

JEROME J. KEATING BRANCH



BRANCH NINE NEWS

"AN INJURY TO ONE IS AN INJURY TO ALL"

1964

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DO NOT OPEN

(Unless you value your career, retirement,
vacation, and benefits)

From the Editor's Desk



One year ago in the Branch 9 News, the cover page theme was "The Good; The Bad; The Ugly; of election 2010. Today the Good are still the volunteers who do phone banks, collect signatures from friends and family, and various duties for the betterment of all Branch 9 members. The Bad; members, who through indifference, don't see the benefits of NALC-endorsed candidates. The Ugly; a labor unfriendly Congress who are hell-bent on destroying the collective bargaining process. Letter carriers have been asked to collect signatures from friends, neighbors, and businesses. The goal is to show our representatives in Congress that voter's do not want postal services reduced.

This issue has short articles from your fellow carriers that attended the National Rap Session in Las Vegas, last month. I believe the branch's money was invested well. These are the carriers that will motivate others to action, and help save our careers.

New Members

Ken Bailey

In Memoriam

Michael Stodola (Active)

Jerry Tripp

Robert Ess

Mark Betzler (Active)

Virgil Andrada

Letter to the Editor.

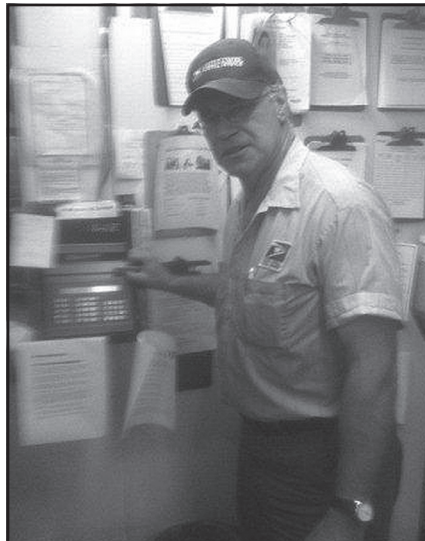
Remember when the Joint Statement regarding violence in the workplace was **GOLDEN?** Remember when bullying, intimidation, and harrassment was unacceptable? Those were the "good ole days." Many thanks to the stewards who work tirelessly to hold that pack of wolves accountable.

Marlys Fox
Coon Rapids Station

WHAT DOIS DOESN'T CONSIDER:

How you feel today (sick, sore)
Weather (hot, cold, rainy)
Heavy (DPS, FSS)
Heavy post (pkgs, sprs)
Heavy accountables
Skinny/thick pieces of mail
Standup talks (10-15 min.)
Heavy markup mail (UTF, CFS, 3575's)
3rd bundle full coverage

Jim Nelson
Anoka



Jim Rozek retired out of Bloomington's Garfield Station on July 1st.

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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 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

The Question That Needs To Be Answered Is Why?

There has been so much happening in the last month that it is hard to know where to begin. First we had the MSALC State Convention, congratulations to Lisa O'Neill our new State President and to all those elected. Next we had the national Rap Session where we had 20 Branch 9 members in attendance. This was followed by a nationwide teleconference. What did these three things have in common? At all three, there was an extensive discussion about the current legislation that has been introduced dealing with the Postal Service. More importantly what would be the impact of these bills on the public, the service and ... oh yeah on us, the employees of the Postal Service. As more was learned about the bills supposedly designed to reform the Postal Service, I kept coming back to the same question. Why? Why do we need to do this? Followed by the next question what can we do about it?

HR-2309 Rep Issa's bill – Among the things this bill (if passed) would do is that it would immediately require going to five day delivery. It would require ending door to door delivery on park and loop and mounted delivery in favor of centralized deliver. It would require pre-determined cuts in expenditures and pre-determined cuts in the number of Post Offices. It would require the closing of plant operations unless they were operating at pre-determined capacity levels and creates two additional levels of unchallengeable bureaucracy. It also has a companion bill in the Senate

sponsored by Sen. McCain. Why? It would destroy the service that we know along with many of the jobs we rely upon. Yet the Public is being told that this is necessary.

But there is another bill in the Senate. S-1789 is a bill that does much the same with better wrapping maybe the results are the same: The end of 6 day delivery within 2 years; the end of door to door delivery on park and loop routes; changes to OWCP that would reduce the benefits to those who simply were injured doing their job. It does not address the prefunding issue and it ignores the overpayment to the Civil Service Retirement. Why? It would destroy the service that we know along with many of the jobs we rely upon. Yet the Public is being told that this is necessary.

That is why we all need to stand up, get involved, talk to the public and tell them the truth. Ask them to contact their Representatives and Senators to just say "No" to needless reform that destroys rather than builds. That is the reason for the petition drive to engage our friends, neighbors and the public at large. We do this because if we don't no one else will do it for us. Yet there are those in our own membership who remain unconvinced that this is what we should be doing. There are those who mistakenly are in favor of giving up on 6 day delivery under the misguided impression that we would get weekends off or that this would be a good thing. Why? Do we no longer believe in the principle of "an injury to one is an injury to all?" The purpose of belonging to a union is to do collectively what you can't individually. We need to continue to



Mike Zagaros

work together not only for ourselves but for, and not at the expense of those who come after us.

I recently spent some time talking with Wain Pearce who was the Executive Vice President of Branch 9 during the Strike. I asked him how they were able to keep the membership together and united during the strike? His answer, "It's because we were desperate. We felt that we didn't have a choice." We talked about the sight of the Main Office Carriers crossing the 3rd Avenue Bridge en masse to vote on the strike. "These were carriers with 30 and 40 years putting their jobs, retirement and everything on the line, for the hope of something better." As the recipients of that unified action we have a responsibility to continue the work of those who came before us and to pass it on for future men and women who hope to retire as letter carriers.

Our job is to educate the public and fight those who would destroy all that defines us as an organization. To those who would take away America's Postal Service and the jobs of letter carriers now and in the future we need to ask why? Then we need to be prepared to do what is necessary to make sure they don't.

Living History in the NALC



Seated from left to right:

James Rademacher, 70 year pin honoree and NALC President, 1968 - 1976

Bill Young, NALC President, 2002 - 2009

Vincent Sombrotto, NALC President, 1979 - 2002
standing: Fred Rolando, NALC President, 2009 - present

The best line I heard was from Past President, James Rademacher; "Remember what happens to a banana when it leaves the bunch? It gets skinned." We are stronger when we stick together. For the future, what we used to do as a business will not be good enough to keep our jobs. We (NALC) are out of our comfort zone, but it is something we absolutely have to do – fight for our jobs and force the USPS to negotiate on their business plan, contractually or otherwise. The USPS management has very little credibility on Capital Hill. It is the postal employee that they trust. NALC President, Fred Rolando said, "An informed citizenry is our greatest weapon. What the public knows is not the truth, the NALC has to get the truth out because no one else will." Also, I wish to thank the Richfield COLCPE contributors.

Joe Rian, Richfield



**Branch 9 members, past and present,
at the National Rap Session**

Report to fellow Branch 9 members from Rap Session attendees

The workshops on the Saturday before the Rap Session were very informative. I took four classes and the session on "Managing Branch Finances" was the most informative to me, being a Branch 9 Trustee. The Rap Session on Sunday really stood out. Hearing President Rolando along with our 3 previous National Presidents speak, was heartwarming. What history! I feel better about our future after hearing Fred's plans, including the hiring of Ron Bloom from outside of our union. Mr. Bloom was hired by President Obama to straighten out the auto industry mess, and hopefully he can straighten out the mess postal (mis)management has brought on. Does this mean we can sit back and take it easy? NO!! We are in the fight of our postal careers. We all need to step up and do what National and our own Branch 9 needs us to do! If we, as Letter Carriers, don't stand up for ourselves, postal management will run our Postal Service into the ground. Think about it.
Mike Smith, Branch 9 Trustee

I would like to thank the membership for allowing me to attend such an important event. This was my first time ever attending a Rap Session and I will never forget the great time I had. I was honored to travel with such an amazing group of people from Branch 9. I was able to attend workshops that included Postal Finances, The Nuts and Bolts of Branch Management, Preparing for Retirement, and my favorite, Legislative Update. The workshops were informative...more importantly was being surrounded by like-minded people and the solidarity that we felt throughout our stay. The rally was the main event. Talk about excitement, Branch 9 scored seats in the third row with the past living Presidents all in attendance and each one spoke in their own special way. It was a great opportunity to re-energize. President Rolando stressed the importance for all of us to be engaged. We all must do our part. I know that there are some out there that do not believe that the changes we are going through will affect them. Not true. Everything is on the table and America's Postal Service is at stake. Please take the time to talk with your friends and families about our issues and ask them to make calls to Congress. The future of the Postal Service and your job depends on it. Wake up carriers and do your part! Be there for your union like your union has been there for you. Teamwork....We need Everyone!

Cathy Burton, Lake Street

More Rap Session articles on page 13

Executive Vice President's Report

Are We One As A Union?

With all the changes and issues happening currently on the workroom floors we cannot lose sight of the fact that we all need to work together and support one another each and every day. Every carrier is concerned about what the future may hold at the USPS. The majority of carriers are concerned for their benefits. The TE's are concerned about their future employment. Our senior carriers are concerned about their retirement and possible loss of future benefits. We as a Union have to remind ourselves that because of the tough conditions the USPS is currently working through (whether political or financial) we must stay focused and be looking out for one another.

If you see management treating a fellow carrier in a way that is not respectful you need to step up even if it is merely by finding a steward and informing them of the situation. It is much easier to not get involved, but that is not what we as a Union can allow. The Joint Statement of Violence and Behavior in the Workplace was written and agreed upon for these reasons. Everyone is to be treated with dignity and respect. Behavior that includes intimidation and threats will not be tolerated. When you witness such actions taking place at your office your role does not have to be the person trying to resolve the situation, it may merely be acting as a witness and informing your steward of what has transpired. In the offices that we have visited it seems that in the stations where carriers have

taken it upon themselves to watch out for one another and are not overly concerned about voicing their opinions regarding the inappropriate behavior by management the issues seem to be of a lesser nature. This by no means insinuates that there are not issues at each and every station Branch 9 represents; it only means the levels are varied. We will not work through these issues by hoping they will get better in time or thinking that the problems will just go away.

We cannot just be letter carriers that work at our cases and thinking that we are thankful that some supervisor or manager is yelling at someone else and have an "at least it's not me" type of attitude.

We have to support each other and give our support to our stewards by keeping them informed of any actions that we feel may be in violation of the Joint Statement. The Branch also needs to be notified because although the USPS is going through some tough times, improper behavior by supervisors and managers will not be tolerated by not only the officers of the Branch, but rather each and every member of this Union. **That is what a Union is all about "an injury to one is an injury to all."** A copy of the Joint Statement on Violence and Behavior in the Workplace is in this issue of the Branch 9 News and I urge you to read and understand every word and when you witness a behavior that is in violation of the Joint Statement, do your part as a member and get involved.



Darrell Maus

Self Test

After reading the above article ask yourself the following questions and see if you are a part of "Are one as a Union".

What kind of a Union member am I?
Am I supporting my fellow members at work?

Am I attending Union meetings regularly?

Am I volunteering for Union charitable events (i.e. NALC Food Drive, MDA fundraisers or any of the other numerous Branch events)?

Am I keeping informed of Union and political issues?

Am I volunteering for political activities at the Union's request?

Am I contributing to COLCPE and PAL 9?

To be a good Union member today it takes more than simply paying dues. We must maintain the standards and ideals that past members have had, whether it was the strikers from the 1970 strike or the current members today that are always volunteering time to the Union or donating to our political funds. To be a good Union

VP continued on page 13

Bingo / Karaoke Night

On October 9th, Branch 9 held their 4th Annual Bingo/Karaoke fundraiser. In addition to cash bingo prizes, there was a silent auction and raffle for items and gift certificates. As usual, the 50/50 drawings were a big hit. We had a smaller crowd this year, but we were able to raise over \$1,300 for MDA. When bingo was completed, we moved on to the Karaoke portion of the evening. Entertainment was provided by **Karaoke Kroonin**, who donated their services for the evening. Our Karaoke contest had many participants. Our "**Branch 9 Idol**" winner was Samantha Hartwig (Eastside). Both Branch 9 members and Crystal VFW members volunteered their time and talents to ensure this event was a success. By not being there, you missed a chance to raise money for MDA, and you missed a lot of fun. **JoAnn Gilbaugh (MDA Co-Chair)**.



Volunteer's setting up and preparing for the evening event.



Recording Secretary, Jeremy Rothstein and his wife danced to a few Karaoke tunes.



Karen Pederson (Loring) poses with JoAnn Gilbaugh (Lowry). Karen ran the silent auction.

BRANCH 9 NALC MDA RAFFLE

1. Raffle tickets are \$5/each
 2. First Prize is \$1,000
 3. Second Prize is a one week (Sat - Sat), 2 person vacation condo in Palm Springs, CA (airfare is NOT included).
Valued between \$350 - \$600 depending on availability and time of year. For more information go to www.cappublishing.com.
 4. The drawing will be held at the January 24, 2012 Branch 9 General Membership Meeting.
 5. The winner need NOT be present to win.
 6. Checks are to be made out to Branch 9 MDA Fund and
All proceeds will go to MDA.
 7. There is NO LIMIT to the number of tickets you can buy.
- If you have any questions, please contact the Branch 9 office at 612.781.9858

School Supplies donated by Letter Carriers to North Minneapolis Schoolchildren affected by the May, 2011 Tornado



Pete Wilson and Don Grunnes check out some of the donated school supplies.



Pete Wilson, Don Grunnes, Melanie Sanco (Mpls Resource officer), and Olin Moore spearheaded the drive to collect supplies to local schools.

Reprinted article by Margo Ashmore of Northside News.

“You do more than carry mail, you carry the hopes and dreams and burdens of the community,” Melanie Sanco to the blue-shirted postal workers gathered before dawn. The group, operating out of the Lowry station, conducted a drive for school supplies and cash for the tornado affected school children. Sanco is Minneapolis Public schools coordinator of resource development.

At the time, the workers, many of whom live nearby didn't know whether their workplace would be closed in the nationwide US Postal cuts. They've since heard it has been spared.

Pete Wilson, of 41st and Sheridan, said “We have the benefit of a good education. That's why we got this job. There are kids without school supplies...how can they expect to get a good education?” That's why they set about collecting approximately \$2000 in supplies and cash, \$500 of

it from the union, Jerome J Keating Branch 9 of the National Association of Letter Carriers, AFL-CIO.

Transitional Employee Olin Moore from the Harrison neighborhood, Wilson, and Don Grunnes, also a Northsider spearheaded the effort. Manager Myron Kudanovych signed off on it and let them use postal equipment toward the cause. Michael Zagaros, the union branch president, gave a celebratory speech from the union.

“With today's rain there will be slippery ground. Be safe.” Kudanovych said, sending them off to start the day.

Pete Wilson adds:

If I were to have written the story there are two changes that I would have made. Olin Moore is the one who pushed to do something for the people hurt by the tornado. He deserved more credit in my opinion. Plus, I don't think the story made it clear that it was carriers from all over the city and inner suburbs who made this drive successful by their donation.

Some of the items donated to North Minneapolis school kids:

backpacks
pens
pencil sharpeners
erasers
crayons
markers
rulers
note pads
notebooks
3-ring binders
ream of paper
notebooks
pencils
markers
calculators
index cards
elmers glue
colored pencils
magnets
over \$130 collected by passing the hat at General Membership Meeting.

Minnesota State Association of Letter Carriers

October 2 - October 5, 2011

Education

Legislation

Politics



Newly elected President of the Minnesota State Association of Letter Carriers, Lisa O'Neill



Honored Guest at the State Convention; (l) Myra Warren, NALC Director of Life Insurance. Cathy Burton (Lake Street), Barb Kucera, speaker from the (UofM) Labor Education Service



Memorial Service held to honor Minnesota letter carriers who passed away this past year.



Branch 9's Samantha Hartwig was honored by the State Association for her work on the NALC Food Drive.



Branch 9's Silent Auction item "Death by Chocolate" was won by Stacy Whelan of Branch #2942, for \$400.



Pam Donato (Special Assistant to President Fred Rolando) and Myra Warren (NALC Director of Life Insurance)

The Minnesota State Association of Letter Carriers is the political and legislative arm of the NALC. The 2011 State Convention was attended by 100 delegates from across the state. The convention closed with a banquet and MDA fundraiser. A record of \$12,100 was raised for MDA by the delegates. ***Lisa O'Neill, President, MSALC***



JOINT STATEMENT ON VIOLENCE AND BEHAVIOR IN THE WORKPLACE

We all grieve for the Royal Oak victims, and we sympathize with their families, as we have grieved and sympathized all too often before in similar horrifying circumstances. But grief and sympathy are not enough. Neither are ritualistic expressions of grave concern or the initiation of investigations, studies, or research projects.

The United States Postal Service as an institution and all of us who serve that institution must firmly and unequivocally commit to do everything within our power to prevent further incidents of work-related violence.

This is a time for a candid appraisal of our flaws and not a time for scapegoating, fingerpointing, or procrastination. It is a time for reaffirming the basic right of all employees to a safe and humane working environment. *It is also the time to take action to show that we mean what we say.*

We openly acknowledge that in some places or units there is an unacceptable level of stress in the workplace; that there is no excuse for and will be no tolerance of violence or any threats of violence by anyone at any level of the Postal Service; and that there is no excuse for and will be no tolerance of harassment, intimidation, threats, or bullying by anyone.

We also affirm that every employee at every level of the Postal Service should be treated at all times with dignity, respect, and fairness. The need for the USPS to serve the public efficiently and productively, and the need for all employees to be committed to giving a fair day's work for a fair day's pay, does not justify actions that are abusive or intolerant. *"Making the numbers" is not an excuse for the abuse of anyone.* Those who do not treat others with dignity and respect will not be rewarded or promoted. Those whose unacceptable behavior continues will be removed from their positions.

We obviously cannot ensure that however seriously intentioned our words may be, they will not be treated with winks and nods, or skepticism, by some of our over 700,000 employees. But let there be no mistake that we mean what we say and we will enforce our commitment to a workplace where dignity, respect, and fairness are basic human rights, and where those who do not respect those rights are not tolerated.

Our intention is to make the workroom floor a safer, more harmonious, as well as a more productive workplace. We pledge our efforts to these objectives.


D.C. Nurses Association


Federation of Postal Police Officers


National Association of Letter Carriers


National Postal Mail Handlers Union


United States Postal Service


National Association of Postal Supervisors


National Association of Postmasters of the United States


National League of Postmasters of the United States


National Rural Letter Carriers' Association

Dated: February 14, 1992

PLEASE POST ON BULLETIN BOARDS IN ALL INSTALLATIONS



Julie Waldemar,
NALC Health Benefits
Rep.

2012

Rate Information for the NALC Health Benefit Plan

Non-Postal rates apply to most non-Postal employees. If you are in a special enrollment category, refer to the *Guide to Federal Benefits* for that category or contact the agency that maintains your health benefits enrollment.

Postal Category 1 rates apply to career employees covered by the National Postal Mail Handlers Union (NPMHU), National Association of Letter Carriers (NALC) and Postal Police bargaining units.

Postal Category 2 rates apply to other non-APWU, non-PCES, non-law enforcement Postal Service career employees, including management employees, and employees covered by the National Rural Letter Carriers' Association bargaining unit.

Special Guides to Benefits are published for American Postal Workers Union (APWU) employees (see RI 70-2A) including Material Distribution Center, Operating Services and Information Technology/Accounting Services employees and Nurses; Postal Service Inspectors and Office of Inspector General (OIG) law enforcement employees (see RI 70-2IN), Postal Career Executive Service (PCES) employees (see RI 70-2EX), and noncareer employees (see RI 70-8PS).

Career APWU employees hired before May 23, 2011, will have the same rates as the Category 2 rates shown below. In the Guide to Benefits for APWU Employees (RI 70-2A) this will be referred to as the "Current" rate; otherwise, "New" rates apply.

For further assistance, Postal Service employees should call:
Human Resources Shared Service Center
1-877-477-3273, option 5
TTY: 1-866-260-7507

Postal rates do not apply to non-career postal employees, postal retirees, or associate members of any postal employee organization who are not career postal employees. Refer to the applicable *Guide to Federal Benefits*.

Note: All USPS Postal Employees are required to pay full local branch dues. Associate dues are not available.

Note: Non-postal employees, federal annuitants, non-NALC Union annuitants, and other Postal annuitants must pay the annual \$36.00 Associate Membership Fee in order to maintain membership in the NALC Health Benefit Plan. For further explanation, please see the front cover and page 76 of this brochure.

Note: Call Membership at 202-662-2856 for inquiries regarding membership, union dues, fees, or information on the NALC union.

Note: The Self Only premium for a USPS Transitional Employee (TE) is \$260.42. The Self and Family premium for a USPS Transitional Employee (TE) is \$565.55. In accordance with 5 U.S.C. Section 8906a, Transitional Employees (TE) are required to pay the entire premium including both the employee share and the Government contribution. Please visit our Web site at www.nalc.org/depart/hbp for more information.

Type of Enrollment	Enrollment Code	Non-Postal Premium				Postal Premium	
		Biweekly		Monthly		Biweekly	
		Gov't Share	Your Share	Gov't Share	Your Share	Category 1 Your Share	Category 2 Your Share
High Option Self Only	321	185.75	74.67	402.46	161.78	54.04	51.46
High Option Self and Family	322	414.35	151.20	897.76	327.60	105.16	99.40

PREPARING FOR RETIREMENT

As one starts preparing for retirement, the first question that usually comes to mind is when and where to begin the process. Since there is a lot of information to absorb, many forms to be concerned with and quite a few decisions to make, all of this has been put into a framework of steps to follow in preparing for retirement.

Here are some steps that should aid in your preparation.

AT LEAST ONE YEAR BEFORE RETIREMENT:

* Ascertain when you will be eligible to retire and when you wish to retire. Check with your personnel office regarding any period of service which is necessary to give you title to an annuity at a certain age, but which you are not sure is creditable for retirement purposes.

- Gather information about any other pensions or benefits for which you might be eligible (e.g. benefits from Social Security, Veterans' Administration, pensions from private industry).
- Set up an appointment with the personnel office. They will provide you with individual retirement counseling with the district retirement counselor early enough to allow that person time to answer any questions you may have or to resolve any problems you may be experiencing. Advance planning will enable you to review your Official Personnel Folder

(OPF) ensuring that your records are complete showing service and all benefit entitlements. This should include information about your health benefits and life insurance coverages. If you are combining your military service the personnel office needs to verify creditable service time.

- Apply to make any deposits for civilian and post-1956 military service if applicable or find out how such service would be credited if deposit is not made.
- Make a decision on when and how you wish to receive Thrift Savings Plan (TSP) funds. If applicable, arrange to pay off any TSP loans before retirement to avoid any delays in receipt of TSP distributions.
- Request an annuity estimate, which will help in personal financial planning. This computation will also aid in making decisions about survivor benefits, waiving military retired pay, and paying deposits or redeposits.

To further aid your financial planning, estimate the monthly deductions (health benefits, life insurance, taxes, union dues, etc.).

Keep in mind that the annuity amount provided by the personnel office is an estimate only-but hopefully it will be fairly close to the final annuity figure from the Office of Personnel Management (OPM).

SIX MONTHS BEFORE RETIREMENT:

- *If applicable*, decide whether to waive military retired pay.
- Clear up any debts owed the Postal Service (e.g. overpaid salary or advance leave).

TWO TO FOUR MONTHS BEFORE RETIREMENT:

- Notify your supervisor, who will have to make plans to adjust for your absence.
- Obtain appropriate retirement application form: SF 2801, Application for Immediate Retirement under the Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS); or SF 3107, Application for Immediate Retirement under the Federal Employees' Retirement System (FERS)
- Decide on the financial institution and type of account you want to receive the direct deposit of your annuity payments.

SIX WEEKS BEFORE RETIREMENT:

- *Complete and submit* the retirement application and related forms. As you will note, the application form contains several pages of information and instructions-read carefully before filling out the forms.

Of course, for some individuals there will be steps in addition to those in this check list.

There are a lot of things to do before retirement, but it is quite manageable if approached in an organized way.

*Credits: article reproduced from the Mound City Carrier.
Branch 343, St.Louis, Missouri*

Credits to Region 7 Report, September 2011. Chris Wittenburg, National Business Agent

OIG Integrity Tests

This recent Holiday Season we have reported that there have been Postal employees disciplined and even removed for using gift cards that they found in collection boxes, on the street, and in some cases, given to them by customers saying they found the gift cards in front of the Post Office. In all of these instances, the gift cards were planted by the OIG. Our office has learned that the OIG is again planting gift cards to test Letter Carriers.



In the recent examples we have heard of, the OIG is conducting "integrity tests." In these tests, the OIG agents are placing gift cards that have values of \$25-\$50 in the outgoing mail slots, collections boxes and even in single-family mailboxes. As letter carriers, it is common for our customers to leave gifts in their mailbox even outside of the holidays, and we normally accept those gifts.

Where a letter carrier may get into trouble is when they accept cash in any amount or gifts (including gift cards) valued above \$20. This is where the OIG agents are testing our integrity. Although, one wonders how these OIG agents would score on any test of integrity. That said, the rules are the rules and below is language from the Code of Federal Regulations 2635.204(a), which should be considered the next time one of your patrons gives you a gift:

Gifts of \$20 or less:

An employee may accept unsolicited gifts having an aggregate market value of \$20 or less per source per occasion, provided that the aggregate market value of individual gifts received from any one person under the authority of this paragraph shall not exceed \$50 in a calendar year. This exception does not apply to gifts of cash or of investment interests such as stock, bonds, or certificates of deposit.

Where the market value of a gift or the aggregate market value of gifts offered on any single occasion exceeds \$20, the employee may not pay the excess value over \$20 in order to accept that portion of the gift or those gifts worth \$20. Where the aggregate value of tangible items offered on a single occasion exceeds \$20, the employee may decline any distinct and separate item in order to accept those items aggregating \$20 or less.

If you have any questions regarding gifts from your customers, contact your supervisor to get verification that it is proper to accept the gift in question. If you disagree with the supervisor's opinion based on the language above, contact your steward for clarification.

**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

Your Job Your Future Your Decision

Actual section of H.R. 2309 which directly affects all postal employees. The Postal Regulatory Commission relinquishes all control if the Post Office posts a revenue loss. The Authority takes control of all postal functions. Its authority is absolute.

SEC. 202. ESTABLISHMENT OF THE AUTHORITY.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—There shall be established, upon the commencement of any control period, an entity to be known as the “Postal Service Financial Responsibility and Management Assistance Authority” (hereinafter in this title referred to as the “Authority”). Authority may conduct its operations under such procedures as it considers appropriate, except that an affirmative vote of a majority of the members of the Authority shall be required in order for the Authority to—

- (1) approve or disapprove a financial plan and budget as described by subtitle C; •HR 2309 IH1
- (2) implement recommendations on financial stability and management responsibility under section 226;
- (3) take any action under authority of section 202(b)(3)(B)(i);
- (4) require the immediate renegotiation of an existing collective bargaining agreement in accordance with section 211(g)(1); or
- (5) reject, modify, or terminate 1 or more terms of an existing collective bargaining agreement in accordance with section 211(g)(2).

Rap Session articles continued from page 4

This 2011 NALC RAP Session was a little different than in the past. We each attended classes. I attended City Delivery; USPS Finances; and Retirement. Sunday’s RAP Session was well attended with three President Emeriti there - Rademacher, Young and Sombrotto. They were all very excitable about what is happening and praised Fred Rolando on being the right person at the right time to get us through this crisis. They all spoke on how important the 9/27 rallies were, and were very impressed with letter carriers nationwide, and are willing to help with any new ventures Fred asks of them. Fred also discussed the importance of keeping 6-day delivery; that we letter carriers need to stay connected through e-activist; what we are willing, and not willing to negotiate in contract negotiations; plus some of our strategies on saving the USPS. WITH YOUR COLCPE DONATIONS, the NALC has retained two financial experts to help set alternative strategies for the USPS. Fred finished his presentation with a couple statements that we all need to think about: 1. For us to do our best isn’t enough – we need to grow our enterprise – we have to take on the challenge to revitalize the USPS. 2. This is the time America needs us – we need to make a difference. The NALC will take on this challenge.

Julie Waldemar, Golden Valley

The most important thing I got out of the Rap Session is the union’s excellent plan for the Postal Service. I thought the NALC’s hiring of the Auto Czar from President Obama’s Administration, plus the whiz’s from Lazard Co. Investment Bank, is our best bet for our future.

Jim Hendrickson, Brooklyn Park

VP article continued from page 5

member today we all have to answer “yes” to the above test and not be reserved when it comes time to talk about current issues concerning our Union with other members or non-members. We must all recommit ourselves to the standards and ideals that benefit us and not rely solely on the officers we have elected to accomplish these feats on our behalf.

In closing, I hope Mike Zagaros and I will see more of you at our meetings, events and also your name on the lists for political contributors to COLCPE and PAL 9.

Darrell Maus
Executive Vice President



**Cheryl Stately
Director of Retirees**

I’d like to start by thanking all the retirees who signed up for COLCPE. Thanks to you, I received a trip to Las Vegas to the Rap Session. I attended 3 workshops while there. One was on retirement taught by our National Director of Retirees, Ernie Kirkland. Each time I attend one of these workshops I learn more and catch something that I missed before. Don’t forget to mark Wednesday, December 7 on your calendar. That is the date of the Retiree Christmas Party. Hope to see a lot of you there!

4th Annual Branch 9 NALC

Ice Fishing Outing on Lake Mille Lacs Twin Pines Resort & Motel-Restaurant

Located just two hours north of the Twin Cities on U.S. Highway 169 (mile marker 232).

For more information call 1.800.450.4682 or visit www.twinpinesmillelacs.com

Noon Sunday to Noon Monday

January 15th & 16th

\$40/Adult

\$35/Children under 14



Contact Ken Jambois with questions at 763.370.1392

The Branch will be hosting a chicken and rib buffet at Twin Pines Resort on Sunday, January 15th from 3:00 - 8:00PM. This dinner is included in the price of the ice house.

Several Houses Available:

- *4 Hole Ice House (sleeps 2 - 3)
- *6 - 10 Hole Ice House (sleeps 4 - 6)
- *8 - 12 Hole Ice House (sleeps 5 - 6)
- *10 - 12 Hole Ice House (sleeps 8)
- *10 - 14 Hole Ice House (sleeps 10)
- *11 Hole Ice House (sleeps 10)
- *14 Hole Ice House (sleeps 14)

Each include: Propane heat, lights, table/chairs, covered pad for bunks, carpeted floors. Cook stoves are available in the larger houses. **Check in time is 1:00PM.**

Branch 9 Ice Fishing

Name: _____ Station: _____

Type of Ice House: _____ Amount Paid: _____

Name of Guests (if under 14 include age): _____

**Deadline is
Tuesday, January 10th**

**Checks payable to: Branch 9 Ice Fishing
2408 Central Avenue NE
Minneapolis, MN 55418**

Retiree Holiday Party Wednesday, December 7th

Retired Carriers will celebrate their Annual Christmas Party. 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 whom we have worked with and known for so many years. Join us at Fred Babcock VFW Post 5555. The social hour begins at 6:00PM with dinner from 7:00 - 9:00PM

Date: December 7th, 2011
Time: 6:00PM - Cocktails (cash bar)
 7:00 - 9:00PM- Dinner
Place: Fred Babcock VFW Post 5555
 6715 Lakeshore Drive
 Richfield, MN
 612.869.5555

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 & return to the Branch Office by November 28th

NALC Retiree Holiday Party

Name _____

(Choose One) Chicken Prime Rib Walleye

I will be bringing _____ **guest(s) @ \$19.00 each**

Name of guest _____ Chicken Prime Rib Walleye

Name of guest _____ Chicken Prime Rib Walleye

Cost: \$19.00 per plate

*All checks must be
made out and mailed to:*

**NALC Branch 9 - 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

Branch Nine Calendar

November 22

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

Tuesday, November 22

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

December 6

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

December 7

Retiree Holiday Party
6PM - 9PM
Fred Babcock VFW
6715 Lakeshore Drive, Richfield
Registration on page 11

December 13

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

Tuesday, December 13

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

December 27

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

Tuesday, December 27

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

January 3

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

Tuesday, January 10

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

January 10

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

January 15 & 16

4th Annual Ice Fishing
Lake Mille Lacs
Twin Pines Resort-Restaurant
Flier on page 14

January 24

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

Tuesday, January 24

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