



VOLUME 68 No 7 **Official Publication of Branch Nine, NALC** **September 2016**

NALC 70th Biennial Convention through the Eyes of a First Time Attendee

By Andrew Olufson, Carrier, St. Louis Park

I was extremely honored to attend my very first NALC Biennial Convention last month in Los Angeles, California. This convention was memorable not only for me, but for our entire union because the last time Los Angeles hosted a convention was 1941.

Walking into those convention halls gave me a sense of belonging to one big and extended family. Sisters and brothers from all backgrounds and from all reaches of the country were coming together for the benefit of all letter carriers. Feeling this connection rang deep within me because I remember starting as a CCA in September of 2014 and feeling

the overwhelming nature of the job. All CCAs have probably felt isolated at some point, as I know I have. The remedy for this is to reach out to your brothers and sisters, shop stewards, and to attend General Membership Meetings. I started attending meetings from the beginning and the support and information you receive is unrivaled. I have found that the most important tool as a carrier is to be informed. When I attended the national convention, the memories of the support I have received from Branch 9 came rushing back.

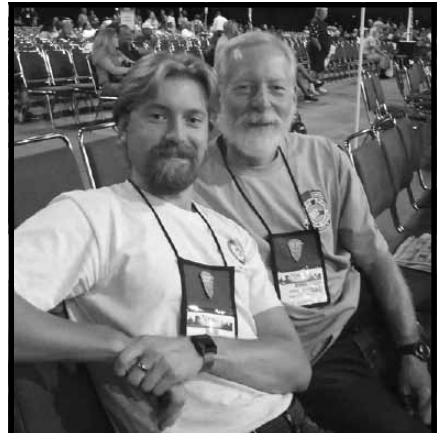
The National Convention was thoroughly empowering. I was most impressed with the various

guest speakers and the workshops that I attended. The five-part NALC video series about the city carrier craft was also quite inspiring. Every new CCA academy class should be shown this video. It showed just how intertwined we are with the necessary functions of our country and how we deliver so much more than just the mail.

I left the convention with a new and positive outlook about my job and about the union that I proudly belong to. I encourage everyone to attend future conventions. They have truly opened my eyes to all the good we do each and every day. I will see you in Detroit in 2018!



Pictured Delegates (Front row from left to right): Connie Beissel, Angelina Brown, Jim Hendrickson, Renee Hickerson, Melia Derrick, Pam Donato, Lenny Larson, Paul Woida (Back row from left to right) Gary Ruhl, Vince Froehlich, Troy Fredenburg, Andy Olufson, Mark Olufson, Joe Rian, Mike Zagaros, Darrell Maus, Ken Jambois, Stacey Ellingson, Jim Nelson, Barry Weiner and Rodney Anderson



Andrew Olufson with his dad Mark (St. Louis Park) during the 2016 Nat'l Convention

RETIREMENTS



Dan Loppnow (Anoka) takes his last punch with Alt Steward Greg Rygg.



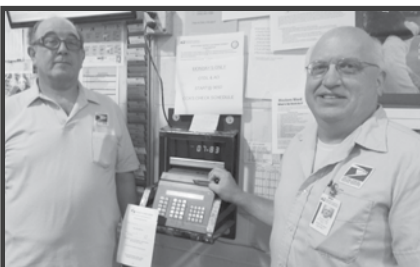
Doug Westburg (Coon Rapids) takes his last punch with Stewards Michelle Guzman, Lisa O'Neill and James Spencer.



James Green (Coon Rapids) last day with Stewards Lisa O'Neill, James Spencer and Michelle Guzman.



Kathy Fitzhenry (BC) takes her last punch with Steward Ken Jambois.



Dale Fenner (BP) takes his last punch with Steward Vince Froehlich.

Welcome New Members

Jayvon Alexander
Aaron Carlson
Terry Cross
Stacy Davis
Pierre Dozier, Sr.
Kurk Eggleston
Weston Fenner
Tammy Herrmann
Melissa Kittok
Andrew Long
Kelly Rogers
Wesley Skogman
Cameron Slick
Chanelle Walker
John Woodin

In Memoriam

Thomas Bennett

VOTE EARLY BY MAIL

To vote by mail, apply to have an absentee ballot mailed to you. You do not need to be registered to apply.

Apply online
www.mnvotes.org

The online application is for federal, state and county elections only.

To complete this application online you must:

- *Be eligible to register and vote in Minnesota
- *Provide an email address
- *Provide an ID
 - MN-issued driver's license,
 - Minnesota ID card or
 - the last 4 digits of your Social Security #

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The Branch Nine News is a monthly publication of NALC Branch 9, and is published in the interest of and for the members of NALC Branch 9.

The opinions expressed by the writers are not necessarily those of the OFFICERS, or of NALC Branch 9.

Articles MUST be submitted to the editor by the 1st of the month, and must be signed. The Editorial Staff reserves the right to edit or refuse to print articles which are derogatory in nature.

Any official NALC organization may reproduce our articles provided appropriate credit is given.

Director of Retirees

Staying Tuned In

I have been advised of an alarming trend amongst a few of our new retirees, that when they are given the chance to join the NALC and Branch 9 in retirement, they are declining to do so. Please allow me to advise you that this is a serious mistake.

I understand the frustration of so many. Being a letter carrier is a tough job, getting worse, and mis-Management doesn't do anything to alleviate our burden. Quite the contrary. **So I have had retiring carriers angrily tell me that they want nothing to do with anything postal once they are separated from the Postal Service.** One even told me he never intends to go to his mailbox to get his mail ever again!

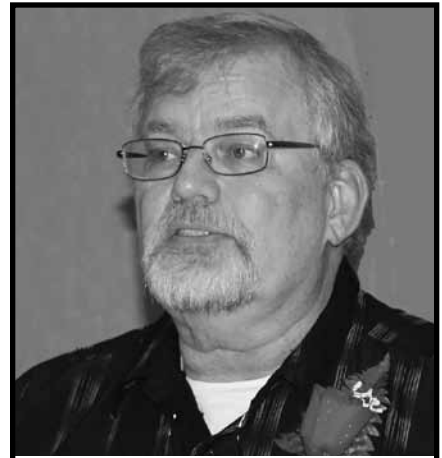
But the benefits of remaining a member of the NALC and Branch 9 far outweigh the liabilities. How many of you know, for example, that the monthly dues are not even \$5 per month? **You will spend less on membership as a retiree in a year, than you now spend in 2 months.**

And what do you get for this pittance? Plenty. The Branch is always available to you in the event of any

problems or issues. Just call me or the Branch office, just like you did when active. You are welcomed every month to our Retiree Breakfasts to reconnect with people you worked with. Once per year, the first Sunday in May, we have a Retiree Banquet where we honor all our retirees. You send a check into register; but when you show up, you get the check back, so it's essentially a free banquet. Besides (again) the chance to reconnect with all those whose memories you share from your career.

In most unions, retirees may have informal groups linked to their past careers, but they are technically no longer members of that union. That's not true in the NALC. **You are still a member, and invited to fully participate in all events, elections, debates, and volunteer opportunities like the Food Drive or MDA events, the same as if you were still an active carrier.**

In return, the union still takes care of you on many fronts. Much of the NALC lobbying efforts before Congress directly impact retirees. **As you know, our pensions and benefits are never safe from the rapacious hand of a hostile Congress.** But the NALC is one of



Rodney Anderson

the primary lobbying groups to protect our retirements.

How many of you are aware that NALC retirees have an (almost) secret life insurance policy, through the Mutual Benefit Association? In the event of accidental death, you have a free \$5,000 policy that few people know about, and is only available to NALC members.


And never forget that those of you who have the excellent NALC Health Benefit Plan **MUST** be members. I grieve that occasionally some retiree will decide to save the less than \$50 per year by dropping out, and suddenly find themselves kicked out of the NALC HBP, and thereby also the Federal Health Benefit Program altogether. It's an extremely brutal lesson in paying attention.

Brothers and sisters, when you retire from the Big Blue Lunatic Asylum, both Branch 9 and the National NALC office will mail you a form 1189, to deduct your NALC dues. Fill it out and return to Branch 9. That's all you need do to maintain your membership.

Retirement is a wonderful time of your life, something we all look forward to. Just be sure you continue your NALC membership to derive even more of its many benefits.

CRIBBAGE TOURNAMENT
Wednesday, October 12, 2016
10:00AM
PLACE:
 NALC Branch 28
 1715 Van Dyke Street
 Maplewood, MN
 651.771.0533
\$3.00 Entry Fee




01	Effective Date	Notification of Personnel Action	02	Social Security Number
				

EMPLOYEE INFORMATION

03	Employee Name - Last		38	Probation Expire Date	
04	Employee Name - First		39	FLSA Status	
05	Employee Name - Middle		40	Pay Location	
06	Mailing Address Street/Box/ Apt		41	Rural Carrier - Route	
			42	Rural Carrier - L - Route ID	
07	Mailing Address - City		43	Rural Carrier - Pay Type	
08	Mailing Address - State		45	Rural Carrier - FLSA	
09	Mailing Address - Zip +4		46	Rural Carrier - Commit	
10	Date of Birth		47	Rural Carrier - EMA	
11	Veteran's Preference		48	Rural Carrier - Hours	
12	Sex		49	Rural Carrier - Miles	
13	Ethnicity - Race		50	Job Sequence	
14	Disability		51	Occupation Code	
15	Leave Comp Date		52	Position Title	
16	Enter on Duty Date		53	Labor Dist Code	
17	Retirement Comp Date		54	Designation/Activity	
18	Service Anniversary - PPYR		55	Position Type	
19	TSP Eligibility		56	Limit Hours	
20	TSP Service Comp Date		57	Allowance Code	
21	Prior CSRS Service		58	Employment Type	

SALARY INFORMATION

22	Frozen CSRS Time				
23	Leave Data Category		59	Pay Rate Code	
24	Leave Data - Chg PPYR		60	Rate Schedule Code	
25	Leave Data - Type		61	Grade/Step	
26	Credit Military Service		62	Base Salary	
27	Reserve for Future Use		63	COLA	
28	Retirement Plan		64	COLA Roll-In Ind	
29	Employee Status		65	Next Step PPYR	
30	Life Insurance		66	Merit Anniversary Date	
31	Special Benefits		67	Merit Lump Sum	

POSITION INFORMATION

32	Employ Office - Finance No.		68	Special Salary Code	
33	Employ Office - Name		69	Protected RSC	
34	Employ Office - Address		70	Protected Grade/Step	
			71	Expiration PPYR	
			72	Protection RC Hours	
35	Duty Station - Finance No.		73	Protected RC Miles	
36	Duty Station - Name		74	RC Guaranteed Salary	
37	Appt. Expiration Dale		75	Annuity Amount	

NATURE OF PERSONNEL ACTION

77	Nature of Action Code		78	Authority	39-USC Sect 1001
79	Description				
80	Code	81	Code	82	Code
83	Code	84	Code	85	Code
86	Remarks				

85	Authorization MANAGER HUMAN RESOURCES SHARED SERVICE CENTER		86	Processed Date	
			87	Personnel Office ID	
			88	OPF Location	

Executive Vice President's Report

FORM 50 - WHAT IS IT?

The USPS has an Official Personnel Folder (OPF) on employees that contains documents concerning your appointment, compensation, benefits, administrative and payroll records. USPS may use these records to review employee qualifications, status, eligibility, rights and benefits. They're also used to track length of service and other information USPS needs to establish your amount of benefits. Before 2008, employees had to meet with their district personnel offices to review their folders. Now, OPF documents are available online and have become "eOPFs." Employees can go to LiteBlue at any time to review their files. Each eOPF is a secure and encrypted file, available only to employees by using their employee ID number and USPS PIN. Once you are logged on you click the HR tab and in the drop down box click "access OPF" and the next screen will have an access prompt to open your file. Employees should review their eOPFs to make sure documents are up-to-date and accurate. Accurate records will make processing personnel actions such as transfers, promotions or retirements easier. This article is going to explain one of the forms that will be in your eOPF the Form 50.

The Form 50 is a notice of personnel action that has occurred in your career. It covers any action such changing from a carrier 1 position to carrier 2, step increase, contract pay increase, or change in route. The information on this form will also inform you of your benefits and other career information that I will now explain.

A copy of the Form 50 is printed on the opposite page.

Lines 1 - 10-is your personal information and this should be reviewed every time you receive it to verify or correct.

Line 11-is a veterans preference code 1-is non veteran, 2-5 point veteran, 5-10 point veteran and 3, 4, and 6 codes all deal with a veteran disability classification.

Line 14-is a self-identification disability code usually with a 05 meaning no disability.

Line 15-leave computation date is the date you became a career employee.

Line 16-is the date you entered on duty with prior time as a non-career employee.

Line 17-is the date your retirement years begin and is based on.

Line 18-is the same as 17 only it has the pay period and beginning year listed (PPYR).

Line 19-TSP (Thrift Savings Plan) eligibility will mostly list a Y meaning you're eligible with deductions or possibly one of 4 other classifications.

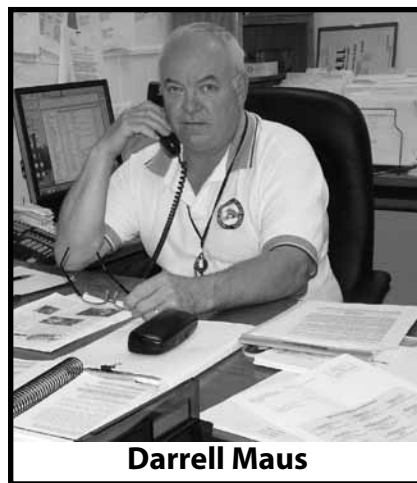
Line 20-is the computation or enrollment date TSP began.

Line 21-lists whether you had prior CSRS service time for retirement reasons.

Line 23-lists how many hours of annual leave you receive each pay period and **Line 24**-tells you in what pay period and year the earned hours will increase and **Line 25**-tells us our leave is advanced at the beginning of the year and our sick leave is earned by pay period.

Line 26-tells you in years and months of the military credit you have earned for retirement.

Line 28-lists your retirement plan.



Darrell Maus

Line 30-lists the amount of life insurance you are enrolled in and the amounts.

Lines 32 - 50-deal with station information you work at and the rural carrier craft.

Lines 51 - 55-is your occupation code, position title, label code, and designation and position code.

Line 57-tells us we have a uniform allowance.

Line 60-states we are a Q-City Letter Carrier.

Line 61 - 62-informs you of your grade and step currently at and the yearly salary.

Line 65-informs you of the pay period and year your next step increase happens.

Line 84-is the remark section that gives an explanation and reason why this form was generated and sent to you.

The remaining lines I did not explain deal with issues that usually do not affect city carriers. So as you can see this Form 50 has a lot of information on it that deals with your personal information and benefits that you currently have and will earn in the future. It is important that this information is verified and corrected if necessary to avoid problems later in your career. As always if there are any questions or concerns about your pay or benefits please contact your steward and/or the branch office.

Pronto Pups and Postal Reform

By Ashley Keul, CCA, Minnehaha

Now that our annual quota for fried finger foods has hopefully been exceeded, let's take a moment to digest the value of representing the NALC at the Great Minnesota Eat Together.

First off, it was such a sweet surprise to encounter the number of grateful customers who meandered over to the Branch 9 stand simply to say, "Thank you!" We were nestled among many little carts occupied by other locals at the Minnesota AFL-CIO Labor Pavilion. Thousands of heads bobbed by and occasionally a face would light up as they spotted us, their letter carriers. We really are the most liked employees of the federal government, and volunteering at the State Fair made that crystal clear to me. Customers frequented our stand to thank us for our hard work, and hey, it made me feel pretty darn proud to be a letter carrier. Another bonus of volunteering was the opportunity to educate. Sure, maybe it was the freebies - plastic Food Drive bags, letter openers, stamp books, and other trinkets - that initially lured folks in, but many stayed to chat. That engagement provided an opportunity to explain our dire situation for comprehensive Postal Reform legislation. To ease into the nuanced details of Reform legislation, we invited guests to our booth to sign petition cards which will be sent to their congressional representatives. It was designed as a checklist format, allowing each individual to select issues that matter most to them: restoring postal banking, maintaining door delivery, allowing letter carriers to deliver alcoholic beverages, etc. We had fact sheets available and a whole host of anecdotes from

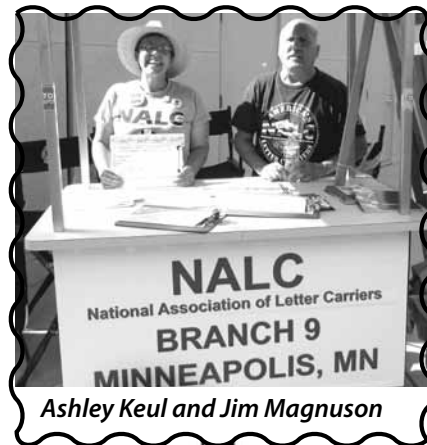
Branch 9 volunteers to help answer questions. Misinformation about the Postal Service is abundant and every opportunity we get to correct it helps connect our customers with the realities of our jobs and the critical need for comprehensive, letter carrier-friendly, Postal Reform.

Lastly, but certainly not least, volunteering at the Fair provided for some pretty rich bonding time with fellow members. As a CCA, I couldn't recommend more for other new carriers to stake out a few hours to listen to the stories of longtime carriers and to share a few too. What better time than at the Fair?! I gleaned an enormous amount of information about the history of our jobs, as well as our union, and a whole lot about the individuals, active and retired, who chose to show up to represent our union at the Fair. It provided valuable perspectives about where we've been as a union, which helps me consider the ways in which I'd like to see it grow. Plus, I got to know a few members on a more personal level, which I really appreciated.

I know there will be plenty of chances to volunteer for Branch 9 again before the next Fair, but I'm already looking forward to settling into a shift at the Labor Pavilion with a pile of cheese curds and an afternoon shared with YOU!



Darrell Maus



Ashley Keul and Jim Magnuson



Pat Rottach (Lake Street)

Branch 9 at the fair The Great Minnesota Get Together



Al Gulden (Retired) & Vince Froehlich (Brooklyn Park)



Darrell Maus & Brad Knutson (Burnsville)



Lisa O'Neill (Coon Rapids) & Nick Zagaros (Brooklyn Center)



Fair patron, Chuck Glover (Retired) Barry Weiner (Retired) & Ken Jambois (Brooklyn Center)



Mike Smith ((West Edina & Carol Garnto (Lost Lake)



Jeremy Rothstein (Normandale) & and Jim Magnuson (Retired)



Connie Beissel (Burnsville) & Dennis Ryan (Retired)



Stacey Ellingson (Anoka), Mike Zagaros & Jim Nelson (Anoka)

...on a Stick

Union Friendly Politicians on a stick!



Tim Walz (Rep. 1st CD) Dennis Ryan, Connie Beissel & Renee Hickerson



Senator Al Franken



Mike Zagaros, Angie Craig (Candidate 2nd CD) & Paul Woida



Mike Smith, Betty McCullum (Rep. 4th CD), Carol Garnto & Rodney Anderson



Keith Ellison (Rep. 5th CD), Jim Magnuson, Mike Zagaros & Paul Woida



Jim Magnuson, Dan Snyder (Candidate 6th CD) & Mike Zagaros

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651- 224 - 7567

BRANCH 9 AT THE NALC CONVENTION IN LOS ANGELES



Jason Karnopp (RAA), Ken Jambois (BC) and Troy Fredenburg (RAA)



Pam Donato and Stacey Ellingson (Anoka)



Rodney Anderson, Connie Beissel and Darrell Maus



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Renee Hickerson (Anoka), Lenny Larson (Retired), Jim Hendrickson (Retired), Mark Olufson (St. Louis Park) and Mike Zagaros



Marty Cornell (Retired), Troy Fredenburg and Lenny Larson



Mike Zagaros singing the National Anthem during the convention.



Stacey Ellingson and Ken Jambois



Vince Froehlich and Barry Weiner



Jim Nelson and Renee Hickerson

Life Insurance Open Season

(September 1 - September 30, 2016)

The Federal Employees' Group Life Insurance Program, FEGLI, is having an Open Season from September 1, 2016 through September 30, 2016. This is the first FEGLI Open Season since 2004.

During the month of September 2016, if you are a Federal employee eligible for FEGLI, you can elect any coverage that FEGLI offers, including Option C coverage on the lives of your eligible family members. Employees who are in their first 12 months of workers' compensation are also eligible but they must meet pay and duty status requirements before their coverage can come into effect.

You do not need to be currently enrolled in FEGLI to elect coverage during the Open Season. Open Season elections have no medical exam required and no health questions to answer.

Elections made during the FEGLI Open Season have a one-year delayed effective date. Coverage you elect in the September 2016 FEGLI Open Season will be effective on the first day of the first full pay period on or after October 1, 2017, as long as you meet pay and duty status requirements.

For most biweekly employees, this means your coverage will be effective on October 1, 2017. For most Postal employees, this means

your coverage will be effective on October 14, 2017.

Your new premiums will be effective when your new coverage is effective. You will not pay your new premiums during the one-year waiting period.

The FEGLI Open Season is for FEGLI-eligible employees and qualifying compensationers only. Annuitants are not eligible to make FEGLI Open Season elections. By law, annuitants are never allowed to elect or increase their FEGLI life insurance coverage, even during an Open Season. Like employees, annuitants can cancel or reduce FEGLI coverage at any time unless assigned.

SAVE THE DATE

Branch 9 Christmas Party

Sunday, December 11

1:00 to 4:00PM

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

\$5.00/person

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

***Watch for the flyer in the next issue of the paper
and in station mailings.***

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


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Stay informed by:

- *Signing up for E-activist at NALC.org
- * Branch9nalc.com (website)
- * "like" our Branch 9 Facebook Page
- * Follow us on Twitter

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



nalc.org/government-affairs/political-activity

Branch 9 Calendar

September 27
General Membership Meeting
7:00PM
Crystal VFW, Crystal, MN

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

October 2 - 5
MSALC Training

November 6
Daylight Savings Time ENDS

October 10
Columbus Day
Holiday

November 8
Election Day

October 11
Steward Meeting
7:00PM
Crystal VFW, Crystal, MN

November 8
Steward Meeting
7:00PM
Crystal VFW, Crystal, MN

October 12
Cribbage Tournament
Branch 28
1715 Van Dyke Street
Maplewood, MN 55109

November 11
Veterans Day
Holiday

November 22
General Membership Meeting
7:00PM
Crystal VFW, Crystal, MN

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

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

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

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

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