

VOLUME 68 No 8

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October 2016

## Democracy and the Body Majority

Ashley Keul, CCA, Minnehaha

I often wonder what would happen if we voted like our lives really depended on it. If we took more seriously this job of citizenry, what could we do with that power? Now I'm not naïve, I know this disenfranchisement, disillusionment, and disgust with politics is what keeps in power those in power. But what would happen if we all showed up to vote? Every. Single. Time.

Maybe we wouldn't have our kin lying dead in the streets. Maybe we wouldn't have undrinkable water, unfarmable soil, unbreathable air. Maybe we wouldn't have the cyclic high unemployment rates,

housing crises, market crashes, healthcare inadequacies, and rampant malnutrition in this great nation. Maybe we wouldn't have the despair, the loneliness, the apathy, the fear, the Gross Domestic Anxiety: all symptomatic convulsions of a disempowered Body. How much longer can we remain so disembodied?

Democracy is supposed to be the Rule of the Majority. But when we do not vote, our Body is not heard. When we do not vote we are further fragmented and hushed. Audre Lorde reminds us: "Your silence will not protect you."

Democracy on all levels takes participation of a willing, informed

group of people to show up and to **speak their truth**. You must first show up. Your presence anywhere is the very first vote you cast. With your body you become part of the collective Body. When you say "yea" and "nay," you're voting with your voice to be part of the collective Voice. From there it's all freestyle: you can contribute new ideas, call out unfair practices, express anger and sadness and joy, forge coalitions, propose brand new ways of organizing, and of course invite more to join the party.

This is how Democracy works. It can be messy, frustrating, and

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You must vote at your assigned polling place. It is usually located near where you live. Most polling places are open from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m.

You have the right to time off work to vote, without losing pay, personal leave, or vacation time.

If you are registered to vote, your name will be on a list of voters. You just need to write your signature next to your name. If you are registered, you do not need to show ID when you sign in.

If you did not register before Election Day, you must show proof of your current address.

You will vote in a private area, and your vote is confidential. Mark the ballot with a pen or pencil, and completely fill in the oval next to your choice. You may also fill out your ballot using a ballot-marking machine.

The ballot instructions will say how many candidates you can choose for each office. Usually it will say to 'choose one,' but some local offices may have more than one seat to fill.

Your ballot will count even if you do not vote on every race or ballot question.

Take your ballot to the ballot box when finished voting and place it in the ballot-counter machine.

Be sure to get your "I Voted" sticker before you leave!



## RETIREMENTS



*Brad Beaman (Lake Street) takes his last punch with Steward George Kell. Happy Retirement!*



*Darrell Maus congratulates Sean Mc Coy (Brooklyn Park) on his retirement!*

## WELCOME New Members

Hassan Abdallah  
 Johnny Balboa  
 Latoria Bentley  
 Jeremy Bruntz  
 Geriand Cook, Jr  
 Jeremy Dobratz  
 Elizabeth Domstrand  
 Michael Egan  
 Edet Ene  
 Jasmin Freeman  
 Seth Hausken  
 Charnise Hines  
 Malina Kabanuk  
 Latonia Kern  
 Michael Larson  
 Yuseng Lee  
 Marissa Manke  
 Shane Mattson  
 Constancio Pineda  
 Steven Pope  
 Christopher Riter  
 Heather Skipitaris  
 Kayle Witzman  
 Aaron Wolfe

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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 1st 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.

*Branch 9 is raffling off*

**50 FREE TURKEYS**

**General Membership Meeting**

**Tuesday, October 25th  
 7:00 PM**

Crystal VFW  
 5222 - 56th Avenue North  
 Crystal, MN 55429

***Must be present to win!***

## PRESIDENT'S REPORT

### Decision 2016

School is back in session, the leaves are changing color and falling to the ground, autumn is here. It is a time of change. It's decision time. With the elections just around the corner, along with the annual Health Benefits Open Season happening in November and December, the decisions that we make can have a profound impact on our lives in both the short term and for years to come.

Let's talk about the Decision 2016, otherwise known as our usual quadrennial experience where we elect someone to be the President of the United States. This year's election is anything but usual. If you have watched and heard the tone and tenor of the rhetoric that is being thrown around by the major party's candidates and their surrogates, it's enough to make us shake our collective heads and say **who should we choose? Should we simply skip this election? But what would that do? Nothing good that's for sure. It would leave it to others to make decisions about our personal and professional lives without our input.**

Let's be frank about the current status of our government. At the State level, we have a divided legislature that has not been able to do what is necessary in order for our government to work for all of us. All anyone has to do to look at how this year's session came to a close as the finger pointing began. On the Federal level, again we have a divided government. This time the saber rattling is between a united Congress and the Executive Branch. In both situations we have strong barriers that are stopping the people's work from getting done. What can we do about it?

**If we are ever going to untie this**

**"Gordian Knot" that has everything tangled up, the one thing we cannot do is skip this election or any election. Because it is those that are elected that have the ability and the responsibility to represent us all.**

Who should get our vote for president? For me, the choice starts and ends with who I believe will do the most to protect the livelihood of letter carriers and that means keeping the Postal Service strong. Yes, there are a lot of other issues that are very important to me. But without a secure job with good wages and benefits that will continue to allow us to provide for our families the rest doesn't measure up. I hope you will take the time, to review the positions that have been taken regarding the Postal Service and its future. **I believe that Hillary Clinton provides the best choice for letter carriers and she has my vote, because she believes in our future.**

Throughout this campaign season I have had the opportunity to participate in dozens of screenings of candidates for elective office. Some of these candidates have been endorsed by our political coordinator committee and by the Branch. This year, the Branch has chosen to endorse the following candidates for election and reelection to the US House of Representatives:

**In the 1st CD, Rep. Tim Walz; in the 2nd CD, Angie Craig; in the 4th CD, Rep. Betty McCollum; in the 5th CD, Rep. Keith Ellison; in the 7th CD, Rep Collin Peterson; in the 8th CD, Rep Rick Nolan.**

These candidates support letter carriers and our issues and have our back.

At the State Level, the entire Legislature is up for election. Again I encourage you to see where the



**Mike Zagaros**

candidates stand on the issues that are important to you. If you are interested in the candidates that have received a labor endorsement visit [www.mnaflcio.org](http://www.mnaflcio.org) and **click on 2016 political endorsements.** The most important thing is to make sure you get your friends and family members to vote.

Every election people say that *this is the most important election of our lifetime*, and it's true because the results have had in the past and will continue to impact what happens the days, weeks, months and years after an Election Day. **The great unknown. It's about our future and it's simply too important to leave this to others.**

**The other Decision 2016 – Open Season - Beginning on November 14 and ending December 12th** marks the annual open season for FEHBP (Health Insurance Plans), FEDVIP (Dental and Vision plans), FSA (Flexible Spending Accounts). **This is when career carriers can make changes to their benefit plans.**

FEHBP (Federal Employees Health Benefit Plan) allows career carriers to choose between dozens of health plans that meet you and your family's particular needs. Beginning next month, you will be able to review up to 4 health plans side by side to see how they compare for costs, benefits and

*Pres. Report continued on pg. 10*



## Delivery After Dark

With Day Light Savings Time approaching and the seasonal shortening of daylight hours, letter carriers are once again dealing with delivering mail after dark.

There is no blanket policy regarding delivery after dark because the issue to contend with is whether a particular carrier on a particular route can SAFELY deliver the mail. Bottom line, each carrier must weigh their individual circumstances about the type of delivery to be carried (door to door, walking, mounted, apartments, cluster boxes, etc.), their surroundings (unfamiliar, high crime, steps, animals and hills, etc.) and their experiences in attempting to make after dark deliveries.

Some mail delivery may not be able to be made safely after daylight hours. Most apartments have lighted entryways and don't present the safety hazards that walking on uneven terrain, up and down stairs, going door to door and being exposed to the elements would. Because carriers have the most experience and the best knowledge of what is safe or unsafe in the performance of their duties, and because they are often times held responsible for accidents and injuries that might occur while completing those duties, only the carrier, can make the decision on whether delivering after dark can be done safely.

So, if presented with a situation where you believe you'll be out delivering mail after dark, **REMEMBER THAT YOU DO HAVE RIGHTS**, and follow these instructions:

1. Inform your supervisor in the morning of your need of auxiliary assistance in order to complete your street duties before dark. **THIS MEANS FILL OUT A FORM 3996 - HELP SLIP.**
2. Notify your supervisor prior to heading out to the street that you may not be able to complete your duties on the street by dark.
3. When on the street if you realize that you definitely will be out after dark, call your supervisor and make them aware of that reality. Stress your concern for your safety and again request auxiliary assistance.
4. Assuming no help arrives and you are faced with darkening conditions, attempt to continue.
5. IF while attempting delivery, you literally experience a safety hazard (i.e. stumbling, tripping, hear dogs barking, but unable to see that threat, not able to see potential dangers using your LLV/van's outside mirrors ...) call your supervisor. Explain your situation and notify them that you cannot safely continue delivery then return to your station.
6. **COMPLETE FORM 1571 - Curtailment form for the undelivered mail.**

Be sure to hand the curtailment slip to the supervisor, and **ASK FOR A COPY.** The copy is for your protection. You could also request a Form 1767 - Notice of Hazardous Working Condition. This will help you document the safety hazards you encountered while attempting delivery after dark.

**It is important to note that these instructions are not intended to endorse or encourage the unnecessary curtailment of any mail. It is about each carrier's safety and the protection of the mail in our charge.**

This is also not a blanket policy or approach. It very simply is the responsibility of each carrier to measure their safety and ensure that they are working safely. **PERIOD.**

# Executive Vice President's Report

## STATE FAIR

The smell of corn dogs, cotton candy and the beer garden are now gone from the Minnesota State Fair grounds. The Branch 9 kiosk had another successful year and the fun and memories should last us well into winter! We had a fantastic turn out from both our active and retired Branch 9 members that volunteered to staff our kiosk and inform the fair goers of all the current political issues that will affect America's Post Office. Our seasoned volunteers mentored the rookie volunteers in the fine art of "working the crowd" and "Informing the public of the real issues of the service"! It was

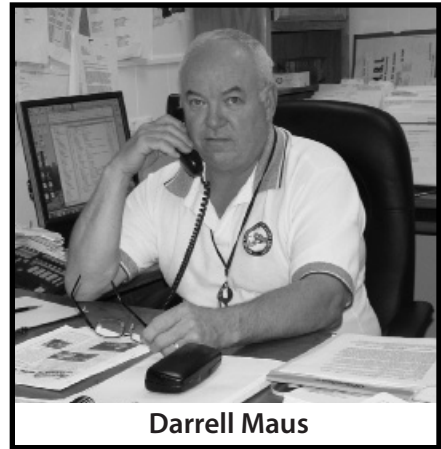


realized very quickly that the public wanted to be part of some kind of action to insure their Postal Service survives

and remains in place as is. This year we asked our customers how they would like the Postal Service to expand its services whether it be restoring delivery standards, postal banking, vote by mail, or delivery of wine and beer or any other ideas they wanted to share. These cards were then delivered to the Representatives of their district. **Good service is crucial to maintaining a vibrant, public Postal Service that connects residents and businesses alike in all areas and provides living-wage jobs that strengthen our communities. It was unanimous that they wanted to keep their post office.** There were some that

still thought taxpayer money was used for postal operations and that the current system is wasting their money. We heard comments like UPS or FedEx would do a better job and do it cheaper and would be better for the country. **When we informed them of the amount of packages the Postal Service delivers for these companies in our last mile system (34% of UPS and 56% of FedEx) they were amazed.**

This was our 13th year at the AFL-CIO's House of Labor. We had many fairgoers return specifically to our booth to see what we were up to this time around. Repeat "customers" are the greatest compliment to any organization. They know we're up to something good and they want to be sure to get involved. **As they would leave our booth, they thanked us over and over for the information and as always informed us of how they loved their carrier and don't want to ever lose them or the Postal Service.** It was also fun to meet fairgoers who had never been exposed to the letter carriers "interactive" style. You could pick them out right away. They'd slow their pace as they got closer and you could almost read their minds... "these people look like they're going to talk to me... what do they want and why". Then once they knew some of the "REAL" facts it was followed by a big thank you and encouragement from them to keep up the great work. All of the people we talked to from all over the country were first of all amazed at the factual information that was relayed to them and very concerned about what could happen to their mail delivery. When we emphasized how important it was to contact their congressman and relay the message of how important "THEIR POST OFFICE" is to them it was almost always followed up with



Darrell Maus

the commitment to do so.

**MIKE AND I WANT TO SAY GREAT JOB AND THANK YOU TO ALL OF OUR VOLUNTEERS!**

## ELECTIONS

Well the commercials and mud-slinging has started and it is another election year with many less than truthful statements being broadcasted. We all have heard the frustration no matter what party or candidate you support. A voter may have to rely not merely on the qualifications of a candidate but rather on the one that will be less damaging to our family and work issues. We have heard it more and more from voters this election that they are not going to vote as sign of protest. If you only remember one thing from this article let it be this:

**REFUSING TO VOTE IS NOT A SIGN OF PROTEST, IT IS A SIGN OF SURRENDER!!! VOTE!**



**Winners of the Fall 2016 Cribbage Tournament on October 12th. 3rd place Ron School (Br 9); 1st place Dan Proesch (Br 28); 2nd place Jim Green (Br 9)**

# Branch 9's Racial Forum and Listening Sessions

A motion was put forward at the March 2016 General Membership Meeting to form a Racial and Economic Justice Committee within our Branch. The motion carried.



This committee will be used to create a safe place for our union brothers and sisters to have conversations regarding racial issues in our union. To find ways to organize people of color within our union and to bring POC issues to the forefront within our union and workplace and create positive ways to work together and resolve issues.

Listening sessions on consecutive nights were scheduled for members to attend. The first session was scheduled in Richfield on September 14th and the second was at our usual meeting hall, Crystal VFW on September 15th.

The first night was led by SEIU

EVP Jigme Ugen. It soon became a forum for members of color expressing their stories and feelings of being singled out, discriminated against and treated differently because they were people of color. Their stories were directed at the Post Office and Branch 9. The session was very emotional.

The second night was led by SEIU President Javier Morillo. A few who had attended the night before returned to join the many new faces. Those in attendance got to speak their stories similar to the night before but, the session was soon redirected. The discussion was geared toward



systematic racism. Attendees were split up into groups and were rotating from table to table which had a specific question relating to race and the union. The groups were to discuss and come up with answers that they wrote down so

each group could see what the others had answered.

The discussion from both nights brought about many ideas and suggestions for the Branch and also for the (in progress) racial committee. In addition, a few Branch 9 members had been meeting prior to the sessions and brought forth their suggestions as well.

Some of those suggestions include diversity/cultural competency



training for stewards and the E-Board to help represent people of color. To use more people of color in Union organizing, training, positions within Branch committees and representing the Branch (i.e. safety liaisons). In addition, try to get more people of color involved in the Union.

From the sessions several have expressed interest in being a part of the Racial and Economic Justice Committee within our Branch. If you have interest in this committee contact the Branch.



Thank you, so very much for the J Wesley Woods Scholarship. It will help so much with my education.

I just graduated this past June from Bloomington Kennedy High School. While there I was involved in many activities including Volleyball, Show Choir, Ignite Mentors, and the Kolleens dance team.

Over my 4 years in high school I also worked at Dairy Queen, Green Mill, and now I currently work with elementary school kids.

This fall I will be attending Normandale Community College for two years and then transferring to the University of Minnesota Duluth. As of right now I am undecided about my major. However, I am interested in either Criminology or Education.

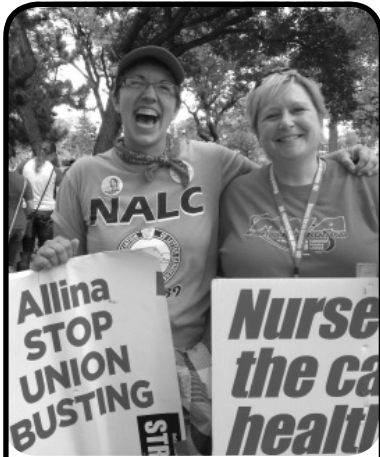
Thank you for this scholarship and for this wonderful opportunity.

Catherine Allmann  
Daughter of Normandale Station  
Letter Carrier Dave Allmann



*Democracy continued from pg. 1*  
 downright heartbreaking. If it was always easy, and we didn't have to sweat and cry and bleed, it wouldn't feel nearly as rewarding. And that's not to say that Democracy can't be fun or can't be easy. There's lots of dancing and laughing and hugging and handshaking and success stories and silliness and smiles in the Democratic processes in which I've been involved. It can be a rowdy good time. But you won't know until you show up.

And I hear you, not every **body**



*Ashley picketing with the Nurses Union (pictured with a customer/ nurse on her route)*

feels welcome in the process of Democracy in this country still today, from Capitol Hill all the way down to our own union community. There is a restructuring of power that is long overdue, across all levels of government and social organizations, in order for the majority- for all bodies- to feel safe, welcome, respected, and truly represented.

Democracy is supposed to be Equal Opportunity.

But it isn't. Unjust laws and illegal customs abound, but most pervasive and destructive are the learned biases that rip apart the Body of the Majority. This divisiveness is what keeps

some folks "in," and the rest "out," of power. Facing these truths is part of the hard, messy work we get to do together to better make sure we continue to live in a Democracy. **It is the empowerment of the Majority that embodies a Democracy.** A long line of hard working people came before us; people who chose not to sit on the sidelines and watch the injustices and the ugliest expressions of humanity remain national institutions, but instead they chose to shut them down. There is much more work to be done.

It's "We the People". It's not Us and Them. It's WE. And WE are responsible for electing individuals to respect and act upon the will of the people. WE are responsible for stepping up and becoming the new voices of a new Majority.

This is so much bigger than November's election alone. This is an honest plea to you to lean into and become part of the citizenry in bold new way. Democracy can take many forms; you just need to show up. So much can be accomplished when a few people get together to create a little change, to stir things up a bit, all for the betterment of society.

No one says it better than Paul Wellstone: "We all do better when we all do better."

Here we are, alive in this time, on this planet, in this nation, this state, this union, together. You, me, WE. Together, we create the world we want to live in. But we have to roll up our sleeves and do the work. What are you going to do to make things better? You can start by voting.



## VETERAN'S DAY

Friday, November 11, 2016

★ LAND ★ OF THE ★ FREE ★

★ BECAUSE ★ OF THE ★ BRAVE ★

Branch 9 would like to thank its members and their families that have given the ultimate sacrifice, that served and came home and those who are currently serving.

**Thank you!**

*"As we express our gratitude, we must never forget that the highest appreciation is not to utter words, but to live by them."*

— President John F. Kennedy

### **The Following is a list of PAL 9 Paid Members for July & August 2016.**

**VERY CONCERNED MEMBERS**

Kenneth A Freiermuth

**REGULAR MEMBERS**

Ronald J Davis  
 Karen M Torell  
 W. T. ( Billy ) Whritenour

**Submitted By**  
 Ron Lawrence  
 Treasurer PAL 9



**Barry Weiner**  
**Retired Nat'l Business Agent**  
**& Branch 9 Retiree**

## RETIREES NEED TO STAY THE COURSE

For starters, a number of proposals have been kicked around about a change in the way the Consumer Price Index (CPI) which our C.O.L.A.s are determined by is calculated. Those who are friendly to us would make changes that would more fairly represent the rises in the cost of living particular to retirees and provide a higher C.O.L.A. to reflect that. Those who are not our friends want to change the formula in a manner that would reduce our C.O.L.A.

many years of hard work and the financial contributions we have made to the system.

As NALC President Fred Rolando has pointed out, active and retired letter carriers are a microcosm of the rest of our country, spanning the spectrum of political parties and ideas. Some of our members may choose to give priority in their voting decisions to issues other than their financial well being and the survival of the postal service, and that is their right.

Honestly, at first, when I was asked to write an article directed to Branch 9's retirees about voting in this coming election, I thought to myself "why is that needed"? After all, the retirees of this branch have always been by far our most reliable group and especially when it comes to political action.

A hostile president and congress subscribing to the false notion that we have a "Cadillac" health benefits plan could enact changes to the Federal Employees Health Benefits Plan that increase our premiums and lower our benefits. Isn't it about time that something is done about the unfair "Windfall" Elimination Provision (W.E.P.) which in most cases, substantially decreases what we can receive from Social Security. As we know, this has been a long fight but we surely have no chance of winning it unless we have a President and Congress that is friendly to us. Beyond all of the above, the makeup of the next congress, and our next President will likely finalize legislative proposals for postal reform. How that turns out will determine if the Postal Service will remain viable and able to support the benefits which retired letter carriers and other postal workers have earned through our

But if you and your families well being is a high priority, then we urge you to vote, and to vote for candidates ( regardless of party) that we have identified as being in our corner. And to get as many of your family members and friend to do so as well. THE STAKES ARE HIGH!

Then I got to thinking about how weird this election campaign has been (probably the strangest in our lifetimes) and that perhaps, some of us may be so turned off by it that we may **do something very uncharacteristic of retirees to decide not to vote this time around. THAT WOULD BE A BIG MISTAKE.** We know from experience that indeed, our well being can be affected by who gets elected President and to the U.S. Congress. So let's keep in mind just a few of the many issues that are at stake for us.

**MEMORIAM**  
**Thomas Bennett**  
**Bruce Fritsinger**  
**Mitchell Tobias**

**UNIFORMS UNLIMITED**

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

### The Twin Cities Postal Headquarters



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



## Director of Retirees Report

### Plain Speaking

I saw an amusing cartoon on the Internet a few days ago. It showed a flock of sheep staring at a billboard of a wolf, with the wolf informing them "I will eat you." One sheep says to the other, "I like him. He says what he thinks."

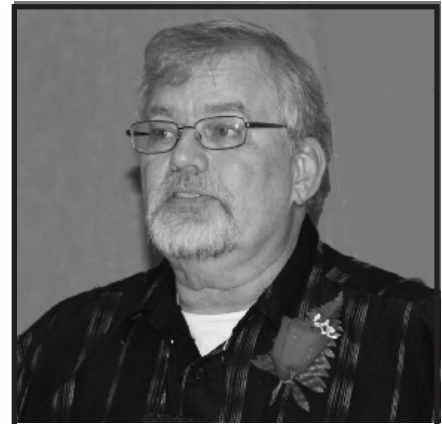
I'm hearing that a lot these days, even from close friends, and I can certainly sympathize. The frustration level of the American people is at a level unseen in decades. The Middle Class -- including America's letter carriers -- are being squeezed every which way. They watch costs rise but not their salaries, they pay higher prices for less value, they see our national and local security threatened by enemies real and imagined, and they find themselves the first generation in American history where their children may not necessarily live better than their parents. On the job site, they are monitored constantly by managers and supervisors, whose sole qualification of their job was that they raised their hand to volunteer, so they would never have to work again. There is unquestionably something wrong, very wrong. In the immortal words of George Carlin, "They call this the American Dream -- because you have to be asleep to believe it."

On November 8 we will get one of those quadrennial opportunities to do something about it, or at least to Rage Against the Machine.

So what will you do then?

This article is addressed to those of you who -- as the first paragraph said -- "like a man who says what he thinks." I am hoping you will get over your tantrum, pull your head out of your overused backsides, and vote for your INTERESTS, not for your anger. The NALC and other groups like NARFE (National Active and Retired Federal Employees) spend a lot of time, money, and talent studying the issues, and recommending choices for those of us too busy to live on the political Internet.

I gave the following report at Branch 9's September GMM, but it's worth repeating. The latest issue of NARFE's magazine gave the Congressional report card for the entire nation, that is, how various people in Congress voted on issues of budgetary and appropriations measures that benefit us, besides their records on supporting the issues of specific concern to postal employees. Want to know the scores for Minnesota? In the Senate, both Al Franken and Amy Klobuchar were 100%. In the House of Representatives, Rick Nolan and Betty McCollum were also 100% on our side, and Keith Ellison was right behind with 97%. Down in the first district, our friend Tim Walz was 91% favorable to our issues, Collin Peterson trailed him with 80%. Now let's cross the aisle, and see what they think about postal workers: Paulsen got 27%. John (Good-Riddance) Kline was 22%. And Tom Emmer got a perfect score -- 0%.



**Rodney Anderson**

In the same issue, Hillary Clinton and Donald Trump were asked about a plethora of issues of vital interest to postal workers. Just like the Postal Record last winter, Clinton gave clear and coherent answers indicating that she was on our side. As for Mr. Trump ... well, since you were enamored of "what he thinks", I'd love to tell you what he thinks about our issues. But as with the Postal Record and despite several pleas and exhortations, The Donald couldn't be bothered to reply. In this case, he's NOT telling us what he thinks.

Brothers and sisters, what I'm telling you is, to never mind Trump saying what he thinks. The point is, what do YOU think? Or DO YOU THINK? Do you have enough brains to put your frustration aside and not waste a protest vote for those who do NOT have our best interests in mind. YOU need to THINK about the issues, and how we may best attain them to create a better life for ourselves and our families.

Or else we may all be subject to the Big Bad Wolf come January. Baa. Baa.



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**



**Mike Smith**  
Health Benefits Representative

## OPEN SEASON:

As the season and weather change, it is a great time to think about changing your health care plan to the NALC Health Benefit Plan.

**Open Season for 2017 starts on November 14th and ends on December 12th, 2016 (11/14/16 - 12/12/16).**

The following are the new rates for active carriers for 2017 and I'm sure you will be impressed with our bi-weekly rates.

- \*Hi Option Self only - \$65.09
- \*Hi Option Self + one - \$149.76
- \*Hi Option Self + family - \$139.35
- \*CDHP Self only - \$44.46
- \*CDHP Self + one - \$96.17
- \*CDHP Self + family - \$96.39
- \*Value Option Self only - \$36.49
- \*Value Option Self + one - \$78.93
- \*Value Option Self + family - \$79.14

I recently received a letter from Bill Gimble. He is one of our 58 year NALC members and I asked him if I may reprint his letter in our Branch Nine News along with my article.

"NALC HEALTH BENEFIT PLAN IS TOPS"

Dear Mike:

Over the years, 31 years of service and now 27 years retired I have carried the NALC health insurance

for most of the time. What a blessing!

In October 2015 I was diagnosed with Leukemia and began treatment in November. The only supplemental insurance I have is Medicare part A. The NALC plan has been fabulous with covering me.

I am holding my own, Thanks to the NALC HBP coverage of my specialty chemo drug and other expenses. If you don't have the NALC HBP now, please think of switching this open season. It will be your best decision.

Thanks,  
William J. Gimble  
58 year BR 9 member

Thanks Bill, what a treat to receive a hand written letter!

Branch 9 will be holding a health fair at 6:00 pm before the GMM on November 22nd, 2016. I am looking forward to seeing members and helping with questions.

*Pres. Report continued from pg. 3*

networks by going to OPM's (Office of Personnel Management) website at [www.opm.gov/insure](http://www.opm.gov/insure) and comparing the various plans that are available to you. For those of you who do not have the NALC Health Benefit Plan (NALCHBP), I hope that you will take the opportunity and compare your plan with the NALC plan. If you have questions about the NALCHBP, I invite you to get them answered prior to our November General Membership Meeting on Tuesday, November 22nd at 6:00 p.m. at the Crystal VFW. Spouses are welcome. For more information on this year's open season you can also visit the Postal Service's lite blue page at <https://liteblue.usps.gov/humanresources/benefits/elections/openseason>.

**It's decision time.**

## Thinking about retiring and have questions?

Join Branch 9 for a CSRS & FERS Retirement Seminar.

**Wednesday,  
November 16th, 2016  
6:00 - 8:00PM**

**CRYSTAL VFW  
5222 56th Avenue North  
(Bass Lake Road)  
Crystal, MN 55429**

**CSRS  
(Specific Information)**

**6:00PM**

**FERS  
(Specific Information)**

**7:00PM**

**RSVP To:  
Branch 9 - 612.781.9858**

*This is a unique opportunity to ask questions and get valuable information regarding your retirement.*



**Retirement  
planning**

# Branch 9 Holiday Party

## Sunday, December 11

### 1:00 to 4:00PM

**New Hope Cinema Grill  
2749 Winnetka Avenue North  
New Hope, MN 55427**

**\$5.00/Person**

*Available space for 200 people - first come, first served.  
Limit of 6 tickets per Branch 9 member (Active, CCA & Retired)  
and immediate family only.*

### Buffet Lunch

Zesty Queso Dip with  
Fresh Tortilla Chips  
BBQ Meatballs  
Tator Tots  
Pizza with  
Assorted Toppings  
Boneless Buffalo Wings with  
Bleu Cheese Dressing  
Soda and a Cash Bar

*DEADLINE is:  
Friday, December 2, 2016*

*A fun day out with family  
and friends!*

*Special Guest  
SANTA!!*

*Watch the Christmas  
Classic Cartoons  
How the Grinch  
Stole Christmas  
&  
Frosty the Snowman  
on a movie theater screen.*

## Branch 9 Holiday Party Registration Form

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

Number of Guests: \_\_\_\_\_ Amount Paid: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Guests (Must include ages of children): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

*Return registration form and payment  
(checks made out to Branch 9 Christmas Party) to:  
Branch 9, 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](http://NALC.org)
- \* [Branch9nalc.com](http://Branch9nalc.com) (website)
- \* "like" our **Branch 9 Facebook Page**
- \* **Follow us on Twitter**

**Contribute to the PAC**  
The Letter Carrier Political Fund is the anchor for NALC's legislative and political activities.



[nalc.org/government-affairs/political-activity](http://nalc.org/government-affairs/political-activity)

## Branch 9 Calendar

**October 25**  
*General Membership Meeting*  
7:00PM  
Crystal VFW, Crystal, MN

**October 27**  
Racial & Economic Justice  
Committee Meeting  
6:30PM  
Crystal VFW

**October 31**  
Halloween

**November 8**  
Election Day

**November 11**  
Veteran's Day - HOLIDAY

**November 16**  
Retirement Seminar  
CSRS - 6:00PM  
FERS - 7:00PM  
Crystal VFW

**November 22**  
*COMBINED*  
*Steward Board and*  
*General Membership Meeting*  
7:00PM  
Crystal VFW, Crystal, MN

**November 24**  
Thanksgiving - HOLIDAY

**DECEMBER 11**  
Holiday Party  
1:00 - 4:00M  
New Hope Cinema Grill

**Northside Retiree Breakfast**  
1st Tuesday of the Month  
9:30AM @ Elsie's  
729 Marshall St. NE, Minneapolis

**N Suburban Retiree Breakfast**  
1st Friday of the Month  
8:30AM @ Denny's Restaurant  
9020 Quaday Avenue NE, Otsego

**Southside Retiree Breakfast**  
2nd Tuesday of the Month  
9:00AM @ Fred Babcock VFW  
6715 Lakeshore Dr, Richfield

**Nokomis Retiree Breakfast**  
4th Tuesday of the Month  
9:00AM @ Fred Babcock VFW  
6715 Lakeshore Dr, Richfield

**POCUM**  
4th Monday of the Month  
6:00PM - Labor Centre -2nd Floor  
312 Central Ave, Minneapolis