



VOLUME 63 No 3

Official Publication of Branch Nine, NALC

April 2011

Imagine.....

Try to envision coming in to work after our bargaining rights are taken away. Everything that is in the contract, no longer applies. You clock in, walk over to “your” route, the supervisor approaches you and tells you to work on the aux route today. You begin to argue that you aren’t on the overtime list... but wait; there is no overtime list! “Your” route doesn’t exist anymore either. You have to carry what you are told to carry and the supervisor doesn’t like it when you argue, so you have to carry the aux route and the heavy business route. “That will take more than 12 hours” you say. Well the 12/60 rule no longer exists either. You think “gosh I am glad my vacation is coming up soon”, but wait; you can’t take your vacation because the station is understaffed. You will have to wait until management thinks they can spare you to take that hard earned leave time. Oh that’s right, the amount of leave we get is also bargained for. You don’t have sick leave anymore, you have to use your vacation time when your kids get sick so there will be no vacation this year.

These are some of the things we as carriers take for granted, that our union leaders sat down and bargained for. The public employees in Wisconsin are facing the loss of their right to collectively bargain for benefits, and wages. We can lose our rights if this is allowed to snowball.

It’s time to start paying attention to the candidates we elect to office. Governor Walker never mentioned (during his campaign) his intent to take this right away from public employees, but he did have a history of doing just that. One of the speakers at the rally we attended in Madison said that 39% of union households in Wisconsin voted for Governor Walker! They ended up voting for a pay cut, and more importantly, the loss of their right to be represented at the bargaining table.

This fight is a big one and there is a lot of misinformation out there. One thing that is commonly reported is



that our union dues are being used to elect Democrats. This is not true, and it is the reason why giving to COLCPE and PAL9 is so important. **The union is not allowed to use our dues for politics.** COLCPE and PAL9 are our political action funds, used to educate and to help candidates that are labor friendly get elected. It is the choice of each union member to decide if they would like to donate, a choice we all should be considering if we want to keep our contract and our bargaining rights.

Deb Grunnes
Associate Office Coordinator
Osseo Branch

**By-Laws submitted (Page 11) to be acted upon at the
April 26th General Membership Meeting.
Golden Valley VFW. 7775 Medicine Lake Rd. Golden Valley**

Last Punch Bunch



Tom Flavin and Ed Ahrens (Lake Street) on their last day at the Post Office, pose with Steward's Tim Bergstrom and Cathy Burton.

MDA UPDATE



Mike Zagaros (Br9 Vice President), and JoAnn Gilbaugh (MDA Coordinator) present a check for contributions from 2010, to MDA's Jenna Wendorf (Exec. Director) and Rose McDonough (Purchasing Director).

The Following is a list of Paid Members of PAL 9 for March, 2011.

Very Concerned Members

Ron Barker

Gary J Mathews

Wesley E Thomas

Kenneth T Schack

Pamela K Donato

Regular Members

Steven R Bjoraker

Patricia A Wagner

James R Sharp

Daniel C Holland

Roger E Ritter

Jeremy J Rothstein

Herbert J Hess

Michael J Mroska

**Ron Lawrence,
Treasurer PAL 9**

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Branch Nine Officers

**President
Pam Donato**

**Exec. Vice President
Mike Zagaros**

**Recording Secretary
Jeremy Rothstein**

**Treasurer
Darrell Maus**

**Financial Secretary
Melia Derrick**

**Editor
Chuck Glover**

**Sergeant at Arms
Jim Nelson**

**Health Benefits Rep.
Julie Waldemar**

**Trustee
Barb Watzcak**

**Trustee
Mike Smith**

**Trustee
Samantha Hartwig**

**Director of Retirees
Cheryl Stately**

**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.

Welcome New Members

Richard Kuhl - Normandale

Derek Hazen - Golden Valley

Andrew Erstad - Nokomis

Debra Boughton - West Edina

Karl Kaiser - Minnehaha

Denise Buske - Metro Hub

Dorothea Donald - Powderhorn

Henry Herod - Loring

Dale Olson - West Edina

Theresa Wittmann -
West Bloomington

Joseph Mosner - Lake Street

John Spencer - Robbinsdale

Mariah Ronningen -
(Minneapolis)

In Memoriam

Donald J. Higgins

Stephen Hasser (Active)

President's Report

IN SOLIDARITY

I love a good ending,

But, endings are never truly the end. Whether it's a game or a movie or a career, endings are simply a marking point, ripe for the next challenge or sequel or "thing". And change for both the Branch (and me) is no different. Mike has appointed two key positions as he becomes the Branch 9 President on May 1st. Darrell Maus will be an excellent Executive Vice President and Lisa O'Neill will bring leadership and valuable experience as Branch Treasurer. In their new roles, Mike, Darrell and Lisa will be supported by the best Executive Board anywhere. There you have it, positive change, not an end.

But all change is entirely affected by surrounding conditions. There may be roster changes, or economic changes or rule changes. There are changes in ones personal life, job duties or maybe your job entirely. The transition of Branch 9's leadership and ultimately its success will be significantly impacted by many different conditions. And this is where each and every one of you comes in.

This entire union thing is about **all** of us, not just some of us. While I understand that there are many levels of involvement, now is the time for every single one of us to kick it up a notch! Attend a General Membership meeting, become a steward, or show up for any social event sponsored by the Branch. The reality is, not only are you all part of this organization, you actually run it! Nothing happens without the membership voting for it, showing up for it or pushing for it. No one Executive Board, however talented, is going to make anything happen without the will and work of

the members, period.

So, now Mike will lead Branch 9. He will do so with a rich depth of experience, knowledge and with all of his personal might. But our success as workers, as letter carriers and unionists, our personal "ending", will be determined ultimately by the conditions you as the membership help create. Mike needs you. The Executive Board needs you. Your Steward needs you. All workers need you. And please make no mistake, **YOU NEED YOU!**

I deeply appreciate the well wishes from everyone since my announcement last month. I will move into my new position having been mentored by the very best. With every phone call asking a question or looking for help, every complaint, every idea or offer to volunteer, each of you has helped to raise me. We have done great things together, suffered losses together and then brushed ourselves off and started anew together. And for all of my years, as a new member to becoming the Branch President, I have signed off in articles, on letters and correspondence with great intention **"In Solidarity"**. It is who I am, together with you.

I told you I love happy endings, especially when followed by great beginnings!

My greatest privilege has been in working with all of you, together and always ...

In Solidarity,

Pam



Pam Donato
Branch 9 President



Minnesota Rally

On February 26th, more than 1000 people including Melia Derrick (BR 9 Financial Secretary) braved the cold and snow to gather together for a rally at the Minnesota Capital in St. Paul, in a show of support for Wisconsin public workers who are waging a battle to keep their collective bargaining rights. One of the highlights of the rally was a rousing speech given by Minnesota Congressman Keith Ellison. *Steve Boice, Retired Branch 9 Member*



Darrell Maus, Present Treasurer and Future Executive Vice President

I would like to take this opportunity to introduce myself to the membership of Branch 9. I am Darrell Maus the current Treasurer for the Branch, and future Executive Vice President.

Pam Donato, our current President, has accepted a position at the National Level in Washington, DC. Mike Zagaros, our current Executive Vice President, will assume the duties of President (in accordance with the NALC Constitution) on May 1st, 2011. Mike has asked me to become his Executive Vice President, and I have accepted. I would like to thank Mike and the Executive Board for the consideration and approval of this opportunity.

Anytime there is a change in our routines there may be cause for concern. I want to assure you, the members, and my fellow officers that this transition in leadership will not interfere with the daily obligations and duties of this Branch. There are going to be a lot of changes in the Post Office's future and the jobs of letter carriers will be changing too with the onset of automation and the current volume of mail. Carriers have seen the issue of decreased mail volume before and the volume has always returned, but this time there are other factors involved. With the pending implementation of the Flat

Continued on page 6



Executive Vice President's Report

Help Wanted

If you watch the news pundits, they are reporting that the economy is starting to turn around. One of the indicators that they are using is that industry is planning on hiring in the near future. Does that mean that we will be seeing "help wanted" signs in the window? What kind of jobs will people be hired for? Will they be good middle class jobs that working men and women can raise their families on? There is a "help wanted" sign out there; it's just not talked about very much. The sign speaks of a need for representatives for working people. Did you know that the word representative comes from an old French word that means those who were "standing for others." We need this type of representative that we need today. We need people who are willing to stand up for others. This is not the job for a few. We need everyone to become a representative for letter carriers and more importantly to represent themselves for who and what we are, working men and women.

So what is a letter carrier representative? All too often we limit what we consider as representatives to elected officers and stewards. There are a lot of ways to be a representative of letter carriers. In the last issue of the Branch Nine News there were pictures from the rally in Madison, WI. Branch 9 members were representing or standing for others that Sunday morning. They were supporting teachers and public employees who are under attack by those who would make these people the scapegoat for the current economic climate in Wisconsin. A week later there were more Branch 9 representatives standing on a bridge deck in Hudson, again in support of the workers in

Wisconsin who were simply trying to keep the right to collective bargaining from being taken away. These are just two examples of the job of a Branch 9 Representative. Here are some more:

Help wanted - Shop Steward.

Currently there are several offices that do not have the proper number of designated stewards or alternate stewards. The job description of a steward is to be responsible for investigating and filing grievances for contractual violations and disciplinary action against the carriers in their work unit. They are expected to attend the training sessions sponsored by the Branch, make announcements and post information, and to help new and probationary employees learn station policies ... These are the duties of the steward from the Branch 9 By-Laws, but to be honest, they should be in the job description of every Branch 9 member. A steward is someone who has to be willing to stand up for others including themselves when their contractual rights are at stake. To some, the job of a steward may seem daunting and time consuming. It is. There is support for those who choose to stand for others by way of training and additional help. But the steward also needs the support of those around him or her on the workroom floor. The ability of the steward's and the alternate's to do their job well can best be determined by those who are being represented. The old saying is true many hands do make light work. The same is true of the job of the steward and the alternate if the rest of the unit is involved.

Help wanted – Political Coordinators, Legislative Volunteers and contributors to COLCPE and PAL9. The February Postal Record



Mike Zagaros, Branch 9
Exec. Vice President

and the Branch Nine News have listed those who have contributed to COLCPE and PAL9. To those of you who contributed or volunteered on behalf of the Branch in the political arena, Thank You. As a contributor and/or volunteer, you are a representative of our legislative efforts on behalf of letter carriers and working men and women. Your contribution to the "Gimme 5 campaign" and members of PAL9 provide the resources to get our message to state and federal elected representatives. If you look around the country the coordinated attacks on working people especially those in unions, we need more people to be representatives of letter carriers and working people, to be willing to be standing for others in the legislative arena. To be willing to stand for others as we did in Wisconsin and for ourselves. There are plenty of openings.

Help wanted – Safety Liaisons.

There is a signed agreement between the President of Branch 9 and the Postmaster establishing Station Safety Liaisons. These are volunteers who have committed themselves to trying to make a safer work environment for letter carriers. They do this by inspecting our facilities looking for safety hazards. They also investigate every accident to try and determine its cause. This is

VP article continued on page 11

Darrell Maus continued from pg 4

Sequence System (FSS) machines the office time of carriers will be impacted. Management, I am sure has the projected hours all figured out for what the savings are going to be, and any carrier that has been around the Post Office for more than 5 years knows that the total hours projected by Management is usually not achieved. But the truth of the matter is that a carrier's daily routine will be changing and the Branch is well aware and preparing for this transition. We are not against automation, but we are against any automation that is in violation of the National Agreement and the safety of our carriers. These changes are daunting, but we will all work together for the best outcome of our members.

Once again I want to say thank you to the members and officers of Branch 9 for this opportunity.

Darrell Maus

FOOD DRIVE 2011

May 14, 2011 will mark the 19th Annual NALC Food Drive, the largest one day food drive in the nation. Last year in Minneapolis we raised 764,000 pounds of food in one day, this was a new record. This year the need for food assistance is as great as ever. Our economy is still struggling to recover from the "great recession", and many families in our neighborhoods are struggling to feed themselves. Many of these families are working people with jobs; however some have suffered severe pay cuts, or the loss of a good paying job. The sad reality is a new description of the hungry in America, "Food Insecure".

Insecure households struggle daily with not knowing how to feed their families. Many times Food Insecure families have to choose between eating and paying the bills. In fact

the statistics on hunger in America are startling; of all the hungry in America 1 in 4 is a child. This hungry child could be the neighbor down the street, or a relative. With the end of the winter months and the holiday seasons, donations to local food shelves begin to dwindle. This is why it is so important that we take one day of our time to help our neighbors, friends, and family in our community.

During the week of the food drive we will be promoting our event on the radio and television. We will also be participating in the May Day Parade on May 1st, "The Heart of the Beast", and we need volunteers to join us. There will be a cook out prior to the parade at 11:30 a.m. The parade begins at 1:00 p.m. and we will walk through the route promoting the Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive, and having fun.

Every station has a food drive coordinator, and if your station does not have a coordinator than your station steward will be the coordinator. As in previous years we are targeting the Tuesday before the drive (May 10) as the day to deliver the Stamp Out Hunger Postcards. We are also targeting Thursday before the drive (May 12) we will be delivering the plastic Cub Foods bags to our customers. We pick up all of the food on May 14th.

There will be many Cub Foods store locations that will have trucks in the parking lot for carriers to drop off the food donations throughout the day. We are asking that all carriers with a Cub Foods Food Drive Drop Off Site to use that location. Using the Cub Foods sites helps alleviate many trucking issues, and helps keep as many Post Office docks as clear as possible. The food needs to be out the stations by the of the day. We will have a handful of wonderful truck drivers from the Main Office driving around and collecting the food from the stations on May 14th. The station coordinators will have a

truck schedule by the April General Membership meeting.

Every year it takes some special people to pull the whole food drive together. Bob Baird from the Main Office is helping with the food drive working on the logistics part. I think he has been a part of the food drive longer than I have been in the Post Office.

New to the food drive this year is Cathy Burton (Lake Street). She is learning the ropes, and has become a wonderful addition to the team. She is a Co-Coordinator with me, and another contact for food drive questions.

The food drive wouldn't be a success without the help of our local food drive partners, WCCO Radio, Second Harvest Heartland, MTSA Trucking, Cub Foods, and the newest supporters the Rural Letter Carriers.

If anyone would like to volunteer to help out with the food drive please give Samantha Hartwig (Eastside), or Cathy Burton (Lake Street) a call. Messages can also be left for us at the Branch Office.

We are looking forward to another wonderful and successful year for the Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive. Our goal this year for Minneapolis and St. Paul is to raise 1.3 million pounds of food in one day, last year we raised 1.2 million pounds of food. Be safe and have fun.

Samantha Hartwig



Hudson, Wisconsin Rally for all workers



J. Wesley Woods - \$1,000 Scholarship Application Form

Name _____ Phone _____

Address _____

High School _____

Member parent's name _____

Work unit _____

School to attend (if known) _____

Jerome J. Keating/Austin B. Carlson \$2,000 Scholarship Application Form

Name _____ Phone _____

Address _____

High School _____

Member parent's name _____

Work unit _____

School to attend (if known) _____

Walter E. Couillard/ Eugene P. McNulty \$2,000 Scholarship Application Form

Name _____ Phone _____

Address _____

High School _____

Member parent's name _____

Work unit _____

School to attend (if known) _____

High School Seniors:

Submit scholarship applications to Branch 9 by May 24, 2010

Every spring, Branch 9 awards three scholarships to graduating seniors: the J. Wesley Woods Scholarship (\$1,000); the Jerome J. Keating/Austin B. Carlson Scholarship (\$2,000); and the Walter E. Couillard/Eugene P. McNulty Scholarship (\$2,000). The awards have made it easier for many students to begin their post-secondary education while honoring the sacrifices and contribution of important Branch 9 Leaders.

The following rules apply to all three scholarships:

A. Any senior graduating from high school and is a dependent of a Branch 9 member is eligible for these scholarships.

B. The scholarships may be used for any accredited trade school, vocational/technical institute, community college, or university.

C. Three names will be drawn for each scholarship. The first name picked will be the winner, then first and second runner-up respectively. The winners of any drawing will not be eligible for the other drawing.

D. The application for the drawings will run in the March and April issues of the Branch Nine News. The drawing will be held at the May General Membership Meeting. The applications shall contain the following information:

1. The applicant's name, address, and home phone number.
2. The name of the applicant's parent or guardian who is a member of Branch 9.
3. The intended school of choice, if known.

E. Payment to the winners will be made after they have enrolled and can show proof of payment towards their tuition.

Members with dependents who graduate from high school this spring and who plan to attend an accredited education institution next fall, should complete the applications and return them to the Branch Office by May 24 or bring them to that night's meeting. All three forms should be submitted as there are three separate drawings for each scholarship.

Adult Learners Scholarship

Leonard A. Larson/ Barry J. Weiner Scholarship

Adult Learners:

Submit scholarship
application to Branch 9
by May 24, 2011

**Leonard A. Larson/
Barry J. Weiner
Adult Learner Scholarship
Application Form**

Name _____

Phone _____

Address _____

Active or Retired _____

Work unit _____

Two (2) \$1,000 scholarships will be awarded.

The following rules apply to the two scholarships:

A. Any member active or retired in good standing of Branch 9 is eligible for one of the two scholarships.

B. The scholarships may be used for any accredited trade school, vocational/technical institute, community college, or university. The Adult Learner Scholarships may also be used for any community, county or state adult educational program.

C. One name will be drawn for each scholarship. The first name picked will be the winner. The winners of any drawing will not be eligible for the other drawings.

D. The application for the drawings will run in the March and April issues of the Branch Nine News. The drawing will be held at the May General Membership meeting. The applications shall contain the following information:

1. The applicant's name, address, and home phone number.
2. Whether active or retired.

E. Payment to the winners will be made after they have enrolled and can show proof of payment towards their tuition.

F. Benefits under the Adult Learner Scholarships expire one year from date of drawing.

Members who plan to attend an accredited education institution should complete the application and return it to the Branch Office by May 24, or bring it to that night's meeting.

**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

**Rally at Wisconsin's State Capital
and just some of the hundreds of signs and placards by teachers,
firefighters, police, construction trades, and many more.**



VP article continued from page 5

done so hopefully there will be a reduction of accidents and fewer injured carriers. As changes continue in our work, carriers will be on the street more hours in the day, there are subject to more risks. Through the work of the Safety Liaisons those risks can be reduced. Safety is everyone's responsibility, but these representatives are standing up for our safety. Thank you to those of you who are serving as Station Liaisons, but there are still openings in some locations.

There are other openings available. Most stations are looking for union representatives. Whether it is as the MDA or Food Drive Coordinator someone who is just willing to help on a particular project, there is almost always a help wanted sign for you to be a representative. As time passes there continue to be changes in who is a representative of Branch 9 and in what capacity. As Pam begins her new role at NALC Headquarters there will be changes in the representatives to the Executive Board. Darrell Maus has accepted my request to serve as the Executive Vice President of Branch 9. Darrell brings a wealth of knowledge and experience to the position and will be invaluable as we begin the implementation of FSS (Flat Sequencing System) in 10 work units this spring. This leaves the position of Branch Treasurer open and Lisa O'Neill has accepted my request to serve as Branch 9 Treasurer. Lisa has previously served the membership as Shop Steward and JARAP evaluation and adjustment team leader. She is currently the Vice President of the MSALC and is very active politically. Her dedication to the work of the NALC has demonstrated her ability to stand up for the members as a Branch 9 Representative.

There is one more help wanted sign that needs to be posted.

Help wanted – Involved Member.

The future of letter carriers and working people in general cannot be left to the few. We need as many representatives as we can get. We need people who are willing to be "standing for others." We need representatives to help defend against the battle currently being waged against public employees. Will this take time and effort? Yes it will. But there are some questions that we as individuals need to consider. If not now, when? If not us, who? Will you be a Representative for working men and women? The need is great and there are plenty of openings.

Bylaw submissions are printed as received by the Bylaw Committee.

Bylaw Submission #2

Proposed Bylaw Change.

In the event the office of Branch President is vacated, the Executive Vice President will fill the position of Branch President for a period not to exceed the first 100 days following the vacancy as "Acting Branch President"

As "Acting Branch President" he/she will convene a special election for Branch President that shall be held by referendum vote, following the procedures outlined in Articles VI.C and VI.D.

The "Acting Branch president shall appoint election judges and tellers, as needed to oversee this election, under authority of Article III Sec13 and 14 of the Branch 9 Bylaws.

The special election for President will be completed within the first 100 days after the office of President has been Vacated. The "Acting Branch President" will resume their position of Executive Vice President upon the outcome of this Special Election.

Nothing in this section would prohibit the "Acting Branch President" from running for the position of Branch President in The Special Election

Submitted by Joe Rian

2/22/11

Probably under Article 6 Section II

Bylaw Submission #1

February 22, 2011

BY LAW PROPOSAL

2011

ARTICLE V, SECTION 2

RE: CHANGE ATTENDANCE REQUIREMENT FOR THE 2012 NATIONAL CONVENTION ONLY.

ADD TO EXISTING LANGUAGE:

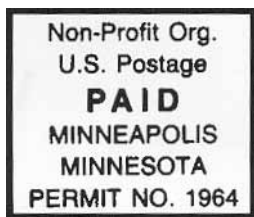
"ELIGIBILITY FOR PAYMENT OF ANY DELEGATE FOR THE 2012 NATIONAL CONVENTION IN MINNEAPOLIS WILL INCLUDE ATTENDANCE AT 9 OF 12 GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS PRECEDING SAID CONVENTION."

SUBMITTED BY:

Pamela K. Donato

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

Change Service Requested



Branch Nine Calendar

April 12

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

****Stewards Meeting****

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

April 13

Cribbage Tournament
Br28 vs. Br9
10AM
1715 van Dyke Ave
St Paul, MN 55119

April 16

MDA Bowl-A-Thon
Park Tavern
7PM-9:30PM
3401 Louisiana Ave. S
St Louis Park

April 25-29

NBA Region 7 Training
Holiday Inn Metrodome
1500 Washington Ave. S.
Minneapolis

April 26

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

May 1

Red and Gold Retiree Banquet
1330 Industrial Blvd, Minneapolis
Registration: noon-1:30pm
Lunch 1:30-3:30

May Day Parade and Festival

Powderhorn Park
Barbeque 11:30 am
Parade 1:00 pm

May 10

****Stewards Meeting****

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

Nokomis Retiree Breakfast
9:00AM

Fred Babcock VFW
6715 Lakeshore Drive, Richfield

May 14

****NALC FOOD DRIVE****

May 24

****General Membership Meeting****

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