





# MAKE UP!

President/ Editor Publisher
Daniel P. Wheeler

Volume 47 Issue 10 November 2023

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



Holliston carriers joined other Holliston Post Office employees in recognizing Breast Cancer Awareness Month this October.

## President's Message

We all know there has been a critical need for new vehicles for some time now. The LLVs have needed replacement for a long time. As we all eagerly await the arrival of the new vehicles, we hear of a recent influx of Dodge Promaster vehicles in the district. The Promaster is not new to the Postal Service. It has been around for a few years now. I think most offices have at least, a few. For those who don't know, the Promaster is a cargo van. Many contractors and other delivery companies use these. They are left-hand drive vehicles with front doors that open wide, much like a regular passenger vehicle door, unlike an LLV door, which slides open. The Promaster is also higher than an LLV, meaning entering and exiting the vehicle requires more effort. I mention all this because we are just starting to see this new group of vehicles being pushed out into our offices.

The potential problem is that there may be issues that come along with this. Most of the routes that currently are assigned Promasters are Park & Loop routes. However, we are getting reports that routes with a large amount of dismount or Box-on-Post delivery will be given one of these vehicles. The first problem is this may be a safety issue depending on the route. If a carrier with dismount delivery will be using a Promaster instead of an LLV, the physical mechanics of entering and exiting the vehicle are much different. If a carrier with Box-on-Post delivery is being told they are now to make these deliveries as dismounts, then that may be a safety issue. It may also be a logistical issue as well. There are reports that carriers are being told to "just dismount" these deliveries or "Park & Loop them". However, these instructions apparently don't come with any guidance from management other than to figure it out.

If anyone is assigned a Promaster as their new vehicle and has any issues with how it affects their daily routine, please let your steward or the branch office know so we can check into it and address any possible issues that may arise because of this.

The TIAREAP process has been slow in the branch lately. Dracut, Wayland, and the offices in the Woburn building have gone through the process, and the adjustments have been implemented. These offices will start hitting the 90-day mark evaluation metric soon. According to M-01983, the District Lead Team will

review the adjustment data within 90 days of implementation of the adjustments to determine if a follow-up evaluation is necessary. Unlike previous joint processes, reviewing the adjustment data for TIAREAP is mandatory. In previous processes, a review could be called for by either side. More offices within the branch are still on the list to be evaluated under TIAREAP, but as of now, we have not been notified of any dates for this to happen. The TIAREAP MOU ends on December 31, 2023, but selected offices will continue in the process.

Unfortunately, armed robberies of letter carriers continue to take place both nationwide and locally. A Lowell letter carrier was the subject of one of these crimes at the very end of September. Luckily for the carrier, the incident went as well as it could have, and there was no physical harm done to the carrier. Undoubtedly, more needs to be done to protect our carriers out there and punish the criminals who are robbing them. There have been over 2000 violent crimes committed against letter carriers since the year 2000. In 2022, only 14% of violent crimes against letter carriers resulted in both arrests and prosecutions. The Postal Service is currently testing new mailbox lock systems to deter crime. Still, a recent Inspector General report labeled the Postal Service's plans as "incomplete and yielding few results" so far. The NALC has been working on this issue as their top priority, and the hope is that a bill will be announced soon. This bill will call for total funding of the arrow key system replacement nationwide. It would also give funding for additional postal inspectors dedicated to these crimes and stricter sentencing guidelines. Look for more information on how you can help the NALC bring attention to this critical issue soon!

In Solidarity,

Dan Wheeler

# **Executive Vice-President's Report**

I received a card in the mail recently from the Postal Service that was about reporting hazards or unsafe conditions via Form 1767. I assume everyone else has received one also, or soon will. I was glad to see this, but the only issue may be finding a form 1767 in your office. I have recently fielded questions from carriers about how to report a safety hazard and was told there are no Form 1767s to be found in that office. I am told they are being made available. In all fairness, that office was undergoing renovations, and the forms could have been temporarily moved, but these forms are supposed to be in an obvious space, readily available for all to use to report hazards or unsafe conditions. If this is not so in your office, please ask management where they are or contact your steward or the Union office.

I want to address something that has been happening in some our stations more often and shouldn't be. Management has been conducting interviews with carriers, without representation, and asking them for statements that have been used both against those carriers and others. First of all, any time your supervisor or multiple supervisors ask you to come to an office, you should be thinking something is a little different. You should immediately ask why they want to speak with you and request the presence of a steward. Also, anything you say in that room, may be taken in a way that you did not mean it to be. Management takes notes and you should have a representative to not only be a witness, but to clarify what the questions could be. I have seen many of management's interview notes that carriers later disagreed with the accuracy, but they were alone with 2 or more managers. Understand, management is not asking you to be interviewed by yourself to congratulate you on being a great carrier, they are more than likely trying to get information to use against either yourself or someone else. If there is any reason to believe that the questioning could lead to discipline, you should be requesting a steward. If a steward is not immediately available, please tell them you will co-operate when a steward is provided and let management reach out to the Union office to schedule an interview if necessary. You do not have to write any statements, if requested, but most likely they will not tell you that.

There have been many one-day counts and 3999s conducted within the branch lately. These one-day counts are strictly used to determine a carriers' efficiency for one day in the office. Basically, they are

used to determine if a carrier makes standards or has any inefficiencies that need to be corrected. A one-day count should be conducted with Form 1838-C and reviewed with the carrier by management by the next day. Any later than that does not allow the carrier to begin to correct any inefficiencies that may exist. The 3999 has no particular use at this point in time. The only purpose a 3999 serves within our manuals is to make territorial adjustments during a full 6-day count and inspection, which is currently not being utilized because of the TIAREP program. A 3999 is currently generated through the scanners by the TIAREP representatives during the adjustments. The TIAREP process is agreed to through the end of the year, but could be renewed at any time. If you are being counted, you are entitled to verify the count of all caseable mail and parcels. I suggest you do this. Please ask for a copy of the documents and notes used for a one-day count or 3999.

At this point we are getting close to the end of the year and carriers should be checking their annual balances to make sure they don't carry over more than 520 hours. If you think you may be close to losing any time, please start to request some time off. Management is required to approve annual leave if you are going to be otherwise giving it back. See you at the next branch meeting on November 14<sup>th</sup>.

Keep your head up!

Paul Desmond

Calendar of Events		
November 11	Veterans Day	
November 13	World Kindness Day	
November 14	Regular Branch Meeting K of C Wilmington 8:00PM Food served at 7:15 PM	
November 23	Thanksgiving	
December 3	Advent begins	
December 7	Pearl Harbor Day	

# Vice President's Report

# "What Better Place than Here, What Better Time than Now"

Recently I had the displeasure of handling two grievances where carriers, through no fault of their own, were injured on the job. The reaction from management at both installations was improper, but vastly different. In one circumstance, when the employee was injured, management mentioned to the carrier they could file a claim for an on-the-job injury and did little else. In the other situation, the 204b moved equipment resulting in an injury to the carrier, and neither he nor the postmaster seem to know the process of handling an injury on the job.

In the situation with the 204b, immediately after the injury happened, they looked at the carrier and said, "why were you standing there?" When I heard that I almost called my doctor to get a prescription for blood pressure medication. But that was just the tip of the iceberg. Management failed to make the carrier aware of any of their rights through law regarding their injury. The carrier went to the doctors to be evaluated. The injury happened early in the morning, and management ended the carrier's tour, which is a grievance. The carrier had evidence they would be working until after 7:00 pm, and per the EL-505 they should be paid for the entire shift they were scheduled to work. Management also failed to fill out an accident report, which is another one of their responsibilities. This is especially concerning because the carrier and 204b were discussing how unsafe the work area was before the accident happened. When I reached out for information to process the grievance, I was told by "upper" management that the accident report was completed. When the 204b was asked, they stated they had never heard of the form before.

It can be a difficult experience when being injured on duty, actions like these by management only serve to create more stress and anxiety for the injured carrier. Although we have multiple branch officers trained in workers compensation matters, you can save yourself or our fellow carriers a headache by having some knowledge about workers compensation. As frequently stated by the branch officers, this starts with attending our monthly branch meetings. National Business Agent Rick DiCecca and Regional Workers Compensation

Assistant Dave Barbuzzi are frequently at our branch meetings, and branch officers give their reports on current and hot button letter carrier issues. When carriers are educated, and they hear about something affecting another carrier or themselves that seems off, and they speak up, we have a better chance at holding management accountable. We typically have ten meetings a year. If you haven't been to one recently, make an effort to attend. If you make it to one here and there, commit to going to a handful. Bring along other carriers who are having a tough time with the job or who have spoken to you about management giving them a hard time. Over the course of our career contract provisions may change, new memorandums are agreed upon by the parties, or maybe you just need a refresher about our daily duties. You can find these answers at our branch meetings, and educated carriers can have an exponential impact on their installation.

In Solidarity,

Tony Bossi

This past summer, Branch 25 bought water for four different stations that had failed to keep water supplied for their carriers during the heat of the summer season. Thanks to Angela Giangregio for memorializing this in the cartoon below.



# Step Away From The Mailbox, Nothing To See Here

The following article was written by Doug Brendel. Doug is an Ipswich-based writer. This article is printed here courtesy of his website Outsidah.com, where you can find more of Doug's work.

My mailbox is out there. I can see it from my front window. Once a day, Monday through Saturday, my mail carrier pauses, does some business there and moves on.

After that, if I go out there and look into the mailbox, my mail magically appears. I have not lived in Ipswich long, but I have outlived two of my three Postal Service mail carriers. One died, the other retired.

I love my current mail carrier; I'll protect his privacy by referring to him as Paul. Paul's daily arrival is a welcome moment for me, especially because I work from home. The internet is all well and good, but what a treat to find anything coming to me via the USPS, thanks to Paul — or if Paul is off-duty, then Leslie, or Vaslav, or whomever. The arrival of the mail is my six-out-of-seven-day opportunity to experience actual tactile communication with the outside world.

This week, I thought I'd have to go downtown to deal with a certain international delivery problem, but my beloved mail carrier Paul paused in his rounds, pulled out his official smartphone, and helped me, at great length, to sort through it. Paul is my hero.

Certainly, the United States Postal Service is not perfect. They're humans, after all. It's not as if a preprogrammed robot clunks your stuff into your mailbox at 14:04:37 every day. No. Paul and his colleagues are actual people. In their own lives, they're dealing with spouses, ex-spouses, children, stepchildren, grown children who can't seem to move out, pets, mortgages, taxes, plumbers, exterminators, all the stuff that you and I deal with — but we never imagine our mail carrier is dealing with this stuff. They are. So maybe Paul has to pull off the road to take a phone call and talk his daughter off the ledge about her loser of a boyfriend. So no, the mail doesn't arrive at exactly the same time every day.

The daily question, then, is: When will, or when did, the mail arrive? To tell you the truth, this issue has turned it into something of a superstition for me. An almost religious "twinge." I could not have developed such a twinge in my youth in suburban Chicago. We had little mailboxes attached to our houses, mounted adjacent to our front door, so you simply reached out and grabbed the mail without a second thought.

Not so here. With the mailbox standing roadside, you have to hike out there to retrieve your mail. It's a certain investment of time and energy. Back here, in my house, I think about it:

What's out there, in the box? Anything or nothing? Is it too early in the day? Did I hear the mail carrier come and go, or was I flushing the toilet and missed it? Do I feel the "twinge"? When I think I feel the twinge, I go out to the mailbox, and if there's mail, I rejoice. My superstition was true!

But if the mailbox is empty, I'm abject. Humiliated. I look around furtively to see if any of my neighbors are smirking because they caught me peeking into an empty mailbox. On the other hand, if I don't have the twinge, and then it suddenly occurs to me that it's late in the day, and I go out to the mailbox, and it's full of mail...how did I miss the twinge?

This is how religions get started. Sure, it would be relatively easy for someone to manufacture a mailbox with a see-through rear end, so I could look out my front window and see whether there's mail in the box or not. But then, of course, someone would start a religion that makes a see-through mailbox a sin. So forget that idea. Doug Brendel is hopeless. His demise is inevitable. Follow his real-life work at doughrendel.com.

# **Branch 25 Directory of Officers**

#### **Recent Retirees**

Daniel P. Wheeler
Paul G. Desmond
Anthony Bossi
Joe Stearns
James P. Nutter

President
Executive V.P.
Vice President
Secretary
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.



Recent Lynnfield retiree Jack Guarino showing off his "new retiree uniform" at the October branch meeting.



Marblehead Carrier Steve Roy retired at the end of September after 36 years of delivering mail. Congrats Steve and enjoy your retirement!

# **Branch Meeting Attendance Prize**

At the October branch meeting, a motion was approved to change how the monthly attendance prize will be given starting in January 2024. As part of the motion, for the November meeting, the first \$1000 attendance prize, as currently established, will be drawn until there is a winner. However, it will be drawn from those members in attendance only. This would be a great time to attend a monthly meeting, especially if this is your first time. We hope to see you on November 14!

# Safety

#### **New Members**

#### "Real Men of SAFETY Genius"

First, we (don't) salute you, Mr. 'shoot a gun off at a wedding' guy. You're from Texas, so you go big or go home. So when you wanted to signal the music to start at your nephew's wedding, you thought of a gun. Luckily, you used a blank round to fire. But, you made the blank round yourself, using an empty shell, some black gunpowder, and hot glue to hold it together. Unfortunately, as you were cocking the gun's hammer, the gun fired and hit your grandson in the shoulder. The empty shell was found in the gun. Officials believe it was actually the dried glue that hit the boy and caused the injury. The upside to the story is the grandson only needed stitches and was then released.

And next, we (don't) salute you, Mr. 'drive across a customer's lawn in your LLV' guy. Although a PTF, and in your first week, you thought driving across someone's front lawn was okay. Maybe you confused it with cutting across a lawn on foot? Whatever the reason, you decided not to stop and apologize to the customer or call your supervisor. When the customer called to complain, your letter carrier career came to an abrupt end.

Don't be these guys. Think about your own safety and the safety of those around you.

(And drink responsibly),

Jim Salvati



Branch 25 sponsored a hole at NALC Branch 19's annual golf tournament for MDA on October 8, 2023.

We would like to welcome the following new members to Branch 25. Please help us in welcoming them and help them out in your stations.

Concord

Anthony Badohu	Lawrence
Eric Fabrizio	Marblehead
Erik Ramirez	Lawrence
Isaiah Smith	Gloucester
Magody Taghiam	Sudbury
Worapong Tengjaroenchai	Manchester
Cameron Chartier	Andover
Matthew Eriole	Billerica
Drake Riot	Billerica
Abdessle Aboutoui	Lawrence
Nicholas Bisesti	Concord
Patria Cabrera	Haverhill
Romule Calixto	Billerica
Amy Carbonneau	Lawrence
Emily Davis	Ipswich
Mark Dinardo	Billerica
Westley Fish	Holliston
Zachary Goerke	Dracut

Mohammed Afsar

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 is good standing at date of retirement. Retiree has 4 months from retirement date to remit this voucher to the branch office. Please mail to:NALC Branch 25 2500 Main St, Suite 201, Tewksbury Ma, 01876

### From The Secretary's Desk

It's another busy month ahead, with a lot going on both here at the branch and in general. I hope everyone got lots of treats and no tricks for Halloween. This November is filled with all kinds of stuff. Daylight savings is Oct 5<sup>th</sup> (turn those clocks back an hour Saturday night), the 7<sup>th</sup> is election day, Veteran's Day the 11<sup>th</sup>, and of course, Thanksgiving on the 23<sup>rd</sup>. This month, a few of us will be headed to New Orleans for the NALC RAP session. Hopefully, we will get an update about current contract negotiations along with the training and information already planned.

At the end of September, Steve (Stro) Roy retired from the Marblehead PO. Steve had a little over 36 years of service, most of which he spent on two routes: 12 and most of his career on 19. Congratulations, and enjoy the rest of your life doing the things you love. I was even able to get a last punch pic you will see here in this issue.

I know Dan speaks about this in this issue, but I couldn't not say something. Earlier this year, I had the privilege of giving a 60-year pin to William Healey. It is with great sadness to say that he passed away in late October. I am glad I got to spend the time I did with him. I have included a picture of a group of retirees and an active carrier who attended the funeral. I am also very PROUD of 9 other active carriers who parked their trucks together for the family to see and represent the career he had with the USPS. I was told his daughter was impressed by the showing and thankful.

We seem to have a lot of retirees each month but no pictures to go with them. Please take a quick pic and send it to the branch office so we can get them in the wake-up. It is these individuals who have led the way to where we are today.

Also, I want to thank Angela Giangregio, an employee at The Little Depot Diner that I go to in Peabody. She is the artist for the cartoon I have included this month. I know many of you will be able to relate to this, especially this year at some of the offices.

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. Have a wonderful Thanksgiving, and see you at the meeting.





Snapple Fact # 1029 Humans share 50% of their DNA with Bananas.

Joe Stearns

#### **Letter Carrier Political Fund**

The letter on Page 9 is being sent out to all Branch 25 retirees. Retired members should be receiving this letter in the very near future. Branch 25 is joining Region 14 and the NALC in making a push to increase our participation in the Letter Carrier Political Fund (LCPF). Active members should expect to receive a phone call about the LCPF at some point in the near future. I would encourage all members to read this letter and consider giving to the LCPF.

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.

# National Association of Letter Carriers

2500 Main Street, Suite 201, Tewksbury, MA 01876-3185 978.658.5820 phone 978.658.0888 fax

Dear Branch Retiree,

One of my duties as Branch President is to be active in the legislative program of the NALC. Many of you were active participants in the Letter Carrier Political Fund (LCPF), formerly known as COLCPE, when you were an active Letter Carrier. Many politicians in the halls of Congress would like nothing more than to dismantle the retiree benefits you have fought for and have proposed legislation to do just that.

As you know, the LCPF is a non-partisan political action committee (PAC) established to electqualified candidates who support active and retired Letter Carriers and are committed to maintaining a strong and innovative U.S. Postal Service. Each year, NALC fights to fend off attacks in Congress that threaten Letter Carriers' collective-bargaining rights, retirement benefits, and livelihood. We've been successful so far, and we want to continue helping to elect House and Senate candidates who will protect us, promote our issues, and deliver our message to Washington.

What can you do to help protect your benefits? Consider donating to the Letter Carrier Political Fund. We are asking each retiree to donate as little as \$5.00 per month to the LCPF. Donating \$5.00 monthly amounts to only \$60 for the entire year. If we all contribute a little, a little becomes a lot. Your donation will help elect members of Congress who will fight to protect your benefits, not take them away. The NALC supports candidates for federal office who support issues of active and retired Letter Carriers, regardless of what party they may be affiliated with.

In February of each year, our National Union lists the names of members who donate to the Letter Carrier Political Fund in The Postal Record. I hope to see many names from our Branch added to that list. For that reason, I am excited to inform you our Branch, along with hundreds of other Branches across the Country, have ramped up efforts to raise money for the LCPF. If we do not have a seat at the table in Washington, we may be on the menu. Donating is simple. Enclosed in this mailing, you will find the form that you will need to sign up. There are two convenient options.

Option #1: Donate \$5.00 per month through your annuity (most popular).

Option # 2: Donate \$5.00 per month through your electronic fund transfer.

Please fill out the option best for you and return the form to us in the provided postage-paid envelope.

I appreciate your support,

Daniel P. Wheeler

Daniel P. Wheeler President, NALC Branch 25 Daniel P. Wheeler President

Paul G. Desmond

Executive Vice President

Anthony P. Bossi Vice President

AFFILIATIONS: AFL-CIO · MASSACHUSETTS EMPLOYEES COUNCIL AFL-CIO · MASSACHUSETTS AFL-CIO · POSTAL TELEGRAPH & TELEPHONE INTERNATIONAL



#### In Memoriam



Branch 25 was sad to learn of the passing of Gold-card member William J. "Spider" Healey on October 19, 2023. Brother Healey was featured in the June issue of The Wake Up! receiving his 60-year NALC Membership Pin from Marblehead Steward Joe Stearns. Joe also shared a few anecdotes about Brother Healey in that issue. Brother Healey served customers in Marblehead for 37 years, retiring in 1998. Rest easy, Brother!

Branch 25 joins the NALC in expressing our sorrow at learning of the passing of Stephen Vozzella. Brother Vozzella was a member of NALC Branch 241 and was a victim of the horrific shootings in Lewiston, Maine, on October 25, 2023.

Brother Vozzella was only 45 years old. He was out enjoying time with friends when he lost his life in the tragic shooting. Our sympathies go out to Brother Vozzella's family and the other families affected by this senseless act.

Former and current Marblehead Letter Carriers Kevin Sullivan, Linda Johnson, Bobby Black, Laurie Rocker, Mike Mullaney, Peter Hooks, Joanne Lundin, Nick Freeman, and Joanne Tinkham attended Brother Healey's funeral on October25, 2023.





#### Keep a calendar.

Whether on your computer, on the wall or on your phone. With seasonal activities at school and work, you will likely receive conflicting invitations. Simply consult your calendar when necessary to prevent conflicts. When the calendar looks too busy, put in a "Me" day to spend in a way that allows you to reset and slow down.

#### Celebrations don't require a crowd.

Time with a friend or just with your family can give you a break from the party scene. It's okay to say "no" to events. Sometimes staying in for a "silent night" is just what you need most to relax and reflect on the meaning of the season.

#### Stick to healthy routines.

When things start to get hectic and you've been in too many traffic jams and crowded stores, remember what keeps you centered. You've likely been grabbing fast food on the run rather than stocking your fridge with healthy options. You may be skimping on sleep in order to fit everything in. And when was the last time you took a walk or went to the gym?

#### H.A.L.T. before you crash.

Our bodies give us signals if we simply pay attention. Ask yourself, am I Hungry, Angry (Hangry), Lonely or Tired right now? It's hard to stay "in the moment" when your to-do list is a mile long. Keep the joy from turning into misery.

Struggling to find balance? A consultation or session with your EAP may help. Partner with us to confront holiday stress. Visit EAP4YOU.com or give us a call. We are here to help you have a healthy season!



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

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at the next meeting
November 14
K of C Wilmington
8:00 PM



Lynnfield carriers joined Branch 25 President Dan Wheeler in congratulating recent retiree Jack Guarino at the October branch meeting.