



Executive Board Statement on Rejection of Tentative Agreement

Members of the National Association of Letter Carriers rejected the 2023-2026 National Agreement, with 63,680 voting to reject to 26,304 voting to accept.

This is a historic moment for NALC, as this is only the second time in our union's 55-year collective bargaining history, that members have rejected a contract. The last time a contract was rejected was in 1978, when NALC members were dealing with their own inflationary times, and were able to defeat an attempt by management to cap COLAs (Cost of Living Adjustments).

At the November 2024 General Membership meeting, Branch 9 passed a "Vote NO" recommendation resolution, alongside over 50 other NALC branches across the country.

National NALC leadership is planning actions in Washington DC under the banner "Fight Like Hell" for a strong contract. Branch 9 will be planning a contract rally locally where members can bring



November General Membership Meeting



Minnehaha Station



Lost Lake Station



Diamond Lake Station

out their families, friends, and supporters in the near future. Stay tuned for more information. We want to coordinate with any planned national actions and other branches across the country in order to get maximum media coverage and support if we head into arbitration.

For the first time in over 40 years, NALC members came together, organized a Vote NO campaign with parking lot meetings and rallies before work, took group photos, passed Vote NO recommendation resolutions, had discussions about the contract, and decided that we are worth more than 1.3% a year. This example of solidarity in action is inspiring, and points the way forward for creating a more unified, stronger union.

Solidarity,

NALC Branch 9 Executive Board

NOTICE TO ALL BRANCH 9 MEMBERS

Any proposed amendments to the 2025 Branch 9 By-Laws must be presented in writing to the Recording Secretary no later than the February 25, 2025 General Membership Mtg.

NO RETIREMENTS THIS MONTH

MORE VOTE NO GROUP PHOTOS FROM BRANCH 9 AND ACROSS THE COUNTRY



Loring Station



Branch 263 Augusta, GA



Branch 274 Allentown, PA



Branch 2902 Newbury Park, CA



Branch 3 Buffalo, NY

NEW MEMBERS

- David Balk
- Daveon Barnes
- Karl Bedow
- Luke Ferguson
- Nicole Freeman
- Nate Guthrie
- Whitnee Kenney
- Zelalem Kidane
- Geoffrey McPherson

IN MEMORIAM

Gloria Lawrence
(wife of Ron Lawrence)

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

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

Branch 9 Officers
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Joe Rian

Exec. Vice President
Chris Pennock

Recording Secretary
Andrew Hagan

Treasurer
Barb Watczak

Financial Secretary
Stacey Ellingson

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Director of Retirees
Joe Tanner

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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

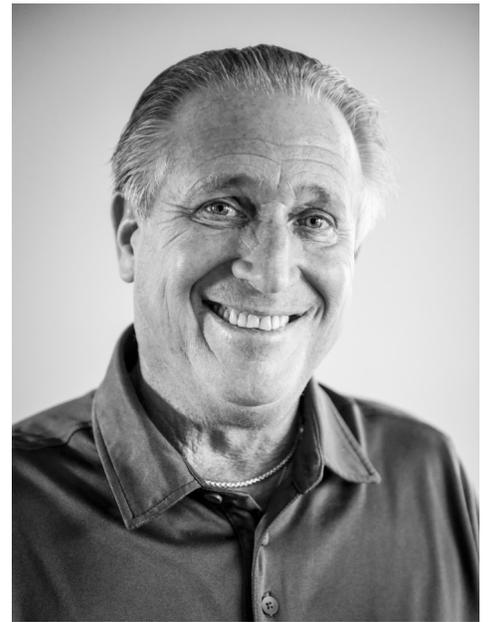
Hello brothers and sisters,

For my first Article as Branch 9 President, I wanted to mention just a few important notes.

First, on January 28, 2025, over 190 people watched your new Branch 9 Executive Board being sworn in and installed into office by Region 7 Business Agent Patrick Johnson at the Crystal VFW. It was a big night for us all and I want to thank everyone who attended in person or via zoom for being part of this changing of the guard.

I also want to give special thanks to out of town guests NALC National Vice President James Henry and Region 3 Illinois National Business Agent Mike Caref, Buffalo New York Branch 3 President David Grosskopf and Minnesota State President Perry Schmidt along with a variety of Minnesota Branch Presidents for sharing the night with us. It was an honor to have you there.

Second, I want to make sure you know about some of our Branch 9 brothers who should make us proud to be letter carriers.



Joe Rian



Above is Thomas Burnett Carrier Robert Osborne, who has gone 38 years as a letter carrier without an accident of any kind. No slip trip or fall; no vehicle. Nothing in 38 years!

Exec. Vice President's Report

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

It's my great honor to address you as your Vice President. I'm very excited about the future for Branch 9. We have a team of dedicated and passionate carriers that are pitching in to make Branch 9 the very best it can be. We invite you to join us in whatever capacity you can.

In my new position I'm responsible for overseeing the grievance procedure at Branch 9. I'm happy to report that we're very strong in our handling of grievances. We've been at the contractual 7-day turnaround in our office since November of 2023, and that continues to this day. I'm also very proud of the quality of work being done and the decisions we've been getting reflect that.

Last year we filed 2,018 grievances, up from 1,498 in 2023. 1,441 of those were dealt with at Formal Step A. Most of the remaining 577 cases were settled at the station. Reminder to the stewards to send in copies of your resolved grievances, as I'm sure there were many more grievances from last year that we never received.

The increase in the grievance workload over the past year has led to a lot of overtime and more stress than we'd like in the Step A office. I'd like to thank Will Mathes and Zoe Bunzli for their excellent work over the last year and to welcome the two new members of our Step A team, Ben Noble

and Jessie Vasquez. Getting two new full time Step As to replace me was a goal of ours that I'm very pleased to report we have already succeeded in. Having a fourth Step A is making the workload much more manageable.

Moving to the national stage the big news is that our Tentative Agreement was voted down with 63K voting against and 26K voting for, with a turnout of nearly 90K. Letter carriers voted to reject the TA by 71%, and there was an increase in turnout compared to the last TA of 41%. Letter carriers are coming together in rejecting this contract that does not meet our needs or restore our purchasing power that has been eaten away by inflation.

Some of the best conversations I've had with co-workers on the TA are those that were hesitant to vote no or who voted yes out of fear of what a Trump presidency would mean for the NALC and our contract. These co-workers expressed concern that the new administration would bring with it more open hostility to unions that might threaten our chances in arbitration.

I agree with these co-workers that we will be seeing more anti-union activity in the new administration. I just read the news coming out of Utah where their legislature just passed a bill banning public sector collective bargaining.



Chris Pennock

This previews upcoming struggles that are likely to happen on the Federal level.

Where I differ with these co-workers is on the path forward. A militant and organized union will offer the best defense against these kinds of attacks on our democratic right to organize ourselves into a union and to fight for a fair contract. Hiding in a corner and hoping not to be noticed is not the path forward. We need to act collectively to defend the contract that we have and to fight for a new TA that meets our needs.

My hope is that we will be able to coordinate with other branches throughout the country to organize a national day of action where we can have contract rallies all over the country. Together we are strong!

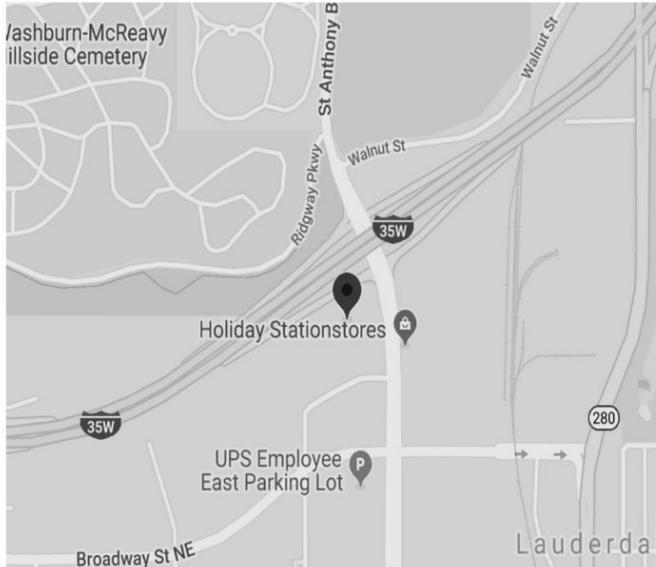
In solidarity,

Chris Pennock

2025 Red and Gold Retiree Banquet

Sunday, May 4, 2025

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 May GMM

2025 Retiree Banquet Registration Form

Name: _____

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

New 70 Year Honoree 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 May 1, 2025 to:
Branch 9 NALC, 5831 Cedar Lake Road, St. Louis Park, MN 55416.

Letter from the Editor

Hello members of Branch 9, my name is Tyler Vasseur. I've been a City Letter Carrier at USPS since 2018, a Shop Steward at Zone 4/54 at the Minneapolis Main office since 2020, and I am now proud to be the Editor of the Branch Nine News.

In the era of the internet, and social media, I believe there is still space for a printed newsletter. Every month members of Branch 9 receive the Branch Nine News in their mailboxes, and for many it is one of their only forms of connection to the union. We have an opportunity with the Branch Nine News to create a media source that is completely our own. As the Editor, I want to make our newsletter into a space to not just share reports, and information about events, although those two things are important. The Branch Nine News should also be a space where members can share experiences, and lessons from the workroom floor. Did you win a big grievance at your station? Did you and your coworkers come together to fight back against harassment? Do you have a heartwarming story about how you were able to help a customer on your route? Do you want to write an article, or draw a cartoon about the issues facing our union? I can't promise I will be able to put every proposed article into the newsletter, but I will take every proposal into consideration.

I want to help foster a space for discussion and debate about the big questions facing NALC, and the best way forward for our union. NALC is a big, diverse union. We have members in every community, delivering to every corner of the United States. This diversity: of geography, ethnicity, religion, political opinion, or otherwise, can be a source of strength, rather than division.

I have my own opinions, and I think

it is the duty of a person in an elected position, whether they are a branch president, a shop steward, or an editor of a newsletter, to make their position known. To defend their position, and make the case for it, while also creating space for opposing points of view. But my role as the Editor is not to just shove my opinion down your throat. As the Editor I will seek to make the Branch Nine News into a space for friendly discussion, and debate, a space for opposing points of view to be heard, and taken into consideration.

Structured discussion and debate can be healthy, and can help us take on the issues we face as letter carriers. One example of this could be during the vote on the Tentative Agreement. We could have someone who supports a "Yes" vote write an article, side by side with someone who supports a "No" vote. This sort of exchange can be done in a friendly manner that can help all members make an informed decision.

I hope to do my little part with the newsletter to help create a culture in Branch 9 of friendly discussion and debate about the issues we face. The point is not to just be a talk shop, but to discuss issues in order to take action. To find the common ground that unites us, and strengthen our union in the process. February's Branch Nine News is coming out a bit later in the month than I would like, but with the transition over from the old Executive Board, to the new one, it took a little longer. I will try my best to have it out early in the month, so that all relevant information is timely, and Branch 9 members can go into each new month with a fresh batch of articles and information.

With the local election this past November we have a new Executive Board. Some of the goals of this



Tyler Vasseur

new Executive Board are to increase engagement, and participation, and to build more transparency and communication between the branch leadership and the broader membership. There are many ways to do this, including printing motions and resolutions that were passed at General Membership Meetings, regular station visits from the President and Executive Vice President, and more extensive training for the Shop Stewards that include information for Stewards to bring back for the morning stand-ups at the stations, among other things.

There will also be articles from new Executive Board members in the coming issues of the Branch Nine News. For Board members to introduce themselves, talk about how they want to use their position to help build up the branch, and any issues they want to highlight.

As members of Branch 9, this newsletter belongs to all of us. If you're interested in proposing an article, a cartoon, or anything else, please send me an email at Branch9news@branch9nalc.com.

Solidarity,
Tyler Vasseur
Editor, Branch Nine News

2025 RED AND GOLD BANQUET HONOREES

50 YEAR RETIREES (JOINED IN 1975)

Robert E Baird

Timothy W Bearth

Steven W Blom

Dale J Carhill

Gary J Dzwonkowski

Craig L Hanschen

Herbert J Hess

Paul H Hultgren

Richard L Jacobson

Richard A Kelly

Rodney A Kieffer

Thomas A Krawczynski

Charles E Scheid

Gerald K Schraber

Howard D Steen

55 YEAR RETIREES (JOINED IN 1970)

Burton P Baker

Michael M Bangsund

Norman J Cavalier

Rodney H Dirx

Thomas F Dvorak

Morris R Gross

John M Hahn

Garrett W Hardenburgh

Thomas A Holten

Marvin J Kaderlik

James E Kloster

Lloyd R Matt

David R Millette

David L Pierson

Loretta E Quick

David M Shingler

Sonia M Stark

Joseph J Steckler

60 YEAR RETIREE (JOINED IN 1965)

Richard W Hobot

Marvin M Mattila

David T Swatosh

William F Winefeldt

65 YEAR RETIREES (JOINED IN 1960)

John G Bailey

Harry A Bloom

Roger E Lindahl

Jerome M Madsen

Joe F Pasiowitz

Wain D Pearce

Glen J Trudell

70 YEAR RETIREES (JOINED IN 1955)

Curtis F Britz

Jan. GMM Report: New E-Board Sworn In



The new Executive Board of Branch 9 was sworn in at the January 28, 2025 General Membership Meeting (GMM) by Region 7 Business Agent Patrick Johnson, in a packed room of almost 200 members, family, supporters, and visitors from local and regional branches who were in town attending a national officers' training.

The new Executive Board was elected in November 2024, calling for a more "proactive, transparent, and fighting leadership" in Branch 9. The Executive Board met the following Tuesday for an all-day meeting to hit the ground running, and plan for the coming months of branch activity.

The January GMM had guest speakers including Minnesota State Association of Letter Carriers President Perry Schmidt, National Vice President James Henry, and Region 3 Business Agent Mike Caref, who talked about the state of NALC, the coming 2026 national leadership

elections, and plans for building a stronger union in the months and years ahead.

After the swearing in of officers, and speeches were made, a motion was unanimously adopted for Branch 9 to donate \$500, and to "pass the hat", for the NALC Disaster Relief Fund for union members affected by the LA wildfires. Alongside the lump sum from Branch 9, \$584 was raised from attendees, for a total donation of \$1,084.



Br. 9 President Joe Rian receiving the gavel from Reg. 7 Bus. Agent Patrick Johnson



Br. 9 EVP Chris Pennock, Natl. VP James Henry, Record. Sec. Andrew Hagan, Reg. 7 Bus. Agent Patrick Johnson



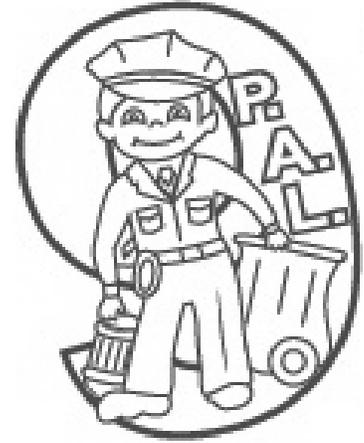
Reg. 3 Bus. Agent Mike Caref



Natl. Vice President James Henry

P.A.L. 9

Political Action League



What is PAL 9?

You should have recently received a letter from PAL9 asking you to pony up 25 bucks to join our branch's political "club." But I'm afraid we put the cart in front of the horse: First we have to show you why politics matters.

There's no question letter carriers enjoy a cart-full of benefits: health insurance in retirement, a defined benefit pension, employer contributions to your Thrift Savings Plan account, COLA's, life insurance. More senior carriers may remember how the opportunity to support candidates and freely pursue our political interests was restricted by the Hatch Act for many years.

Crucially, active carriers depend on Congress for the most important "benefit" of all: collective bargaining rights. This isn't to deny the tawdry aspect of politics, the posturing that wastes time and smothers interest and attention. Everyone has an opinion about those we elect to steer our course. But regardless of belief, the simple truth is that letter carrier livelihoods depend on Washington. We risk our well-being if we let down our guard.

The letter we sent actually was about getting that horse in front of the cart. In order to haul those benefits home we first need awareness of how it gets done. Don't think about the 25 bucks as much as why politics matters to letter carriers.

Kieran Hughes

Members

Very Concerned (\$50 or more)

Susan Becker
James Johnson
Robert Hoffman
Charles Glover
Gregory Bedor
Charles Peasha
Emma Peasha
Troy Fredenburg
Duane Foyt
Larry Blesi
William Halos
Daniel Loppnow
Joseph Wineman
Fredrick Johnston
Jeffery Stanko
Rodney Anderson
Jeff Sherman
Marty Cornell
Ronald Sumstad
Michelle Benson
Steven Peterson
Cyril Toay
Ronald Barker
Sonia Stark
Kent Cleland
Dale McNellis
Thomas Buchner
Ken Jambois
Tom Hoban
Susan Hoban
Kerian Hughes
Mary Skerbinc
Sharon Spooner
Lenny Larson
Robert Baird
Sheryl Christensen
Russell Flaten
Vincent Froehlich
Gerald Broman
Michael Zagaros
Michael Spurbeck
Renee Hickerson
Charles Rivers
Al Gulden
Ron Moore

Concerned (\$25 donated)

Russ Ofsthun	Teri Koch
Roger Harwarth	David Wallentiny
Charles Friend	Robert Masuda
Thomas D'Vorak	David Cornelius
Dennis Bahn	Roger Johnson
Arnold Johnson	Greg Holmes
David Wroz	Theresa Ronning-
Gerald Schraber	Allen
Gregory Wallin	Geno Taddei
Gary Hughes	Mary Miller
Stanley Mackcow	Lawrence Elfelt
Debbie Frank	John Burmis
Michael Bangsund	Ken Johnson
Terrance O'Neill	Joe Pasiowitz
Craig Ites	Marlys Fox
Theresa Oelrich	Thomas Tadlock
John Vesovich	Linda Stipe
Karma Khampa	Victor Stanfield
Harley Ring	Jerry Arnold
Robert Logelin	Robert Dondelinger
Stephen Boughton	Kathleen Johnson
David Peterson	Michael Mroska
Paul Skarman	Kim Kline
Jon Frick	Karin LeBak
Alexis Wheeler	Mary Hoch
Gary Svidron	Tom Hoch
Thomas Holten	Raymond Tranby
Pauline Pepper	Wayne Kelash
Curtis Britz	Timothy Bearth
Alice Nopola	Scott Randolph
Jeffrey Smeets	Lori Randolph
Craig Hanschen	
Darrel Maus	
Joe Rian	
Richard Rimer	
Greg Caulfield	
Vernon Zierman	
Kathy Bolton	
Herman Weidner	

I WANT YOU



TO KNOW YOUR RIGHTS!

How do you know if you are being investigated?

If management asks you about why you missed work, **YOU ARE BEING INVESTIGATED!**

If management asks you about stationary events, **YOU ARE BEING INVESTIGATED!**

If management asks you why you deviated from your route, **YOU ARE BEING INVESTIGATED!**

If management asks you why you worked unauthorized overtime, **YOU ARE BEING INVESTIGATED!**

NEVER go into the office without first requesting a union steward.

We are stronger together than we are on our own! Always ask for a union representative!

What are Weingarten Rights?

Weingarten Rights are your rights to union representation during an investigative interview.

If you believe you are being investigated by management, **ASK FOR A STEWARD!** Unlike Miranda rights, management does not have to inform you of your right to representation. You **MUST** request a union representative.

Once you request a steward, management has three options:

1. Grant the request and delay questioning until the union rep arrives.
2. Deny the request and end the interview.
3. Give the employee a clear choice between having the interview without representation, or ending the interview.



Submitted by Lake Street Station Steward Emmett Bongaarts

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

February 25

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

March 11

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

March 25

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

April 8

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

April 22

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

Stay tuned for more event
announcements here in future
issues of the Branch Nine
News!

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](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

