the overtime desired list? Have you worked past your 12/60-hour limitations? Did management review a recent 3999 with you? Has management moved you off your swing? Have they switched your days off on a hold-down?

I'm not actively trying to push an agenda that Louis DeJoy is bad. As a matter of fact, he's shown very little interest in adversely affecting the NALC. He's also worked closely with the NALC and the Letter Carrier Political Fund to remove the Postal Accountability Enhancement Act that crippled the Postal Service for countless years. But the attention I'm trying to draw is regarding his overall action. This is an acknowledgment that management at the highest level is aware of noncompliance and consistent grievances. And I am firmly rooted in the belief that actions speak much louder than words. So, ask yourself, is an internal memo sent to managers across the country that has had little to no effect and actual attempt to rectify issues with management continuing to violate our contract? Absolutely not.

I have stewards consistently reaching out to me for insight and direction regarding issues in their buildings. I still have many carriers who started out in the Good Start Academy reaching out to me for advice in their buildings. Don't become complacent, and believe management will act in good faith to rectify all problems based on this silly letter.

That said, let's turn our attention to some good news. Teamsters President Sean O'Brien recently oversaw a historic increase for UPS, granting a \$7.50/hour raise over the course of the new contract alongside the removal of a two-tier pay scale. The ratification went 161-1 in favor of the new contract. That's massive for UPS. Jim Evers, President of Boston Carmen's Local 589, recently announced MBTA workers would receive an 18% wage increase, alongside 10 days of "parental paid leave", bereavement, and dental and vision benefits for its part-time workforce.

At the time of writing this article, the Writers Guild of America is awaiting details regarding a new contract but has called off picketing since Sunday, September 24. More information to come tonight. This marks a historic moment for the WGA as we are currently witnessing what technology like AI may impact. The point is labor organizations are currently the lifeblood of the working class. Together, our unity and unionization will push companies to recognize the working class and ensure we are treated and compensated fairly. I know I'm preaching to the choir, but I'll continue to say it day in and day out: I don't believe even \$100,000 may be fair for the labor and work we do.

In the 103°F heat with blistering sun and humidity, we deliver. When there are two and a half feet of snow falling from the sky, we deliver. When a global pandemic hits, and millions of people are victims of an infectious disease, we deliver. Yes, we deliver mail to a mailbox. But remember, our retention rate, albeit disheartening, is under 40%. The work YOU do each day is incredibly undermined and underappreciated by the Postal Service. We aren't just a number. We are the lifeblood that keeps the Postal Service afloat. Thank you for all that you do.

Workers of the world unite.

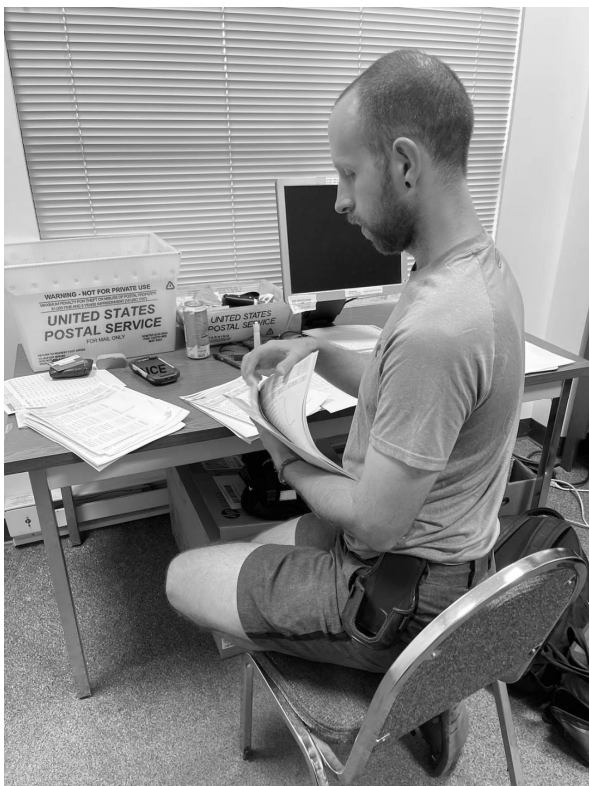
James Metilinos

Branch 25 Directory of Officers

Daniel P. Wheeler	President
Paul G. Desmond	Executive V.P.
Anthony Bossi	Vice President
Joe Stearns	Secretary
James P. Nutter	Treasurer
Kenneth Dusombre	Health Benefits Rep.
Jim Salvati	Safety Officer
Doug Murray	Sergeant At Arms
Dan Raske	Chairman of Trustees
Bruce Johnson	Trustee
Tony Porciello	Trustee
Bob Cronin	Trustee
Gilbert Paredes	Trustee
James Metilinos	Assistant Treasurer
Andy Coan	Assistant Secretary
Jeremy Provost	Assistant Safety Officer
James Tuttle	Assistant Wake Up Publisher
Wesley Tugman	Assistant Health Ben. Rep.

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

Lowell Alternate Steward Wes Tugman hard at work on some grievances.



Recent Retirees

Salem's Gilbert Paredes is pictured with NALC Vice-President James Henry receiving his certificate denoting his completion of the NALC's Formal A & Beyond Training program.



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

“Pumpkin Spice, and Everything Nice”

Fall is here! A couple of things we get to enjoy with Fall are cooler temperatures and watching leaves die. Fall is also a great time to prepare for... winter. With that, I'd like to expand on a couple of things that Jim wrote about last month.

Make sure your truck is ready for winter. Those tires that are “fine because I can't see the cords” need to be changed. Write them up. Make sure ALL the lights work. Go beyond the brake lights, blinkers, and flashers. Check the headlights, tail lights, side lights, gauge lights, cargo lights, and dome light too. You will be working in the dark and you want to see and be seen in your truck. Check your heater. I remember a few days last winter where I would have refused a truck without heat. I know everyone does a thorough vehicle inspection every morning, so you will have no problem correcting any issues with your truck.

Make sure YOU are ready for winter. Find your headlamp and make sure it works. Pull out all of your winter gear. Make sure everything fits appropriately and is in good working order. The first snow storm is a terrible time to find out the zipper on your parka is broken. Make sure you have a hat and gloves that fit well and keep you warm. Check that your winter boots have good tread on them. If the bottoms look like bowling shoes, bite the bullet and get a new pair. Finally, check your ice grippers for missing or worn out studs. Make sure you have a good set of grippers for winter.

I hear a lot of jokes about wet leaves in the fall. The truth is that wet leaves can be as slippery as ice. A vehicle traveling at 45 MPH can stop in 80 feet on dry pavement. On wet leaves, that stop will take over 200 feet. While walking on wet leaves, treat the surface as if it were ice.

Finally, Halloween. I hate working on Halloween. Kids running around your truck like idiots in the dark is a recipe for disaster. Please take your time and be so careful.

Stay Safe,
Jeremy Provost

Also, this month as you can see here in the wake up we have by-laws to be voted on. These are minor changes to what we already have. If you have a question on these come down and ask away.

On a more somber note. The last few months I have been trying to update our address listing as best I can. One of the issues I come across is getting back wakeups and not knowing why. This year I have found about 10 members who have passed on, some over a year or more ago. If you know of a member who has passed on please notify me as soon as you can. When I do finally find these I submit them to the Postal Record so their names can be printed there.

As I always end this if you have moved please update your address with the branch. You can call, write, or email me at JESBR25@gmail.com. Enjoy and here is a little fun....

Snapple Fact #45 Elephants are capable of swimming 20 miles a day.

Happy Halloween,
Joe Stearns

Lynnfield's Mike Pendola received his retirement gratuity from Branch 25's Exec VP Paul Desmond at the September



WAKE UP

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First Class Mail
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at the next meeting
October 10
K of C Wilmington
8:00 PM



Branch 25 Trustee and Salem Steward Gilbert Paredes (7th from right, back row) is pictured with the latest class of graduates of the NALC's Formal A and Beyond training. Good job Gilbert!



ECOMP - U.S. Department of Labor

www.ecomp.dol.gov