



VOLUME 66 No 8

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October 2014

## THE ELECTION IS HERE!

**TODAY, you can vote by MAIL or vote in person!**

**Why wait until Election Day? Get it done now around your own schedule.**

To find out where and when you can vote visit [www.mnvotes.org](http://www.mnvotes.org)

This year, Minnesota voters will head to the polls to decide a U.S. Senate seat, all of eight U.S. House seats, as well as governor, attorney general, secretary of state, state auditor, and all State House seats. The 2014 election will also include many county commissioners, county sheriffs, county attorneys, auditors, treasurers and recorders.

Get registered. Get informed. Go vote.

You can vote at the county office Monday through Friday during normal business hours (8:00am - 4:30pm).

If you live in Minneapolis or certain cities, you can vote at your city office during weekday business hours.

Also, you can register online if you need to, and sign up to receive an Absentee Voter Ballot in the mail. Then, you can sit back and vote from your couch!



### Go Vote on Election Day - Vote November 4

Sign in and Register if Needed — An election judge will ask for your name and address. If you registered before Election Day, you will be on the voter list and can sign in. If you did not pre-register to vote, you can register at the polling place.

**EVERY VOTE COUNTS don't wait to act!**



*Best Wishes to Dave Wallentiny of Fridley station on his retirement.*



*Kim Stevens of Burnsville Post Office is now retired. Enjoy it Kim.*



*Mike Rosenow making his last punch. Wells wishes to you in your retirement*



*Gary Ruhl from the Main Office making his last punch. Have a great retirement Gary.*

## WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

**Kay Anderson  
Taisia Anderson  
Miria Belter  
Daniel Blake  
Samuel Brooks  
Abdikarim Haji-Ali  
Edward Hogan  
Jesse Lyddy  
Jeanell McGee  
Shawn McGovern  
Christopher Nelson  
Waneda Reimers  
Rhonda Renfroe  
Daniel Schaefer  
Dominique Soto  
Zachary Strand  
Jennifer Svendahl  
Yer Thao  
Ashland Tyrrell  
Michelle Ventura**

### In Memoriam

**Vincent Chams  
Paul Nielsen**

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**Exec. Vice President  
Darrell Maus**  
**Recording Secretary  
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Cathy Jones**  
**Trustee  
Ken Jambois**

**Director of Retirees  
Rodney Anderson**

**NALC Health Benefits Rep.  
Julie Waldemar  
(612) 963-6252**

The Branch Nine News is a monthly publication of NALC Branch 9, and is published in the interest of and for the members of NALC Branch 9. The opinions expressed by the writers are not necessarily those of the OFFICERS, or of NALC Branch 9. Articles MUST be submitted to the editor by the 2nd Friday of the month, and must be signed. The Editorial Staff reserves the right to edit or refuse to print articles which are derogatory in nature. Any official NALC organization may reproduce our articles provided appropriate credit is given.

# President's Report

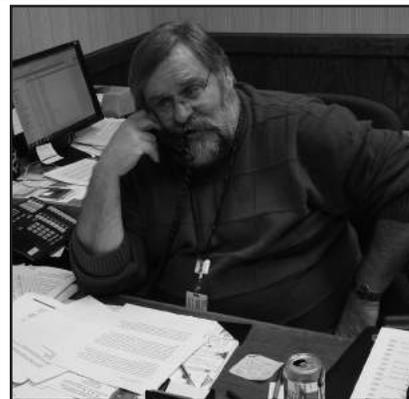
Mike Zagaros

**It is autumn at Branch 9** and like the leaves falling from the trees there are many issues that are piling up. Starting with the General Election, Daylight Savings Time ending, Annual Leave Bidding and Open Season for employee benefits just to name a few. So here we go:

**Election Day** – By now I imagine that all of you are getting a little worn out by all the media surrounding this candidate or that candidate, some by the candidate themselves (“I approved this message”) or some by what is called an Independent Expenditures not on behalf of a particular candidate. By the time you receive this, we will be down to the last few days. As you have noticed, this issue of the Branch 9 News is devoted to this year's election the most important election of our lives. **But every election is the most important election of our lives.** The reason for this is, that this is the last time we the general public have a say in our representative democracy. That is until the next most important election of our lives. Unfortunately this is what is termed the off year election (the election that takes place between Presidential Elections) when so often the winners of the off year elections are determined not by who shows up, but who doesn't. I know that we (the membership) often have different ideas on who should be elected. The Branch has endorsed candidates in a variety of offices, (visit the Branch's website at [www.branch-9nalc.com](http://www.branch-9nalc.com) for those endorsed by

Branch 9 and the Minneapolis Regional Labor Federation's website at [www.minneapolisunions.org](http://www.minneapolisunions.org) for those endorsed by the RLF.) The question is not whether you agree with the endorsement or not. The question is whether or not you will show up and cast your ballot in this year's election. Elections have consequences. As letter carriers we know better than most that we are subject to the actions or inaction of Congress. This is our opportunity to have a say in who is making those decisions.

**Annual Leave Bidding** – Beginning in November all offices covered by Branch 9 will start making their selections for annual leave for the leave year of 2015 which begins on January 10th. There will be 3 rounds of bidding for career carriers provided that they have enough annual leave to cover their selections. **In Minneapolis, Elk River and Osseo, CCAs for the first time will be able to take part in the bidding for annual leave process.** The bidding procedure can be found in your respective Local Memorandum of Understanding (LMOU). You can find this on the Branch 9 website ([www.branch9nalc.com](http://www.branch9nalc.com)) Please take time to review the amount of time you have to make your selections. If you miss the time limit, you will be passed over and slotted in at the time you submit your selection. CCAs in the other offices will be using the leave procedures found the National Agreement. If you have questions see your steward or contact the Branch Office.



**Special Meetings** – On November 19th there will be two special meetings for those **interested in information on retirement. The first meeting will begin at 5:30 and focus on the Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS). The second meeting will begin at 7:00 and focus on the Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS).**

These meetings will take place at the Golden Valley VFW Post 7051 at 7775 Medicine Lake Road in Golden Valley. These meetings are open to members and their spouses and will be focused on the actual retirement process and providing answers to your questions.

**On November 25th there will be a special NALC Health Benefits Plan (NALCHBP) meeting beginning at 6:00 p.m.**

This will be prior to the General Membership meeting and will be offer members an opportunity to compare various health plans with the NALCHBP and will be led by our own Director of Health Benefits Julie Waldemar. Open season begins on November 10 for Health Benefits, Dental and Vision plans (FEDVIP), and Flexible Spending Programs. For more information see [www.nalchbp.org](http://www.nalchbp.org) or [www.opm.gov](http://www.opm.gov)

*President's Report cont'd on page 14*

## CCAS & NEWLY CONVERTED REGULAR MEETING

Branch 9 had its semi-annual CCA meeting on September 25 to support and answer questions that specifically concerned our newest members and the future of the Branch and the Post Office.

The CCAs and newly converted Regulars had common concerns dealing with opting, "on-call?", annual leave, hours, time off, using personal vehicles to deliver mail, training, station reassignment, health benefits and clock rings.

The officers made sure that all of the questions and concerns raised were addressed. **Reminder - If something doesn't seem right ask to see your steward.**



*Smiling- that's a good sign.  
Thanks for attending.*



*Concerned CCAs and newly converted Regulars asking questions.  
Knowledge is power.*

## THE IMPORTANCE OF VOTING

Voting very well may be the most important right that you, as an American, has in this country. Not your free speech, not your freedom of religion, not your right to bear arms, but your right to vote. Those other rights previously mentioned are absolutely important, **but your right to vote gives you the power to decide on a candidate that will uphold and sustain all of those other rights.**

With the upcoming elections, there is no time like the present to raise awareness on this particular topic. Too many times, I have heard people exclaim, **"My vote will not make a difference!" to justify their lack of participation**, and never have I heard a more misguided and calloused statement. You may as well of said, "I am not important, and my views do not matter", by making an assertion like that; I truly hope that no one reading this feels that they are not important, or should not be heard.

The lack of voter participation is hurting neighborhoods, communities, and districts all over. **Our elected officials know who does and doesn't vote**, so subsequently, a poor turnout can cause a great deal of neglect right where you live!

**As a CCA, it is imperative that you vote this coming election**, because this can shape your future as an employee for the USPS. Do

your research, and conclude which candidate is going to push for the sort of legislation that benefits you, and your fellow citizens, as well as the workforce as a whole.

**Those of you who have been a CCA, or are one, knows that circumstances surrounding our pay, treatment, and position within this organization illustrates just how important it is for you to vote for not only public servants, but within this very union as well.**

**Finally, voting is not just your right; it is your responsibility as a citizen.** Our country was founded on the principle that we the people will select, through due process, the men and women that will shape the future of this country.

Hopefully, this article serves its purpose in resonating within your mind the importance of your participation this coming election, and instead of deciding to "opt out", you take it upon yourself to go out there and vote. Even if the candidate you supported does not win the election, you still participated, and **I always say that it is better to of tried and failed, then never to have tried at all.**

Adam Kell  
CCA  
Lake Street Station

# Executive Vice President's Report

## Darrell Maus

### DOES THIS ELECTION AFFECT ME?

In recent months our union's focus has been almost completely on politics. Our pleas for action have been constant, from writing letters and making phone calls to your legislators to staying informed on current Postal Reform issues. Now you have another important task. VOTE! We have to insure that the future of our jobs, wages, health insurance and retirement benefits are protected. This will only happen if the right people that support Postal issues are elected. Once we succeed with electing the supporters of our issues in Congress we have to constantly monitor and contact them with the current issues that affect us.

**First, ensuring the restructuring (reduction) of the pre-funding payments obviously will allow for more money to remain in the Postal Services' pocket!** This will allow the USPS to initiate and be more aggressive in the selling of new products and services, which also helps to make a positive impression on the public. We need every carrier and customer to be aware and contact their legislator with concerns as Postal Reform moves through Congress in the coming months.

### WHAT DO I SAY?

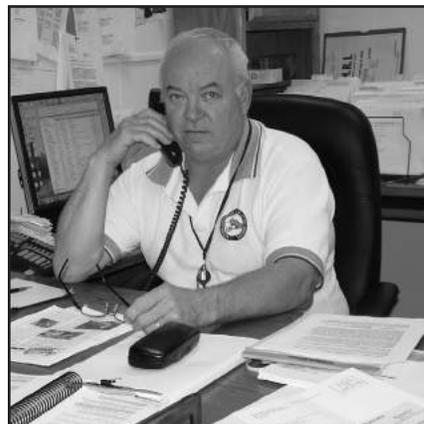
Carriers need to understand that the future of the USPS, and our livelihoods are at stake. We all agree that change is not only needed, but absolutely inevitable. Congress created this problem, Congress needs to fix it. Our current problem is that most carriers aren't quite sure what to say and

write when communicating with their representatives or senators. Some branches have provided their members with form letters that are basically "fill in the blank". These letters are easy to do but, they don't really convince your legislator that you're all that concerned or informed. A personalized letter is best because it actually requires someone to read it, not just count it. It will be more unique, and show that you, as its author, are informed and specifically concerned about specific issues as a voter and constituent. Bottom line, it's more real. It doesn't have to be lengthy, technical or worthy of a prize from your grammar teacher. Whether it be hand written, typed, or an email, they pretty much count as the same thing. **I think it's important to send a letter by regular mail, as that happens to be the institution we're trying to save!** And it's as easy as a few clicks of the keys to send that same letter as an attachment to an email to any legislator.

### Here are some tips for your letter:

Identify yourself, as a resident and registered voter in their District/State. This will help to drive home the message that you're one of the voters that voted for them during the election that put them in office. You will also want to tell them that you're a letter carrier with the USPS.

List your concerns, you don't have to be scientific or lengthy, just describe your situation and concerns. Refrain from broad



generic statements like "Save the Post Office" but rather but be specific like 5-day delivery will be financially damaging to the service and its business growth. We must retain current door to door delivery because the citizens of this country are entitled to it. Then on a personal note you can refer to the benefit changes or that letting Congress be involved with your Collective Bargaining rights and benefits and how that will affect your personal life and the hardships your family will have to endure. **The Union has several sources of material, like the Postal Record, Branch Nine News, and MSALC publications** that provide all the subject matter you'll need! You simply personalize it to how it will affect you. Our national web site "nalc.org" is constantly updated with current legislative issues as well as our own branch web site "branch9nalc.com". The best way to keep informed of current issues or actions needed to be taken by our members is to sign up for E-Activist with the NALC office.

Refer to the Bill Number, if available. Every bill has a number which identifies it in either the House (number starts with "H") or Senate (number starts with "S").

*Exec VP Report cont'd on page 11*

# I HATE POLITICS

**"I hate politics".** " they are all the same". " no point in voting, nothing changes". These thoughts and statements are often heard from many letter carriers and other citizens. Honestly, as a general proposition, I have felt that way myself some times. And , my involvement in NALC's political and legislative actions have been one of my least favorite activities during my some 45 years of activism in our union. But I did learn a long time ago that like it or not, right or wrong, the **individuals that are elected to political office have the power to, and do, directly affect our lives** and in particular, what happens to us at work. So , in urging all of our members to vote, and to vote for candidates that the NALC endorses, I focus here on a few concrete examples of how you can be affected by the results of the upcoming elections.

**If you are a City Carrier Assistant:** Some candidates support, and or, have introduced legislation that would eliminate door to door delivery and Saturday delivery. If they were to be successful, **the result would be a substantial decrease in the number of full time career letter carrier positions.** Obviously, that would greatly delay, reduce, or eliminate your opportunity to be promoted to a career position.

**If you are an active career carrier:** Regardless of seniority, the above could reek havoc on you as well. Your route could be drastically altered or eliminated in the process of the Postal Service's downsizing. Many of those same politicians support and have worked to severely weaken our collective bargaining rights and specifically targeted for harm, your health benefits plan , leave, and retirement rights and benefits for both FERS and CSRS.

**If you are a retired letter carrier:** Most of us have been around long enough to be aware of the dangers and do vote but some of this bears repeating. We are not immune to having our health benefits and pensions put in jeopardy. Legislation has been introduced to take us out of the Federal Employees Health Benefits plan , and or, to put all of our health benefits on the table at contract negotiations. So to with our pensions. We have seen the hits that retirees in other industries have taken under those circumstances.

**So, voting, and voting for candidates that will stand against these things that can do us great harm, is critical,** even if we are disenchanted with our political system in general.

**Barry Weiner**  
Retired National Business  
Agent Region 7

## Flip a District

In the 2nd Congressional District Representative John Kline has been about as anti-Post Office as they come. He has not signed on to any positive postal legislation that has been introduced during his entire tenure. We need a change in CD 2. We need to help elect a congressman who will stand for us when we need him to. We need a man like Mike Obermueller.

Mike Obermueller is a man who will do that for us. In fact Mike HAS stood with us. Mike attended the 'Stop Staples' rally held earlier this year in the twin cities when we joined forces with the APWU. I have seen Mike at many events this year and he is always up to date on what is happening with the USPS. I believe he would be a change for the best and so does Bill Maher.

Comedian Bill Maher named Rep. John Kline (Minn.) as the biggest loser to oust from Congress in his **"Flip a District"** challenge. Maher will now campaign against Kline in an attempt to unseat the Minnesota Republican and flip his district from red to blue, hoping the lawmaker will "feel the heat" from his constituents.

Of course this kind of change won't come easy. Mike ran against John Kline two years ago and lost. He needs our help this year to win. He needs carriers to offer their 'boots on the ground' and 'voices on the phone'. He needs us to spread the word about voting for Mike Obermueller for Congress. He needs you and me to help make this change and we need him in congress.

**Connie Beissel 2nd  
Congressional Dist Liaison**

# ANOTHER REASON TO VOTE

**The USPS is the single largest employer of veterans.** Unless you have paid no attention at all, you must realize by now that the vast majority of right wing senators and representatives have been conducting an all-out assault on the service and its' employees. Reducing service, days of delivery or outright closure of the postal service will cost the loss of thousands of jobs for veterans who as a group, suffers the highest unemployment rate in the country. If this situation alone does not, as a veteran give you reason to vote, here are a few more.

**In 2013, House Republicans blocked passage of at least seven different bills to help vets.** In February of 2014, Independent party Senator Bernie Sanders introduced the Comprehensive Veterans Health and Benefits and Military Retirement Pay Restoration Act. This legislation would have expanded healthcare and education programs, restored COLA's and protect veteran benefits in the event of another government shutdown. It would also provide tuition assistance to post 9/11 vets and perhaps most importantly, provide funds for twenty seven new clinics and medical facilities. Once again this bill was defeated due to Republican resistance and gerrymandering of senate rules yet they found it in their hearts to advance a bill to provide six hundred billion dollars in tax cuts for corporations!

A few months later the V.A. hospital scandals became big news.

Now the right wingers wanted to point the finger at everyone but themselves for creating this crisis. The hospitals, faced with overwhelming case loads and lack of staff began to fudge the numbers. (sound familiar?) **In the end it was the deserving veterans that suffered the consequence of uncaring politicians that refused to provide adequate funding.** Due to the public outcry, a much watered down version of Sander's bill was recently signed into law.

As a veteran or anyone that supports our troops, we should be damned angry. I faced many of the same problems upon returning from my tour of combat in Viet Nam. Now, nearly forty five years later, **we continue to ask our military personnel to give their all in wars and conflicts around the world while refusing to give them our all when and if they return.** It is about time we do something about it.

These same veterans have given us the means to correct this shameful situation, the right to vote. The politicians we recommend for your vote all stand firmly behind the improvement of the lives of active military, veterans and their families. I am sure all our veterans will vote the right way come November 4th. Will you honor their service and do the same?

**Lenny Larson**  
**NALC Branch 9 President**  
**Emeritus**

**For more than 235 years, the United States Postal Service (USPS) has been one of the nation's largest employers of Veterans, second only to the Department of Defense.**

*In fact, there is nearly 120-thousand employees — 21 percent of our workforce — who have worn their military and postal uniforms with pride. There are employees on military leave, actively serving our nation.*

VETERAN'S DAY Nov. 11

*We had a different name for Veterans Day: like many other nations, we called it Armistice Day, and it carried something of a different meaning to us than it does today.*

*As christened by Congress in 1926, Armistice Day was meant to mark the end of World War I on November 11, 1918, and to set aside November 11 henceforth as a date to be marked by "thanksgiving and prayer and exercises designed to perpetuate peace through good will and mutual understanding between nations.*

*Armistice Day became Veterans Day in America after World War II. President Dwight D. Eisenhower declared that November 11 should be a celebration of all veterans living and dead, instead of a date purely for remembrance and peacemaking. The great general adds: "let us reconsecrate ourselves to the cause of promoting an enduring peace so that their efforts may not have been in vain."*

# Congress is Dysfunctional.

Why should I vote? Voter turnout is always significantly lower in non-presidential election years. **Many voters think Congress just doesn't work and voting isn't likely to change things.**

Here's what happened in the 2010 elections. The GOP seized full-party control of 21 state governments (up from nine the previous year); **enough to put the party in charge of redistricting 173 House seats. Through extreme gerrymandering the GOP was able to maintain a majority** in the House in 2012 even though Democratic candidates received well over a million more votes than their Republican counterparts.

There is no question that the future of the USPS and our jobs depends on congressional action... to maintain six day door-to-door

delivery to remain competitive; to reduce the burden of pre-funding retiree's health benefits 75 years into the future and to stop degrading delivery standards by closing processing facilities. **We need friends in office at all levels to retain good union jobs and sustain the middle class.**

It is critical that we elect labor-friendly officials at the local, state and federal levels. Minnesota now has no excuse required absentee balloting, so there should be no excuse for not voting. Making it a point to **encourage family, friends and neighbors to join you in voting for labor friendly endorsed candidates.** Your job and retirement depend on it.

**Ned McCraine**  
**NALC Branch 9**  
**University Station**

## NOISE! Want to make some? Then vote!

Every vote counts. The 2000 Presidential election proved how close things can get, so really every vote counts.

**If you don't vote, someone else will.** Our government was designed for citizen participation, so if you don't vote - other people are going to make the decisions for you.

To bust the stereotype! "Young people are lazy, they don't care, they won't vote." That's what they say. **Let's prove them wrong.**

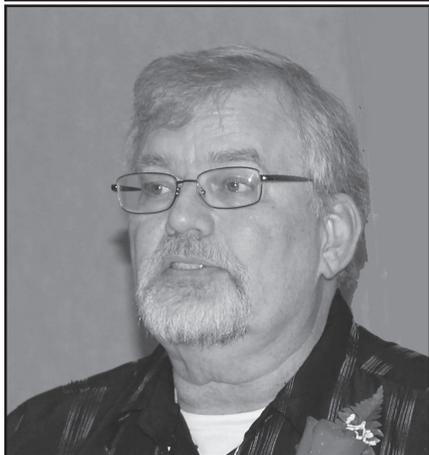
To cancel out someone else's vote. Whether it's your Dad, your Mom, your teacher, or your soccer coach -- you probably know someone who is going to vote the opposite of you.

*"Noise" cont'd on page 14*

### IS YOUR SENATOR OR REPRESENTATIVE A CO-SPONSOR OF KEY POSTAL LEGISLAATION??\*

	H. Res 30	HR 961	HR 630	HR2748**	H. Res 711
Rep Tim Walz	YES!	YES!	YES!	NO!	YES!
Rep John Kline	no	no	no	NO!	no
Rep Erik Paulsen	no	no	no	NO!	no
Rep Betty McCollum	YES!	YES!	YES!	NO!	no
Rep Keith Ellison	YES!	YES!	YES!	NO!	YES!
Rep Michelle Bachmann	no	no	no	NO!	no
Rep Collin Peterson	YES!	no	YES!	NO!	no
Rep Rick Nolan	YES!	YES!	YES!	NO!	no
	S. 316	S. 1486**			
Senator Al Franken	YES!	NO!			
Senator Amy Klobuchar	no	NO!			

\* As of Sept 18, 2014 \*\* The NALC urges opposition to these bills



## Director of Retirees Rodney Anderson

source. Everyone has issues of passionate interest to themselves: maybe yours is the Polymet Mining, or the environment, guns or gays or abortion. I would hope that jobs and the peril the middle class faces is high on your list.

May I suggest that you at least consider this site:

[www.middleclassmn.org](http://www.middleclassmn.org)

This is the website of the political arm of the AFL-CIO. It offers a sample ballot containing the political endorsements of the chief body representing our middle class values in the state.

Finally, may I direct you to a site which is little known? It's the video website of the State Retiree Council of the Minnesota AFL-CIO, over a hundred videos that have been made over the past few years to help educate our people on issues of import, by trained experts in their fields. The site is:

[www.youtube.com/mnretired/videos](http://www.youtube.com/mnretired/videos)

And among other delights is the fact that you will see a thumbnail to the video of our Branch President, Mike Zagaros, being interviewed on the issue of 6-day mail delivery by an incredibly wise and handsome man.

Please check these websites out at your leisure.

## Something Completely Different

Those of us of the Boomer Generation will remember Monty Python's hilarious segues: "And now for something completely different". Well, we have cooked up something "**Completely Different**" for our Retirees. It has to do with our annual Retiree Holiday Party.

Numbers have been slowly declining at this premiere annual event. Much of it can't be helped. But judging by conversations we've had with our retirees at breakfasts, some variables are within our control. This past year some have told me that they fear driving at night; or dislike risking rush-hour traffic.

This year's Retiree Holiday Party will be at the usual place (Fred Babcock Post at 67th and Lyndale in Richfield) with the same menu (choice of chicken, walleye, or prime rib).

However, **it will be a lunch**, not a supper. We will gather on Wednesday, December 17 sat about 12:30 P.M. for a social hour. Our meal will be served at about 1:30. Which means that even after waiting for holiday cake, you should be on your way home by 2:30, or 3:00 at the latest.

It's always an enormous pleasure to see all those we shared a career with and wishing them happy holiday season. Hope to see you there!

## Election Websites to Explore

As I write this article, I just finished watching the news. I believe I counted six political ads in a half-hour program. We are so inundated with the biennial political blizzard, usually slanted, that sometimes we cannot decide where to get fundamental information. But I know a small handful of websites should help you navigate the bewildering election landscape.

The chief election official in Minnesota is, of course, our Secretary of State, who has some complicated website address that he shares with other Secretaries of State throughout the nation. But there is a short-cut to get to the site:

[www.mnvotes.org](http://www.mnvotes.org)

This site gets you to the website which offers a multitude of helpful answers: how to register, where to vote, how to get an absentee ballot, what your ballot will look like, etc. You can even volunteer to work at the polls.

Of course, EVERYONE has advice on who you should vote for. The problem is the reliability of the

**The Minnesota AFL-CIO  
has endorsed the  
following candidates for  
the 2014 General  
Election.**

**Governor &**

**Lieutenant Governor**

- Governor Mark Dayton & Tina Smith (DFL)

**United States Senate**

- Senator Al Franken (DFL)

**Secretary of State**

- Steve Simon (DFL)

**State Auditor**

- Rebecca Otto (DFL)

**United States House of  
Representatives**

- Dist.1 - Tim Walz (DFL)
- Dist. 2 - Mike Obermueller (DFL)
- Dist. 3 - Sharon Sund (DFL)
- Dist. 4 - Betty McCollum (DFL)
- Dist. 5 - Keith Ellison (DFL)
- Dist. 6 - Joe Perske (DFL)
- Dist. 7 - Colin Peterson (DFL)
- Dist. 8 - Rick Nolan (DFL)

## Still Crazy After All These Years

Recently I watched the new documentary on the Roosevelts. It struck me how we are still fighting the same battles. The wealthy and powerful want to keep every advantage they possess, while **the average worker has to strive to attain a decent living** and a seat at the bargaining table.

I know some of the history of "The New Deal", about Social Security and workers rights to organize and bargain for wages and working conditions. The show put that fight in perspective. The US was in the Great Depression, Boom or Bust capitalisms greatest failure to provide stability and security for people in the work force.

The Social Security system was enacted to provide help for the disabled and a measure of dignity and security in old age.

**The National Labor Relations Act granted workers the right to organize and bargain collectively for wages and working conditions.** Disputes were reviewed by the National Labor Relations Board, the NLRB. Currently the NLRB has been crippled by Congress's refusal to approve Presi-

dent Obama's appointees to the NLRB, which deprives the board a quorum. If all positions filled the five member board could decide claims of unfair labor practices.

But, just last week Republican Senator Lamar Alexander of Tennessee, proposed expanding the NLRB to six members. Three from each party, guaranteeing gridlock.

The Social Security system remains the bulwark of retirement security, despite flaws congress has refused to address. It faces attacks. President George W Bush proposed privatizing the assets of the fund, ensuring big fees to Wall Street and market uncertainty to an individuals retirement benefits.

**Without our Labor advocates in Congress to protect our interests, these guarantees are at risk.** Remember to vote for our Labor endorsed candidates in November and urges others to do so.

**Joel Carter  
Branch 9 NALC  
Retired**



Br. 9 Retired Letter Carrier  
Kerry Herdine  
Home: 952.854.2655  
Cell: 612.805.8407

## AME'S UNIFORMS

**OUR BUSINESS IS MAKING YOU LOOK GOOD!**

We offer "Life of the Garment" guarantee.  
If fixable we will repair your uniform at no cost to you.  
Take waist in/out and change hem length

**Ame's Uniforms are a UNION PREFERRED vendor**





**Representative Keith Ellison speaks at our September GMM.**

We were fortunate to have Representative Keith Ellison (5th CD) as our guest speaker during our September GMM. Here are some excerpts from his speech and Q & A session.

"The Postal Service is a fundamental American Institution, that delivers hopes, dreams, checks and medicine. People rely on you."

"Here in this day and hour people are trying to undermine our post office. I will not have it. I will stand shoulder to shoulder, hand in hand to stop privatization."

He also discussed the upcoming election. "Elections have consequences. If we get the gavels back, things will be different as it relates to the Post Office. This is highly political and we need to get it fixed right away. In Minnesota we need to try to Turn Out The Vote."

Representative Ellison ended by reminding us we have a lot on the line. "You hold the last vestige of truly private correspondence in America. Electronic messages, texts, e-mails; someone can see them. You swear an oath. What you do is important and needs to be protected. I am passionate about what you do. I am right next to you. You are not alone. Thank you for all you do". AND thank you Keith for being our friend in Washington.

JoAnn Gilbaugh  
Lowry Carrier

### *Exec VP Report cont'd from page 5*

This will clarify your area of concern with the bill they'll eventually be voting on. Again these will be in the publications I listed earlier with information of what's in the bill and how it affects postal issues.

Ask them to contact you, don't be expecting a phone call directly from your congressman/representative but you may receive a call or return letter/email from one of their staffers, acknowledging your letter or email and telling you the representatives position (if they have one). This lets them know **you're more than casually interested and helps them to know their actions will be accountable to their constituents.**

Follow Up, now if your actions and the action of others have earned a positive vote on your issues make sure to follow up with a thank you. Not only in a letter, but if by chance you meet them in person say thank you and ask them for their continued support.

**The names and contact information for all legislators in the State of Minnesota are listed in the pocket calendars** the Branch hands out to every member yearly. The information is also listed on our website [branch9nalc.com](http://branch9nalc.com) under the heading of Legislative.

**We (as letter carriers) have a chance every day to make ourselves irreplaceable to our customers.** This was proven again at this year's State Fair, customers love their letter carrier. Each mailbox we deliver to repre-

sents at least one voting constituent, be it a residential or business delivery. The service we provide helps influence their perception of what and/or who the "Postal Service" of tomorrow should be and what could be gone if some people in Congress have their way. So despite the fact that for years management has allowed service to take a back seat to "making the numbers", by simply doing your job professionally you'll be, in effect, "lobbying" to insure the continuation of mail delivery 6 days a week and a bright future for the Postal Service.

Lastly I urge all members that have not done so to **sign up for COLCPE, the "Give Me Five" campaign and our local PAL 9.** For the members that have already joined a big

**THANK YOU. REMEMBER TO VOTE**

# GOTV

**We need your help to Get Out The Vote on October 29 and 30th. Please call the Branch office (612.781.9858) to volunteer**

**Do your part to Get Out The Vote!**

## New Employees - Regarding Health Benefits

If you are newly hired into a career position with the Postal Service, or are a new hire CCA, you may enroll for the remainder of the current year if you enroll within 60 days of your eligibility date. (You will have the opportunity to change your enrollment thereafter during Open Season or if you have a Qualifying Life Event.) You may also choose to waive your FEHB enrollment at this time if you decide that you do not want to participate.

## All Employees- Regarding Health Benefits

FEHB Open Season Dates for 2015 coverage

12:00 AM Central Time Monday, November 10, 2014

05:00 PM Central Time on \*Tuesday, December 9, 2014

\*FYI - DO NOT wait until Dec. 9th to make any changes because if doesn't go through you can't change anything for another year (SUGGESTION in your mind set your closing date for Dec. 5th just to be safe)

## To sign up or change your Health Benefits online go to

Postal EASE Employee Web Main Menu - Federal Employees Health Benefits

For more information on the FEHB enrollment process and program policy, please refer to the Guide to Benefits that is mailed to your address on record prior to each annual Open Season. Complete FEHB program information may be found on the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) web site at [www.opm.gov/insurehealth](http://www.opm.gov/insurehealth)

If you have any problems using this online system or have questions, please contact the Human Resources Shared Services Center (HRSSC) at 1-877-477-3273, menu option 5 and the request Benefits when prompted. To reach the HRSSC using TTY, call 1-888-2607507. You may send a FAX to the HRSSC at 1-651-994-3543. another alternative to the online system is to make your election through Postal EASE IVR system by calling 1-877-477-3273, menu option 1.

## NALC AND USPS AGREE TO NEW JOINT ROUTE ADJUSTMENT PROCESS

Sept. 23, 2014—The NALC and USPS have agreed upon a new joint route adjustment process called City Delivery Route Alternative Adjustment Process (CDRAAP) for 2014 and 2015. The new Memorandum of Understanding Re: City Delivery Route Alternative Adjustment Process – 2014 -2015 (M-01845) establishes the process. [www.nalc.org](http://www.nalc.org)

**STOP STAPLES:** The NALC's Executive Council has voted to endorse the boycott of the Staples office supplies chain. "NALC stands with the growing list of

unions and progressive allies who have joined in solidarity with our brothers and sisters in the APWU against outsourcing decent jobs," NALC President Fredric Rolando said. "The Postal Service should not undermine its own superb network by sub-contracting work to low-wage, low-skill workers at chain stores. It should embrace new revenue strategies and innovation to better serve the public."

**COMBINED FEDERAL CAMPAIGN:** The Combined Federal Campaign (CFC) is under way, giving federal and postal em-

ployees the opportunity to make a charitable donation to one - or several - charities through payroll deduction.

**OPEN SEASON - HEALTH BENEFITS:** November 10 through December 12.



**COLLECTION BOX**

# ***CSRS and FERS RETIREMENT SEMINAR***

***Wednesday November 19th, 2014***

***Golden Valley VFW  
7775 Medicine Lake Rd  
Golden Valley MN 55427***

***CSRS Seminar @ 5:30 PM  
FERS Seminar @ 7:00PM***

*A unique opportunity to ask questions and get valuable information regarding your retirement.*



DISTRICT MANAGER  
CUSTOMER SERVICE AND SALES  
NORTHLAND DISTRICT



To the members of Branch 9:

Due to unforeseen errors in the mail processing, the delivery of the September issue Branch Nine News was delayed by several days. This should not have happened. I would like to apologize to you not only as our employees, but our customers as well. We are working to try to ensure that delays like this do not happen in the future.

Thank you for your understanding.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Anthony Williams".

Anthony Williams  
District Manager  
Northland District

*President's Report from page 3*

**2015 MSALC Business Convention Delegates** – In 2015, the MSALC will have its next Business Convention. Due to the mistaken belief that this would be a training convention, the Branch did not hold its nomination of delegates for the MSALC convention in September as called for in the Branch 9 By-Laws. Following the passage of a motion at the October General Membership Meeting there will be a notice sent out to all members calling for the nominations for Delegates to the MSALC at the November General Membership meeting and an election if necessary, that will take place at the December General Membership Meeting.

**CFC (Combined Federal Campaign)** – All offices should have received information on this year's CFC drive which is currently going on through early December. The Combined Federal Campaign is a federal government program that allows letter carriers, to donate to charitable organizations of their choice by designating an amount to be deducted from their paychecks. Employees may give to more than one charity. There are two charitable causes that letter carriers may want to consider supporting through CFC: The Muscular Dystrophy Association (MDA), and the Postal Employees Relief Fund (PERF), a program administered

by NALC and several other postal unions and management organizations that provides assistance to postal employees who are victims of natural disasters or home fires. Participation is strictly voluntary. Please consider making a contribution. If you have not seen information about the CFC contact your steward or call the Branch Office.

**Route Adjustments** – The National Parties have entered into an agreement for a joint evaluation and adjustment process called CDRAAP (City Delivery Route Alternate Adjustment Process). This process will begin the process after the first of the year. In November the District Lead Teams made up of one NALC Rep and one USPS Rep will begin selecting the zones that will be evaluated in adjusted. This process calls for more consultations with the individual carriers than previous RAP did and more of a joint process in the adjustment phase. More information will be provided in upcoming issues or go to [www.nalc.org](http://www.nalc.org)

**Branch 9 News** – Please accept my apologies on the delays with the last issue of the Branch 9 News. There was a problem with the processing of the paper and we are working to make sure that this is not repeated. It's time to rake up more leaves.

**Br. 9 President Mike Zagaros**

*"Noise" cont'd from page 8*

**More federal money...**for youth programs, the environment, HIV/AIDS or breast cancer research whatever your cause! Where do the candidates stand on your issue? Find out and make sure your concerns are their concerns.

**Fashion.** You get to wear an "I Voted" sticker -- definitely fashionable.

**Representation.** Does it seem as if politicians are a bunch of old white males? Well, in Congress only 13 percent of members are of color, and only 14 percent are women. Want to change it? Vote.

**It's your right.**

Young people, women and underrepresented groups all fought hard for the right to vote. And even today there are countries where people are still dying for the right to vote.

So you can complain. If you are eligible to vote, but choose not to, we don't have to listen to your whining!

Taken from top ten reasons to [vote.com](http://vote.com)

**submitted by Cathy Jones  
Lake Street Station**

**UNIFORMS  
UNLIMITED**

Minneapolis  
2220 Lyndale Avenue South  
Minneapolis, MN 55405  
612-377-0011

The Twin Cities Postal Headquarters

USA  
Union preferred

St. Paul  
935 N. Dale Street  
St. Paul, MN 55103  
651-224-7567



# Retiree Holiday Party

## Wednesday, December 17th

This year's event will once again feature friendly libations, good food, and plenty of time for reminiscing and extending holiday cheer to all our colleagues we have worked with and known for so many years.

Fred Babcock VFW  
6715 Lakeshore Drive  
Richfield, MN  
612.869.5555  
Social Hour begins at 12:30PM  
Lunch from 1:30 - 3:00PM

Dinner Menu  
Choice of Prime Rib or  
1/2 Oven-baked Chicken or Walleye  
Salad  
Potato  
Vegetable  
Coffee, Tea, Milk

Please complete the reservation form and return it to the Branch office by December

### Retiree Holiday Party

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Chicken      Prime Rib      Walleye      (Circle One)

Name of Guest 1: \_\_\_\_\_ Chicken      Prime Rib      Walleye

Name of Guest 2: \_\_\_\_\_ Chicken      Prime Rib      Walleye

Cost: Chicken Dinner \$18.00/person  
Prime Rib Dinner \$21.00/Person  
Walleye Dinner \$21.00/Person

Amount Paid: \_\_\_\_\_

All checks made out and mailed to:  
NALC Branch 9 Retiree Holiday Party  
2408 Central Avenue NE, Minneapolis, MN 55418



Branch Nine News  
2408 Central Avenue NE  
Minneapolis, MN 55418-3712

Change Service Requested

PRSR STD  
US POSTAGE  
PAID  
TWIN CITIES MN  
PERMIT NO. 91964



Stay informed by:

- **Signing up for E-activist at NALC.org**
- **Branch9nalc.com (website)**
- **“like” our Branch 9 facebook page**
- **Follow us on Twitter**



**October 28**

Nokomis Retiree Breakfast  
9:00AM  
Fred Babcock VFW Post 5555  
6715 Lakeshore Drive  
Richfield

**Tuesday, October 28**

General Membership Meeting  
7:00PM  
Golden Valley VFW Post 7051  
7775 Medicine Lake Rd  
Golden Valley

**November 7**

N Suburban Retiree's Breakfast  
8:30AM  
Denny's Restaurant  
9020 Quaday Ave NE Otsego

**November 4**

ELECTION DAY  
GO VOTE

**November 4**

Northside Retiree's Breakfast  
9:30AM  
Elsie's  
729 Marshall St. NE  
Minneapolis

**November 11**

Southside Retiree Breakfast  
9:00AM  
Fred Babcock VFW Post 5555  
6715 Lakeshore Drive  
Richfield

**November 11**

VETERANS DAY  
OFF

**November 11**

\*NOTICE  
STEWARDS MEETING CANCELLED

**November 19**

Retirement Seminar  
CSRS 5:30 PM  
FERS 7:00 PM  
Golden Valley VFW Post 7051  
7775 Medicine Lake Rd  
Golden Valley

**November 25**

NALC Health Fair  
6:00 PM  
General Membership Meeting  
7:00PM  
Golden Valley VFW Post 7051  
7775 Medicine Lake Rd  
Golden Valley