

VOLUME 74 No 5

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June/July 2022

The "Lenny A Larson" Building

At a recent General Membership meeting, the members overwhelmingly voted to name our new building the "Lenny A Larson Building". (Our previous building at 2408 Central Ave was named the same.) During discussion on the recent motion, it was brought up that many newer carriers may not know brother Larson. Let me help with that. (pictured to the right, front row center)

Lenny's tenure as a fulltime officer began some 40 years ago. He served as Branch 9 president for nearly 20 years- itself an extraordinary accomplishment. Issues during these years included fighting off a failed union-management process "Employee Involvement", automation of the letter carrier's work, staffing shortages, the aftermath of 9/11 and ensuring letter carrier safety as anthrax was weaponized in the postal system, and subcontracting letter carrier work as a whole.

Lenny just didn't guide the branch through challenges, though. He seized every opportunity to also build carrier morale and solidarity,

Larson Building cont'd on page 9

Branch 9's Open House of the "Lenny A Larson" building, home of NALC Branch 9



More photos on page 8

RETIREMENTS



Karen Solberg (Chanhassen) last punch with Steward Kevin Barbosa. Best Wishes!



Robert Barsness retirement - (Main Office) receives his retirement pin from Branch 9 President Samantha Hartwig. Enjoy Retirement!

NEW MEMBERS

- Graham Butler
- Nathan Sutton
- Daniel Tipping
- Sarah Wehr
- Michael Zwart Andrew Ferrando
- Patrick Gagnon
- Michael Huffman
- Mark Hynes
- Matthew Krofta
- David Marley
- Karen Vavra

IN MEMORIAM

- Gary Weber
- Daryl Blatzheim – 55+ year member

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JoAnn Gilbaugh

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Robb Petersburg

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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.

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

At the April General Membership Meeting (GMM) I announced that I will be working on a detail for NALC headquarters assisting with the Regional Workers' Compensation Assistant (RWCA) job for regions 3, 5, and 7 in the month May and all of June. The previous RWCA for Regions 3, 5, and 7, Larrissa Parde, has been prompted to the job of Regional Administrative Assistant (RAA) for Region 5 which has left a vacancy in the RWCA position since January of this year. NALC National President, Fred Rolando, officially offered me the RWCA job and I have accepted the position, which will be effective on July 11, 2022.

This means that in accordance with the NALC Constitution and the Branch 9 by-laws Executive Vice President JoAnn Gilbaugh will become the new Branch 9 President. JoAnn will then need to appoint a new Executive Vice President and they will finish out this term of office till the next Branch election in November of 2024. I wish JoAnn and the Executive Board of Branch 9 the best and know they will continue to represent this membership.

As my term as your President officially ends in July the by-laws call for an end of term report.

The biggest change since my December 2021 end of term report has been the purchase of the new Branch office and the sale of property at 2408 Central Ave in Northeast Minneapolis, which has ultimately allowed the Branch Nine Building Corporation to be financially solid for many years to come. Grievances continue to move through different steps of the grievance procedure. There are several overtime violation grievances pending arbitration at this time. When those grievances are resolved through either pre-arbitration or arbitration the Branch will inform the membership of those outcomes.

I have been honored to be your President, and before that your Executive Vice President. In my time as a full-time officer for Branch 9 I have enjoyed getting to know the membership and helping many of you throughout the years. There have also been many previous full-time officers that I have been privileged to learn from; President Emeritus Lenny Larson, along with former Presidents Jan Wild, Pam Donato, and Mike Zagaros. There are many active members that I have also learned much from, but there are too many of you to mention, so I will say, thank you, to everyone. The wonderful thing I have



Samantha Hartwig

learned about this Branch is the willingness of retired and active members to help out when there is a need.

While I will no longer be involved in the business of running Branch 9, this does not mean I will not be around. I will be working out of the Region 7 Business Agent's Office in Northeast Minneapolis as the RWCA. I look forward to seeing everyone at the Branch 9 General Membership Meetings.

My time as your President has been both challenging and rewarding. I sincerely thank the membership for the opportunity and trust that I have been given to do that job.

In Solidarity,
Samantha

Bonus Open House pics.

Thanks for all the hardwork you all did!



BRANCH 9 2022 SCHOLARSHIP DRAWING WINNERS
--

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

		<u>School Attending</u>	<u>Parent</u>	<u>Work Location</u>
Winner	Ellie Meier	MSU – Mankato	Michael Meier	West Edina
1st Runner-Up	Abbie Kujawa	Undecided	Paul Kujawa	Main Office
2nd Runner-Up	Joseph Melancon	UND	Sidney Melancon	Mound

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

		<u>School Attending</u>	<u>Parent</u>	<u>Work Location</u>
Winner	Grace McCullough	Anoka – Ramsey Community College	Amerita McCullough	Osseo
1st Runner-Up	Abbie Kujawa	Undecided	Paul Kujawa	Main Office
2nd Runner-Up	Ilse Thompson-Nelson	Century College	Karen Thompson	Lowry

J. WESLEY WOODS – \$1,000.00

		<u>School Attending</u>	<u>Parent</u>	<u>Work Location</u>
Winner	Eli Guthrie	UW – River Falls	Michael Guthrie	Anoka
1st Runner-Up	Abbie Kujawa	Undecided	Paul Kujawa	Main Office
2nd Runner-Up	Daniel O'Neill	Undecided	Lisa O'Neill	Retired

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

	<u>Position</u>	<u>Work Location</u>
1st Winner	Richard Langsdorf	Richfield
2nd Winner	Patrick Paplow	Retired



Leadership Academy project presentation.

Christa Abraham presented her Leadership Academy project at the June Steward's meeting. Christa is part of Leadership Academy - Class 25, which started before the pandemic. Due to the delays caused by the pandemic, they are the longest running class. Christa decided to present on the NALC's Mutual Benefits Association. The presentation lasted about 25 minutes and covered the different life insurance policies available to NALC members and their families, as well as the Individual Disability Income Insurance Policy. These are just a few products offered by the NALC MBA. All those in attendance enjoyed the presentation and learned something new, of what the NALC offers their members. She has one more week in Washington DC and finishes with one week at the National Business Agent's office. Wonderful job, Christa!

Exec. Vice President's Report

Congratulations to Sam on her national appointment to Regional Workers Compensation Assistant for Regions 3, 5 & 7. I know she will experience great success in this new endeavor! I am proud of all we have been through and accomplished in the past two and a half years, and I cannot imagine having gone through any of it with anyone else.

Moving forward as your Branch 9 President, I am excited about new directions and that things are looking up. By the end of July, all CCA's in the Minneapolis Installation will be converted to either regular or PTF. All new hires in Minneapolis after this conversion will be PTF's, with instant career carrier status. Hopefully, this will be a meaningful start of a solution to our staffing issues. Positive changes like this have been a long-time coming. Let's hope it is a pre-cursor to a similar move for the Associate Offices.

By now you have most likely heard that there is also a new route adjustment agreement from the National Parties. The adjustments will be done by teams who are starting to receive specialized training as we speak. This new program is unique in that each of your routes will be adjusted using your actual performance on your route. No more being followed around by someone you don't know, who doesn't know your route or routine. No more being subjected to route inspectors whose only goal is to make a name for themselves by cutting routes.

We are working on some new initiatives. I am appointing a group of six carriers who are tasked with looking at our staffing issues and producing viable suggestions/solutions.

Our History Committee had their first meeting and have started compiling items for our history display. Anyone who has items to donate, please call the branch office to set up a time to stop by.

Lastly, we have a growing number of carriers who have English as a second language. Our work is hard enough – can you imagine trying to do it when you cannot understand most of what is communicated throughout the day? We need to break down these language and communication barriers. How can we do this? By recruiting current members who would be willing to help us translate information and answer questions from new carriers. We are actively seeking anyone who would like to help or has ideas to help our English as a second language carriers.

By my stepping into the position of President, the position of EVP needs to be filled. I am very pleased to announce that I will be appointing Scott Bultena as the next Branch 9 Executive Vice President, upon my move to the position of President. Scott has most recently represented branch members as a Trustee, Lead Formal Step A Representative and Technical Assistant in Arbitration Hearings. He has been a Letter Carrier for 17 years and served as Steward at St. Louis Park Station. In addition to the day-to-day administration of the Formal Step A grievance process, Scott's work has been pivotal to our success with both Forced Overtime and JSVB/Dignity and Respect in the Workplace grievances. Scott's temperament and level-headed decision-making skills will serve us all well.

While there are two full-time officers, we could not run the branch without the dedicated



JoAnn Gilbaugh

work of everyone on the Executive Board. We are blessed with a talented group, who never miss a beat and are always up to the challenge. Scott moving to EVP leaves a Trustee spot open. A decision on who will fill the position will be made soon.

One last congratulations is in order before I sign off on this month's article. Congratulations to Lenny Larson on the motion to name our new Branch 9 home after him! Lenny was the Branch 9 President when I started nearly 22 years ago. So much of what we have gained as a branch today is due to hard work and ingenuity of Lenny and his cohorts. The stories are legendary – as is Lenny. It is an honor to call him a mentor and a friend.

Our Retirees Banquet is scheduled for August 21st. I hope everyone - retired and active carriers will attend this important event.

If you haven't heard it lately – thank you to each one of you for the hard work you put in each and every day. It doesn't go unnoticed. Be kind to one another and look out for each other. In Solidarity there is strength.

JoAnn

THE ROOTS OF JUNETEENTH

Juneteenth, the nation's newest federal holiday, is the oldest nationally celebrated commemoration of the end of slavery in the United States.

It is rooted in events that took place in Texas in 1865.

President Abraham Lincoln had declared enslaved persons free as of Jan. 1, 1863, but enforcement of his Emancipation Proclamation relied heavily on the power and presence of the Union army. However, Texas, the westernmost state in the Confederacy, did not have any major battles during the Civil War and Union troops did not have a strong presence there. The resulting vacuum allowed slavery to continue for years after the proclamation.

On June 19, 1865, 2,000 federal troops finally arrived in Galveston Bay and declared enslaved persons free by executive decree. In 1866, the first celebration of Juneteenth was held in Texas. What began as church picnics and prayer meetings grew into barbecues, speeches and festivals.

The holiday's celebrants brought "Juneteenth" — a blend of "June" and "nineteenth" — to other states as they moved throughout the nation. Texas made Juneteenth a state holiday in 1980, and most states followed suit in subsequent years.

In 2021, President Joe Biden signed the law establishing Juneteenth as a federal holiday. Because June 19 falls on a Sunday in 2022, the holiday will be observed on Monday, June 20. This year will mark the Postal Service's first observance of Juneteenth.

Juneteenth provides Americans of all races an occasion to both celebrate human freedom and to reflect on the painful legacy of slavery in our country. It also provides an opportunity to re-commit ourselves to the work of achieving true equality for all Americans.

Now that Open Season for Health Benefits is long past- how can you change your health, dental and vision plans?

There are options to change your health, dental and vision plans. Only if a qualifying life event occurs. So, what is a qualifying life event? A qualifying life event (QLE) is a term defined by the Office of Personal Management (OPM) to describe events deemed acceptable by the IRS that may allow participants in health, dental and vision plans to change their plans outside of open season.

What are some of the qualifying life events (QLE)? They are divided in to three categories: me/my family, job and retirement.

* Me/my family would include- if I've acquired a new family member, my child's status is changing, a family member died or I'm getting married or remarried. I'm separated or I'm getting a divorce. I'm moving and/or working for another federal agency. If I die and if I've gained or lost coverage under my spouse.

* My job-my employment status is changing (not retiring). I'm called up to/return from military duty, I'm on leave without pay, I'm in receipt of workers

compensation or I'm leaving federal service (not retiring).

* Retirement- I'm thinking about retiring, I'm turning 65 years old, I'm retiring on disability and I'm returning as a reemployed annuitant in the federal government.

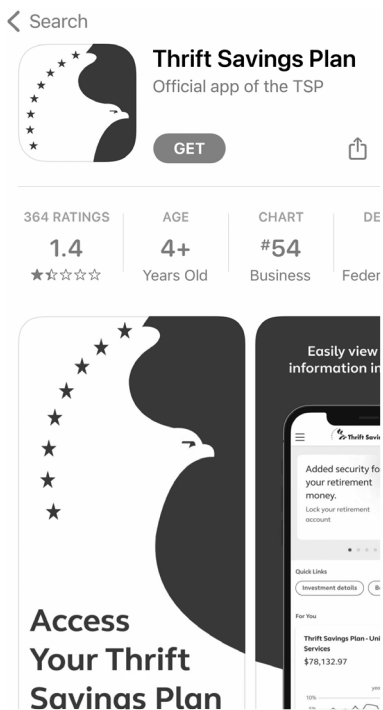
Also, if you are converted to a PTF or converted to a career carrier you can sign up for health, dental or vision benefits with 60 days.

With all these situations available outside of open season for a qualifying life event to happen-this is a good option to make some changes. All this information is available with greater detail on the OPM.gov website. If you know you qualify and want to make changes call Shared Services. 1-877-477-3273. Please call me if you have any questions.

Branch 9 NALC Health Benefits Representative
Ken Jambois
763-370-1392

Director of Retirees Report

If you like roller coaster rides, then viewing your TSP balance might be as good as a ride at the State Fair. The stock market is heaving up and down by hundreds of points almost daily. Understandably, the faint of heart have bailed as their returns tanked. Without giving advice on your personal position, just remember that bailing seals in any loss. If you can stomach it, riding through the waves might get you through these times in a better financial position.



mobile application is available and for some documents an e-signature will be allowed. Finally, there is a change in processing schedule will not affect those who normally get their TSP payments between the 1st and 15th of the month; they will get their payment on the normal date. However, any payments that are scheduled to be made between the 16th and the 31st will be made on the 16th.

We had a great Open House at our new building on June 5 with well over 80 people taking a tour. Food was served; games were available as well as good conversations at the tables under some

tents. One of the highlights of the tour was the History Room. A committee has been formed to collect memorabilia which will be displayed in this room. Currently we have old uniforms and even the Postal hat with badge #1 among many other items. The committee is still looking for more historical items, especially Striker material. Please contact the office if you have items for donations to display. Don't just drop things



Melia Derrick

off; space is limited and we want to maintain the quality of the collection.

Okay. I was wrong. When a retiree told me he thought carriers would be eligible for Hero Pay from the state, I said no way. I had what I thought were good arguments: it was money for state and private industry workers, those who worked front line jobs, we are quasi government workers and would not fall under this state program. But no, I was wrong. So, if you are a retiree now who worked during the time of covid, you are eligible to apply for the Hero Pay. You must apply before July 22nd at frontlinepay.mn.gov.

Stayed Tuned In
Melia Derrick



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

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Branch 9's Open House of the "Lenny A Larson" building, home of NALC Branch 9

continued from the front page



Larson Building cont'd from page 1

all while connecting labor and community organizations, churches, and politicians to letter carrier issues and the public service we delivered.

Also under Lenny's leadership, the branch went through 3 office moves, ultimately buying our very first building on Central Ave. We paid cash in full, in large part because of his focused plan of fiscal responsibility and good investments of branch savings.

Now, Lenny would be the first to tell you that he didn't do any of this- not alone. He would heap praise on his Executive Board and shop stewards, help from other Labor and community organizations, NALC Regional and National Headquarters and especially, the rank and file members of our branch. Lenny

was and is the consummate bridge builder, communicator and morale booster. But mostly, he's a fierce advocate for letter carriers and the US Postal Service's mission of public service. He loved to discuss and debate issues, with passion and respect. It may have gotten loud and was likely animated. But whether you ultimately agreed or not, it was sure to end with a friendly meal, a drink and a few stories (as Lenny famously loves to share). That's because Lenny believed everyone had value and a perspective that mattered.

And though Lenny officially retired in 2006, he has continued to work tirelessly for our branch in many ways. He has led committees, mentored young advocates, served on a new building search committee and was responsible for reconstructing our Building Corporation By Laws- an important legal requirement before we could

buy a new branch building.

It's also important to know that Lenny is a decorated combat Vietnam War veteran. And he raised three amazing children as a single parent.

Buildings and parks and roadways are named after important people for good reasons. It's a way to bestow an honor on them in a physical form. And we hope when people (who may not otherwise know) ask "who is Lenny A Larson and why is our branch building named after him?" they'll learn about him, and the timeless attributes of a great leader and greater man- and President Emeritus of Branch 9 of the NALC.

IN SOLIDARITY, AND WITH GREAT
APPRECIATION AND RESPECT,
Pam Donato

Humphrey-Mondale Dinner

Celebrating the Life and Legacy of Vice President Walter Mondale

Hi I'm Heidi Iverson, Nokomis station and political activist. I was asked to attend the Humphrey-Mondale Dinner in place of a PAL 9 member who was unable to attend. What a wonderful opportunity. I was going with the express idea of hearing from some big political figures in our great state of Minnesota. I was not disappointed when I heard uplifting words from Amy Klobuchar and also Governor Walz. There were many other wonderful speakers who talked about the things our state has gone through and awards were given. Many wonderful stories were shared about the leadership of Humphrey and Mondale, including the legacy they left behind and the good men they were. It was a wonderful way too get encouraged politically for the work that is still left to do. The one disappointment was the guest speaker Pete Buttigieg, the transportation secretary appointed by President Biden, got covid and was unable to appear. Pete did send a nice message to all of the attendees. The meal we all shared was wonderful and the chocolate desert was fabulous. If you have a desire to become more politically active you should consider joining PAL 9, that's the Political Action League for branch 9.



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.
 I am willing to be a chauffeur.
 Phone #: _____
 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)

50 YEAR RETIREES (JOINED IN 1972)

Arlo H Lange	Kenneth P Ring
Terry O'Neill	Charles B Stromquist
Douglas M Pederson	George A Wisuri
Leonard H Rardin, Jr.	

TOTAL – 7**55 YEAR RETIREES (JOINED IN 1967)**

Donald M Carlson	James E Krueger
Kent P Cleland	Robert D Landa
Richard H Colburn	Ronald G Lawrence
Lavern E Dornbusch	Larrie D Lovstad
Ronald L Everson	Charles R Peasha
Dennis D Folke	Lloyd C Schubich
Allan J Gulden	Gene Tronnes
Dallas V Holm	William C Tuffs
Arnold E Johnson	Gary L Weber
Roger W Johnson	Barry J Weiner
Donald Kology	

TOTAL – 21**60 YEAR RETIREES (JOINED IN 1962)**

Earl D Anderson	John M Keeley
Gerald L Arnold	William A Mechels
Lowell H Berget	John J Vesovich
Roger G Harwarth	

TOTAL – 7**65 YEAR RETIREES (JOINED IN 1957)**

Robert V Atherton	John L Hilden
Jack J Bartlett	Robert C Meyerson
William H Halos	Walter W Reed

TOTAL – 6**70 YEAR RETIREE (JOINED IN 1952)**

Herman A Metzler

TOTAL – 1

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- * 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 12
Steward Meeting
7:00PM
*In person *
Branch 9 Office, SLP

July 26
General Membership Meeting
7:00PM
In person and ZOOM
Crystal VFW, Crystal, MN

August 8-12
The 72nd Convention in Chicago

August 9
Steward Meeting
7:00PM
*In person *
Crystal VFW, Crystal, MN

August 21
Red & Gold Retiree Banquet
Noon
1330 Industrial Blvd NE, Mpls

August 25- September 5
Minnesota State Fair
Plan on volunteering at our kiosk

SAVE THE DATE
September 17th
MDA Bowl-a-thon
Place and Time TBD

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