



WAKE UP!

President/ Editor
Dave Barbuzzi

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



A little bit of a shake-up at the top of Branch 25 is imminent. Incoming President Dan Wheeler (Top Left) will assume his new responsibilities on December 17. Likewise, Tony Bossi will assume his role as Vice President while Paul Desmond remains steady as Executive Vice President. They are captured here hard at work for the members.

President's Message

“1/1/11, 11-11, or Ho Ho Ho It's Time to Go”

The numbers in the title of my article aren't a secret code or the answer to a riddle, they are actually quite simple. January 1, 2011 is when I started my presidency and I have served as President for 11 years and 11 months. That's a lot of ones!

But, the Presidency is not about “1's”; in the case of Branch 25 the presidency is currently about the 949 active members, the 571 retired members, and yes even the 28 non-members that fall within the umbrella of the branch. The President is responsible to ensure that those 1548 letter carriers receive representation, receive their contractual rights and benefits. No President can do that alone, and any President that tried would be a fool.

Fortunately, I've had a lot of help over the course of my presidency. When I became President a particular carrier who was a steward at the time, approached me at a branch meeting and told me that he would walk through a wall for me, that he would go into battle without batting an eye. He knows who he is. I am forever grateful that I have had stewards and officers that have served ALONG SIDE (not under) me throughout my career and I ask that another generation of members take up the call for the next President.

Since I started the article speaking about numbers, I'll point to a few more numbers now. The branch has grown by roughly 500 (total active and retired) members with the mergers of the former Branch 33 and Branch 212, and the treasury has grown over \$200,000 dollars. Grievance activity has decreased to less than 300 grievances a year. Some may think that a decrease in grievances is a bad thing. It's not, a decrease in grievance activity indicates less discipline and more contract compliance. Of course there are the outlier offices where management doesn't get it, they issue frivolous discipline and they don't comply with the contract, but those offices are addressed through the grievance procedure.

There are cliches that people use at times like “I looked forward to going to work every day of my career”. Let me tell you, there were many days that I dreaded going to work. That dread was/is the result of the deplorable staffing conditions that are spreading like a disease through the branch and through the entire post office. The dread comes from realizing that the job is

becoming more difficult and less appealing almost daily. The dread comes from realizing that today, if you are a single parent, it is next to impossible to maintain this job because the demands on your time, the forced overtime both on a regular scheduled day and on your day off, are not sustainable.

But then, just when it seems that dread is beginning to become insurmountable, a little ray of hope peaks in. These small rewards may be in the form of a conversation on a workroom floor where one carrier tells another carrier to be sure to take their lunch and breaks. Where in the same conversation the carrier tells the other carrier not to be intimidated by management saying that carrier x finishes the route before 4 o'clock every day so you are expected to do the same. That is the kind of advice that gives hope to a union official, knowing that there are people that over the years have taught themselves something about the contract and are trying to spread their knowledge to others.

The vast majority of Branch 25 letter carriers are AWESOME LETTER CARRIERS!! DON'T LET A SUPERVISOR OR POSTMASTER TELL YOU ANYTHING DIFFERENT! I don't want to use my last article to denigrate management, but I will say this, continue to strive to be better than them. When I started, there were far more good managers, good people as managers, than there presently are. That's a shame. But, there are still some good ones and if you happen to be in an office that has a good environment, you are fortunate.

Over ten years ago, I wrote an article (I'll have the webmaster link it to the online version of the Wake-Up!) where I quoted a song by Argent. Some lyrics are below.

*“And if they stare - just let them burn their eyes on you moving.
And if they shout - don't let it change a thing that you're doing.”*

If there's one thing that I'd like to leave you with it's that you are incredible. I may not have loved coming to work every day over my entire term, but I have always loved being your President and doing my very best to serve you. I hope I have contributed to your career in a positive way.

Thank you. Thank you for letting me be your President, thank you for your support, and thank you for the support you have shown each other.

Stay well and stay informed! Happy Holidays!

Dave

Executive Vice-President's Report

As we approach the December branch meeting, the weather unfortunately, is taking a downturn and becoming more seasonal than it has been. It has been a warm Fall but I don't expect it to last. There is a forecast for snow this week (November 15) and the leaves are still falling, so let's be careful out on the street, especially after dark. Nobody likes to work in the dark, but it is a reality of our jobs and has been for a long time. Use your judgement if it is unsafe to deliver a particular address because you can't see stairs or a walkway, or it is covered with snow. Also, do not skip any breaks or lunch in order to finish your route a little sooner. Be safe and notify management of your need of OT or aux assistance.

Letter carriers will be receiving the final contract raise of this contract on November 19th. The raise is 1.3% added to the base pay for all carriers and an extra 1% for CCAs, bringing the CCA increase to 2.3%. The last remaining salary increase will be the COLA adjustment after the release of the indexes in January. The contract expires in May 2023, and I'm sure the NALC is already working on getting ready for the next round of negotiations. This will be the first round of negotiations with Brian Renfroe as President, but as Executive VP, he led the negotiations for the NALC in previous negotiations, so I think we are in a good position.

By the time you read this we will be well into Open Season and actually approaching the end, which is 12-12-2022. Please don't wait until the last minute to choose or change any of your Health Benefits. You will need to sign in to Liteblue in order to process any changes and an updated password will be necessary so do it now if you haven't already. Even if you aren't changing anything, it is good to have an updated password for Liteblue for access to benefit and retirement information. Any regulars that were converted this year also are able to change any health care coverage, if necessary, even though they may have signed up for a FEHB plan this year already.

There are multiple ways for the children of NALC members to earn scholarships for college and this is the time for high school seniors to start to apply. The Branch offers two scholarships every year to the children or grandchildren of active or retired members of the branch. The scholarships are one time for \$1000 each. The application is processed through the Mass AFL-CIO scholarship program and is done online at massaflcio.org/scholarships. There is a link on the branch website to the program. There is a test administered through the guidance department at the local high schools, but the deadline to register is December 16, 2022. The test is scheduled for February 6-10, 2023. Any high school senior that qualifies as a child or grandchild should apply prior to the deadline. The Mass AFL-CIO determines the winners and notifies

the branch, and you can also be considered for many other local scholarships as well. The NALC, at the national level, offers scholarships also and children of NALC members are eligible. These scholarships are the Doherty and Donelon scholarships and are renewable for up to 4 years and are worth \$1000 to \$4000 per year. There is also the Lemonopoulos Scholarships that go to members' children that attend schools in the state of Florida. And finally, Union Plus has scholarships that go to children of union members. Obviously, there are scholarships out there for children and grandchildren of NALC members, so please take advantage. Some of these are a significant amount of money and anything helps. To locate how to apply for these, go the NALC website under member benefits, or call the union office for help.

We will be in the penalty time exclusion period soon, and I know everyone will be working a lot of OT, but it would be great to see a large crowd at the December branch meeting. As usual we do a more upscale menu for the December meeting, although the pizza usually goes over pretty well. For those that can't make it, I hope you have a great Christmas season and New Years as well.

Keep your head up!

Paul Desmond

Calendar of Events

December 7	Pearl Harbor Day
December 13	Branch Meeting K of C Wilmington 8:00PM Food served 7:00PM
December 15	Bill of Rights Day
December 18	Chanukah Begins
December 21	Winter Solstice
December 23	Festivus (For the rest of us)
December 25	Christmas
December 26	Boxing Day
December 31	New Year's Eve

Branch 25 Directory of Officers

David J. Barbuzzi	President
Paul G. Desmond	Executive V.P.
Dan Wheeler	Vice President
Anthony Bossi	Secretary
James P. Nutter	Treasurer
Kenneth Dusombre	Health Benefits Rep.
Jim Salvati	Safety Officer
Jack Lyman	Sergeant At Arms
Bob Cronin	MBA-NSBA Rep
Chris Bruno	Wake-Up Publisher
Dan Raske	Chairman, Board of Trustees
Bruce Johnson	Trustee
John McNulty	Trustee
Gilbert Paredes	Trustee
Joe Stearns	Trustee
Andy Coan	Assistant Secretary
James Metilinos	Assistant Treasurer
Jeremy Provost	Assistant Safety Officer

help others by extension. I'm not bashful to admit these moments changed my life. It's strange how things happen sometimes.

If you've ever thanked me for work I've done on behalf of the union, it's truly owed to him, whether due to his advice, guidance, or training. This is not a knock on his predecessors, but I think a person's goal should always be to strive to leave something better than you found it, and I believe that is what he did with Branch 25. To the members he will be representing in his new role, congratulations, you may have had others along the way, but I can say with certainty now you'll have one who cares. Best of luck Dave, and thanks.

Happy Holidays,

Tony Bossi


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

Secretary's Report

"He Cares"

As a general reminder, make sure to update your contact information with the Branch if it changes. There is a 'Member Address Update' coupon posted in the Wake Up that you can mail to the Branch to keep us up to date.

This month I'd like to take a point of privilege to wish President Dave Barbuzzi well in his new role at the Regional Office. Around ten years ago I transferred from Cambridge as a PTF to Lowell and became a Regular Carrier. I had around seven years of service but was usually in trouble at work, and things didn't change when I got to Lowell. The 52-zip code of Lowell had been installed into Billerica around this time. After some prodding from Jim Nutter, I went to my first Branch 25 Meeting. When I got there Dave introduced himself to me, we had a conversation, and before he started the meeting he said, "We could use a steward in Billerica." I started to laugh, and Dave turned around straight-faced and said, "I'm not joking." When I got to Billerica I was still finding myself in trouble at work. I didn't think of myself as steward material. Dave had other plans. He saw something and pushed me to find something within myself that led to becoming a steward and ultimately

 **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



MEMBER ADDRESS UPDATE

MEMBER NAME: _____

NEW ADDRESS: _____

If this is a temporary change please fill-in the beginning and ending dates: FROM ___/___/___ TO ___/___/___

Please mail this form to:
NALC Branch 25
2500 Main St Suite 201
Tewksbury Ma, 01876-3185

Safety

“No Right On Red?”

Cambridge recently voted to ban all right on red turns. They are joining other cities such as New York City and Washington D.C. who have already done so. In Washington DC. a pilot program found that intersections which previously had had conflict with pedestrians or cyclists went down 92%.

This change supports Vision Zero, an international campaign Cambridge adopted in March 2016 that aims to eliminate “all traffic fatalities and severe injuries, while increasing safe, healthy, equitable mobility for all.” The plan advocates examining the factors that cause crashes in order to make changes accordingly.

The idea is to try to decrease accidents involving pedestrians and cyclists. Many times drivers taking a right on red will make a quick stop, glance left, and then proceed without watching for pedestrians.

The right on red legislation originally began in the gas-shortage days of the early seventies and was designed to save fuel.

Although we might not see a right on red ban in our Branch area, it is a good reminder to watch for people when turning right on red. We are always extra cautious taking left hand turns. Let’s also take some extra caution when turning right and watch for pedestrians and cyclists.

Stay Safe,
Jim Salvati

Lyrics Trivia- Name the song title, Songwriter and Band that made it famous. BONUS – Name the Bible Book, Chapter and Verses which inspired the song.

*To everything
There is a season
And a time to every purpose, under heaven*

Assistant Treasurer’s Report

I want to touch on something that may have entirely escaped many people when our most recent contract was signed retroactively: Transfers and Reassignments.

Many of us are aware how transfers within the service works. Putting in a request for reassignment will put you on a waitlist to go into the installation of your choosing. Your installation will convert a number of employees who are CCA’s or PTF’s to regular letter carriers and then once that number is met, they will bring in an outside transfer, assuming there is someone trying to come in.

To give an example that might help you understand simply:

Lowell, MA will convert five employees before bringing in an outside reassignment. Once five CCA’s/PTF’s are converted to regular, a transfer, if there is one, comes in. Then the five conversions will start once more. If there’s two people on a waitlist to come into an office before you, you’ll need ten conversions and two transfers before you’ll be accepted into the installation, assuming the prior transfers are actually accepted. This can be lengthy and difficult.

Now, onto what may have escaped some of you reading this. PTF carriers are *career employees*. What does that have to do with transfers? Simple. Any office employing PTF’s will be required to convert any reassignment to a PTF.

That probably sounds strange. Let’s break it down with an actual example that just took place in Lowell. Recently, a carrier from the Lynn installation put in for reassignment into Lowell. That carrier was placed on a 45 day hold before they were released. Lowell was recently added to M-01986, *All Career Workforce*, meaning they employ only PTF carriers. Because of this, the Lynn transfer, who was a Regular Letter Carrier and owned their own route, upon reassignment was converted to a PTF. This means that this carrier in Lynn, who was guaranteed 40 hours a week and a rotating schedule, just lost both commitments. That employee will probably be working Sunday every week now. Additionally, this employee now is the lowest PTF in seniority, behind two more individuals and will wait for a vacancy before they will become a regular once more.

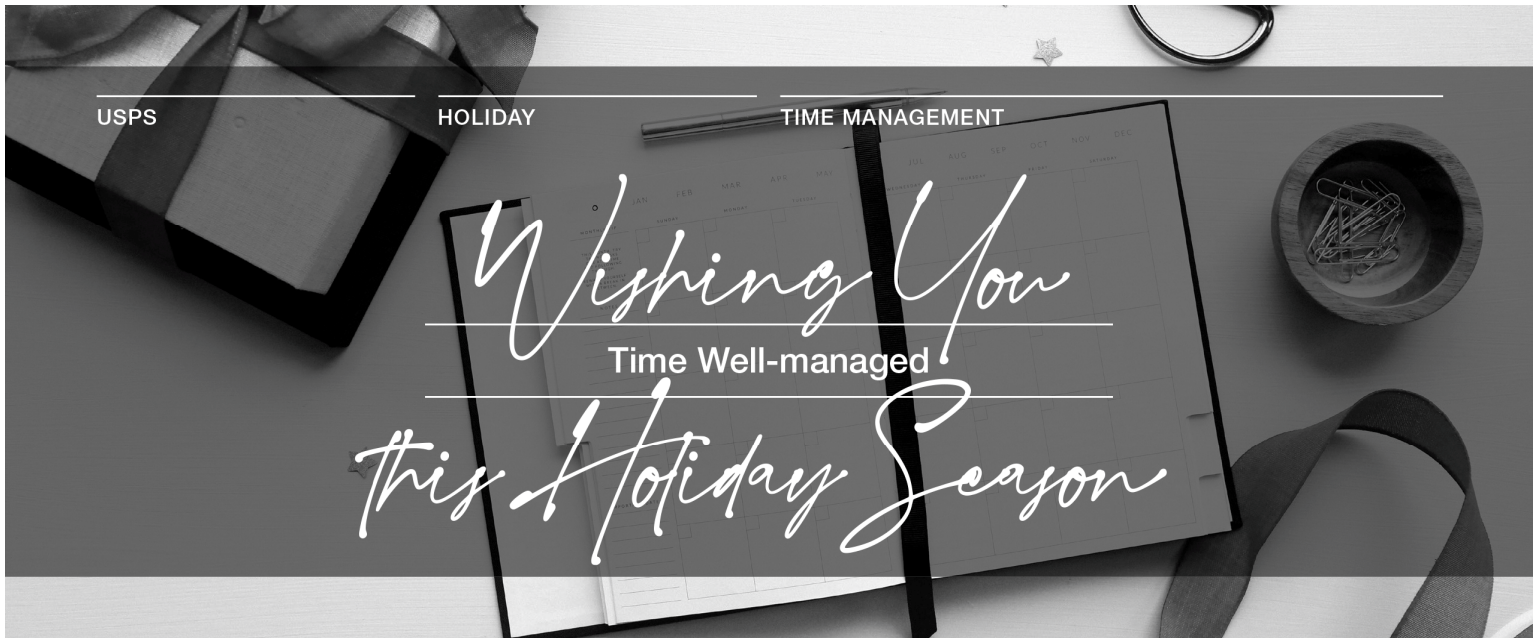
There is no exemption to this. If you’re a 30 year carrier considering a transfer out of state, you might face the exact same situation. Do your homework. Reach out to the NALC and try to contact branches you’re looking to transfer to. Make sure you’re aware and conscious of what you may become by transferring. Understand that your guarantees may no longer exist.

Any questions that you may have regarding transfers, call the branch. We’re more than happy to assist you and armed with the knowledge to prevent any issues.

Brace yourselves for the Holidays.

Winter is coming.

James Metilinos



The holiday season can be a time of increased anxiety. There is often pressure to socialize more, eat more, drink more and spend more. USPS employees are asked to do *all* of this during the busiest time of year for the Postal Service. One key to holiday harmony is in finding the right way to juggle personal lives and workplace needs. The good news is—with a little planning, prioritizing and prep work—you can reduce some of the added pressure during this busy time and make the most of your holiday.

Time Management Tips for Reducing Stress During the Holidays

Plan Ahead and Prioritize: For many, the holidays can turn into a daunting to-do list preventing people from being present to enjoy the many festive moments of the season. To ensure that things get done, start planning early and prioritizing the tasks at hand. Figure out what’s most important and what you can cut out. Keep a “To Do” list of items, prioritized in order.

Stick to the Plan: It’s easy to get distracted, and even more so during the holidays. To prevent this, make a plan. Decide in advance what and who is most important, and plan activities based on that. Knowing what is most important is the key to finding the right balance. Take five minutes at the end of each day to see what worked, what didn’t and what’s next.

Take Advantage of Predictability: If your job or family obligations have some predictability, get in the habit before the holiday season of carving out an hour or two each week to work on future tasks you know will land on your plate. This doesn’t necessarily require working longer hours — just being more strategic about devoting what’s often lost time to prepping for future tasks. You may gain some time and flexibility when you most need it, especially during the holidays.

Schedule Breaks: With regular break-times, you’ll be less likely to goof off when you know you should be working. The upside of planning ahead is that it’s possible you won’t just accomplish everything you need to but accomplish it with time to spare. Holidays are supposed to be fun, after all — not all work. Schedule in some fun with those you care about most.

Set Expectations, Then Communicate: Set clear expectations for yourself and communicate them with others. People appreciate when you let them know of your competing demands.

Additional Tips for Making Tasks More Manageable This Season

- Break big tasks into smaller chunks.
- Tackle projects one at a time.
- Delegate tasks. Ask for help.
- Learn to say “No” if you are overburdened.
- Be flexible, but remain in control.
- Be realistic. Don’t make your schedule too rigid.

For more on how to organize time, set priorities and establish a plan for the holidays, reach out to the EAP.



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

Vice President's Report

I will start this month's Vice-President Report with a thank you to outgoing Branch President Dave Barbuzzi. As Dave previously announced, he will be stepping down from his current role to start a new one. He'll still serve letter carriers at the regional level as the new regional workers' compensation assistant (RWCA) for Region 14. Dave has worked hard to represent the letter carriers of Branch 25 in his time as branch president. He will be missed here in Branch 25 but the letter carriers of Region 14 are lucky to have him in this new role. Dave has been a great help to me in my time with the branch and I appreciate what he has done for me. Good luck Dave!

Article 41 of the National Agreement covers the posting of vacant assignments. Over the last few months, I've seen some other branches having issues with Management properly posting vacant assignments. I heard from someone in another state about multiple grievances at the B Team level being filed for routes that have not been posted for almost a whole year! Those grievances were just being filed now for this! An entire year is totally unacceptable, but we need to hold Management accountable however long the delay is. Article 41 states vacant assignments must be posted within 14 days of them becoming vacant. The only exception is if the assignment(s) are being held for consideration for reversion under Article 12 or if there is a mutual agreement with the Union to do so. Vacant assignments must be posted for 10 days unless your LMOU says differently. Management must announce the winner of the bid within 10 days of closing. The winner must then be placed on the new assignment within 15 days, except for December. Another thing to keep in mind is 204Bs may not bid on assignments while on a detail.

Often Management does not post vacant assignments out of laziness and often they claim their hands are tied because someone at a higher level of management is not doing what they are supposed to. Anyone who has been a steward for a while has likely heard "I did what I was supposed to do but I'm waiting on someone else" or "My hands are tied. What am I supposed to do?" Management is management. Don't let them pass the blame off to someone above them as if they've done all they can do. Letter carriers may bid on another assignment for many different reasons. Whatever the reason is, it's important management follows the contract and does what they are supposed to do in the time they are supposed to do it. Holding back on giving carriers the chance to bid on new assignments in a timely manner affects not only the bidding carrier but potentially carriers who may become regular once the bidding process shakes out in an office. If vacant assignments

aren't being posted or awarded properly in your office, please let us know so it can be addressed and grieved if necessary.

I'm admittedly a "summer guy". Give me the heat and sunshine all the time. This time of year is my least favorite as a letter carrier. Now that we've left daylight savings time until spring we are working with shorter days. Letter carriers can barely even finish an 8-hour day before it gets dark at this point of the year. Unfortunately, these shorter daylight days coincide with the peak season for us. This means heavier volumes, winter weather starting to rear its ugly head, and more working in the dark. There is no blanket policy for working in the dark. Carriers should be aware that it's important to work safely still and their immediate safety is up to them. Take each situation and delivery on a case-by-case basis. If you can't make a delivery due to darkness, weather, or whatever the situation may be, it's up to you to make the decision. You need to be looking out for yourself because unfortunately, management will not be!

The October zone selection period for TIAREAP is finished and we now have about 80 zones (zip codes) and 1350 total routes for the MA/RI District. 7 of those zones were NALC selections and the rest were from management. There are about 12 Branch 25 zones included in the total number. Live Weeks will start up in January again. Due to a large number of zones now involved many of these will not be scheduled for a long time. We will have to wait and see what happens going forward. The longer it takes to get to an office in the TIAREAP process means Teams will be using more data from weeks that have not yet happened to evaluate routes. It's important to do what you are supposed to do out there, even if it hasn't always been the case. The better data we can provide will make for a better and more fair evaluation of your route when it does happen. It would be great to see a good turnout at the December branch meeting. It's a busy time of year for us but it would be great to see some new faces and maybe some old faces we haven't seen in a while!

In Solidarity,

Dan Wheeler

WAKE UP

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Phone: (978) 658-5820
Fax: (978) 658-0888
Web: www.nalcbranch25.com

First Class Mail
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TEWKSBURY, MA



at the next meeting
December 13
K of C Wilmington
8:00 PM

Apply for a Scholarship

MASSACHUSETTS AFL-CIO SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

For more information
and to register visit:
www.massaflcio.org/scholarships



Application Available Until:
December 16, 2022
Exam Administered: February 6-10, 2023

President: Steven A. Tolman
Secretary/Treasurer: Louis A. Mandarinini, Jr.