



WAKE UP!

President/ Editor
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Publisher
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Volume 41 Issue 9

November 2017

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

Veterans Day November 11, 2017



President's Message

In the last month or so, things have been fairly hectic. We have had route inspections in two offices (Salem and Danvers), and the local implementation period commenced on October 16. During this time, I have read each and every LMOU.

It never ceases to amaze me how within the branch there are offices that have gone to great pains to spell out each and every possible scenario that can take place, and other offices that seem to leave a lot to the imagination. One can tell when reading these documents which stations had good or even great labor/management relationships and which ones were lacking.

The one thing that is evident throughout is that the people that crafted the language contained within the LMOU'S took their task seriously. It is clear that a great deal of effort was taken to ensure the rights of the letter carriers in the ao's.

In my opinion, the most important section of the LMOU is the section that deals with annual leave. Annual leave is cherished, hard-earned, and greatly deserved. Letter carriers don't have much to look forward to in today's postal service, but ask a letter carrier when they are planning leave and I'll bet you might get a slight smile out of them.

This year, the national parties negotiated language that REQUIRES the local parties to negotiate leave provisions for CCA'S. I was ecstatic when I learned of this. Fortunately, many of our locals already had provisions for CCA's during prime time. But with this new language, we've taken one step closer to allowing CCA's to be human.

By the time you read this, we will have signed off on many of the branch's more than 30 LMOU's, and I'm happy to say that there was not much resistance on the part of management to simply adding the CCA's into the mix and allowing them to choose leave like anyone else.

I believe this was a long time coming and applaud the parties at the National Level for providing this mandate.

Regarding the inspections that took place in early October, preliminary results show gains in both Danvers and Salem. Danvers only had a handful of routes inspected as a result of special inspection requests. Preliminary is a key word, however, as Operations Programs Support (OPS) has not subjected the numbers to their magic math known as COR. We will monitor the results closely and remain vigilant.

Speaking of magic math, I have recently entered into an agreement with OPS to reinspect the Marblehead office. Some of you may know, Marblehead was

inspected almost a year ago. Adjustments were put into place in June, and to describe them as a fiasco would be an understatement. During the middle of the summer, when mail volume is at its lightest, the office used on average over 20 hours more than their base adjusted hours to get the mail delivered. Actually, the DOIS projections for the office during July and August showed that the routes were out of adjustment by over 12 hours.

The time frame for the grievance procedure would have put the potential arbitration decision at such a time that a successful outcome would have produced spring inspections. Spring inspections are what messed things up to begin with. So, we agreed to do fall inspections and hopefully this time around the mail volume and parcel volume cooperates and the office gets the relief they have deserved for some time.

I feel it necessary to make a general comment for the benefit of all letter carriers who are going through or have gone through route inspections. If you believe that your route, and your office as a whole is overburdened, get off the overtime desired list. You see, an arbitrator really doesn't understand the nuances of why carriers are on the overtime list.

Some carriers may be on it because they believe they are the only ones that can give top notch service to their customers. Some may be on it because they don't want to go out to their route to find that a carrier unfamiliar with their (the postal service's) route may have misdelivered to an apartment complex or business. Some may be on the list because they think that if they don't do the overtime, they will come in to a mess in the morning from all the mail brought back by the pieces that they gave off for assistance. I'm sure there are more reasons why a carrier, who really doesn't want to work late, signs the overtime desired list.

To an arbitrator, it's not that confusing. You sign the list because you want overtime. Any overtime. To an arbitrator, you want to work all you can get. To an arbitrator it doesn't matter what time you go to work, or what time you get home, whether it's raining or snowing, whether your route is adjusted or not, if you sign that list you want overtime. Period. Think about that when it takes management forever to fix things. What is their motivation? Sure, they're paying you overtime, but you're on the list so there is no penalty to them.

I hope everyone has a great Thanksgiving!!

Stay informed!

Dave Barbuzzi

Executive Vice President's Report

The Branch has been involved with local negotiations with management since October 16, and I feel that we have been successful so far in getting the CCAs included in the annual leave provisions of the individual LMOUs. The national parties instructed us to negotiate these provisions and most Postmasters have been very reasonable in the process, which should result in CCAs being allowed to use leave when it is available, and they have a leave balance. It has taken a while, but the CCAs are beginning to see advances to their benefits. They just started to receive more contribution from the Postal Service for health benefits and will now get 6 holidays paid per year. Hopefully next negotiation results in more. Most local memorandums have been cleaned up over the years, so there are not a lot of provisions that we or management are looking to change, but there is always some language that must change due to changes in the business, such as the creation of CCAs. The new LMOUs will be good until the next national agreement is negotiated. The current agreement expires in November of 2019.

With the arrival of Fall, once again we will likely be swamped with parcels right through the Christmas season. Of course, some managers will be telling the carriers that they need to be off the clock in a pre-determined time, regardless of the carriers workload estimate. This is no time to skip breaks or take chances with your safety. Obviously do not do anything that would put you at risk with the vehicles. It will be getting dark early soon and you need to be aware of your surroundings. Wet leaves and darkness can be a problem if you are trying to rush in order to make an unreasonable deadline. Delivering parcels seems like it is going to be a big part of the Postal Services future, and management is going to have to get used to the fact that there may be times that it takes longer to deliver them than some computer tells them. In some cases it may be quicker. A few years ago, the Postal Service said it was going to look into the possibility of creating routes, for the sole purpose of delivering parcels. This may not work in every office, but I would like to think there is a need for it. When I walk into a station and see carriers making 3 trips in order to load parcels, or returning to the station because there was no room in the vehicle for all the parcels, that indicates to me that an extra carrier delivering parcels would take some of the burden off the routes, and probably improve service.

Just a couple of things to keep in mind. Open season is soon upon us so take a good look at your health benefits and make sure you are in the right plan for you. Also remember, that you must be in a Federal health plan

for the last 5 years of your career in order to carry health benefits into retirement. Congress is proposing a budget that includes slashing our retirement benefits in many ways. They would like to eliminate the annuity supplement we receive before we qualify for Social Security benefits at age 62. They would like to slash the rate of interest on the G fund in the TSP. There are many other negative provisions in this budget but hopefully there will be many amendments before it actually is passed by Congress. I don't believe the majority of members of Congress actually want to reduce the retirement benefits for the people that will either vote for them, or vote them out of office. We should be calling our reps in Congress to tell them how we feel.

Keep your head up!

Paul Desmond

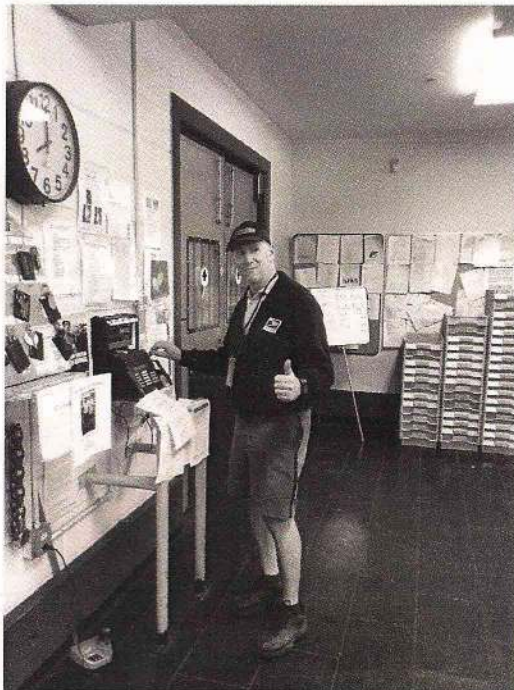
Calendar of Events

November 1	All Saints Day
November 7	8PM Branch Meeting @ Knights of Columbus 27 School St. Ext. Wilmington Food served @ 7:15
November 10	United States Marine Corps Day
November 11	Veteran's Day
November 13	Health Benefit Open Season
November 14	Local Negotiations End
November 15	America Recycles Day
November 23	Thanksgiving Day
November 24	Black Friday

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

Last Punch



Holliston carrier Tim Fitzgerald hit the clock for the last time on September 29 after 30 years delivering mail. Tim is already enjoying his extra time to spend with family and at his place in New Hampshire.

Since 2016 the issue of peaceful protest by National Football League players has been a topic for debate. The main message from those who have chosen to participate was the belief of injustice in multiple occasions of black men being killed by law enforcement officers and in their opinion a failure of the justice system in processing the legal determination of guilt or innocence. In many discussions since then, the topic of economic status, domestic violence, gender inequalities etc.... have been included. The purpose of this article is not to discuss the merits of either side's stance on the substance of these debates, but the actual right of protesting itself.

Most will agree our citizens have the right to peaceful protest. The president has inserted into the argument that it does not include the right to protest or disrespect the American flag or National Anthem. Make no mistake, I am not in favor of nor am condoning using these two symbols as props. I do, however, recognize someone's right to do so. Let me make a couple of comparisons that are not identical but would present a similarity.

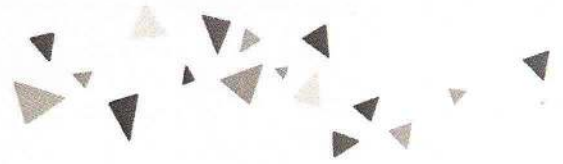
Back in the first half of the twentieth century, how would we look upon the Russians or Germans not standing for their countries flag or anthem? How would we view the North Koreans if they refused to stand and clap like crazy to the pressure of their leader Kim Jong Un? For that matter lets go back to the late 1700's, and ponder the revolutionists not honoring the British flag and the King of England. Mind you these are viewed as extreme examples. The point is we are allowed to protest. During the late 1960's and early 1970's many protested the Vietnam War. Flags were burned. Draft cards were burned. Protesters were attacked and beaten. Kent State armored guards opened fire on college students. Who among us has not seen the picture of a slain student in front of a weeping fellow student?

I wonder how many of those who protested or agreed with those causes are so indignant to the protesters or their causes currently. I'm curious if those who would want the players in the NFL, who are kneeling, fired would also want the Vietnam protester fired or expelled from universities? The flag and anthem do stand for something. They stand for something in Russia, Germany, North Korea, and pre- revolution Great Brittan.

(continued on page 6)

Momentum

Healthy habits



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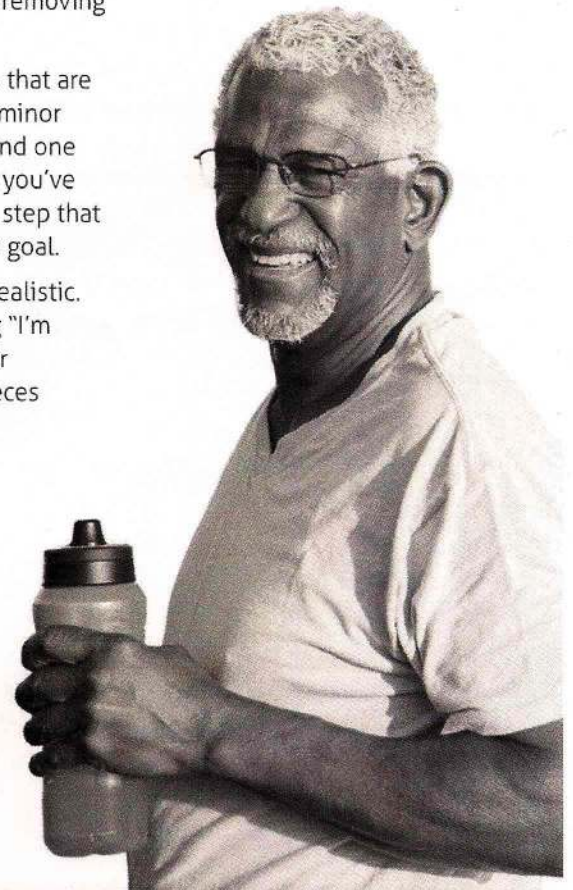
- ✓ Balance means different things to different people. But most of us agree it's finding time for family, friends and spiritual growth.
- ✓ It's not easy, but we all need to get enough sleep and regular exercise, as well as eat a healthy diet. It helps us stay strong during life's challenges.
- ✓ If you're out-of-balance, try changing how you manage your time. Ask for help at work and at home.

Small steps toward better health

Instant makeovers are tempting, especially for weight loss and fitness. However, it's better to work gradually toward improving your health. Starting an intense diet or exercise plan in hopes of quick results often leads to failure.

We've all known people who go "all in" on the latest diet or exercise craze, abandon it, and regain all the lost weight once a setback happens. Here are some ways you can gradually achieve your health goals:

- Limit major changes like starting six-day-per-week workouts or removing favorite foods from your diet.
- Start with a few small changes that are easy to make. Try making one minor change in your eating habits and one in your physical activity. Once you've succeeded, add another small step that moves you toward your health goal.
- Keep your goals specific and realistic. For example, instead of saying "I'm going to eat healthier" say "For the next month, I'll eat two pieces of fruit a day—one at breakfast and one for an afternoon snack."



Getting healthier is a minute-by-minute process. It's about small choices you make throughout the day. When you're tempted to have junk food or sugared soda, stop and make a different choice.

Log on to www.EAP4YOU.com today!

Magellan
HEALTHCARESM

Welcome New Members

Kyle V Alex	Billerica
James J Ambrefe	Newburyport
Joel C Blood	Salem
Mark E Fantasia	Salem
Natasha Garcia	Lowell
Socrates D Gomez	Salem
Natashka Guy	Topsfield
Robert S Hewey	Amesbury
N.C. King	Wilmington
Benjamin J Mannion	Wakefield
Shawn G McInnis	Haverhill
Debra A O'Brien	Concord
Anthony J Pasquale	Newburyport
Christopher Petros	Billerica
Jessie M Reid	Haverhill
Ronald J Robertson Jr	Dracut
Melvin Sanchez	Salem
James Soiro	Concord
Tara L Souther	Haverhill
Corey D Spinney	Wakefield
Josilene Souza	Concord
Kleber Souza	Sudbury
David M Stanley	Danvers
Cong T Tran	Lowell
Daniel P Weisenmiller	Newburyport

From The Treasurer's Desk

In America, they stand for freedom and opportunity, I believe they stand for the greatest and most generous country in the world. Just because I honor the flag and anthem, does not mean I don't respect the right of those who desire to bring attention to their cause by making a gesture in protesting it.

I, and many others, would prefer utilizing a different measure to make their point. Unfortunately, their message or point is lost on those who want them fired. The discussion of race relations and identifying the causes and developing solutions seems to be ignored over the insistence of honoring the flag and anthem. Hopefully, the point made by the protesters in this case has been made and the discussions of the causes and resolving the issues can begin to reaffirm protesting and bringing about change is also part of what makes America great.

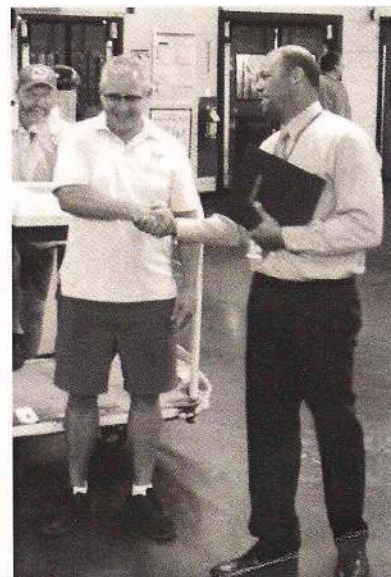
Special prayer to all our veterans and Happy Thanksgiving to all!

Jim Nutter

Veterans Day Facts

- What we now know as Veterans Day was first known as Armistice Day; November 11, 1919, the first anniversary of the end of WWI
- In 1926 congress passed a resolution for an annual observance
- In 1938 congress made Armistice day a national holiday
- In 1954 Armistice Day was changed to Veterans Day
- In 1968 congress moved veterans Day to the fourth Monday in October. In 1975 President Ford moved it back to November 11 due to it's historical significance
- As of the 2015 Census there are over 18 million veterans living in the United States including over 7 million Vietnam era veterans and over 5 million Gulf War veterans

Last Punch



Peabody Carrier's will their miss well-loved brother Tom Karolides! Tom just hung-up his satchel after 30 years delivering in 01960 and was given a warm sendoff by all at the Peabody station. Tom enjoys visiting Portugal with his lovely wife Ana, and they are looking forward to more traveling in retirement. 01960 is missing you already,

Safety

When I stopped to deliver to one of my residential customers the other day, he said "how do like my new landscaping?" He was referring to the fact that a car drove off the road, over his lawn, through 2 bushes, hit his house, drove through 2 more bushes, and then kept going! Police couldn't track down the driver to know what happened but chances are it involved some form of distracted driving.

We all know, there are distracted drivers out there and we must be on the defense. It could be phones, music, food, or drink. What is troubling is that the distractions are becoming more prevalent with technology. In a AAA study it was revealed that new cars are being loaded with options to easier access internet applications, for example, in-vehicle GPS navigation system.

Programming a destination takes an average of 40 seconds which at 25 mph can take a driver 400 yards! Research has shown that if you look away from the road for 2 seconds you double your risk of a crash. Keep your eyes on the road and your hands upon the wheel!

Jim Salvati

Safety Officer (Assistant Officer Wanted)

Lyrics Trivia- Name the song. Bonus; Any artists that recorded it. *I couldn't stop, so I swerved to the right*

*I'll never forget the sound that night
The screamin' tires, the bustin' glass
The painful scream that I heard last.*

Answer at www.nalcbranch25.com

Health Benefits


The 2017 Federal Employee Health Benefit (FEHB) Open Season is fast approaching. This year's dates are from November 13 to December 11. Employees may review their coverage and switch plans during this time. The NALC Health Benefit Plan continues to get better every year. If you are currently enrolled in another plan take some time to give it a look this year. The 2018 rates and benefits are up on the website at nalchbp.org

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