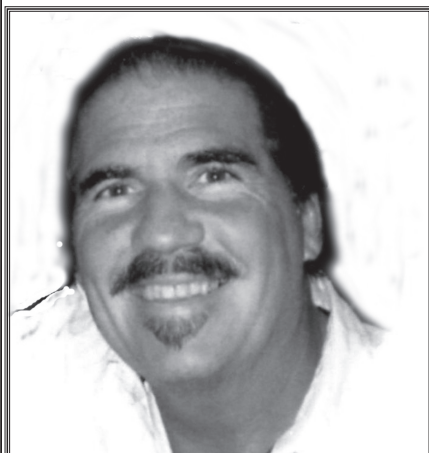




TRAGIC LOSS TO ALL



Leo Michael Brandt
Feb. 5, 1955 - June 18, 2013

Leo Michael Brandt, age 58, of Brooklyn Park, passed away unexpectedly on June 18, 2013. Preceded in death by parents, Clifford and Geraldine (Guider), and his sister, Mary Kay. Survived by his wife, Loreese, and their children Crissy, Cory, Ciara and Cayla; granddaughter, Nataliah, and grandson, Avery, sisters, Patty Paulson (Chuck) and Beth Johnstone (Wayne); brother-in-law, Tom Jorissen, and nine sisters-in-law, two brothers-in-law, and many nieces and nephews. Born in Minneapolis, Leo was an outgoing, fun-loving, selfless, compassionate man who loved

people and life and never acted his age or stopped moving. He had a wonderful sense of humor, loved talking to people whether he knew them or not, loved motorcycling, jet-skiing, and loved when his children and grandchildren went along for the ride. Most of all he cherished and loved his family. He couldn't wait for the next sunny vacation destination with his wife and trips with his kids and granddaughter and was excited about his new grandson. His caring nature and deep faith kept him busy with daily calls to family and friends in need of support and countless hours ministering to inmates at area correctional facilities. He was always ready with encouraging words, prayers and comfort. Leo was proud of his many years as a letter carrier with the US Postal Service and loved getting to know the people on his routes. He was unforgettable to those who met him. Leo left this world with an unwavering faith in God. Even though we weren't ready to see him go, he was ready to be called to heaven when the time came. He lived what he preached. It is a deep loss to his family, friends, co-workers and those he touched.

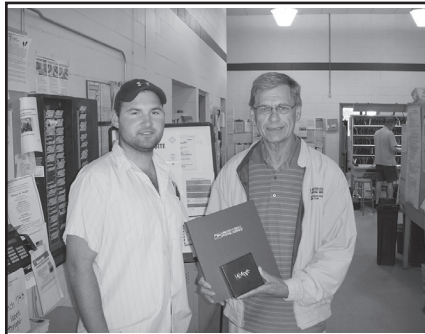
Why I Belong



Steve Petersen
(retired, Brooklyn Center)

In October 1985 I joined Branch 9 on my first day of work. It was one of the best decisions I made during my postal career. Now that I have retired, I have donated my uniforms to the Branch and pay my retirees' dues through my annuity. I will also continue to contribute to COLCPE and PAL9 throughout my retirement. Why? Because the union has always been there for me and my fellow brothers and sisters. Who else would negotiate for better pay and benefits? Who would lobby Congress to protect our jobs? Management? Yeah right. We, as a collective group of interested persons, are the union and we join together for the joint protection of each other, our financial security

Continued on page 13



Joe Tieman (Steward) congratulates Bill Stegora (Lowry) on his retirement.



Br 9 President, Mike Zagaros congratulates Jim Hendrickson (Brooklyn Park) on his retirement.



Tom Taykalo (I) (Steward) congratulates John Wagner (Zone 4/54) on his retirement.



John Smith (Diamond Lake) receives best wishes on his retirement from Br 9 Executive Vice President, Darrell Maus.



Doug Zahn (Diamond Lake) receives his gold watch and best wishes on his retirement from Darrell Maus.



Joe Bedor (Thomas Burnett) makes his final clock ring as Jim Wilson (Steward) watches.

In Memoriam

Leo Brandt (Active)
Galen Christianson
Rick Evans
Herbert Franzen
Dennis Jaeger

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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

From its first issue in 1923, Time Magazine has always had a section called "Milestones." I remember that it was the first and sometimes the only section I looked at when my parents' subscription came in the mail. It listed events that had happened during the previous week that the editors felt were newsworthy. I don't intend to compare what I put in the President's Reports to Time Magazine. But there have been certain events that have happened these past two months that would constitute a milestone - An important event, as in a person's career, the history of a nation, or the advancement of knowledge in a field; a turning point (American Heritage Dictionary).

Resolved

Simultaneous Scheduling grievances otherwise known as "operational window" cases or the "WOO". How the remedy (called for in the Pre-Arbitration settlement) will be distributed has been determined and the names and amounts have been forwarded for payment and should be paid by the time you receive this issue of the Branch 9 News. In addition, the evidence indicates that management is now complying with the language of the settlement. The issue of the violations that occurred after April 26th, continue to be pursued through the grievance/arbitration process.

In Memoriam – Leo M. Brandt

On Tuesday, June 18th, a tragic accident occurred at the Brooklyn Center Branch and Brother Leo Brandt was killed as he was arriving at work. Leo was a truly unique individual; he always had an upbeat attitude and could be

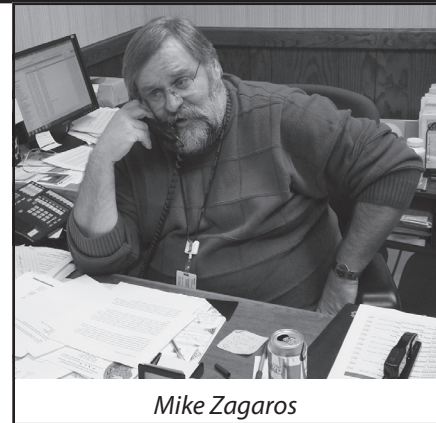
counted on to go out of his way to try and raise your spirits in times of difficulty. Leo leaves behind that which he was most proud of; his family: his loving wife Loreese; his children Crissy, Cory, Ciara and Cayla and his grandchildren Nataliah and Avery. He also leaves behind a host of friends and co-workers. If you spent anytime at Brooklyn Center, be it a week or years, you knew Leo. He will truly be missed.

Leo is the third letter carrier who has died on the job in the last 50 years joining Brothers J. Wesley Wood and Louis Nordahl. His name has been submitted to be added to the plaque on display at NALC Headquarters that bears the names of those men and women who have been killed while delivering mail. The Branch has also set up a memorial fund for Leo's family in his name. Donations may be made payable to:

Leo Brandt Memorial Fund
c/o US Federal Credit Union
1400 Riverwood Drive
Burnsville, MN 55337

Please note the funds donated are **NOT** tax deductible.

Congressional Action - The House Oversight and Government Reform Committee The committee has a hearing scheduled this week about postal reform. Prior to this hearing, two discussion drafts of legislation have been released for input. One is from the Committee Chairman Darrell Issa (R-CA) and the other by Ranking Member Elijah Cummings (D-MD). The national website www.nalc.org has a response from President Rolando to both drafts. The responses outline both the positives and the



Mike Zagaros

negatives of both drafts. Chairman Issa has tentatively scheduled the marking up of his bill for July 24th. (Marking up a bill is where the specific language of a bill can be altered or amended in committee. This happens before a bill is sent up and acted on at the next level.) We need to be aware of what is happening with this legislation as it relates to topics such as Saturday delivery, door to door delivery, the pre-funding of future retirees health benefits requirement, the pension surpluses and the terms of our collective bargaining agreement to name a few. The Congressional August recess is scheduled to begin on Saturday, August 3rd through September 9th. This is another opportunity to contact your Representative or Senator while they are home and let them hear about the impact of these proposals.

Congressional Action - The House Appropriations Committee

This committee is meeting this week to markup the Financial Services Bill. This is the bill that contains the language about six day delivery:

"The Committee includes language specifying that 6-day delivery and rural delivery of mail shall continue at not less than the 1983 level."

*Presidents article
 continued on page 7*

From My Perspective as a TE

By: John Chudy, Affton, Branch 343
Credits: Mound City Carrier
March 2013

A SIX-BUCK CUT? THINK ABOUT IT

As you all know by now, the recently approved contract has designated a new postal position, namely the city carrier assistant, for which most transitional employees are applying and being accepted. This conversion involves a significant drop in hourly pay, and many TEs are crying foul and accusing the union of unfaithful representation. I, for one, don't see things that way, and would like to address my fellow TEs on this issue. The first thing to keep in mind, of course, is that this is not a union decision—nor is it a managerial decision. It is a decision brought about through the process of binding arbitration and was made by a separate third party.

It is unfair to accuse the union of misrepresentation when they have presented their best case before postal management and the arbitrator for securing more benefits and a career path for TEs. The immediate, and most tangible, of these benefits is that, after a year of service, TEs are now eligible for health insurance. Prior service does apply, so most TEs will be immediately qualified. I find this inclusion remarkable because I am probably the oldest TE on the planet (and age does bring its own unique health concerns), but TEs of all ages should appreciate this. You can't be too cavalier about the lack of health insurance, yet most of us have been playing

roulette with it for years. A simple visit to the emergency room for something as simple as, say, a broken leg (of which we are at high risk), can easily run from \$8,500 to \$10,000.

Not many of us have that much cash immediately available. A few have found affordable individual policies, but those come with an extremely high deductible, usually around the same amount of \$10,000. That could help you out ... once.

So what does an individual insurance policy comparable to the one we are gaining run? As usual, it varies with everyone, depending on factors such as age, weight, height, smoking status, medical history, etc. Currently your weekly rate is roughly \$138. Dividing that by 40 gives you an hourly rate of \$3.45. This coverage of our insurance cost is a tangible hourly gain in pay. So, we've only taken a cut in pay of \$2.55 an hour. Think about it.

So, let's see, has our union attained any other benefits for us which might make up for that \$2.50? Yes, they have, and I find two especially noteworthy.

The first benefit that the union has gained for CCA positions is that, although CCAs will be furloughed for five days each year, it is mandatory that they be rehired. Think about this; it has a very major consequence: no more can management hold the we-don't-have-to-rehire-you gun to your head. This stipulation in a TE's job definition has been abused by management since its inception, and has led to practices so harsh that any other occupation would find them unacceptable. How much is your

human dignity worth per hour to you?

I remember developing flu-like symptoms a couple years ago and deciding to call in. My manager took the call, and told me that if I insisted on taking off sick, it would severely damage my career. Thus threatened with my job, I came in to work, worsening my condition and no doubt spreading the flu to others. I was later told by the same manager that "my TEs aren't allowed to get sick."

How many times has that happened to you ... that you were bullied by management into coming into work while ill to avoid *damaging your career*?

Aren't you getting a little tired of it? Aren't you getting tired of coming into work, being given eight hours on the street, told to complete it in six, then rushing to do so with total disregard for your own safety, to avoid *damaging your career*?

Aren't you getting tired of skipping your lunch breaks and restroom breaks? Don't you get tired of not being able to speak up for yourself when a 204B is goose-stepping around the workroom floor, declaring "TEs ain't got no rights," to avoid *damaging your career*?

Aren't you getting tired of enduring some of the most humiliating, condescending, frustrating behavior on the part of management to avoid *damaging your career*?

Well, you may very well not be tired of it. But, I most certainly am. And no doubt so has every other TE who has been

Continued on page 10

Executive Vice President's Report

CARRIER PERFORMANCE AGAINST COMPUTER NUMBERS- WHO WINS?

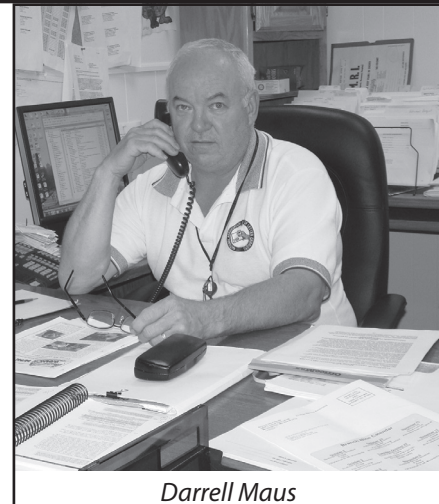
Carrying mail, whether on foot or curb side delivery, is honest, hard work and we do it day in and day out! we are out there daily in good weather or bad, new rules and policies, forced overtime, and unfounded expectations. Carriers EARN their paycheck! Our work load is not very predictable or consistent, and occurs mostly outdoors, in weather conditions often cursed by inside workers. Knowing these truths, why, oh why, would we allow ourselves and our work ethic be defined by some troubled supervisor and/or manager? Where the only vision they see about a days workload has come off a computer screen and it is the absolute and only guide they use.

It seems as of late, some management personnel have developed a very poor habit. It apparently begins when a carrier fails to meet the "expectations" that DOIS has generated. The carrier will not receive any consideration by the supervisor on what their judgment of workload is for the day. Then when the carriers input turns out to be the reality for the day, the carrier is then called into the manager's office, where a supervisor or manager bombards them with several of their subjective observations. "Why is it taking you so long out there?" "You're not giving us an honest effort!" "If your times don't improve, I'll have to discipline you!" "What's happened to you? You use to be such a good carrier." Or worse yet these shouting matches taking place on the workroom

floor. These meetings vary with regards to specifics (or lack of), and are sometimes layered with inconsistent messages that are void of any of your personally witnessed "deficient activities." Almost all of the carriers that have gone through this leave the meeting feeling less of a person than when they walked in or while working at their case. For whatever reason, some carriers allow this perception of their work ethic and performance to own them. Despite their own reality of self worth and character, they take on this cloud of guilt and shame. It's impossible to make people be nice, let alone professional or genial with this type of managerial style. Eleanor Roosevelt once said, "Nobody can make you feel inferior without your permission".

Unfortunately, as a result of these meetings, carriers are left feeling dejected, devalued, and angry. They have informed management what the days workload consists of and when that estimate turns out to be accurate and not according to DOIS numbers they are scorned. Never mind the fact that you are not on the Overtime Desired List, never mind that you have a family gathering you must attend, never mind that it's your day off, management needs you to work and be done by a certain time and that is the only rule they feel they have to follow.

Regular carriers in our stations that have been on their routes with the Postal Service for years are also being subjected to this style of management. But to make matters worse our office is starting to get reports that this type of behavior is happening to our CCA's even when they are going



Darrell Maus

through training at the stations. "You're not going to make it", "You won't last two weeks", "Everyone else can do those deliveries in 2 hours". Often the decision to retain a new CCA is decided before all the requirements of the training procedures are completed by management. There are managers that feel CCA's are "throw away employees" and have the mentality that there is a revolving door and just move on to the next new CCA and keep repeating the cycle. The Postal Service has invested \$6500 in these employees before they even show up at the stations they are assigned to. They are the future of the Postal Service. Proper training and working with the JIT's and helping these new carriers through the first few weeks is the only way to insure these future career carriers will fill the Postal Services staffing needs down the road.

This whole negative perception is based on formulas in DOIS that may be a semi accurate tool for management to use (if accurate data is input). The real problem is when inaccurate data is put into the system that contaminates it and makes it a flawed system. The assumption that you are a machine, able to replicate exact

Exec. VP article continued on page 8

NALC Food Drive 2013



Branch 9 President, Mike Zagaros let the sign do the talking at Target Field.



Jay Hoffman (Columbia Heights)



Tammy Madsen (Coon Rapids)



Coon Rapids volunteers. Patty Jensen, Steve Nortrom, Julie Roberts, Daniel O'Neill, Lisa O'Neill, Doug Waldhoff, Mike Darling, Shawn Darling



Samantha Hartwig (Eastside) and Amanda Greer (Lake Street) publisize the Food Drive at Target Field.



Curt Blackwell (Coon Rapids)



Richfield's David Wong (retired), Shane Larson, Susan Becker, Mike Smith.



Karen Torell (Coon Rapids)



NALC Food Drive 2013



Jim Murray (Coon Rapids)



Gail Eliason (Fridley)



Maggie Savaloja (Coon Rapids)



Laura Burns with her son Luther, and his friend



Lisa O'Neill (Coon Rapids) with her son Daniel



2nd Harvest Heartland volunteers

Presidents article *continued from page 3*

If you haven't signed up to be an eActivist or a contributor to COLCPE the question is why? The issues being discussed in these two committees in the House as well as those in the Senate address the very core of the Postal Service and therefore the livelihoods of all employees and are the definition of the "milestone" or turning point for the USPS and the NALC.

Special City Carrier Assistant (CCA) Meeting Notice

There have been a number of calls from our CCAs wanting more information about their rights and benefits under the contract. That is why we are scheduling a special meeting designed for and to discuss all things related to CCAs. It will be held on Wednesday evening August 21 at 7:00 p.m. The meeting will take place at the Golden Valley VFW, located at 7775 Medicine Lake Road in Golden Valley. Please contact the Branch Office if you plan on attending this meeting so we can have some idea as to the number of people. If you have specific issues to discuss let us know.

Branch 9 Safety Committee

A new committee has been formed to help set the safety agenda for the Branch. The committee members come from the each MCSO areas (North, Central and South Stations) as well as a representative from the Associate Offices. The committee will be chaired by our Safety Representative Barb Watzcak of Brooklyn Park, John Marzлак from Coon Rapids, Ron Ploog from Lake Street, Susan Becker from Richfield and Deb Grunnes from Osseo representing the Associate Offices. The committee will meet monthly

Continued on page 10

Congressional District #2 Update



*Connie Beissel (Burnsville),
2nd CD Political Organizer*

Everyone knows that Congress has the ability to make or break the financial stability of our employer. We have been trying to convince our legislatures to sign on to key legislative bills for quite some time. Some are happy to oblige and some seem to ignore our requests.

This year your State Association of Letter Carriers made an important decision on how to help protect the future of the Postal Service. We decided to join forces with the other states in the country and send our Congressional District Liaisons to Washington D.C. for a lobbying trip at the request of your National President Fred Rolando. When there is upwards of 8 CDLs walking into the federal offices of a Minnesota Representative as a group it fills up their office and makes quite an impression. It shows them we have power and we mean business. Even our friendliest representatives might not have met with us if it was not for the sheer number of us in attendance.

All of our days in DC were busy from sun up to sun down. We had a large agenda to accomplish in a short amount of time. On Monday we had training at the NALC office building on what we should do during the office visits. We then strategized how to maximize our goals for the next few days.

Tuesday was spent visiting the offices of our Congressmen. While there are 3 different buildings that house the congressional offices it became apparent that it would be best to divide and conquer. We then met with Senator Al Franken in the afternoon. Wednesday we attended a congressional breakfast before our continued lobby visits. We then sat in on a hearing on long term unemployment chaired by Senator Amy Klobuchar. In the afternoon we met with Senator Klobuchar in her office. That evening was spent at a fundraiser for Representative Rick Nolan. Thursday morning we attended a fundraising breakfast for Senator Franken at the AFL-CIO Headquarters in Washington, D.C. before packing up to come home.

We hadn't sent this many carriers out to Washington, D.C. to lobby in many years. We worked hard out there, attended training classes, special events and lobbied every day. We were very well received and in my opinion made a difference. The lobby trip to was very well organized by State President Lisa O'Neill. Through her leadership skills we stayed focused and accomplished our goals.

*Exec. VP article
continued from page 5*

time performances even after management has just arbitrarily deducted time from your street time through inspections that they feel should not be built into your route. This value establishes a phantom route value that they hope and feel you will be able to accomplish, regardless of the countless variables in your day. Management will say "well we just had formal inspections and we adjusted your route to your time of 8 hours", RIGHT!! That's after they took away all the allied time like personal needs, gassing vehicles, customer contact, unnecessary motions and several other thought up reasons. Thus confirming that DOIS may become a flawed and meaningless formula. Every time I witness a supervisor doing their morning go around it reminds me of the Family Feud show where the host constantly says "and the computer says". After all the computer numbers are all that matters right. Who wins? No one. Maybe it's time to adjust DOIS to the routes as opposed to adjusting the routes to DOIS projections.

Results of the ByLaw submissions voted on at the May 28th General Membership Meeting

By-Law Proposal #1: Article II, Section B. Passed

By-Law Proposal #2: Article III, Section 3. Failed

By-Law Proposal #3: Article III, Section 4. Withdrawn

By-Law Proposal #4: Article V, Section 2. Passed

All Passed By-Law proposals were by a 2/3 majority vote.
Failed By-Law proposal lacked 2/3 majority vote.



Lisa O'Neill
President, Minnesota State Association

The Minnesota State Association of Letter Carriers (MSALC) has been busy representing you. 2013 is proving to be a demanding year for letter carriers and for all organized labor to be sure! The Executive Board met in February to discuss state business. The current situation of letter carriers was at the top of the list. If you recall, back in February, letter carriers were facing an all-out attack on 6-day delivery by the PMG and a congress that was in gridlock. NALC headquarters sent out multiple messages to all members "Call your legislators!" HQ also decided that a nationwide rally day would draw attention to the attacks on the Postal Service. But let's be totally honest here, this attack or really multiple attacks on the USPS are directed at organized labor and on a successful "government provided" service! Given our work experience, each of us knows that a profit could be made in the urban areas of postal delivery. Due to costs and USPS efficiency to the rural areas, both UPS and FedEx

currently contract the majority of their rural delivery with the Postal Service. One could then assume that the folks who want to privatize the USPS don't really care about the needs of rural America when it comes to interstate commerce or communication. March 24th was chosen to be the rally day. In Minnesota, Minneapolis and Duluth were picked to be the rally sites. As you can see by the pictures in this newsletter, folks showed their support on a cold windy day. I want to thank Scott Dulas and Duluth Branch 114 for organizing Duluth's rally. They had to deal with snow as well but that didn't stop letter carriers from getting our message out to the public! I want to acknowledge some of the people who worked on the Minneapolis rally. Retiree and CDL-MN 01 Harold Weed organized buses to bring folks into Minneapolis as did St Paul Branch 28 President Dan Garhofer. Rochester Branch 440 President Dave Evanson and St Cloud Branch 388 President Eric Hagburg organized carloads of carriers to come to Minneapolis. Minneapolis Branch 9 President Mike Zagaros was pivotal in getting Governor Mark Dayton to speak at the Minneapolis rally. My heartfelt thanks go to each of these individuals! I did not name all the people or other Unions who volunteered their time and efforts for the rallies but their

State Association News

work made the events successful, THANK YOU! And finally, THANK YOU TO EVERY LETTER CARRIER THAT SHOWED UP TO SUPPORT YOUR JOB! The message was loud and clear and got through to legislators and the public. If another rally is held in the future, I hope to see more letter carriers attend and show their support.

The board held its second quarter meeting on May 19th. This meeting was to begin preparations for the next state convention taking place October 6th thru the 9th, 2013. As in the past couple of years, it will be held at Ruttger's Bay Lake Lodge and Resort in Deerwood, MN. Politics is the focus of the state association and educating our members on the need for their participation in the political arena is a continuing effort. There will be much to discuss regarding the postal world we work in and an abundance of information to present. Please try to attend; your union needs you! I want to close by emphasizing the "YOU" in union. The Union needs "YOU"! The more "YOU's" participating in the Union, the more "THEY" will begin to notice, then listen and finally act. Who are the "THEY" you ask? "THEY" are the politicians or the non-dues paying letter carriers or even postal management to name a few. Unions epitomize grassroots ac-

Continued on page 13

**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

TE article continued from page 4

employed here for over a month. I'm tired of management having this unfair trump card over my employment, and it's well worth a drop in pay to have it removed from their hand. What's it worth per hour to you? Fifty cents? One dollar? This security has been obtained for me through the hard work and efforts of the NALC, and most certainly NOT from any concern on the part of management for my welfare. Think about it.

And while you're thinking, it might be good for you to realize the most important point of all: all this effort you have put forth to avoid *damaging your career* has been in vain, *because you didn't have a career with the post office!* You were simply a contract employee, hired on an annual basis, with minimal rights, and with no guarantee of becoming a full-time regular employee. That is NOT the definition of a career. According to The American Century Dictionary, a career is "one's occupational progress through life." At any point in your employment as a TE have you felt that you were making progress? I haven't. I've simply been waiting. And waiting. Now we have a contract that gives us a path towards career employment with the post office. And again, we have acquired this benefit NOT through the benevolence of management, but through the bargaining efforts of the NALC, *all on our behalf!*

Now, as a postal employee, you can look forward to having, within time, the status of a full-time career employee. This includes all the scheduled

vacations, bidding capabilities, health insurance, retirement benefits, voluntary overtime, and a host of other advantages that a regular has over a TE. Now *surely* this has some value to you. How much? A dollar an hour? Two dollars? \$2.55 perhaps?

So, to the nay-saying, dissatisfied TEs among us who are bitter with the union and claiming that they have thrown us under the proverbial bus, I would have to strongly disagree. Where you see a six-dollar-an-hour pay cut, I see a vast advancement in the financial security of my health, a huge improvement in the manner in which I am treated by management, and a major progression towards career employment. And, given time, so should you. You should see these benefits that our union has secured for us as simply that—*beneficial*. Beneficial for you, your life, and your family. And really, what is all that worth per hour to you? Think about it.



Attending a Labor Lunch with Congressman Keith Ellison are from left to right, Lenny Larson (President Emeritus, Br 9), Darrell Maus (Executive Vice President, Br 9), and Mike Zagaros (President, Br 9).

Presidents article continued from page 7

to try and put some action behind the phrase "an injury to one is an injury to all."

Honoring Our Own

Lisa O'Neill – President of the Minnesota State Association and Branch 9 Treasurer was recognized at the 2013 DFL Women's Hall of Fame luncheon and received one of this year's "Rising Star" award.

Rena Weis – is the daughter of Branch 9 Retiree Jane Hofman-Weis (Thomas Burnett) and was named as a winner of William C. Doherty Scholarship. Each year five scholarships are awarded (one from each postal region). The scholarship is a four year scholarship awarded by the NALC National Scholarship Committee Judges based on merit (secondary school records, personal qualifications and test scores). The scholarship judges are experienced people in the educational field.

Kaitlyn Brandon – is the daughter of Mark Brandon of Shakopee is the recipient of the Jerome J Keating/Austin B Carlson scholarship.

Jake Tanner – is the son of Joe Tanner of Lowry is the recipient of the Walter E. Couillard/Eugene P. McNulty scholarship.

Frances Eichten – is the daughter of Mike Eichten of Powderhorn is the recipient of the J. Wesley Wood scholarship.

Lorene Banovetz – retired member from Lake Street Station is one of the recipients of the Leonard A. Larson/Barry J. Weiner Adult Learner Scholarships.

Continued on page 11

Auxiliary Assistance

By: Kieran Hughes, Steward
(Minnehaha)

How does a professional letter carrier respond to an overburdened route, heavy volume, understaffing, inclement weather, and the Food Drive? Easy. Request auxiliary assistance.

That is what we did on Food Drive Day at Minnehaha Station. To our grateful surprise, John O'Laughlin and Greg Wallin, two recently-retired Minnehaha carriers responded to the help request by showing up on May 11th and relieving the burden of a number of our carriers who delivered routes that generate hefty contributions of groceries for the needy.

The help request for the Food Drive actually began as a joke. After all, wouldn't the average retiree count that demanding day as one of the happy reasons to feel relieved from USPS demands? How many active carriers show up on their day off to help out with the Food Drive?

Not only did they show up, but they put in an honest day's work, shuttling collected bags from the carriers to the drop site at Cub Foods. That is a big help to walking carriers with long routes like ours on Saturdays when TCV's and parcels fill the cargo area before collecting groceries complicate the struggle to stay efficient. I can't emphasize how appreciative carriers are for that kind of lift, not to mention how good it was to greet a couple of old friends.

Speaking of retiree's stepping up, who else but Al Gulden would you expect to find pitching in to bring food to the needy? Who can

forget his yeoman work delivering truckloads of donated food to Hormel strikers in Austin back in the mid-80s? Al has staffed the Cub collection site we use for as long as it has been operative. Believe me, the efforts of that crew has relieved us of the most demanding burden the day used to present—unloading the postal vehicles and stacking the goods onto pallets. Now we merely pull into the Cub parking lot, shake a few hands, and watch his volunteer crew quickly and efficiently empty our vehicles and end our workday hours sooner than when we transferred our food to postal vehicles.

I can't say he is the boss, but the volunteers seem to like him and the job gets done. Their work reminds me of how post offices functioned years ago, when good supervisors only made themselves visible when you wanted them (which wasn't very often.) I say that because this is one day where carriers prove once again that we are fully capable of succeeding without overbearing attention. That reminds me that clerks, too, generously recognize where help can be provided and willingly step up. Charles Allen, a longtime clerk at Haha, once again answered the call without ever being asked, chipping in to make the day successful. Of course, our coordinator Ken Schack, all of the carriers, and a number of others—spouses, kids, and friends—were part of the effort as well.

To all, congratulations on your productive efforts and thanks for your contribution to a worthy cause.

Kieran.

*Presidents article continued
from page 10*

Michelle Benson – retired member from the Main Office also received one of the Leonard A. Larson/Barry J. Weiner Adult Learner Scholarships. Michelle has also been elected as the First Vice President – Membership of the Minnesota State Chapter of NARFE (National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association).

During the months of June and July, letter carriers think about vacations and trying to avoid the summer heat. This year there are a lot of milestones, some positive and some not; some filled with joy and some with sadness. But this summer has been filled with milestones: important events in our lives as individuals and as an organization. It remains to be seen if they truly are a turning point.

MBA Reminder:

The National Arbitration Award for NALC's Contract established a new class of Postal Service employees called a City Carrier Assistant (CCA). Once a CCA joins the National Association of Letter Carriers (NALC), they are eligible to apply for any of the products offered by the MBA. The plans are also available to the CCA's family members as defined in the NALC Constitution.

The MBA is in the process of updating their website. Please visit www.nalc.org, under Departments – MBA, and view the new Life Insurance Applications. In addition to applications, information about filing claims and options for life insurance policies has been updated on the website.

Steve Petersen continued from page 1
and for our employer.

Many of us have our own personal circumstances where the Branch and the membership came together to help in our time of need. Two things of importance to me were: My brother, Tom Petersen, a carrier that carried mail at Normandale and Coon Rapids died. He was survived by a spouse and three young children. His steward Pam Donato and my fellow union brothers and sisters were there to help our family with financial and moral support. When my Multiple Sclerosis evolved to the point I was not able to continue with my job, Mike Zagaros was there to guide me through disability retirement. These are benefits that when needed were invaluable and are not duplicated by management. It is a family thing, we are brothers and sisters for a reason. When I look back at my career it can be summed up in one word "undescribable." It started like this, after a year my neighbor was called for an interview to be a letter carrier. He asked me what is the post office like? I thought about it for a minute or two and said "It is undescribable." He went to the interview and was asked what he knew about the USPS and commented on my description and the person could not stop laughing and said "Yes that is correct." In my 27 plus years that was a constant. Not that the job of delivering the mail was difficult, one files the mail in order of the route and delivers the mail to the customer. Physically challenging daily, but the undescribable parts are the obstacles management puts in our way of timely and efficiently doing the work. I worked for some good supervisors over the years, but they were persis-

tently drowned out by the outright incompetent management. The single worst part is bad management which has no consequences. In fact, many times they are rewarded with promotions. The further removed from customers, the worse management seemed to get.

If I had a magic wand to fix the USPS I would remove the District offices around the country, cost would go down, efficiency would go up and so would the morale. That brings me to my last point, six day delivery. I know how enticing it sounds to have a normal work week. However, consider the costs. This is proposed because they want to eliminate about one fifth of the workforce, so how many of your coworkers are you willing to sacrifice to get a reduced work week? Who knows how management would implement the program. Just think about all the other great ideas upper management has had. Right, they were implemented how?

Undescribable!!

*State President report
continued from page 9*

tion. The national rally day and the lobby trip to D.C. both exemplify the importance of participation. Numbers matter and help make the difference when trying to get our point across to a legislator or to the public. During the week of April 22nd, politicians took note of the NALC ("US") - letter carriers! Why? Because we showed up in numbers. Because we took the time to explain our position. Because we vote. Because we participate! Now I understand not everyone had the opportunity to go to Washington but you can still participate and show the "THEY'S" the power of the numbers! "YOU" can contact your legislator. "YOU" can ask a non-member to join our Union. "YOU" can stand up to mistreatment on the workroom floor. "YOU" can contribute to COLCPE. "YOU" can sign up for E-Activist. These are some of the ways to participate. The Union needs "YOU", now more than ever.

Cross River Battle

Branch 9, Minneapolis vs. Branch 28, Saint Paul



The Branch 9 hockey team fell to Branch 28's hockey team by the close score of 11 - 8. Exhausting forced overtime for Branch 9 carriers due to the "WOO", could have been a contributing factor for their loss.

"Fish On"

A phrase repeated often during the four hours of fishing on Lake Mille Lacs. Sunday, June 23rd didn't start out too well, with spotty rain showers and windy conditions. This didn't stop 16 Branch 9 members from launching out of the Twin Pines Resort for some mid-morning fishing. The resorts launch supplies fishing rods and bait. The crew sets each line to the proper depth, baits hooks, and nets all fish. The rain let up, and with a good "walleye chop", 39 walleyes were landed in just under four hours of fishing. Most fish were within the slot limit, but eight were keeper sized. John Frick (retiree, Brklyn Center) caught the largest walleye at 29 inches, and another at 26 inches. After docking, we were treated to a broasted chicken dinner with all the fix-ins in the Twin Pines dining room. Thanks to Ken Jambois for arranging the trip, and thanks to Linda at Twin Pines for being the perfect hostess.



BRANCH 9 2013 SCHOLARSHIP DRAWINGS

JEROME J. KEATING/AUSTIN B CARLSON - \$2,000.00

Winner: Kaitlyn Brandon Father Mark Brandon Shakopee MSU - Moorhead

1st Runner-Up: Hayley Kilbride-Pierce Father David Pierce Richfield Hamlin University

2nd Runner-Up: Danielle Peterson Father Ron Peterson Brooklyn Center Winona State

WALTER E. COULLARD/EUGENE P. McNULTY - \$2,000.00

Winner: Jake Tanner Father Joe Tanner Lowry Presentation College

1st Runner-Up: Kassi Green Mother Kathy Green Brooklyn Center UMC

2nd Runner-Up: Leah Tillman Father David Tillman Elmwood UW - River Falls

J. WESLEY WOODS - \$1,000.00

Winner: Frances Eichten Father Mike Eichten Powderhorn Rockhurst University

1st Runner-Up: Kela Green Mother Kathy Green Brooklyn Center UMC

2nd Runner-Up: Kassi Green Mother Kathy Green Brooklyn Center UMC

LEONARD A. LARSON/BARRY J. WEINER - ADULT SCHOLARSHIP - \$1,000.00

1st Winner: Lorene Banovetz Retired

2nd Winner: Michelle Benson Retired

The following is a list of Paid Members of PAL 9 for May/June, 2013

Very Concerned Members

Eugene R Keyes
Howard Lamson
Gene McNulty
Lisa O'Neill

Regular Members

W.T. Billy Writenour
Daniel Magnuson
Scott R Bussman
Michael J Spurbeck
Gay Rene Woodgate

Gregg W Holmes
Martin Cornell

Ron Lawrence
Treasurer Pal 9



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

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If fixable we will repair your uniform at no cost to you.

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Join Branch 9 for
*“The Great Minnesota
Get-Together”*

August 22 - September 2

2 shifts available:

9:00AM - 1:00PM

1:00 - 5:00PM

**See your steward to sign-up
or call the Branch Office.**



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Have a good caption for this cartoon? Branch 9 members and/or retirees can submit their caption to the Editor at branch9news@branch9nalc.com. The Editor will donate \$5 in MDA tickets at the next General Membership Meeting in the winners name.

Branch Nine Calendar

August 6

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

August 27

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

September 10

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

August 13

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

Tuesday, August 27

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

September 24

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

August 13

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

September 3

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

Tuesday, September 24

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

August 22-September 2

Minnesota State Fair

September 10

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