

VOLUME 73 No 5

Official Publication of Branch Nine, NALC

June/July 2021

BIPARTISAN POSTAL SERVICE REFORM ACT INTRODUCED IN SENATE

Just like the House bill, S. 1720 would repeal the mandate that the Postal Service pre-fund decades' worth of health benefits for its future retirees, which was enacted through the Postal Accountability and Enhancement Act (PAEA) of 2006, embracing the bipartisan USPS Fairness Act (H.R. 695 and S. 145). In addition, the legislation maximizes participation in Medicare once active postal employees (as of January 1, 2023) retire and reach age 65. Annuitants as of January 1, 2023 will be given the choice of whether to remain in the existing FEHBP system or participate in the postal version of the program that requires enrollment in Medicare Parts A and B – and retirees over the age of 65 who have chosen not to enroll in Medicare Part B will be given a one-time opportunity to do so with no late-enrollment penalty. Annuitants who elect to remain in the existing FEHBP will not be required to enroll in Medicare. NALC also successfully lobbied to ensure exceptions to the requirement to enroll in Medicare for those covered under other insurance arrangements (such as the VA) and for those who live in a place where there are not Medicare-participating providers.

S. 1720 also includes language that requires the Postal Service to maintain "integrated" delivery of both mail and packages six days a week. If this bill becomes law, the six-day requirement would be a statutory mandate. Since

1983, the policy mandate to deliver mail six days a week has had to be renewed annually in the appropriations process. This bill would eliminate the need for the annual fight to maintain this mandate.

In addition, the bill: requires the Postal Service to provide semi-annual reports to Congress on the implementation of its 10-year strategic plan; provides for a public dashboard using nationwide delivery metrics to track delivery performance; directs the Postal Service to use the most efficient means to transport mail, likely moving from air to ground; mandates a Postal Regulatory Commission (PRC) review of competitive and non-competitive products and a study of nationwide processing efficiency of flats (magazines and catalogs); provides the PRC with independent budget authority through the Postal Fund, preventing it from being directly impacted by sequestration/shutdowns; provides a special postage discount for newspapers; and consolidates the Postal Service's and the PRC's Inspectors General into a single office.

"Millions of Americans and Michiganders, including seniors, veterans, and small business owners, rely on the Postal Service to deliver. For decades, the Postal Service has struggled to overcome unfair and burdensome financial requirements that risk its ability to

continue providing reliable service in the long run," said Chairman Peters. "This commonsense, bipartisan legislation would help put the Postal Service on a sustainable financial footing, ensure it is more transparent and accountable to the American people, and support hardworking postal workers who deliver rain or shine to communities all across the country."

"While its role in American life has changed over the years, the United States Postal Service remains a key part of American life, serving Americans through its delivery of vital medicines, important packages, and other mail," said Ranking Member Portman. "For that reason, I am proud to join Senator Peters in introducing the Postal Service Reform Act of 2021, which will, when coupled with the Postal Service's transformative 10-year plan, help turn around the substantial losses at the Postal Service over the last decade and ensure self-sustaining, high-quality postal service for all Americans."

"NALC appreciates Chairman Peters and Ranking Member Portman's introduction of this important legislation in the Senate," said NALC President Fredric Rolando. "NALC recognizes the Senators who have put partisan tensions aside to show strong support for this bipartisan legislation that is crucial to help restore financial and operational stability to the Postal Service."

www.nalc.org

RETIREMENTS



Terry Koch (Columbia Heights) retired. Pictured with Branch President Samantha Hartwig. Best Wishes Terry!

In Memoriam

- Mary Folke
- Robert Hollis
- Shirley Mechels

NEW MEMBERS

- Christopher Beats
- Aaron Clark
- Connor Clark
- David Goodell
- Erica Kitzrow
- Alyssa Kjensmo
- Luis Lavastida-Mazueta
- Charles Lindstrom
- Daniel Luna
- Benjamin Macht
- Mohamud Mire
- Jordan Moultrie
- Carla Norman
- Felicia Ricks
- Matthew Sudduth
- Nyema Williams
- Kevin Barbosa
- Krystalann Bies
- Brandon Bresnen
- Gonpo Gegyalsang
- Jennifer Schreiter
- Tyler Simpson
- Monica Whitby

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Announcement Branch 9 Members

July GMM will have an **in-person** option!

We are planning an In-Person/ZOOM
July General Membership Meeting.

July 27

7:00PM

Crystal VFW, Crystal, MN

We'll see you there!

or you may still attend via ZOOM
sign up below

Active/CCA Carrier

Retired Carrier

STATION: _____ Steward's Initials: _____
If Active Member

NAME: _____

COMPLETE ADDRESS: _____
Address, Unit #, City, State, Zip

PHONE #: _____ E-Mail: _____

POSTAL RECORD #: _____

(Must have to confirm you are a NALC member in good standing - located on Postal Record mailing label)

E-mail/Scan to angie@branch9nalc.com, fax to 612.781.9849 or mail completed form
to 4001 Stinson Blvd, Ste 304, Columbia Heights, MN 55421

YOU ONLY NEED TO SIGN-UP ONCE FOR THESE ZOOM GMM'S!

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.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

The month of June brought us a string of above 90-degree temperatures. As we moved into June it was apparent that the outdoor temperatures were not the only thing increasing in Minneapolis. We have had an increase in non-OTDL carriers being forced to work overtime and increase in violence across Minneapolis.

Management is back to forcing non-OTDL carriers to work off their assignments, in addition to other scheduling violations, such as CCA removals from hold-down assignments. The language in Article 8.5.G. clearly states that the ONLY time non-OTDL carriers can be forced to work overtime is if the OTDL is maxed out to 12 hours in a day.

Article 8.5.G. Full-time employees not on the "Overtime Desired" list may be required to work overtime only if all available employees on the "Overtime Desired" list have worked up to twelve (12) hours in a day or sixty (60) hours in a service week. Employees on the "Overtime Desired" list...

There have been instances of management not following the provisions of Article 8.5.G. and mandating entire stations without maxing the OTDL. This is a violation, and grievances should be filed every time.

We have also seen that management is attempting to improperly break awarded CCA hold-down assignments at stations and move the CCAs to other locations to work. The ONLY time a CCA hold-down can be broken is if the regular carrier returns to the assignment, or if there is not enough work for a Full-Time Regular carrier. Anytime management attempts to improperly break a hold-down the stewards must be notified. Hold-downs are a working benefit for the CCAs, and we need protect them from being denied this benefit.

With the increase of Full-Time regulars working on Amazon Sundays there have been many questions on how it is decided what routes a Full-Time Regular will deliver on Sunday. The Minneapolis Local Memorandum of Understanding (LMOU), states that overtime is by station.

Minneapolis LMOU: Item 14 A. The Overtime Desired Lists shall be by tour, if applicable, and section, which shall be designated as each Station, Branch or Annex.

Every Sunday for a Full-Time Regular is paid at the regular overtime rate, and thus we argued that Full-Time Regular carriers must only deliver Amazon Sunday in their assigned Zip Codes. A case from the Blaine Station was appealed to Step B, and the Union prevailed in this. Anytime a Full-Time Regular carrier works on Amazon Sunday they need to be in their zone. The July Steward Board will have training on this issue.

There has been an increase in violence around the City of Minneapolis. It is critical that everyone knows what to do in an emergency. The most important action you can take is to remove yourself from the area if possible and get to a safe location, even if you need to return to your station. Call 911, then call your supervisor to report the incident. If it is not safe to deliver the mail where you are at, then do not deliver that part of the route. Document the incident for your records, and make sure that the Postal Inspectors are notified. When it is safe mail delivery can be resumed to the area in question.

I am excited to announce that the July General Membership Meeting (GMM) will be in person at the Crystal VFW starting at 7:00PM. There will also be a Taco Bar set up at the start of the meeting and beverages after the meeting. We will continue to use ZOOM for the meetings at the same time. This will be our first attempt at a hybrid



Samantha Hartwig

GMM with the combination of in person and ZOOM. I am looking forward to finally being able to see our members in person.

The Retiree Banquet will be Sunday August 15th this year, and all 50-year members from 2020 and 2021 will be recognized. Register for this event ASAP! We do not want anyone to miss out on reconnecting with our retirees.

There have been many questions as to when the next retirement seminar will be conducted. We are currently looking at possible dates in October for the next in person meeting. I have received many questions as to how someone can request their retirement application. If you are planning to retire before the seminar, you can call 1-800-477-3273 (sick line phone number) and go to option number 5 to request your retirement application. You can also go online to your USPS Liteblue Page, click on the eRetire tab, and request the application that way. If you need assistance with your application, give us a call, and we can help any future retiree get the paperwork completed.

Summertime is here, and as the temperatures heat up remember to hydrate the night before you report to work, and all day at work.

In Solidarity,

Samantha Hartwig

Protecting Workers from Heat Stress

Heat Illness

Exposure to heat can cause illness and death. The most serious heat illness is heat stroke. Other heat illnesses, such as heat exhaustion, heat cramps and heat rash, should also be avoided.

There are precautions your employer should take any time temperatures are high and the job involves physical work.

Risk Factors for Heat Illness

- High temperature and humidity, direct sun exposure, no breeze or wind
- Low liquid intake
- Heavy physical labor
- Waterproof clothing
- No recent exposure to hot workplaces

Symptoms of Heat Exhaustion

- Headache, dizziness, or fainting
- Weakness and wet skin
- Irritability or confusion
- Thirst, nausea, or vomiting

Symptoms of Heat Stroke

- May be confused, unable to think clearly, pass out, collapse, or have seizures (fits)
- May stop sweating

To Prevent Heat Illness, Your Employer Should

- Establish a complete heat illness prevention program.
- Provide training about the hazards leading to heat stress and how to prevent them.
- Provide a lot of cool water to workers close to the work area. At least one pint of water per hour is needed.
- Modify work schedules and arrange frequent rest periods with water breaks in shaded or air-conditioned areas.
- Gradually increase workloads and allow more frequent breaks for workers new

to the heat or those that have been away from work to adapt to working in the heat (acclimatization).

- Routinely check workers who are at risk of heat stress due to protective clothing and high temperature.
- Consider protective clothing that provides cooling.

How You Can Protect Yourself and Others

- Know signs/symptoms of heat illnesses; monitor yourself; use a buddy system.
- Block out direct sun and other heat sources.
- Drink plenty of fluids. Drink often and BEFORE you are thirsty. Drink water every 15 minutes.
- Avoid beverages containing alcohol or caffeine.
- Wear lightweight, light colored, loose fitting clothes.

What to Do When a Worker is Ill from the Heat

- Call a supervisor for help. If the supervisor is not available, call 911.
- Have someone stay with the worker until help arrives.
- Move the worker to a cooler/shaded area.
- Remove outer clothing.
- Fan and mist the worker with water; apply ice (ice bags or ice towels).
- Provide cool drinking water, if able to drink.

IF THE WORKER IS NOT ALERT or seems confused, this may be a heat stroke. CALL 911 IMMEDIATELY and apply ice as soon as possible.

If you have any questions or concerns, call OSHA at 1-800-321-OSHA (6742).

www.osha.gov (800) 321-OSHA (6742)

**For more information:
Occupational Safety and Health
Administration**

Exec. Vice President's Report

It's been very hectic at the branch office. Besides the normal day to day business, we are actively searching to find a new building for Branch 9. Here's a look at the process so far. We've made lists of building requirements and have determined that any building we purchase will need to be a minimum of 3,000 to 3,5000 square feet with 14 parking spots. (In comparison, we had roughly 4,000 square feet on the main floor of the 2408 Central Avenue building with 15 parking spots. Ideally, we'd like to find a larger building, within our budget.

Along with offices for the full-time officers and a reception area, we need space for at least 2 Formal Step A Representatives, a financial office, and shared space for part-time officers or stewards to come to work at the office. Additional needs include a conference room, storage, a place to keep uniforms that are donated for CCA's, an ADA compliant bathroom and a kitchen (our version of a swing room). We would like to find a place that has enough space for a recognition room to begin to replace and display the history of Branch 9 that we lost in the fire. Likewise, we would like to have a room large enough to do stewards training. Many of you have asked if we are looking for a space big enough for General Membership Meetings (GMM's). We aren't opposed to the idea, but we are staying very conscious of how that additional space would affect our budget in terms of not only cost for the extra square footage, but also parking spaces. Most municipalities require a minimum number of parking spaces when a meeting hall is in place. We will also weigh the benefits of a meeting hall against current and potential rental costs of using a hall once or twice a month, such as what

we do now at the Crystal VFW. It all needs to make sense for the future and as we've learned in the past year with COVID, virtual meetings are always a possibility. In fact, we will be having our first combined in-person and virtual meeting at the GMM in July.

We have currently vetted roughly 50 buildings and toured around 20, all within the 554 zip codes. While a central location is an important consideration, we found out quickly that the likelihood of finding a building in Minneapolis proper that fits in our budget and meets our needs is highly unlikely. Our goal to be centrally located is still in place but is tempered by the criteria that has been stated above and the number of members who actually come to the branch office in comparison to our overall membership.

We've found a few buildings with potential and have worked with union labor sub-contractors for construction estimates. We've come to the realization that some sort of renovation will be necessary in almost any building we purchase, and this has given us a very good idea of how much it could cost to make those changes.

The Branch 9 members that have been working on this project deserve recognition for their hard work. Finding a building that meets our needs within our budget is no small task. The talents, expertise and dedication of these members are what we need to be successful in this endeavor. We've drawn on a diverse group of members, both active and retired. This includes members who were responsible for the purchase of our last building at 2408 Central and our current Executive Board.



JoAnn Gilbaugh

Those members are Lenny Larson, Pam Donato, Bobby Baird, Al Gulden, Mike Zagaros, LaTasha McCaleb, Chris Pennock, Jeremy Rothstein, Robb Petersburg, Ken Jambois, Melia Derrick, Stacy Ellingson, Barb Watzcak, Christa Abraham, Ronaele Bolden, Nick Tiemann, Samantha Hartwig and myself.

We will continue to keep you updated on our progress. We'll be making regular reports at our GMM meetings. In addition, we will provide information here in the Branch 9 News. We're confident we will be successful in finding a Branch 9 home that will serve the needs of the branch members now and for years to come.

In Solidarity,
Jo



EXPLANATION OF THE HEALTH CARE PROVISIONS OF H.R. 3076/S. 1720

Last month, the Postal Service Reform Act of 2021 (H.R. 3076/S. 1720) was introduced in the House of Representatives and in the Senate. NALC strongly supports these bills, the first major postal reform legislation in 15 years, because the bills address two of NALC's top priorities:

The repeal of the mandate that the Postal Service pre-fund decades' worth of health benefits for its future retirees.

A reform of the Federal Employees Health Benefit Program (FEHBP) to maximize participation in Medicare when active postal employees (as of January 1, 2023) retire and reach age 65. Many members may have questions about the FEHBP and Medicare provisions included in these bills. Unfortunately, misinformation about them is common. Let us start with the proposed changes in FEHBP.

FEHBP reform

Under the legislation, postal employees and annuitants would participate in a restructured FEHBP program. All the major plans now available to participants – Blue Cross Blue Shield, the NALC HBP, Kaiser, etc. – would continue to be offered to postal employees and retirees as a postal-only version of their FEHBP plans. But their premiums would be significantly reduced because postal participants would be placed in a separate risk pool with new rules regarding Medicare enrollment.

The new legislation would not change a current postal annuitant's right to decide whether they want to enroll in Medicare. Although 90 percent of current postal annuitants are automatically enrolled in Medicare Part A (hospital services) and nearly 80 percent of them voluntarily enroll in Medicare Part B (medical services), no current annuitant would be required to enroll in either Medicare Part A or Part B. All active employees

under the age of 64 (as of January 1, 2023) would be automatically placed in the postal version of the health plan they choose, and if retired upon reaching Medicare age, they would be enrolled in Medicare (absent the exceptions discussed below).

Active postal employees (as of January 1, 2023) who are 64 and older AND all current postal annuitants as of that date would be given the choice of whether to join the postal-only version of FEHBP plans (integrated with Medicare) or remain in the non-postal version of such plans, depending on whether they want to enroll in Medicare Part B, which currently carries a premium of \$148.50 per month. The reason most annuitants already choose to enroll in Medicare Parts A & B when they turn 65 is because enrolling virtually eliminates any out-of-pocket costs such as deductibles and co-payments. However, under the proposed law, current annuitants (as of January 1, 2023) would decide whether to enroll. Those who do not want to enroll in Medicare would remain in the non-postal version of their FEHBP health plan – and the Postal Service would continue to pay the government's share of their premiums.

The postal-only plans in FEHBP will be regulated and operated in the same way current FEHBP plans are regulated and operated today. There will be an annual Open Season that will allow participants to choose among a range of plans with separate rates for postal and non-postal participants.

Special protections

NALC lobbied aggressively for the inclusion of special exceptions that are contained in the legislation. Future postal annuitants who do not need Medicare because of coverage by the Veterans Administration or by another non-FEHBP program or who cannot use Medicare because they live in a place (for example, overseas) without Medicare providers would be allowed to enroll in the non-postal version of

their FEHBP plan. We also worked to include a provision to give current annuitants who did not enroll in Medicare Part B at age 65, but who now wish to do so, a one-time opportunity to enroll in Part B without the late enrollment penalty that currently applies. That penalty, which raises Part B premiums by 10% for each year after age 65 that a retiree delays enrollment, is very expensive.

Why prospective Medicare integration makes sense.

The reason it makes sense to create postal-only plans within FEHBP and to maximize Medicare participation is that it will reduce health care costs for both the Postal Service and participants. FEHBP premiums would be reduced for active and retired postal employees alike. Because Medicare is the first-payer insurer for its enrollees, the costs covered by postal-only FEHBP plans will be reduced, thereby reducing the premiums for postal employees. This would reduce the Postal Service's health care expenses by hundreds of millions of dollars annually and reduce its future liability for retiree health benefits by approximately \$50 billion.

Battling misinformation

Since the introduction of these bills, misinformation about the Medicare provisions included in the legislation have circulated through other outlets. Most noticeably, the National Active and Retired Federal Employees (NARFE) association has distributed inaccurate information about the bills. NARFE has falsely claimed that these bills would cause the premiums of non-postal federal employees and annuitants to increase, allow the Postal Service to "cherry-pick" individuals who are less costly to insure, and allow the Postal Service to avoid its full financial obligation to those retirees who choose not to enroll in Medicare.

None of this is true. In fact, non-postal FEHBP premiums would decline somewhat (about 1.0%) since the non-postal workforce is younger and less expensive to

insure than the postal workforce. A recent professional actuarial analysis of the proposed FEHBP reforms conducted by PRM Consulting Group for the Postal Service demonstrates this clearly. That analysis mirrors the findings of the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) review of S. 1486 (the Postal Reform Act of 2014), which also included FEHBP and Medicare integration reforms. The CBO Cost Estimate for S. 1486 (July 14, 2014) states on page 14:

The effect of the legislation on federal on-budget payments for health insurance premiums in the FEHB program would partially offset the increase in Medicare spending. Premiums charged to non-postal enrollees in the FEHB program would be based on expected health costs of the employees, annuitants, and dependents remaining in the FEHB program after the health care costs of USPS workers, annuitants, and their dependents are shifted to the PSHB program. Because non-postal enrollees cost FEHB plans slightly less than postal enrollees, on average, CBO estimates that premiums in the FEHB program would be lower than under current law. Thus, the amount the federal government would contribute toward its share of annuitant premiums would be lower.

CBO estimates that federal payments for health insurance premiums for non-postal annuitants enrolled in the FEHB program would be reduced by about \$1.6 billion over the 2015-2024 period.

Finally, the USPS would not be able to cherry-pick who to insure – it will pay the full cost of all postal participant premiums, whether participants are in the postal or non-postal version of their FEHBP plans.

NALC, along with other postal unions, addressed these false claims in-depth in a letter to the President of NARFE. Read the letter here.

www.nalc.org

Annual leave in lieu of holiday pay

Full-time letter carriers and part-time regular letter carriers receive holiday pay for 10 holidays per year: New Year’s Day, Martin Luther King Jr. Day, Presidents Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Columbus Day, Veterans Day, Thanksgiving Day and Christmas Day. These employees receive holiday pay at the employee’s base hourly straight-time rate for the number of hours equal to their regular daily work schedule, not to exceed eight hours.

City carrier assistants (CCAs) receive holiday pay for six holidays per year: New Year’s Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day and Christmas Day. CCAs in offices designated as having 200 workyears receive eight hours pay, while those in POSTPlan offices receive four hours. All other CCAs receive six hours of holiday pay. A POSTPlan office is any post office with a designation below Level 18, and currently there are only 23 CCAs employed in such offices throughout the country.

This new benefit was negotiated during the latest round of collective bargaining between NALC and USPS and was subsequently included in the recently ratified 2019-2023 NA.

Article 11, Section 3. (reads in part): **Effective with the 2021 Independence Day holiday, employees who work their holiday, at their option, may elect to have their annual leave balance credited with up to eight (8) hours of annual leave in lieu of holiday leave pay.**

Section 8. City Carrier Assistant Holidays (reads in part): **Effective with the 2021 Independence Day holiday, CCAs who work on a holiday may, at their option, elect to have their annual leave balance credited with 4, 6, or 8 hours (as applicable) of annual leave in lieu of receiving holiday pay.**

Annual leave earned and received by working a holiday is subject to all applicable rules for requesting and scheduling annual leave. This leave is added to the employee’s annual leave balance and is counted for purposes of annual leave carryover.

Letter carriers who wish to exercise their option to receive annual leave instead of holiday pay must submit, to their supervisor, a completed PS Form 3971 (see below for example form) indicating such by filling in or checking the “Holiday/AL Lv Exch” box in the “Type of Absence” section.

UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE®		Request for or Notification of Absence				SCHEDULED	UN-SCHEDULED	PP	Year	
Employee's Name (Print last, first, MI) <i>Carrier, Ima L.</i>	Employee ID <i>01234567</i>	Date Submitted (MM/DD/YYYY) <i>07/02/2021</i>	No. of Hours Requested <i>8</i>	Pay Loc. No. <i>999</i>	D/A Code <i>134</i>					From: Date <i>07/04</i>
Installation (For postmaster's leave, show city, state, and ZIP Code) <i>Anytown, Georgia, 00001-9999</i>	N/S Day	Pay Loc. No. <i>999</i>	D/A Code <i>134</i>	From: Date <i>07/04</i>	Hour <i>0750</i>	Thru: Date <i>07/04</i>	Hour <i>1600</i>			
Time of Call or Request <i>0750</i>	Scheduled Reporting Time <i>0750</i>	If Needed, Employee Can Be Reached At: <input type="checkbox"/> Do not call		Revised Schedule for (Date)		Approved in Advance <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No				
Type of Absence <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Annual <input type="checkbox"/> Holiday/AL Lv Exch <input type="checkbox"/> Carrier 701 Route <input type="checkbox"/> LWOP (See reverse) <input type="checkbox"/> Sick (See reverse) <input type="checkbox"/> Late <input type="checkbox"/> COP (See reverse) <input type="checkbox"/> Other	Documentation (For official use only) <input type="checkbox"/> FMLA Requested (Certification review – HRSSC) <input type="checkbox"/> For COP Leave (CA1 on file) <input type="checkbox"/> For Advanced Sick Leave (PS 1221 on file) <input type="checkbox"/> For Military Leave (Orders reviewed) <input type="checkbox"/> For Court Leave (Summons reviewed) <input type="checkbox"/> For Higher Level (PS 1723 on file) <input type="checkbox"/> Scheme Training Testing Qualifying (Memo on file)		Begin Work: Lunch Out Lunch In End Work Total Hours							
Remarks (Do not enter medical information. See Privacy Act Statement on reverse of this form.) <i>Annual Leave Credit in lieu of Holiday Pay</i>										
I understand that the annual leave authorized in excess of the amount available to me during the leave year will be charged to LWOP.										
Employee's Signature and Date <i>Ima Carrier 7/2/21</i>		Signature of Person Recording Absence and Date			Signature of Supervisor and Date Notified					
Official Action on Application (Return copy of signed request to employee.)										
<input type="checkbox"/> Approved <input type="checkbox"/> Disapproved (Give reason below)		Do not check an FMLA box until you verify the FMLA designation. <input type="checkbox"/> FMLA Designation is PENDING <input type="checkbox"/> FMLA Protected <input type="checkbox"/> Not FMLA Protected			Signature of Supervisor and Date <input type="checkbox"/> Continued on reverse					
PS Form 3971, October 2017 (Page 1 of 2) PSN 7530-02-000-9136										
Warning: The furnishing of false information on this form may result in a fine of not more than \$10,000 or imprisonment of not more than 5 years, or both (18 U.S.C. 1001).										



Dave Allmann

Fluctuating temperatures are no longer an issue. This has been replaced by extremely hot temperatures. We have already had several carriers suffering from heat related issues. Knowing the symptoms can prevent you from a more serious issue. However, knowledge is only part of the solution. Recognizing the symptoms and taking action when it occurs is equally as important. The longer you are showing symptoms of heat related illnesses the more serious things can become. Seek a cool refuge once you start noticing symptoms.

Taking precautions before going out in the heat will help you. My favorite line before heat builds is "camel up". We all know that in the camel's humps is nothing more than water storage. They can use this water for hydration when encountering the stresses of heat. We can do the same thing by hydrating ourselves before the heat waves set in. Maintaining proper hydration during the heat

can help prevent heat related issues. Food intake is equally important, in which fruits can give you additional water as well as important nutrients.

Taking care of yourselves when not on the clock is important. Getting the necessary rest in a cool environment will be very beneficial. Recognizing that alcohol is a natural dehydrator and can negate the hydration you are trying to give your body. I am not saying do not drink, I am saying to drink extra water to compensate the alcohol. Staying hydrated is what is going to help you make it through the heat.

Download the app, Heat Index, this will tell you the heat index as well as the risk level. There is also a tab to click on that will give you the symptoms of heat stress and heat stroke. Once we are in a higher risk level it will give you tips on how to prevent heat issues.

Meanwhile, as the temperature has risen, so have the dog bites. There are many reasons as to why dogs are being aggressive. With the increase of "Covid" dogs will only increase the chances of encountering an aggressive dog. Never trust a dog, after all, it is an animal, and it does have animal instincts and will bite.

There will be a new program coming out called Dog Paws. This is a program that was developed in New York which has decreased the amount of dog bites. There

are several steps to the program. First you will be getting 2 dog paw stickers. You will be sticking a yellow sticker on the mailbox at the house before a house with a dog. An orange sticker will be placed on the mailbox at a house that has a dog. Each of these homeowners will receive a post card explaining this program and the importance of the sticker.

There will also be a media blitz to notify the public promoting this program. This will also bring the dog issues to the attention of the public. We will continue to use dog warning cards as well as scanner alerts. The engineers are still trying to increase the accuracy rates of the scanner alerts. The best way for any of this to work is to have everyone keep up on dog warning cards, scanner alerts and now the stickers. It is my understanding that this will be rolled out soon starting at the stations with the highest dog issues.

As we continue into peak vacation time, please make sure the dog warning cards are updated. If you are fortunate enough to have a CCA do a hold down on your route, take a few extra minutes and go over your route with them. At least they will have a better idea as to where your trouble spots are. Please continue to work with your CCAs and share your experiences and knowledge.

Be safe and enjoy your summer!
DA



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

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Ame's Uniforms are a UNION PREFERRED vendor

Director of Retirees Report

WE'RE BACK! As announced at the May General Membership meeting, the first post covid retiree breakfast was held in May at Elsie's. Six retirees met up and safely had a great get together. Jon Frick is spearheading the Denny's return breakfast in Otsage the first Friday in June. So, it looks like we survived, even as some retirees did get covid. For sure, we are all grateful for the vaccines apparently heading the country towards control of this pandemic. Just in time for summer and the delayed Retiree Banquet in August.

The Red and Gold banquet honors retirees and we were saddened to have to cancel last year. At the GMM in May, I asked people to let me and any other officer or steward know of retirees who stepped up during the Covid Era. Grandkids were home from school and retirees took up daycare chores so parents could continue to work; they helped those grandkids with homework from their zoom classes; some retirees volunteered to distribute food

to those facing food insecurity after a job loss. Some of us even discovered how to contact people during the past election via text programs. I for sure felt better doing that than making those cold calls. So, if you know a retiree who went above and beyond the call during this pandemic, let us know. We would love to honor those heroes.

While politics is for sure not most people's first love, our retirement benefits and wages for the active carriers depends on Congress. Back in 2006 we had prefunding imposed on us by the Postal Accountability and Enhancement Act. This law required the USPS to create a \$72 billion dollar fund for retiree health care benefits, by adding around \$5 billion to it annually. By 2019 that fund was at \$47.5 billion dollars creating a financial "crisis" because the USPS had not put money in the pot fast enough. On paper, the USPS looked like it was losing money. Currently there is a bipartisan bill called the Postal Service Reform Act of 2021 that would overturn



Melia Derrick

this mandate. Unfortunately, they will not release any of the ill-gotten monies. Another part of these bills will mandate that every retiree take Medicare Part A and Part B when eligible. It is an option now that NALC usually recommends you take and over 90% of us do. Thanks to Joel Carter, our political guru, for the heads up on this at the May GMM. This is where calling a Representative or Senator to support these bills would help.

Stay Tuned In,
Melia Derrick

PAL 9 REPORT

Since I last wrote about Postal Reform legislation big changes have come about, and I believe for the better. I am even more optimistic that the pre-funding mandate will be repealed. In May a new Postal Reform bill was introduced in the House (H.R. 3076) and Senate (S. 1720). It incorporated the earlier bill, called the USPS Fairness Act, plus several additional reforms intended to improve the financial health and sustainability of the Postal Service. These reforms were introduced with the input of many stakeholders, like the mailing industry, which broaden the bill's support, and make it more likely to pass the Congress.

There are four main pieces to the new bill: first, repeal the pre-funding mandate, without which

any reform would be a non-starter. Second, changes to the Federal Employee Health Benefit Program (FEHBP) and increased participation of postal retirees in Medicare which are intended to reduce costs, without lowering the quality of our health insurance, for both active and retired employees. Third, make the standard of 6-day delivery the law, without having to bring it up for a vote every year. And fourth, require certain reports and accountability of the Postal Service to Congress.

A significant sign of the bi-partisan support this reform bill has was evident when it was introduced in the Senate with ten Republican co-sponsors. This indicates a filibuster-proof majority of 60 Senators is attainable, necessary for the bill's passage.

Your support and encouragement to Minnesota's Senators and

Representatives is as important as ever to the bill's passage. Our webmaster Jeremy Rothstein has put an easy link, front and center on our own branch9nalc.com website. It takes you to the national's website nalc.org, where you can quickly generate a form letter to both our senators and the representative for the district you live in.

It's a big ask, but I encourage you to reach out to friends and family for their support for this bill. Everyone is served by the Post Office. Unless these reforms are made, at this doable time in our history, the Postal Service will continue to struggle with the crippling burden of the pre-funding mandate. It cannot become the robust and adaptable Postal Service it needs to be to succeed in the 21st century.

Joel Carter, President PAL 9.

**BRANCH 9
2021 SCHOLARSHIP DRAWING WINNERS**

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

		<u>School Attending</u>	<u>Parent</u>	<u>Work Location</u>
Winner	Abigail Mart	Hamline University	Craig Mart	Anoka
1st Runner-Up	Isabelle Okeson	Undecided	Bruce Okeson	Lake Street
2nd Runner-Up	Milena Yishak	U of MN - Twin Cities	Habtom Girmay	Minnehaha

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

		<u>School Attending</u>	<u>Parent</u>	<u>Work Location</u>
Winner	Han Pham	U of MN - Twin Cities	Henry Pham	Normandale
1st Runner-Up	Katie Bredehorst	U of MN - Twin Cities	John Bredehorst	West Edina
2nd Runner-Up	Ghangla Tsering	Anoka – Ramsey Community College	Tenzing Tsering	Columbia Heights

J. WESLEY WOODS – \$1,000.00

		<u>School Attending</u>	<u>Parent</u>	<u>Work Location</u>
Winner	Meriel Orham	St. Cloud State	Doug Orham	St. Louis Park
1st Runner-Up	Marni Keith	U of MN - Rochester	Chris Keith	Robbinsdale
2nd Runner-Up	Kendrick Chang	Undecided	Kai Chang	Main PO

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

		<u>Position</u>	<u>Work Location</u>
1st Winner	Charles Rivers	Retired	
2nd Winner	Fred Brownson	Retired	



Hannah Pham, whose father is Henry Pham from the Normandale Post Office, graduated from Bloomington Jefferson High School. She was this year's winner of the Jerome J. Keating/Austin B. Carlson Scholarship. This fall, she will be attending the University of Minnesota - Twin Cities in pursuit of a B.S. in Neuroscience.

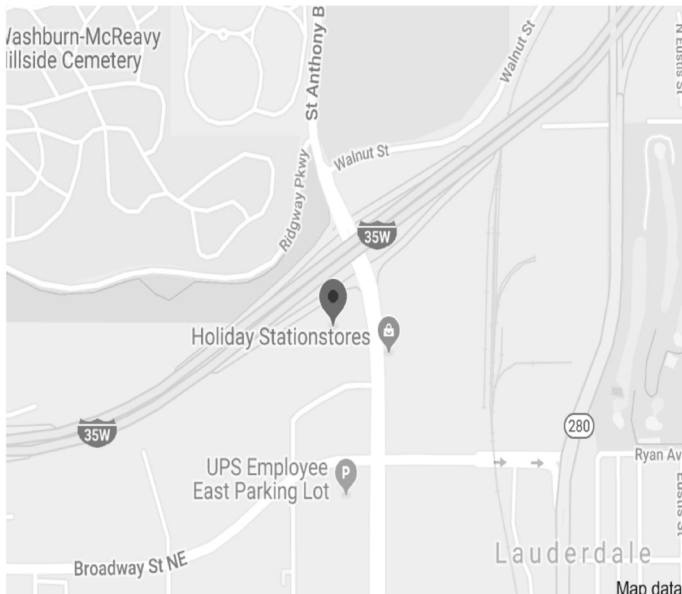
I would like to thank the members of the NALC Branch 9 for the scholarship opportunity.

Hannah Pham

2021 Red and Gold Retiree Banquet (Recognizing our 2020 and 2021 Honorees)

Sunday, August 15, 2021

Delta Hotels by Marriott Minneapolis Northeast
1330 Industrial Blvd NE, Minneapolis, MN 55413



TIMES:

Registration: Noon - 1:00PM
Social Hour: 12:30 - 1:15PM
Lunch: 1:15 - 3:30PM

REGISTRATION FEES:

Retirees & Guests - \$12.00/person
Active Members - \$18.00/person

The Registration Fee for Retirees is refundable upon arrival.

2021 Retiree Banquet Registration Form

Name: _____

Name of Guest: _____

65 Year New Honoree 60 Year New Honoree 55 Year New Honoree

50 Year New Honoree Retired

Active Steward *Amount Enclosed:* _____

I would like a ride I am willing to be a chauffeur
Phone # _____ (Please call Angie to volunteer
at 612.781.9858.)

Please return registration form NO LATER than August 6, 2021 to:
Branch 9 NALC, 4001 Stinson Blvd., Columbia Heights, MN 55421.

(Please note address change)

Branch Nine News
4001 Stinson Blvd. Suite 304
Columbia Heights MN 55421

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Stay informed by:

- *Join Veterans Group <https://www.nalc.org/member-benefits/join-the-nalc-veterans-group>
- * Branch9nalc.com (website)
- * “like” our Branch 9 Facebook Page

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

July 4

Independence Day
Holiday

July 13

Steward Meeting
7:00 PM
Zoom/Online

July 27

General Membership Meeting
7:00PM
ZOOM and in person
Crystal VFW, Crystal, MN

August 10

Steward Meeting
7:00 PM
Zoom/Online

August 15

Red and Gold Banquet Reitree
@Noon
Delta Hotels by Marriott
NE Mpls.

July 27

General Membership Meeting
7:00PM
ZOOM and in person
Crystal VFW, Crystal, MN

Most BRANCH 9 Meetings and events have been modified, please continue to check the website and Facebook page for the latest information on Branch 9 meetings and events.

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

Fridley Retiree Lunch

2nd Tuesday of the Month
11:30 AM
Route 47 Pub and Grub
7820 University Ave