

VOLUME 75 No 7

Official Publication of Branch Nine, NALC

September 2023

Branch 9 at the MN State Fair

We had a few visitors.

Another successful year at the Minnesota State Fair. Thank-you to all the volunteers who worked shifts at our NALC Branch 9 Kiosk located at the Labor Pavilion. We represented letter carriers every day at the fair from 9-5.

We supported other unions in their causes, met new labor friends and heard some great music by Union musicians.

At the kiosk this year we had "Thank You" postcards that visitors could write a special appreciation note to their letter carrier. Branch 9 will send those cards to the carriers and the offices identified. Several people stopped by to expressed their love of the post office and the carriers that work hard every day, knowing we are short staffed but we still deliver.

Pictured are the many elected officials that stopped by to express their gratitude for the service we provide and the support of labor in bettering the lives of Minnesotans.



Dale Steinberg, US Senator Amy Klobuchar and Connie Beissel



Will Mathes, MN Lieutenant Gov. Peggy Flanagan and Connie Beissel



Connie Beissel, US Representative Angie Craig, JoAnn Gilbaugh and Will Mathes



Andrew Truckenmiller, MN Secretary of State Steve Simon and Scott Bultena



Connie Beissel, US Representative Ilhan Omar and Dale Steinberg,

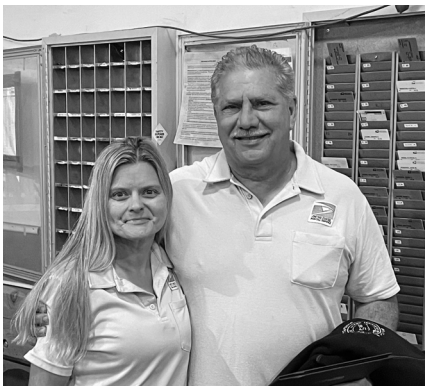


Photos Cont'd on page 11...

RETIREMENTS



Jodi Roppe (Elk River)
Last Punch!
Happy Retirement!



Steven Mealey (Burnsville)
with Steward Patricia Webb
Best Wishes in Retirement!



Paul Laman (Fridley)
with Steward Perry Korzenowski
Enjoy Retirement!



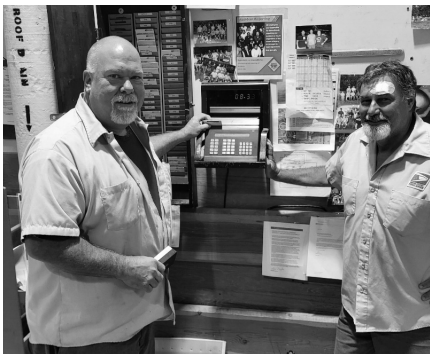
Neil Heiges (Zone 4/54) Last Punch!
with Steward Johnny Holupchinski
Congratulations on Retirement!

NEW MEMBERS

- Raheem Akindele
- Christopher Birr
- Zachary Blihovde Senn
- Blair Bost
- Gerald Jay Cichon
- Angeles Delgado
- Tashi Dorjee
- Scott Ezekiel
- Muhamed Fazlic
- Georgiy Garbuz
- David Holly
- Joe Kollie
- Scott Laban
- Arionna Littlejohn
- Jessica Lucia
- Samantha Mallet
- Krysta-Tai Modtland
- Maxwell Mouser
- Da Norbu
- Adam Paul
- Erica Ratliff
- Eldis Salihovic
- Carlos Sykes
- Harvey Tappin
- Christopher Timahl
- Lamia White
- Gina Whitebird
- Collin Wolfe

In Memoriam

- Nick Boosalis
- David Leba



Brandon Rystedt (Golden Valley)
last punch with
Steward Dave Mash
Happy Retirement!

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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.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Local Memorandum of Understanding (LMOU)

Pretty soon we will have a new National Contract. Whether a tentative agreement is reached before or after Arbitration is, at this point, unknown. What we do know is that once our new contract is in place each branch in the country will have a 30-day negotiating period to address changes and/or corrections in their LMOU.

Branch 9 has 11 LMOU's, one that covers the Minneapolis installation and one for each of our 10 associate offices. As a Branch, we need to review our LMOU's and receive feedback from our members. Included in this month's Branch 9 News is a local negotiation survey. Please take the time to review the LMOU that affects you at your station, fill out the survey and mail it to the Branch office. This is a very important part of the process because it allows you as an active member to have your voice heard and your input considered. Please keep in mind that we need to be reasonable in our expectations. The key word here is negotiations, they will not be demands. Any addition or change that we propose will need to be backed up by factual data.

Please take the time to review your LMOU and provide feedback by mailing the survey to the Branch 9 office.

Updating Work Restrictions

Management has been sending out letters to carriers who have work restrictions asking for their restrictions to be updated. Management has the right to ask carriers to update their restrictions,

however, in the letter they are asking for this update within 14 days. It is not always possible to get an appointment to see your doctor in 14 days. Sometimes they are a month out with appointments and at times even longer than that. Some station managers have gone so far as to tell carriers that if they do not have their restrictions updated within that 14-day time frame their restrictions are no longer valid. This is not true. Do not worry because your restrictions have not become invalid if you are unable to get in to see your doctor right away. Get in to see your doctor as soon as possible and please stick to the restrictions that your doctor has set for you. This is how you are going to heal by following the advice and direction of your medical provider. Going forward, management can again ask you to update your restrictions, but they need to be reasonable in how often they ask for this update. For example, if you have a long-term condition and your doctor wants you to be seen every six months for review, it would not be reasonable for management to ask for updated restrictions every three months. If you have questions or concerns regarding this issue, please do not hesitate to contact me or Joe to discuss.

State Fair

By the time you read this the corn dogs, cheese curds and your favorite food "on a stick" will be a memory. Every year Branch 9 has a theme for the fair. This year we focused on Letter Carrier appreciation. We created cards that fairgoers could fill out expressing their appreciation to their Letter Carrier. We will then take those letters and send them to the stations where the



Scott Bultena

appreciated carriers deliver. Letter Carriers are hard workers and the Executive Board thought it was a good idea to allow customers to show their appreciation. Every year we ask the membership to volunteer to work a shift at the fair. If you have never done this, I encourage you to please give it a try next year. We provide 2 tickets for admission if you work one shift and 3 tickets if you work the full day. This is a great opportunity to talk with active and retired members that visit the booth as well as customers. It is a great opportunity to network with members of other Unions as well. While I was at the fair a member of the newly formed Union that represents the workers of Half Price Books stopped by to ask our Union to write a letter to their management asking for livable wages and a fair contract. I also had a chance to connect with the nurse's union, International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW), the Service Employees International Union (SEIU), and others. It was great to hear their stories. They all have different employers and different crafts but many of the issues are the same as ours. Please consider volunteering next year, it is a great opportunity to connect with customers, co-workers, and other Unions.

In Solidarity,
Scott

NALC AND MDA

When our partnership began more than 70 years ago, no one imagined the incredible impact our work together would have on the futures of MDA families, NALC, and the entire neuromuscular disease community. Throughout the years, NALC branches and leadership became part of the MDA family and, simultaneously, were side by side with families as they grew older and more independent.

In 1952, NALC became MDA's first national sponsor and declared MDA their official charity. Since that time, NALC has raised more than \$20 million through annual fundraising campaigns that support MDA's mission, including Bowl-a-Thons, golf events, MDA Muscle Walks, letter writing campaigns and more. In 2022 alone, NALC raised over \$875,000 and for that we extend our most sincere gratitude.

Thank you, NALC!

2022 Highlights

70+
years as partners

\$875K+
raised for MDA

232
Branches and State Associations
Actively Fundraising



Exec. Vice President's Report

Hello Brother and Sisters of Branch 9. As most of you know, there was a long time between route adjustments here in Minneapolis. Now that the TIAREAP process is in full swing, stations are getting an idea of what this new process looks like. There are a good number of carriers that have never been through a route adjustment process before and it can be intimidating.

In previous route adjustments, management would use your clock rings. For a week, they would send out a 3999 team to perform route evaluations, meaning there would be a manager or supervisor watching you while you do your route for a week. They would record each delivery and your relay time, input all your comfort stops, 10-minute breaks, and lunch break. In this previous process, there was a human watching your every move to make sure that you were doing your job the way you were supposed to do it. If you didn't, they would mark it down and take away time if they felt it was necessary. Within 3 days, you would have a consultation about your evaluation and they would have the data to adjust your route accordingly.

The way they adjust routes is still similar to the previous method, but the way they obtain the data is completely different. The current TIAREAP process takes the human element completely out of the evaluation. Routes are no longer being evaluated by a supervisor or manager; your route data is now being recorded constantly by your scanner. Please note that scanner data during June, July, August, and December will not be used for your route adjustments. As you all know, carriers do their routes differently as routes vary greatly in areas such as business, mounted, apartments and cluster boxes, etc. The scanner is programmed to record the data as if every carrier does their route the same way, every day, by the book. This causes a problem for the adjustment team,

and routes are not getting the appropriate credit towards their adjustment time.

For example, if you skip any step of your job duties to save time, then you are shorting your adjustment as the scanner is programmed to record data as if you performed every expectation of a letter carrier. Or if you skip a break, the scanner assumes you took your breaks and records as such. I know with the current staffing issues and being forced to carry extra that carriers want to get home to their families and may possibly skip some job responsibilities. I get it. I just want to make sure that everyone understands how the process works and why your route adjustment may not come in how you expect.

I'm not going to get into the specific numbers that are listed in the memo for TIAREAP as those are suggested times or national averages. The main message I want to get across in this article is this: the way you do your route could affect your route adjustment for years to come. I've been through many adjustments over my career and there is always a common thread. For the routes where a carrier does it by the book, these routes tend to get a reduction. On the other side of the coin where there is an overburdened route and for the carrier to make "the numbers", shortcuts were made and/or breaks are skipped. These routes seem to receive an addition and the carriers feel that it doesn't make sense. Why would the shortest route get a cut and the biggest route get an addition. It's all about doing every expectation of our job duties as our scanner is programmed to record. If we provide clean data to go into the process then we should get a clean adjustment.

I cannot remember a time when management checked up on us to make sure we were doing all our expected tasks that I mentioned above. You might be wondering if you are doing all your expected



Joseph Tiemann

tasks or not. On the Branch 9 website (www.Branch9nalc.com) click the Contract/Agreements LMOU link then scroll down to the link labeled Letter Carrier Perfect III. This little booklet has so much valuable information in it. It explains our job expectations to a T. You may laugh at some of the expectations listed, but this is what the Post Office is paying us to do. This guide was created by the region 7 office but everything in it is from the Postal Service handbooks, manuals, and national memos. It lays out what we are supposed to do every day. These expectations are what they used to program the scanners. The Post Office pays us to do all the expectations in this book. If we don't do them then we just give that time back. Please note that the info in this book is great to know for every carrier. It was written before the current scanners we use today, so for example there isn't any language about how to use the load truck feature or scanning out your keys, but the info is still good.

After consulting with some carriers that have recently finished their TIAREAP process and some carriers who are currently in the middle of the process, I have a couple of tips to pass on to help your route adjustments go smoothly.

EVP report cont'd on pg. 11

All good things must come to an end!



Please join Branch 9 to celebrate
the retirement of **JoAnn Gilbaugh**

Friday, October 13th
5:00 – 8:00PM

CRYSTAL VFW
5222 - 56TH Avenue North, Main Floor
Crystal, MN 55429

Please RSVP to Angie at angie@branch9nalc.com
by Thursday, October 5th.

Director of Retirees Report

Finally, America and Medicare are getting serious about the cost of drugs. Part of the Inflation Reduction Act gave the government the right to directly broker with drug manufacturers. Don't expect immediate relief since the negotiations begin this year and any new prices will not be effective before 2026. There are 50 drugs to be considered in the coming years that make up 20% of the \$50 billion in drug pharmacy costs Medicare covers annually. Projections are for discounts from 25-60% with a penalty for the drugmakers if they raise drug prices faster than inflation. The initial roll out will include ten drugs; followed by negotiations for twenty different medicines and then another round of negotiations for twenty more. It will be a process covering the next decade.

What is on this first list? Ten drugs used by 9 million people with \$3.4 billion in out-of-pocket expenses in 2022. Blood thinners (Eliquis, is used by 3.7 million people of a cost of \$16.5 billion annually to Medicare), diabetes drugs, heart failure treatments, rheumatoid arthritis, blood cancer and insulin medications.

So of course, there are people and companies unhappy with this. Big Pharma is suing to derail any

negotiations as unconstitutional and the ever-famous warning that this would "stifle incentive for Research and Development." The Veterans Administration already negotiates their drug prices; how can that be constitutional and this not? The R&D alarm must always be tempered with the knowledge that pharmaceutical companies receive substantial U.S. government assistance in the form of publicly funded basic research and tax breaks. Congress does not always support price negotiations because they get big donations from drug companies.

Congress is supposedly working on funding the federal government by passing twelve appropriation bills for the coming fiscal year of 2024. Supposedly, because the "Freedom" caucus is once again trying to stop government from functioning at any level. The House GOP has marked up these bills at lower levels than the caps McCarthy negotiated with Biden for just months ago. They are insisting on no short-term extensions (a common occurrence) and including amendments such as no taxpayer dollars go to prosecute any major presidential candidate (read Trump). The timeline to get this all worked out ends October 1. Then the shut down begins. Any federal agency that has not had



Melia Derrick

their appropriations approved would have to shut down. Essential workers would work with no paychecks until the shutdown is over. Imagine that.

The good news is that our Social Security and our pensions checks will continue. Issuance of new Social Security cards would be suspended. On a typical day, approximately 60,000 Americans apply for Social Security cards. Hopefully this is all settled before the deadline.

Stay tuned In

Melia Derrick



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

AME'S UNIFORMS

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

Thank you again for the donation to buy school supplies. We delivered the supplies today to Deerwood Elementary and Blackhawk Middle School in Eagan.

Pictured is the Principal of Deerwood Tara Rusck, Colleen Nocerini (RLF staff) and myself.

-Connie Beissel

Congratulations Lake Street Carriers

Paul Greer (25 years), Scooter Hill (40 years), Ron Ploog (25 years), Todd Aldentaler (25 years) and Bruce Okeson (25 years) for your dedication to the NALC and Branch 9 for all of these years!

For other recent Branch 9 Union membership pin recipients: Check out our Facebook page- **Branch 9 Online**



Andrew Hagan
Branch 9 LCPF coordinator

Just a reminder you can sign up for LCPF through online services and do it as an allotment or you can write a check out to Letter Carrier Political Fund and do a one time payment. If you are writing



DELIVERING NALC'S MESSAGE TO WASHINGTON

check please include your name AND the branch number on the memo line of the check. It was a great night at the August GMM, after the meeting several carriers committed funds to LCPF! We are moving in the right direction but have lots of work ahead of us. I hope we can get more carriers signed up as soon as possible. I'll continue to update the membership on various LCPF topics each month.

Thanks,
Andrew Hagan

LOCAL NEGOTIATIONS SURVEY

Name: _____ City: _____
(Please Print)

Station: _____

This survey is being provided to you requesting any input you may have regarding Branch 9's upcoming Local Memorandum of Understanding (LMOU) negotiating period.

Please take the time to complete this survey and feel free to comment with your thoughts and suggestions. It is our negotiating team's desire to gain direction from the membership and attempt to include any positive ideas as items to be considered for our agenda. ***There is no guarantee that what you may wish or suggest can be negotiated with the Postal Service.*** If additional space is needed, please use the area provided on the back of this survey.

When completed, please fold and mail the survey back to the Branch office. Thanks in advance for your input.

1. Are there any items that are presently in the Local Agreement that you want changed or clearer language for? What are they?

2. Are there any items that you would like to incorporate into our Local Agreement? What are they?



BRANCH 9 FALL RAFFLE

\$ 20.00 Cub Foods Gift Cards

(50 Gift Cards Available)

**GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING
TUESDAY, OCTOBER 24, 2023
7:00PM**

ZOOM (must be linked in and accounted
for by NO LATER than 7:30PM)

OR

IN PERSON at the Crystal VFW!

**RAFFLE WINNERS WILL BE DRAWN
FROM MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE
(BOTH IN PERSON AND VIA ZOOM)**

EVP report cont'd from pg. 5

Tip number 1. Don't combine any tasks or stationary events. For example, don't take a comfort stop 10 minutes break and do replenishing time at the same location as it will be hard for the team to identify how long each event took.

Number 2. Relay time. Relay time is the time either at the beginning or the end of a split that you do your SCHULCH and load your next split right into your bag so it's ready for delivery. If you have stationary time at the beginning and the end of your split, it will be hard to determine how much relay time was used for each split.

Number 3. Clean clock rings. Don't punch over to another function just to make your manager's numbers. If you are doing office function then you need to be on 722 or 744. If you are on the street then 721.

Number 4. Carry your scanner on you at all times. Scan packages at the door or delivery point.

Number 5. You are your best advocate during consultations. If you have a concern about your route then tell the team. If they don't know about a unique challenge on

your route, you could be dealing with this issue until the next time adjustments come around. For example, unsafe U-turn or line of travel, road construction, etc.

I hope these tips help you with your route adjustments in the future and when the team comes to your station, you have had a chance to provide good clean data to get a fair adjustment.

If you want to know more about TIAREAP, do a quick internet search for these memos: M-01982, M-01983, M-10984. They will provide detailed information about the entire process.

In solidarity,
Joseph Tiemann.

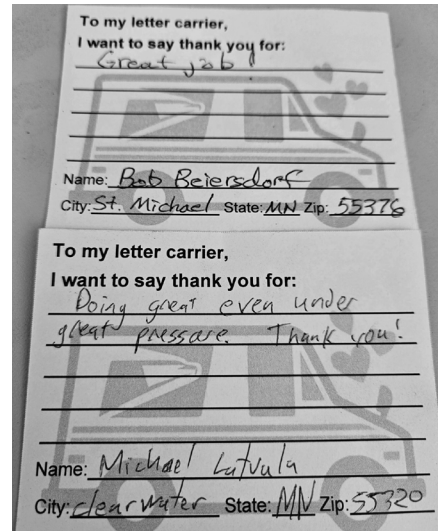


Joe Tiemann and Christa Abraham @ State Fair Br. 9 Kiosk

"State Fair" ...continued from page 1.



Robb Petersburg with the new mailbox post he made. Looks Great!



SAVE THE DATE

HAPPY KWANZAA!

Merry
Branch 9
Happy Holidays Celebration
Christmas Hanukkah

Sunday, November 26th, 2023

Noon – 4:00PM

Location To Be Determined

Happy Holidays

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

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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

September 26

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

October 24

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

October 1-4

MSALC
State Convention

November 7

Election Day

October 9

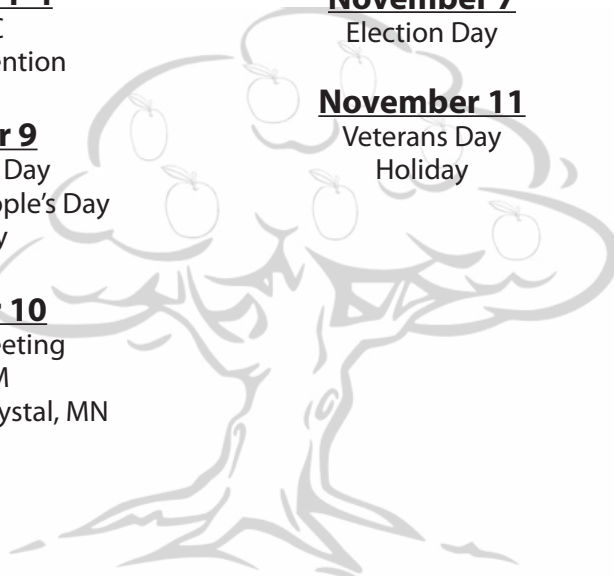
Columbus Day
Indigenous People's Day
Holiday

November 11

Veterans Day
Holiday

October 10

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



Northside Retiree Breakfast

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

N Suburban Retiree Breakfast

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

Fridley Retiree Lunch

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