

VOLUME 74 No 6

Official Publication of Branch Nine, NALC

August 2022

Special Installation of Branch 9 Officers

On July 26th 2022, during the General Membership Meeting, National Director of Retirees Dan Toth installed our newest officers; JoAnn Gilbaugh as President, Scott Bultena as Exec. Vice President and Ryan O'Neill as Trustee.

Dan spoke to the membership of their continued need to be vigilant in protecting our benefits, specifically towards and in retirement. The knowledge and effort you make now towards your retirement will benefit you greatly. It's vital to think about retirement upon conversion to career status, whether you are 25 or 55 years old. Given how employees double their money by contributing 5 percent, it concerns him when he sees his fellow brothers and sisters decide to cancel or reduce their TSP contributions to less than 5 percent. Letter carriers should check their TSP contribution amount through LiteBlue and consider maximizing their employer contributions if they aren't already. Don't leave money on the table.

The Postal Service Reform Act (PSRA) will restructure the Federal Employees Health Benefit (FEHB) program to create postal-only versions to account for the integration of Medicare. All the major plans now available to participants would continue to be offered to postal employees and retirees as a postal-only version of their FEHB plans within FEHB. This will allow these postal-only plans to account for the coordination of benefits provided through Medicare and increase the efficiency of such a system. The reason it makes sense to create postal-only plans within FEHB and to maximize Medicare participation is that it will reduce health care costs for both the Postal Service and postal participants in the federal insurance program. Because Medicare is the first-payer insurer for its enrollees, the costs covered by postal-only FEHB plans will be reduced, thereby reducing costs for postal employees.

The members of Branch 9 appreciated the time he gave in the installation of our newest officers and providing us with important information and encouragement in protecting and exercising our contractual rights.



Pictured: National Director of Retirees Dan Toth presents JoAnn Gilbaugh President, with her gavel.



Pictured: National Director of Retirees Dan Toth installs, Ryan O'Neill as Trustee, JoAnn Gilbaugh as President and Scott Bultena as Exec. Vice President.

RETIREMENTS



Last Punch for Ron Manzke (Brooklyn Park) With Stewards Joel Turrentine and Jeremy Larson Best Wishes!



Last punch for Tim Moser (Edina) with Branch 9 President JoAnn Gilbaugh. Enjoy Retirement!



Last punch for Richard Walker (Lorning) with Steward Johnna Lush. Happy Retirement!

NEW MEMBERS

William Faulk
Garrett LePage
Joshua McDermid
Travis Schilling
Susan Larson
Ricardo Perez
Nancy Vang
Natalie Lenz

IN MEMORIAM

Earl Anderson
John Hilden
Kelvin Kemmer

*Color Coded Letter Carrier
Calendars order form on page 11.
Orders due by 9/27/22

Branch 9, NALC
5831 Cedar Lake Road South
St. Louis Park, MN 55416

Voice: (612) 781-9858
Fax: (612) 781-9849
Website: branch9nalc.com

Branch 9 Officers

President
JoAnn Gilbaugh

Exec. Vice President
Scott Bultena

Recording Secretary
Robb Petersburg

Treasurer
Barb Watczak

Financial Secretary
Stacey Ellingson

Editor
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Sergeant at Arms
Ronaele Bolden

Trustees
Christa Abraham
Ryan O'Neill
Joe Tiemann

Director of Retirees
Melina Derrick

NALC Health Benefits Rep.
Ken Jambois
HBR: (763) 370-1392

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.

Join Branch 9 for

“The Great Minnesota Get Together”

August 25 - September 5, 2022

2 shifts available:

9:00 am—1:00 pm

1:00—5:00 pm

Call the Branch or see your steward to sign-up

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

August is proving to be a very busy month here at Branch 9. Our delegates are preparing for National Convention, which takes place the week of August 8th, in Chicago.

It's safe to venture that most of you don't know the responsibilities of delegates, or what exactly happens at the National Convention. The NALC constitution states that "The National Convention shall be the supreme body to which final appeal shall be made on all matters emanating from Members, Branches and State Associations. There shall be no geographical limitations on the jurisdiction of the Union."

An uncomplicated way to explain National Convention is that this is where delegates from across the nation conduct the business of the NALC. While we are there, we will debate and vote on proposed amendments to the NALC Constitution. We also examine and vote on resolutions to the National Agreement. These resolutions are submitted by branches, and if approved, are brought to the bargaining table for our next National Contract negotiations. The approved resolutions are not automatically included into the contract, as both the NALC and the USPS must reach that agreement. Examples from the 2018 National Convention included GPS data not being used for discipline and adding dry-fit and UV-protected fabric as well as cold wear gear clothing to the uniform program. In addition to voting on amendments and resolutions, there are many guest speakers, including congresspeople and leaders of other national labor unions. In the morning, prior

to the convention being called to order, and after the day's business is done, more than forty workshops are offered to delegates over the course of the week. The evenings are scheduled with gatherings for regional groups, Leadership Academy Alumni, MDA fundraising, and the Retirement dinner to name a few. Overall, it is a very busy week, and simply nothing can compare to the experience of being in a room with thousands of other Letter Carriers from around the nation. I encourage our membership to consider becoming a delegate to the next convention. All that is needed is to sign a notice of nomination and attend at least 18 of 24 meetings in-between conventions.

When we return from convention, our next big event is the Red and Gold Retiree Banquet. This is where we honor all of our retirees. The "Red" refers to the 60-year membership pins and "Gold" refers to the 50-year membership cards which are awarded. 55 and 65-year members also receive a special membership pin, and 70-year members receive a commemorative plaque. It is a wonderful time for friends and co-workers to reconnect and reminisce about their time working at the Post Office. Anyone can attend. It is a fun way to learn some history of our branch members and find out that many of our struggles have been cyclical over the years.

The month of August wraps up with the Minnesota State Fair. Branch 9 has a kiosk at the Labor Pavilion that we staff every day of the fair. Anyone who volunteers to work receives two free admission tickets, so they can invite someone



JoAnn Gilbaugh

to enjoy the fair when their shift at the kiosk is done. This year we are a hiring initiative created by the Branch 9 Staffing Committee which was formed in July. The goal of the committee is to find new and creative ways to bring in new hires to our craft. Stop by and say hi, or better yet, call the branch office to volunteer for a shift!

As we transition from summer into fall (sorry – it is inevitable), we will be providing another retirement seminar. The plan is for late October or early November, with the date yet to be determined. Watch for a flyer in the Branch 9 News and postings at your stations on the Union bulletin boards. Lastly, I am very honored to serve as the Branch 9 President. I pledge to do my absolute best to represent you and uphold the National Agreement. Moving forward, we can do remarkable things together if we put our minds and energy to it. Thank you to each of you for your dedication to serving our customers, and for the sacrifices you make daily due to our staffing shortages. We will get through this. Together we are Branch 9 strong.

Steward Appreciation Dinner

On July 12, during the Steward Board Meeting, the Branch hosted a Steward appreciation dinner. Thank you for all your hard work and dedication to the letter carriers of Branch 9.

These letter carriers are designated as Union shop stewards for individual stations. The NALC business starts, and often ends, with the work of the shop steward. From filing grievances to offering workplace advice, these front-line defenders of the contract are the Union's main presence in a carrier's station. "It's long been said that stewards have the hardest job in the union," NALC President Fredric Rolando said, "and I believe that to be true. But the work that stewards do is among the most important, too, because it all starts with them." No matter how big or small your issue is, your steward is the person to approach.



Exec. Vice President's Report

I am excited to be your new Executive Vice President. I want to start by saying congratulations to Samantha. I wish her the best in her new role and know that she will be greatly missed by the membership and by me. I have learned a lot from Samantha and more importantly she has been, and continues to be, a good friend of mine. I want to take this opportunity to congratulate JoAnn on her new role as President. In my mind there is nobody more qualified and deserving of this job than her.

I am grateful for JoAnn and excited to work with and support her as President of the Branch. JoAnn is extremely well versed in contract administration and a very gifted communicator. We have worked very well together in the past and I know that we will

continue to work together effectively in upholding the rights that we have as Letter Carriers.

I am grateful for the support and encouragement that I have received from my co-workers and hero's including Pam Donato, Lenny Larson, Barry Weiner, Mike Zagaros, Troy Fredenburg, Patrick Johnson, Angie Syverson, Ryan O'Neill, Barb Watzak and Stacey Ellingson. There are too many people to list but I am grateful for your support and well wishes.

Most importantly, I am thankful to

God and my family. Without their support, I would not be where I am today. They completely inspire me and give me the love, support, and encouragement that I need to face every new day, whatever it holds.

I care about the rights of Letter Carriers. I became a Steward years ago at the Saint Louis Park station after Mark Olufson retired. I immediately stepped up to fill the void because I saw firsthand the positive effects that having an educated, dedicated Steward



Scott Bultena

going through the same issues at their stations as I was at mine. There truly is strength in numbers.

I started calling the Branch and talking to the President and EVP about the daily issues that were going on. Pam, Mike, JoAnn, and Samantha can testify that there were times that I kept them on the phone for an hour or more because of all the questions that I had. They were more than helpful with me and supported me then just as they do now.

I believe in paying it forward. I am grateful to be in position

that I am in now, still learning and growing, but with some years of experience and knowledge that I am eager to share with others. Please don't hesitate to call me if you need help or assistance. I am here to support you in your journey as a Letter Carrier, Steward, or Retiree. JoAnn and I are making our way out to the stations, and I look forward to meeting you.

In Solidarity,
Scott Bultena



National Director of Retirees Dan Toth installs, Ryan O'Neill as Trustee, JoAnn Gilbaugh as President and Scott Bultena as Exec. Vice President.

made on the work environment at the station. It was a struggle for me at first because, like many new Stewards, I saw the injustices going on all around me, but I felt overwhelmed by the contract and the ELM and the M-39 and all the Handbooks and Manuals that were out there. It seemed like the more I read the more I realized I didn't know what I needed to know. One thing that served me well in those days that still serves me well today is I am not a quitter. I started attending GMM meetings and Steward meetings, it felt good to know that other Stewards were

When a retired letter carrier dies...

Notify the Office of Personnel Management (OPM). This should be done as soon as possible through its website, by email, by phone or by mail. To report the death of a deceased annuitant to OPM, do one of the following:

- Visit servicesonline.opm.gov and click on "Report an Annuitant Death." This will take you to an online form to complete and submit.
- Send an email to retire@opm.gov and include the following information pertaining to the annuitant and survivor(s): Retired letter carrier's full name, CSA number, date of birth, Social Security number, survivor's full name, relationship to the deceased, Social Security number, date of birth, address and phone number.
- Call OPM at 888-767-6738.*
- Write to OPM at Office of Personnel Management, P.O. Box 45, Boyers, PA 16017. Provide the information on the deceased and survivor(s) as above.

*Calling OPM can sometimes take several attempts due to high call volumes. Callers may be on hold for 20 minutes or longer. The NALC Retirement Department staff is familiar with OPM and is well versed in explaining OPM's processes. Upon request, the NALC Retirement Department will report the death of a retired

member to OPM and answer any questions. To contact the NALC Retirement Department, call toll-free at 800-424-5186 on Monday, Wednesday and Thursday from 10 a.m.-12 p.m. and 2 p.m.-4 p.m. Eastern Standard Time. The NALC Retirement Department also can be reached Monday-Friday from 9 a.m.-4:30 p.m. at 202-393-4695. Long distance charges may apply.

Once the death of an annuitant has been reported to OPM, the OPM will stop payment of the monthly annuity and mail the applicable claim forms to the survivor. In most cases, two forms will be included in the packet:

- application for death benefits under the retirement system (death benefits include survivor benefits and/or any unpaid annuity balance) and
- application for Federal Employees' Group Life Insurance (FEGLI)
- The packet also includes pre-addressed return envelopes, color-coded pink and blue, to facilitate rapid distribution and processing within OPM.

Notify the bank where annuity payments are deposited, as well as any other of the retiree's financial institutions. Any annuity payments deposited after the date of death will be reclaimed by OPM. Return any uncashed annuity checks to the address on the accompanying Treasury Department envelope.

Obtain enough death certificates for your needs from the mortuary.

Notify the retired letter carrier's NALC branch.

If the retiree was a veteran, notify Veterans' Affairs at 800-827-1000. • Call the Social Security Administration at 800-772-1213.

Notify insurance companies (life, health, home, automobile, etc.). If the retiree had a policy with NALC's Mutual Benefit Association, call 202-638-4318 between 8 a.m.-3:30 p.m. EST, or write to MBA, 100 Indiana Ave. NW, Suite 510, Washington, DC 20001-2144.

If the retiree had health insurance through the NALC Health Benefit Plan or any other FEHB plan, the OPM will inform the health plan. When a spouse is entitled to survivor benefits, he or she will receive continuous health insurance coverage as long as they were covered under their spouse's FEHB plan at the time of death. The health plan will automatically change to self-only and be switched to the surviving spouse's name.

If the retiree participated in the Thrift Savings Plan, contact the TSP at 877-968-3778.

If the spouse of a retired letter carrier dies, call the NALC Retirement Department for instructions on how to restore annuity to full amount, switch health coverage from family to self (unless you have dependent children) and change beneficiaries.



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

AME'S UNIFORMS

OUR BUSINESS IS MAKING YOU LOOK GOOD!

We offer "Life of the Garment" guarantee.

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

Take waist in/out and change hem length

Ame's Uniforms are a UNION PREFERRED vendor

Director of Retirees Report

While scrolling through some Postal related Facebook postings, I saw a guy startled that the beneficiary for his TSP account had been deleted. Knowing that he had designated one, he called TSP and was informed that some beneficiaries were indeed not transferred with the recent website changes. So, I checked my personal account and yep, my beneficiary had been erased. The resetting was fairly easy, but I needed a witness. So, be prepared to have to do that if a reset is necessary. The witness, of course, can not be your beneficiary. They will be sent an email confirming their agreement.

And that is why these articles ask that retirees Stay Tuned In. While retirement might center around fishing, hunting, camping and bouncing grandkids on your knees, it also requires that you pay attention to details of your

retirement. The three-legged retirement stool can have any of its legs changed internally with website resets, or by Congress. Keeping tuned in to these changes can prevent serious problems down the road.

Several Branch members will attend the National Convention in Chicago in August. These conventions do have some fun times, but there are also valuable workshops offered each day. I have selected several that should give some important information for retirees and those who would like to retire: Changes in TSP, Retirement Considerations, MBA products and Wills and Trusts. Remember that your retirement begins with planning years before you actually pull the plug.

Some members bought raffle tickets for the State AFL-CIO Retirement fundraiser. The



Melia Derrick

drawing will be held one day before the Red and Gold Banquet. This organization does all lot of good work on legislative issues for retirees. Hopefully I can report a winner from our branch.

So, please Stay Tuned In
Melia Derrick

Federal Retirement Fairness Act (H.R. 4268)

Many federal employees, including Postal Service employees, begin their federal/postal service in non-career positions before transitioning to career status. These employees, including letter carriers who were employed as casuals, transitional employees (TEs) or city carrier assistants (CCAs), do not receive retirement credit for their time spent in these positions. Because years employed as a non-career employee are not creditable under the Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS), employees who started in non-career positions and transition to career status must work longer to reach the required years of employment to receive full retirement benefits.

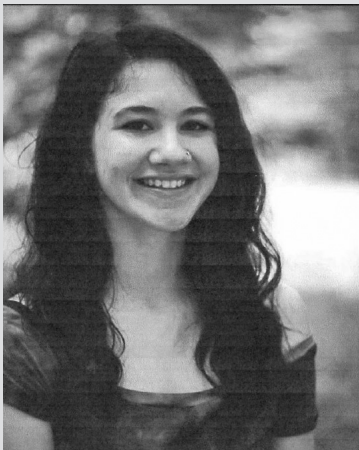
The Federal Retirement Fairness Act (H.R. 4268), sponsored by Reps. Derek Kilmer (D-WA) and Tom Cole (R-OK), would modify what is considered creditable federal civilian service under FERS. This bill would allow these employees to make catch-up retirement contributions for time spent as non-career employees after Dec. 31, 1988, making such time creditable service under the FERS, and for other purposes. This legislation would allow letter carriers and other affected employees the opportunity to purchase retirement credit for the time they spent in these non-career positions, providing greater retirement security.

NALC supports H.R. 4268, which would allow certain federal employees to make catch-up retirement contributions for time spent as non-career employees after Dec. 31, 1988, thus making such time creditable service under FERS. Sponsored by Reps. Derek Kilmer (D-WA) and Tom Cole (R-OK).

Zero Tolerance Process for Dog Bites or Attacks

This process applies to all unprovoked aggressive behavior by animals towards other carriers. When an incident occurs follow the steps listed below:

1. Call Animal Care and Control 311 in Minneapolis or 911 outside of Minneapolis.
2. Contact station management immediately.
3. After incident is reported, management will do the following:
 - All mail will be put on hold for the address until management and the customer can come to an agreement on how future deliver will be handled.
 - Place a lime green placard on top of held mail
 - Letter to customer will be generated (see sample letter, attached).
 - Letters to be delivered to the customer by management or placed in their **held** mail.
 - Complete EH&S on line 1769/301 report and on the Northland District Accident reporting page.
4. Carrier must utilize dog warning card (red cards). They are to be cased in daily, at least two houses prior to the house.
5. Lime green warning cards will be cased in front of every split that there is a dog or dogs on that block.
6. Management completes joint investigation with safety liaison/steward.



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

Winner: Grace McCullough
Parent: Amerita McCullough (Osseo Office)

Hi! My name is Grace McCullough, and I just wanted to say thank you for the scholarship!

I am an Anoka High School graduate and STEAM graduate. While I was in School, I participated in many of our orchestras, such as the conference and chamber orchestra. I was also a participant in Anoka's trap and skeet team. Alongside those, I love to hunt with my family and read books and write research papers.

Heat-related Illnesses and First Aid

Heat stroke, the most serious form of heat-related illness, happens when the body becomes unable to regulate its core temperature. Sweating stops and the body can no longer rid itself of excess heat. Signs include confusion, loss of consciousness, and seizures. Heat stroke is a medical emergency that may result in death. Call 911 immediately!

Heat exhaustion is the body's response to loss of water and salt from heavy sweating. Signs include headache, nausea, dizziness, weakness, irritability, thirst, and heavy sweating.

Heat cramps are caused by the loss of body salts and fluid during sweating. Low salt levels in muscles cause painful cramps. Tired muscles □ those used for performing the work □ are usually the ones most affected by cramps. Cramps may occur during or after working hours.

Heat rash, also known as prickly heat, is skin irritation caused by sweat that does not evaporate from the skin. Heat rash is the most common problem in hot work environments.

The chart below shows symptoms and first aid measures to take if a worker shows signs of a heat-related illness.

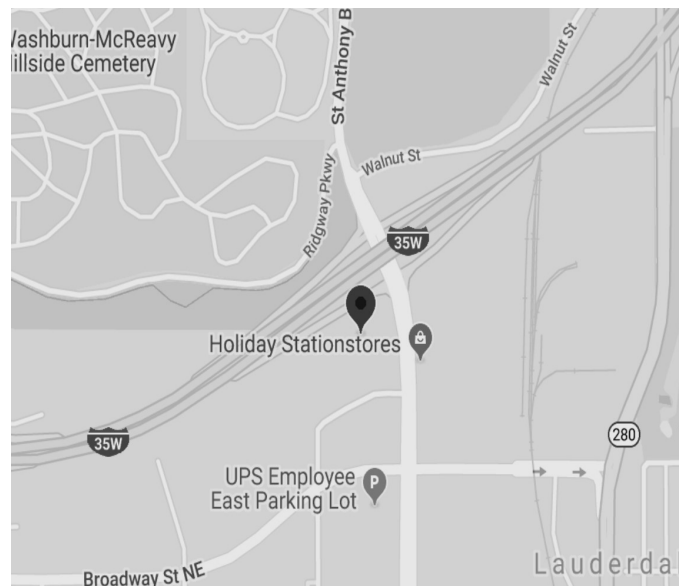
Illness	Symptoms	First Aid*
Heat stroke	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confusion • Fainting • Seizures • Excessive sweating or red, hot, dry skin • Very high body temperature 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Call 911 <p>While waiting for help:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Place worker in shady, cool area • Loosen clothing, remove outer clothing • Fan air on worker; cold packs in armpits • Excessive sweating or red, hot, dry skin • Wet worker with cool water; apply ice packs, cool compresses, or ice if available • Provide fluids (preferably water) as soon as possible • Stay with worker until help arrives
Heat exhaustion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cool, moist skin • Heavy sweating • Headache • Nausea or vomiting • Dizziness • Light headedness • Weakness • Thirst • Irritability • Fast heart beat 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have worker sit or lie down in a cool, shady area • Give worker plenty of water or other cool beverages to drink • Cool worker with cold compresses/ice packs • Take to clinic or emergency room for medical evaluation or treatment if signs or symptoms worsen or do not improve within 60 minutes. • Do not return to work that day
Heat cramps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Muscle spasms • Pain • Usually in abdomen, arms, or legs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have worker rest in shady, cool area • Worker should drink water or other cool beverages • Wait a few hours before allowing worker to return to strenuous work • Have worker seek medical attention if cramps don't go away
Heat rash	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clusters of red bumps on skin • Often appears on neck, upper chest, folds of skin 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Try to work in a cooler, less humid environment when possible • Keep the affected area dry

*** Remember, if you are not a medical professional, use this information as a guide only to help workers in need.**

2022 Red and Gold Retiree Banquet

Sunday, August 21, 2022

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.

Stewards this event will count as your attendance to the August GMM

2022 Retiree Banquet Registration Form

Name: _____

Name (first and last) of Guest (s): _____

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

New 50 Year Honoree Retired

Active

Steward

Amount Enclosed: _____

I would like a ride.

Phone #: _____

I am willing to be a chauffeur.

Please call 612.781.9858 or email

angie@branch9nalc.com to volunteer.

Please return registration form NO LATER than August 16, 2022 to:
Branch 9 NALC, 5831 Cedar Lake Road, St. Louis Park, MN 55416.

(Please note address change)

**COLOR CODED LETTER CARRIER
CALENDAR ORDER FORM**

It's time to order your 2023 color coded calendar!

Calendars are \$4.50/each
(Checks only and made out to Richdon – NO CASH)

**MAIL YOUR CHECKS WITH THE ORDER FORM BELOW TO:
ATTN. KEN JAMBOIS
BRANCH 9
5837 CEDAR LAKE ROAD SOUTH
ST. LOUIS PARK, MN 55416**

If you have any questions, please contact Ken
C: 763.370.1392

**THE LAST DAY TO PURCHASE A CALENDAR
WILL BE AT THE SEPTEMBER 27, 2022 GMM**

COLOR CODED LETTER CARRIER CALENDAR ORDER FORM

Contact Name: _____

Station: _____ # of Calendars: _____

Phone #: _____ Check \$ Amount: _____
(Checks made out to Richdon)

Branch Nine News
5831 Cedar Lake Road South
St. Louis Park, MN 55416

Change Service Requested

PRSRT STD
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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

August 21

Red & Gold Retiree Banquet
Noon
1330 Industrial Blvd NE, Mpls

September 27

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

September 27

Steward/General Membership Meeting
6/7:00PM
In person and ZOOM
Crystal VFW, Crystal, MN

October 2-5

MSALC CONVENTION

October 10

COLUMBUS DAY
INDIGENOUS PEOPLES'S DAY
HOLIDAY

August 25- September 5 Minnesota State Fair

Plan on volunteering at our kiosk

October 11

Steward Meeting
7:00PM
*In person *

September 5

LABOR DAY
HOLIDAY

October 25

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

September 13

Steward Meeting
7:00PM
*In person *

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