



JEROME J. KEATING BRANCH

BRANCH NINE NEWS

"AN INJURY TO ONE IS AN INJURY TO ALL"

VOLUME 76 No 8

Official Publication of Branch Nine, NALC

October 2024

Branch 9 endorsed the following candidates:

US President/Vice President:
Kamala Harris/Tim Walz

US Senate:
Amy Klobuchar

US House of Representatives:

District 1: Rachel Bohman

District 2: Angie Craig

District 3: Kelly Morrison

District 4: Betty McCollum

District 5: Ilhan Omar

District 8: Jen Schultz

MN Senate (Special Election):

Ann Johnson Stewart

MN House of Representatives:

- 32B- Matt Norris
- 34A- Brian Raines
- 34B- Melissa Hortman
- 35A- Zack Stephenson
- 35B- Kari Rehauer
- 36A- Janelle Calhoun
- 37B- Kristin Bahner

- 38A- Huldah Hiltzley
- 38B- Samantha Vang
- 39A- Erin Koegel
- 39B- Sandra Feist
- 42A- Ned Carroll
- 42B- Ginny Klevorn
- 43A- Cedrick Frazier
- 43B- Mike Freiberg
- 45A- Tracy Breazeale
- 45B- Patty Acomb
- 46A- Larry Kraft
- 46B- Cheryl Youakim
- 48B- Lucy Rehm
- 49B- Charlie Kotyza-Witthuhn
- 50A- Julie Greene

- 50B- Steve Elkins
- 51A- Michael Howard
- 51B- Nathan Coulter
- 54A- Brad Tabke
- 55A- Jess Hanson
- 59A- Fue Lee
- 59B- Esther Agbaje
- 60A- Sydney Jordan
- 60B- Mohamud Noor
- 61B- Jamie Long
- 62A- Aisha Gomez
- 62B- Anquam Mahamoud
- 63A- Samantha Sencer-Mura
- 63B- Emma Greenman



NEW MEMBERS

Madeline Aldinger
 Anya Anderson
 Krystal Bauman-Burrows
 Joseph Butze
 Rosieanna Doby
 Bokela Donatien
 Felicia Ecklund
 James Edlund
 Allisha Gray
 William Hanson
 Grant Harrington
 Richard Henson
 Taylor Jackson
 Matthew Jaeger
 Alisa Jojic

Catherine Jones
 Heidi Kelley
 Byron Luff
 Jacob Maddaus
 Heather Matthiesen
 Rickey Robinson
 Emilio Serrato-Ocampo
 Timothy Silkworth
 Evelyn Suarez
 Jason Stephens
 Darold Taylor
 Jacques Tucker
 Frank Wylie
 Mark Yount
 Jose Zapanta

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Exec. Vice President

Joseph Tiemann

Recording Secretary

Robb Petersburg

Treasurer

Christa Abraham

Financial Secretary

Stacey Ellingson

Editor

Jeremy Rothstein
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Sergeant at Arms

Will Mathes

Trustees

Nicole Goodin
 Latasha McCaleb
 Nick Tiemann

Director of Retirees

Darrell Maus

NALC Health Benefits Rep.

Ken Jambois
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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.

Elections can seem simple: you register, vote, and find out the results. Simplicity and ease of use are not accidents - they are features of Minnesota's carefully crafted election laws that seek to balance voter access and election security. Learn more about how elections work in Minnesota. <https://www.sos.state.mn.us/elections-voting/how-elections-work/>



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

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Local Memorandum of Understanding (LMOU)

Pretty soon we will have a new National Contract. 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 Tiemann to discuss.

Mental Health

I am concerned about the mental health of some Branch 9 members. As I go around doing station visits, I see quite a few carriers that appear to me to be depressed. I know what this looks like because I have struggled with depression for most of my life. It is not a surprise to me that with the long hours that we are required to work, and for many of us, the poor treatment we receive daily that carriers are struggling.

We all have moments in our lives when we feel sad or down in the dumps, but if weeks go by and those feelings linger, it may be depression. Depression can leave you feeling overwhelmed and, in some cases, unable to function. If you feel that you need to speak to a professional, please don't hesitate to reach out to your doctor or make a call to the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) their number is 800-EAP-4YOU (1-800-327-4968)

According to the CDC nearly 46,000 Americans died by suicide



Scott Bultena

in 2020. Unfortunately, those numbers are rising across the country. Most people who commit suicide don't want to die, but to end their pain. Please recognize some of the warning signs and reach out to help anyone who:

- Talks about suicide either jokingly or seriously.
- Focus or dwell on the topic of death.
- Make plans. The person may take steps to prepare for death, like updating a will, giving stuff away, saying goodbye to others, some may write a suicide note.
- Becomes withdrawn. Avoids friends and family, loses interest in activities, becomes isolated.
- Shows despair. May talk openly about unbearable pain or feeling like they are a burden on others.

How to Help

- Take all suicide warning signs seriously. Your involvement and support may help save a life.
- Don't be afraid to ask whether the person you're concerned about is thinking of suicide, is depressed, or has problems. Talking about it won't make the person act on their feelings. It might help ease suicidal thoughts -- and lets you know if you need to take further action.
- Encourage the person to talk to a mental health professional as soon as possible. The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline is always open. You can reach a trained counselor at 988.

In Solidarity, Scott

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.

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

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

Exec. Vice President's Report

Hello Branch 9,

It was great to see so many members at the September GMM. It had to be the most attended meeting in recent years as there were over 100 members between in person and Zoom. The General Membership Meetings (GMM's) are where the business of the branch takes place. We go over things that are going on in our branch such as tactics that management is using or social events that our branch is hosting. They are also a great place to get information about what is going on politically and upcoming updates such as health care plan changes. This is the last year that the health plans will be called FEHB (Federal Employee Health Benefits). Starting 2025 the name will be changed to PSHB (Postal Service Health Benefit). Open season will begin November 11 and run through December 9th 2024. I encourage you to keep an eye and ear open for updates about this change as details continue to come out. Overall, the GMM is a great place to meet with your brothers and sisters from all over branch 9. I hope to see you at a GMM soon.

Season change

Summer is coming to a close and we can see fall knocking on the door with cool to cold mornings and nice, warm afternoons. Not to mention all the leaves that are falling already. Be careful while walking when there are a lot of leaves as they can hide hazards and become slippery. The biggest challenge we face as the fall sets in is the amount of daylight. It is staying dark longer in the morning and getting darker sooner at night. November 3rd is daylight savings, and it will be dark by 5:30 pm very soon. With this, it's important to know the rules about delivering after dark.

Delivering in the dark all by itself is not considered an unsafe act. Which is crazy since we all know

it's much safer when delivering in the daylight. But we should know when it is unsafe out there. First, if you are scheduled to deliver in the dark, be sure to let your supervisor know that with the amount of mail scheduled to you that it will put you in a delivery after dark situation. Be sure to attempt the delivery, if you run into any hazards out on the route such as dogs barking and you can't see them or some sidewalks are very uneven due to cracking or anything that would increase the chances of being unsafe and you feel you need to bring the mail back because of it, then report to your supervisor via the scanner that you are bringing the mail back. Once you are back at the station, fill out a 1767 form, which is a report of hazard, unsafe condition or practice. On this form you will report what hazard(s) are preventing you from delivering that mail due to an unsafe condition, then hand it to your supervisor. It's good to make a copy of the form for your records. Also, if the mail is not going to be delivered, then ask your supervisor for a PS form 1571 which is a curtailment of mail slip. Management is to give you a reason why the mail is being delayed, such as management told me to curtail the mail. You must do these steps to protect yourself. Management insults us by pushing our start times back to 7:30, 8:00 and even 8:30 especially stations where carriers are getting forced to carry extra and forcing the OTDL to work until 9pm. This is crazy, and why you need to know your rights when it comes to keeping yourself safe. Your family needs you to be safe and healthy.

Signed CA-16

If you are injured at work and you are going to seek medical attention, you need to make sure you have a signed CA-16 given to



Joseph Tiemann

you by management. This form is an authorization from management for you to seek medical treatment. Over the past 2 months there have been more and more carriers coming into the office to get help with their medical bills. Meaning they got injured at work and went to get care and didn't have a CA-16. These are the steps: the doctor knows that it is a work comp claim so they will treat you. A few months go by and the doctor has been trying to bill the postal service, but they keep getting denied because there isn't an authorization from management about the injury. The next step is that the doctor is going to send all the bills to you. Now you have many thousands of dollars in bills with your name on them. All of this could have been avoided by getting the signed CA-16 from management.

I am asking all of you, if you hear of a carrier that has been injured, please reach out to the stewards right away. Stewards, please call the branch to notify the branch of all injuries and accidents. Keep an eye on each other and give each other as much support as possible. This can be a challenging time of the year especially during the election season with no break going into peak. Please be safe out there.

In Solidarity,
Joseph Tiemann

Branch 9 Candidates for President



I am asking you to vote for me in the upcoming election. We have accomplished a lot since I have been the President of Branch 9. When I became President, we had over 200 open grievances. Under my direction, we worked hard to clean them up and I am proud to say that we settle or send to step B all cases that make it up to Formal A within 7 days of receipt. This means quicker answers to the carriers who need to be made whole.

I have been a good steward with the branch 9 finances. We have moved money from low interest savings accounts to CD's and as a result have made the branch over 20K in interest and counting!

I created the budget for 2024 based on 1220 members. We fluctuate between 1240 to 1265 members. I set the number low because I believe strongly in being prudent with the branch's money.

I have worked in collaboration with management to re-start the monthly safety meetings. I have also worked with them to add a full-time Formal A representative, so now, for the first time ever, we have 3 full-time Formal A representatives. I know the importance of developing a solid working relationship with management. We cannot demand everything we have to be able to develop working relationships with management to get major things done. This is something that my opponent is incapable of doing.

I love this job because I love letter carriers! I get great satisfaction when I can help a person with their OWCP paperwork or help a steward with a grievance. I celebrate with you when you retire, and I mourn with you at funerals when you lose loved ones. Please vote for me so I can continue to work hard for you!



TO MY SISTERS AND BROTHERS IN BRANCH 9,

I ASK THAT YOU VOTE FOR ME, JOE RIAN, FOR PRESIDENT IN THE UPCOMING BRANCH 9 ELECTION THIS NOVEMBER 2024. I'M RUNNING WITH A GREAT GROUP OF CARRIERS ON THE BRANCH 9 REFORM SLATE. I HOPE YOU WILL SUPPORT US ALL.

FOR MY PART, I'M LOOKING TO LEAD BRANCH 9 IN THE FOLLOWING DIRECTIONS;

TRANSPARENCY AND STABILITY IN OUR BOOKKEEPING AND ACCOUNTING PRACTICES;

REPRESENTING AND PROTECTING ALL OUR MEMBERSHIP ON THE WORKROOM FLOOR THROUGH TOUGHNESS AND PERSISTENCE IN THE GRIEVANCE PROCESS. AND,

WORK TO DEVELOP A COLLECTIVE, LONG RANGE VISION FOR THE BRANCH THAT WILL IMPACT AND

INFLUENCE OUR NATIONAL LEADERS IN ADVOCATING FOR A BETTER FUTURE FOR THE LETTER CARRIER CRAFT, INCLUDING HIGHER WAGES FOR ALL.

MY EXPERIENCE IS AS FOLLOWS;

I HAVE BEEN A CITY LETTER CARRIER AT RICHFIELD STATION FOR OVER THIRTY YEARS, STARTING AS A CASUAL CARRIER IN 1984. I HAVE SERVED AS UNION STEWARD AT RICHFIELD FOR OVER 25 YEARS. I HAVE ALSO SERVED AS A BRANCH 9 TRUSTEE, PAST CHAIR OF THE ELECTION COMMITTEE AND AS FORMAL STEP A GRIEVANCE REPRESENTATIVE. I WAS ALSO MDA COORDINATOR FOR THE BRANCH AND THE MINNESOTA STATE ASSOCIATION OF LETTER CARRIERS.

IN ROUTE ADJUSTMENTS, I SERVED AS PART OF THE REGION 7 IRAP, JRAP AND MIRAP ROUTE ADJUSTMENT TEAMS AND RECIEVED NALC TRAINING ON THE COR (COMPUTER OPTIMIZED ROUTE) PROGRAM.

I HAVE RECEIVED NATIONAL DIRECTORS AND OFFICERS TRAINING AS A TRUSTEE AS WELL AS STEP B TRAINING WHILE BEING FORMAL STEP A REPRESENTATIVE.

MY TIME IN THE BRANCH HAS BEEN A STORIED ONE AND MY DEDICATION TO THE MEMBERSHIP IS DEEP. I LOVE THIS JOB AND THE CARRIERS I WORK WITH. I APPRECIATE THE OPPORTUNITY TO GIVE BACK TO YOU ALL FOR ALL YOU HAVE GIVEN ME.

JOE RIAN

Branch 9 Candidates for Executive Vice President



My name is William Mathes and I'm NOT here to explain to you what the issues are. We all know darn well what the issues are.

This is about OUR fight together against the mismanagement that continues within the USPS.

If you vote for me, **I will be part of the solution** which is to end our division locally and bring back our SOLIDARITY.

I want to work with people that I may not agree with. I thrive in an atmosphere with diversity of thought because I don't have all the answers. The answers exist within ALL of us!

I will serve YOU as if my life depended on it!

Currently, I serve as: Carrier of 11 years; Lost Lake Steward; Area Steward; Formal Step A Representative; Chairman of the Bylaw Committee; and Sergeant-at-Arms on the EBoard.

My former career included 20 years of sales and management experience including 3 years as a District Manager and Trainer for a major retailer.

If you put your trust in me, I will put my experience to work building an even stronger team of Stewards to protect your rights more effectively.

I will work as hard as you do because we are in this fight together. I don't need to add another item to my resume, I'm here to work. I want to get stuff done! I will stand up and stand beside you and we will take on this fight together.

I need you to share my message with your fellow Carriers. I'm NOT an "establishment" candidate. I'm an outsider with a fresh perspective.

I will listen to you when you need to be heard.

I will continue to ask for your help because I value what you have to offer. Together, we will continue this fight because **together, we are unstoppable!**



An injury to one is an injury to all! When our carriers are harmed we file grievances to hold Management accountable. There's so much more that we can do to institute an effective grievance machine. We need to be proactive in contract enforcement and strategize about how best to push back on the attacks from Management on our rights and working conditions.

Effective representation doesn't just come through filing grievances, we need to build our confidence and power on the workroom floor. What does it take to make things right without a grievance? We will share our stories of success and learn from our mistakes.

Branch 9 can have a voice on a national level in the NALC and in the labor movement. By the time you read this we'll have already had what I'm sure will be a very successful contract rally on the national day of action on October 14th. This action was taken in solidarity and coordinated with Branches all over the country who also held rallies on the same day. We take inspiration from the labor movement and the increasing fight from unions and workers all over the country who are telling the bosses enough is enough!

I ask for your support not just for myself but for Joe Rian, Andrew Hagan, Joe Tanner, Cheryl Dombrock, Susan Becker and Tim Bash. Solidarity forever!

Branch 9 Candidates for Recording Secretary



My name is Robb Petersburg, and I've been Recording Secretary for over four years. I started carrying mail in 2006 and spent nearly 6 years as a PTF. During that time, I learned from the senior carriers at Lost Lake who referred to me as "The Kid". In 2018, Mike Zagaros appointed me to Sergeant-at-Arms. I became a Trustee, and in 2020, became Recording Secretary.

I'm seeking reelection to Recording Secretary in the upcoming Branch 9 election. For the first time, I'm being challenged for my position by a slate that claims to be anti-establishment but is creating a swamp of friends. In my opinion, there are only two reasons why someone should challenge an incumbent; the incumbent is doing a bad job, or they think they can do a better job. In almost 5 years, I haven't gotten one complaint about how I perform my responsibilities. Second, my challenger doesn't know the position and doesn't know the job duties. The only remaining reasons to run against me are selfish in nature and

risk the progress of the Branch. I've always put the letter carriers first through supporting trainings and coordinating social events. I've tirelessly fought to ensure members of Branch 9 get the best of the best.

The emerging candidates have waged a clear attack on anyone with experience, knowledge, and reason. They don't have the members' best interests in mind, nor are they interested in a fair election. They've setup an in-person forum on a day they knew I would be attending the NALC Leadership Academy in Maryland. The election committee began a candidate meeting during scheduled Recording Secretary duties (don't worry, I caught the last question).

To all members: please vote. Democracy only works if everyone votes, not just those willing to sacrifice your job security.



Hello Brothers and Sisters of Branch 9! I am Andrew Hagan writing to you asking for your vote for Recording Secretary. Just like many of you have experienced and have discussed with each other I too am frustrated and disappointed with the direction our union has taken both nationally and locally. I am hoping to be part of the process to move it forward to a fighting, working, educational and inclusive union for the members.

Far too often when young carriers bring up concerns to national and local leaders they have their concerns and suffering dismissed. We all deserve a fair work life balance and work overtime as the exception not the rule. I will never forget having to call out for a mental health crisis after completing 2+ years of OT that didn't have an end in sight. Our leaders at the time said " what do you want me to do about it?"

In my time since February of 2021 I have been on the budget committee twice as a rank a file representative, head steward at Loring station and Branch 9 Letter Carrier Political Fund Coordinator. Each time I get more involved I see opportunities for us to grow together. If I were to be elected to the E-board I'd be a voice of reason and progress. I'd be an advocate for the young workforce that needs help.

As recording secretary I'd be more vigilant on the financing of the E-board, make sure checks or warrants are accurate. I'd also make sure that all voices are represented in the meeting minutes at the General Membership Meeting and the E-board meeting. I have 28 more years to go before retirement and I'd love to be able to have a fighting and militant union for every single year!

Thanks

Branch 9 Candidates for Director of Retirees



My name is Darrell Maus, I am the current Director of Retirees for Branch 9. Under the Branch 9 Bylaws the required duties of this position include; Be active in our political fund Pal 9 and assist with legislative programs, serve as liaison between active and retired carriers, attend all retired letter carrier meetings and functions, report on retiree issues at General Membership Meetings of the Branch, write articles for the Branch Nine News, and to develop and prepare a plan of action for the year by developing varied programs of interest to retirees, and lastly, and more importantly assist families with questions or problems.

During my current term I have helped retirees with integration into Medicare part B questions and applications, fielded questions from carriers preparing for retirement, and the important task of helping spouses of retirees that have passed away with their spousal benefits. The positions that I have held for the

Union include Station Steward, Formal A Rep, Route Adjustment Rep (PRAM), and have held the union positions of Trustee, Financial Secretary, Treasurer, Executive Vice President and the current Director of Retirees. Along with the Branch positions I also hold the position of director with the Minnesota State AFL-CIO Retiree Council, the Minneapolis Regional Retire Council, and am currently the AFL-CIO Retiree Delegate for the Minnesota State Association of Letter Carriers (MSALC). I will continue to work with the Retirees of this Union and also continue with the work I do with the Retirees of other Unions in the AFL-CIO.

I am asking for your support and vote in the upcoming Branch 9 Elections.

Thank You

Darrell Maus

I'm Joe Tanner. I started my career with the Post Office in February, 2000 and worked as a carrier until my retirement in 2018. I served as a Union Steward on three separate occasions; two terms at Lowry in North Minneapolis and one term at Golden Valley. I've had personal experience with early retirement disability and Social Security. I'm currently enjoying being retired with my wife Lynell, who also recently retired. We are enjoying some traveling and just relaxing on our deck in Brooklyn Park. Our 3 kids are now adults and we recently became new grandparents, which we are thoroughly enjoying! I've dabbled with a couple side-gigs (Door Dash, Wedding Officiating, Stand Up Comedy), but now I'd like to take on a new challenge and do something that will make a difference. I'd like to utilize my experience to educate other Union brothers and sisters by sharing updates and pertinent news regarding retirement. I'm looking forward to helping with recognition of new retirees at our monthly breakfasts.

Delivery After Dark

Daylight Savings Time ends on Sunday, November 3rd and with that comes a decrease of daylight hours available. Carriers will once again be exposed to the possibility of delivering mail after dark.

What should you do? Is it safe to be delivering mail after dark? That depends. There is no uniform policy regarding delivery after dark. That's because we are not dealing with a consistent situation for everyone.

There are some delivery areas that may not be safe and should not be delivered to after dark. That depends on whether or not a carrier can safely make that delivery based on individual circumstances such as is it unfamiliar territory, a high crime area, is there poor visibility or other hazards (i.e. animals, uneven surfaces or other impediments such as fences, toys, etc).

The time to plan for delivering after dark is now before you find yourself literally in the dark. Are there parts of your route that are less hazardous than other to being delivered after dark (apartments with lighted entryways or well lit neighborhoods). Discuss these issues with your supervisor, steward and safety liaison then make a plan and write it down for the CCA's who may be delivering your route for the first time.

If you find yourself in a situation where you believe you'll be out delivering mail after dark, REMEMBER THAT YOU DO HAVE RIGHTS, and follow these instructions:

1. Inform your supervisor in the morning of your need of auxiliary assistance in order to complete your street duties before dark. **THIS MEANS FILL OUT FORM 3996 - HELP SLIP.**
2. Notify your supervisor prior to heading out to the street that you may not be able to complete your duties on the street by dark.
3. When on the street if you realize that you definitely will be out after dark, call your supervisor and make them aware of that reality. Stress your concern for your safety and again request auxiliary assistance.
4. Assuming no help arrives and you are faced with darkening conditions, attempt to continue.
5. **IF** while attempting delivery, you literally experience a safety hazard (i.e. stumbling, tripping, hear dogs barking, but unable to see that threat, not able to see potential dangers using your LLV/van's outside mirrors ...) call your supervisor. Explain your situation and notify them that you cannot safely continue delivery then return to your station.
6. **COMPLETE FORM 1571 - Curtailment form for the undelivered mail.**

Be sure to hand the curtailment slip to the supervisor, and ASK FOR A COPY. The copy is for your protection. You can also request a Form 1767 - Notice of Hazardous Working Condition. This will help you document the safety hazards you encountered while attempting to deliver after dark.

It is important to note that these instructions are not intended to endorse or encourage the unnecessary curtailment of any mail. It is about your safety and the protection of the mail in our charge.

There is not a single answer for every possible situation. It simply is the responsibility of each carrier to measure their safety and ensure that they are working safely. PERIOD.

How to Address Ongoing and Persistent Distress

Everyone experiences various stressors in their daily lives. Stress can be a positive thing that drives us to take action. For instance, if you are worried about an upcoming exam or paper that’s due, you will probably spend more time studying. If you are anxious about an upcoming job interview, this will likely drive you to spend more time prepping for it. We all have different strategies for managing stress. However, sometimes due to an external event or other circumstance, we begin to experience more pervasive feelings of stress. Here are some suggestions for taking control of ongoing and persistent distress.

Change Your Perspective

If your stress is caused by an external event or situation that you have little to no control over, try changing your thoughts about it instead. Often our thoughts are a leading factor in causing distress rather than the circumstance by itself. Try reframing the situation in order to think differently. Rather than ruminating in negative thoughts that fuel distress, aim for a neutral perspective by focusing on the facts of the situation.

Take Action

Often, taking a more proactive stance can help ease persistent stress. This way, you’re focused on what you can do to make a situation better. Brainstorm ways you can improve the situation.

Make Time for Exercise

Incorporating movement into your day helps boost your mood and decrease stress. Even something as simple as going for a walk is beneficial and can help clear your head. Often, you can think more clearly after getting some exercise.

Take Care of Yourself

The stress will only increase and the situation will seem worse if you neglect taking care of yourself. Prioritize your health: Make sure you get adequate sleep, eat healthy foods, and drink plenty of water.

Seek the Help of Others

If you have tried various strategies for dealing with ongoing distress and nothing seems to help, consider reaching out to others for help. Talk with friends or family members. It might also be a good idea to seek the advice of a professional counselor who can help you identify the cause of your stress and create a plan of action.

Branch 9 Election

Ballots for contested Branch 9 Office election will be mailed out on or before October 28, 2024.

If you do not receive a ballot please contact the Branch Office at 612-781-9858.

Ballots will be collected at 9:00 a.m. November 26, 2024
At the Brooklyn Center PO.

Election Committee -
Jeremy Larson Committee Chair, Chuck Glover and Lenny Larson Election Judges.

Branch 9 Candidates

Office of President

*Scott Bultena - candidate

*Joe Rian - candidate

Office of Exce. Vice President

*Will Mathes - candidate

*Chris Pennock - candidate

Office of Recording Secretary

*Robb Petersburg - candidate

*Andrew Hagen - candidate

Office of Director of Retirees

*Darrell Maus - candidate

*Joe Tanner - candidate

The following positions elected by unanimous ballot or uncontested

Treasurer

Barb Watczak

Financial Secretary

Stacey Ellingson

Editor

Tyler Vasseur

Trustee

Tim Bash

Susan Becker

Cheryl Dombrock

Sergeant at Arms

Jorge Quintero-Troetsch

NALC Health Benefits Rep.

Ken Jambois



FACT SHEET

Postal Service Health Benefits (PSHB)

USPS EMPLOYEES

The Postal Service Reform Act of 2022 (PSRA) was signed into law in April 2022. Since then, the Office of Personnel Management (OPM), in conjunction with the Postal Service, has been working to implement a new Postal Service Health Benefits (PSHB) Program, as required under the new law. PSHB is a new, separate program within the Federal Employees Health Benefits (FEHB) Program and will be administered by OPM. Coverage under the PSHB Program will be effective January 1, 2025. Below is a list of facts regarding the PSHB Program for active employees:

1. You are required to select a health insurance plan in the PSHB Program during the 2024 open season period, from November 11, 2024 – December 9, 2024.
2. PSHB plan options and premium information will be available in October 2024.
3. OPM will launch a new enrollment platform for health insurance. Information on how to make elections using the new system will be available prior to the 2024 open season.
4. If you are an active employee age 64 or older as of January 1, 2025, you ARE NOT required to enroll in Medicare Part B to continue your PSHB health insurance coverage once you retire. However, upon your retirement and entitlement to Medicare Part A (typically at age 65), you will have the option to enroll in Medicare Part B during a special enrollment period.
 - If you are the primary subscriber, your covered family members will not be required to enroll in Medicare Part B to stay on your PSHB plan; however, enrollment in Medicare Part B may reduce your overall costs for health care-related expenses and may provide better value for you and your family.
5. If you are an active employee under the age of 64 as of January 1, 2025, to continue your PSHB health insurance coverage in retirement, you WILL BE required to enroll in Medicare Part B after you retire and become entitled to Medicare Part A (typically at age 65).
 - If you are the primary PSHB enrollee, your covered family members will also be required to enroll in Medicare Part B when you retire, upon their entitlement to Medicare Part A, if they wish to remain covered by your PSHB insurance.
 - If you retire on or after January 1, 2025, and you are under 64, you WILL BE required to enroll in Medicare Part B when you become entitled to Medicare Part A (typically at age 65) to remain enrolled in a PSHB plan. The Social Security Administration (SSA) will mail you a notice when you are eligible to enroll in Medicare Part B during your initial enrollment period. Your initial enrollment period starts three months prior to your 65th birthday and ends three months after your 65th birthday. If you are the primary PSHB subscriber, your covered family members will also be required to enroll in Medicare Part B upon their entitlement to Medicare Part A, if they wish to remain covered by your PSHB insurance.
6. There are exceptions to the requirement to enroll in Medicare Part B as an annuitant. These exceptions will also apply to your covered family members. Annuitants may be responsible for providing proof of eligibility for the applicable exception(s) to the designated agency. These exceptions are:
 - You are residing outside of the United States and its territories. You are required to follow the policy and procedure set forth by the Postal Service to be eligible for this exception; or
 - You are enrolled in health care benefits provided by the Department of Veterans Affairs; or
 - You are eligible for health services provided by Indian Health Services.
7. As a general rule, spousal and family member PSHB coverage is based on the primary enrollee's eligibility. If the primary subscriber is required to enroll in Medicare Part B, dependent family members will also be required to enroll when they are eligible.



FACT SHEET

Postal Service Health Benefits (PSHB)

USPS ANNUITANTS

The Postal Service Reform Act of 2022 (PSRA) was signed into law in April 2022. Since then, the Office of Personnel Management (OPM), in conjunction with the Postal Service, has been working to implement a new Postal Service Health Benefits (PSHB) Program, as required under the new law. PSHB is a new, separate program within the Federal Employees Health Benefits (FEHB) Program and will be administered by OPM. Coverage under the PSHB Program will be effective January 1, 2025. Below is a list of facts regarding the PSHB Program for current annuitants:

1. You are required to select a health insurance plan in the PSHB Program during the 2024 open season period, from November 11, 2024 – December 9, 2024.
2. PSHB plan options and premium information will be available in October 2024.
3. OPM will launch a new enrollment platform for health insurance. Information on how to make elections using the new system will be available prior to the 2024 open season.
4. If you are an annuitant as of January 1, 2025, and not currently participating in Medicare Part B, you ARE NOT required to enroll in Medicare Part B to continue your health insurance coverage in the new PSHB Program. Participation in Medicare Part B is voluntary; however, enrollment in Medicare Part B may reduce your overall costs for health care-related expenses and may provide greater value.
 - a) Your covered spouse and eligible family members will also not be required to enroll in Medicare Part B even if they are age 65 or older; however, enrollment in Medicare Part B may reduce overall costs for health care-related expenses and may provide greater value.
 - b) **Note:** If you are an annuitant as of January 1, 2025, and are already enrolled in Medicare Part B, you ARE required to remain enrolled in Medicare Part B to continue coverage under PSHB.
5. If you are an annuitant entitled to Medicare Part A (typically at age 65) prior to January 1, 2024, and have not enrolled in Medicare Part B, you and your covered, eligible family members may be able to participate in the special enrollment period (SEP) for Medicare Part B that starts on April 1, 2024. Those who enroll during the SEP will not need to pay the late enrollment penalty. Eligibility letters will be sent to annuitants and eligible family members in early 2024.
6. If you retire between October 31, 2024, and December 31, 2024, and are entitled to Medicare Part A (typically at age 65), you will have the option to enroll in Medicare Part B during a specific eight-month special enrollment period immediately following your retirement date. If you wish to enroll, you MUST contact the Social Security Administration (SSA) to initiate enrollment if you are over the age of 65.
7. As a general rule, spousal and family member PSHB coverage is based on the primary subscriber's eligibility. If the primary subscriber is not required to join Medicare Part B, neither will dependent family members. Likewise, if you qualify for the SEP, so will your covered family members.

Additional information will be communicated in the coming months. You can also visit or contact us via any of the following methods:

Online – <https://www.keepingposted.org>



www.OPM.gov

Email – retirementbenefits@usps.gov

PostalRetireeHealthBenefits@opm.gov

Mail – 475 L'Enfant Plaza SW
Suite 9670
Washington, DC 20260

Fax – 202-268-3337

Accessibility – Federal Relay Service: 1-800-877-8339

You can also receive information and updates by signing up for our text messaging notifications by texting "PSHBP" to 39369.

Annual Branch 9 vs. Branch 28

RETIREE CRIBBAGE TOURNAMENT

\$2.00 Entry Fee

Wednesday, November 6th, 2024

10:00AM

PLACE:

NALC Branch 9
5831 Cedar Lake Road South
St. Louis Park, MN
612.781.9858

- If you have any questions, call Darrell Maus at 612.810.7729.
- Bring a friend, your cribbage board and cards.
- Lunch will be provided (hot dogs, chips & beverages).

WE HOPE TO SEE YOU THERE!



Together, we are unstoppable!



I need you to share my message with your fellow Carriers. I'm NOT an "establishment" candidate. I'm an outsider with a fresh perspective. **You can find me on Facebook** by scanning the QR Code with your cell phone or by searching with the keywords...

William Mathes 4 Branch 9 EVP

Thank you for your consideration!

BRANCH 9 RETIREMENT SEMINAR

Thursday, November 14th, 2024
6:30PM

BRANCH 9 OFFICE
5831 CEDAR LAKE ROAD SOUTH
ST. LOUIS PARK, MN 55416

This seminar is an opportunity for you and your spouse/significant other to ask questions and to receive information regarding retirement.

Please RSVP to the Branch office via **e-mail ONLY to** angie@branch9nalc.com if you plan on attending.

WE LOOK FORWARD TO SEEING YOU THERE!

2024
Vote

Robb Petersburg

for Recording Secretary



Letter Carrier
18 years

Carrier Trainer
13 years

Branch 9 Executive Board
6 years

Recording Secretary
4 years

Will always consider all Branch 9 members

Will look for solutions, not complaints

Will continue to learn on behalf of all carriers

NOT APPROVED Will be part of the newly created swamp

NOT APPROVED Willing to put your job security at risk

**Please join Branch 9 for
Breakfast and a showing of
Hansel & Gretel's Magical
Adventure!**

**SUNDAY,
DECEMBER
8, 2024.**

**SIDEKICK
THEATRE**


Minnesota Masonic Heritage Center
11411 Masonic Home Drive
Bloomington, MN 55437



**Santa will be our special guest from
11:00am - 1:00pm**

(children 5 and under will receive a stuffed animal).

Price is \$25 per adult/guest/child

**Breakfast Buffet
11:30am**

Waffle Bar, Scrambled Eggs, Cheesy Hash-browns,
Bacon, Fresh Fruit, Orange Juice, Coffee.

**Show Start Time
1:00pm**

65 minute run time

(Available for 200 people - first come, first served.
Tickets are Gen. Admission - Pick up at theater)

**Return registration form and payment
No later than Friday, November 29th, 2024.**

(checks made out and mailed to:
Branch 9 NALC, 5831 Cedar Lk Rd S,
St. Louis Park, MN 55416)

**Branch 9 Holiday Party
Registration Form**

Member's Name: _____

Station: _____

Number of Guests: _____

Amount Paid: _____

Name of Guests (please include ages of
children):

- #1 _____
- #2 _____
- #3 _____
- #4 _____
- #5 _____
- #6 _____
- #7 _____

Contact Ken Jambois with questions 763.370.1392

Vote for: Branch 9 Reform Slate



From left to right: Cheryl Dombrock, Tim Bash, Andrew Hagen, Joe Rian, Chris Pennock, Tyler Vasseur, Susan Becker

We stand for:

1. **Being more pro-active with grievances and education**
2. **Regaining member's trust with branch finances**
3. **Becoming leaders on national issues, like fighting for a strong contract**

An Injury to One, is an Injury to All!
Vote Branch 9 Reform Slate and let's build a stronger, more unified, fighting union together

On your ballot, vote:

President
(Choose one)
■ Joe Rian

Executive Vice President
(Choose one)
■ Chris Pennock

Recording Secretary
(Choose one)
■ Andrew Hagen

Director of Retirees
(Choose one)
■ Joe Tanner

Trustees
(Choose three)
■ Susan Becker
■ Cheryl Dombrock
■ Tim Bash

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

PRSR STD
US POSTAGE
PAID
TWIN CITIES MN
PERMIT NO. 91964

Branch 9 Calendar

October 22

*Steward Meeting @ 6PM
General Membership Meeting
7:00 PM
Crystal VFW, Crystal, MN

November 5

Election Day

November 6

Retiree Cribbage Tournament
10:00 AM
Branch 9 Office

November 11

Veterans Day

November 12

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

November 14

Retirement Seminar
6:30 PM
Branch 9 Office

November 26

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

November 28

Thanksgiving Day

December 8

Holiday Party
Sidekick Theater
"Hansel and Gretel"
11:00 AM

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

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

