



Branch 84 Newsletter

Representing Letter Carriers in Southwest Pennsylvania Jan-Feb 2018

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President's Report

Ted Lee

Happy New Year

I hope everyone had a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. The Branch finished up the year with our annual Christmas party/Chinese Auction on December 21st. The auction was our final MDA event for 2017. The event was a success and raised over \$2,000 for MDA. Our year-end total fund-raising efforts last year, topped out at over \$8,000 dollars! Thanks to all who have participated in our numerous MDA events, last year and we hope to raise even more money this year. Our first MDA Bowling event for the new year is scheduled for Sunday April 15, 2018. Please contact Michelle if you plan to attend. NBA Dave Napadano was on hand to celebrate our Christmas party with us. He also provided the membership updates on the T.E. pay issues, and the Pittsburgh clock ring issues. Dave, also, said that the T.E. pay issues should all be resolved by early 2018. He informed us about the proposed settlements he is working on regarding clock ring manipulation in 6 Pittsburgh Installation Stations. I'm personally grateful for all Dave's guidance and advice on these pay issues.

I am also happy to report that all the pay issues that former CCA's were experiencing due to National-level arbitration 'hiring ratio case' appear to be resolved as far as pay scale step's. however, the back pay 'make whole' aspects will take between 4 to 6 weeks all to be received at one time as a pay adjustment in your check (according to the NBA's office). Remember USPS Shared Services had to rebuild the employment history for the affected former CCA's from the present back to July 2013, with a limited ability of processing a maximum of 6 Form 50's per pay period. Also, each affected carrier had between 12 to 18 Form 50's. I sent all former CCA's who were affected a copy of NALC Vice President Lew Drass's Nov. 2017 Postal Record article which provides a detailed explanation of all

the how's and why's of the pay issues. As always call us if you continue to experience pay issues relating to the 'hiring ratio' national arbitration case.

Labor Management Meetings

November 8th of last year was the first City of Pittsburgh Labor/Management Meeting with the newest A/Postmaster Leeann T. Theriault. Pat Rothwell and myself along with Labor and the two current MCSO's. Safety meetings were discussed. Each office is supposed to have monthly safety meetings with minutes sent to the PM secretary. Issues discussed ranged from Safety meetings, 3971's (leave slips) 3996's (approve or disapprove; stop the confrontations between carriers and supervisors). Start times-new plant manager's changes should speed up mail getting to stations. Grievances-management being trained on grievance handling. Posting of the ODL-should be weekly and reviewed and other topics I will email a copy of the minutes to all stewards to monitor progress of issues raised. We had a Labor management at the Verona Post Office on 12/8/17. We had a huge agenda and Postmaster Jackie Sidick was very cooperative and receptive to all the issues raised. There will be a follow up and again Randy Ball and myself will monitor the progress.

LCPF

The Letter Carriers Political Fund is more important now than ever. I write this in bold for that reason. The NALC supports candidates that support our issues. The NALC employs carriers (from the LCPF fund) full-time to lobby Congress so that our voice will be heard. Our Political Fund is **JOB INSURANCE**. Please consider giving the minimum \$5.00 a pay through automatic deduction. Call us to help you set up the deduction.

Contractual Rights

With a new year I would like to offer some reminders about your contractual rights as a quick reference for easy access. I will briefly cover as many Articles as I can on this page **Article 1** establishes the NALC as the exclusive bargaining unit representative for letter carriers. The NALC is the only organization entitled to represent letter carriers in their collective bargaining relationship with the USPS. This exclusivity is important to our union locally for many reasons such as; organizing/signing new members up, it helps Stewards, Formal A reps and the full-time officers in their direct negotiations with management at every level from supervisors to Postmasters.

Article 1.6.A prohibits management from performing letter carrier work except for an emergency, training purposes, to ensure proper operation of equipment, to protect the safety of employee's or to protect the property of the USPS. In our branch, management's reasons for carrying mail typically are to make numbers and avoid penalty overtime. Management rarely has a contractual reason for doing our work. (grieve first ask questions later). **Article 2** Gives carriers the right to file a grievance if they have reason to believe they have been or are being discriminated against. These grievances are usually filed in conjunction with filing an EEO. The number you need to call if you must file an EEO is 1-888-336-8777. You may also call the hall for guidance in doing so.

Article 3 gives management the right to manage. However, it must act in accordance with applicable laws, regulations, contract provisions, arbitration awards, letters of agreement, and memorandums. Meaning managements rights are limited by negotiated contract provisions. This Article is connected to **Article 41.3.I** which lists the "iron rule" which is; "obey now and grieve later." The only exception is also described in **Article 41.3. I. which says; there is a narrow exception to that rule which permits an employee to disobey where he or she has reasonable or good-faith belief that to obey would cause imminent danger to life or limb.** Remember a mere belief that a safety hazard exists is usually insufficient reason to disobey an order. In our branch Formal A reps have utilized these provisions for carriers who could not continue delivery due to medical reasons. However medical documentation must be obtained ASAP if you need to leave work due to medical reasons.

Article 5 Prohibits the Postal Service from unilateral actions against the existing National Agreement or

with its obligations under the law. The National Labor Relations Act prohibits an employer from making unilateral changes in wages, hours or working conditions during the term of a collective bargaining agreement. These are necessary contractual provisions locally, since judging from all the different tests such as; pre-load tests, dual casing tests, dual route tests and whatever test management dreams up in 2018. This Article is very much needed. This Article also covers past practice. One of the hardest grievances to win. Due to the fact, that; you must establish clarity and consistency, longevity and repetition, acceptability, underlying circumstances that give a practice its true dimension and the significance that can be attributed to the practice.

Article 6 no layoffs or reduction in force protections contractually. If you are employed by the USPS as of 9/15/1978 you are automatically protected against any involuntary layoff or force reduction. The rest of us receive protected status after working six years of continuous service in their regular work force (with exceptions listed in this article). **Article 7** defines regular work force. The regular work force is comprised of two categories; 1) Full-time employees are assigned to regular schedules consisting of (5) eight (8) hour days in a service week. 2) Part-time employees are assigned to schedules for less than (40) hours in a service. Or shall be available to work flexible hours during a service week. **Article 7** also lists all 78 frequently asked questions about CCA's.

Article 8 establishes the service week, service day, full-time employee schedules, days off, five-minute leeway Rule, overtime rate pay (time and a half) penalty rate (double time) out of schedule premium (time and a half) rules for out of schedule premium. Rules for penalty overtime; * overtime worked on more than four of the employee's five scheduled days in a service week. * work over 10 hours on a regular scheduled day. * work over 8 hours on a non-scheduled day. * work over six days in a service week. December is the only month for penalty exclusion. This article is the source of most of grievances filed locally and nationally. A rule of thumb is that the people on the overtime desired list must be maxed before non-ODL carriers can be forced overtime on a rotating basis by juniority. Also, if an ODL carrier is in on his or her lay-off day and is held to eight hours and management gives overtime to non-ODL carriers you have a grievance. Let the Hall or your steward know, so this can be grieved. There is also much more in this article relating to forcing non-ODL's and maxing ODL's.

(cont from page 2)

Article 9 lists all our salary and wage schedules, regarding contractual increases that were negotiated for the current agreement as well as any COLA's and how they relate to the Consumer Price Index. It also describes the Cost of Living formulas. It also explains how all COLA's since the 1994 agreement are immediately made a part of your "basic" salary.

Article 9 also covers your step increases which amounts to converted carriers receiving a step increase once every 46 weeks until they reach the current top rate at 12.4 years. This Article also covers protected Salary rates such as; protected rates, saved rates, and saved grades.

Article 10 is the source for leave rules such as; FMLA, Postal service is required to fund the leave earning level for the duration of the current agreement. It covers annual leave, sick leave, military leave dependent care leave. As a word of advice if you call-off sick once you report back to work you should always fill out a leave slip (3971) and request sick leave. Do not let management fill this out for you. and if they say you will not be paid sick leave or disapprove your request call the hall so we can find out why before you are LWOP'd.

MDA Thank You

Alex Criego, MDA Coordinator

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

I would like to wish you and your loved ones a Happy New Year and a Healthy 2018!

Yours in Unionism,
Alex Criego

Upcoming Inspections

Randy Ball, EVP

We have received a list from Postal Service Operations Programs Support of the installations scheduled for inspection Spring of 2018. They are as follows:

Ambridge 15003:	Feb 24th - Mar 2nd
Freedom 15042:	Mar 3rd – Mar 9th
Baden15005:	Mar 3rd - Mar 9th
Charleroi 15022:	Mar 10th – Mar 16th
Zelienople 16063:	Mar 17th -Mar 23rd
Slippery Rock 16057:	Mar 17th – Mar 30th
Aliquippa 15001:	Mar 24th – Mar 30th
Bethel Park 15102:	Mar 31st – Apr 6th

The Branch will be holding training sessions/meetings with carriers from the affected installations prior to the week of inspection to provide detailed information concerning the route inspection process. The route inspection process is fraught with tension, worry and anxiety. Our Union will, with you, me and the rest of our brothers and sisters succeed in negotiating this difficult process if we all stand united. The maxim harm to one, is harm to all, is applicable in this situation. We must stand united and understand we can come

through this process a stronger Union and united in delivering the best service to the American public.

Dressing for Cold Weather & Protecting Yourself from Cold Stress

Patrick Rothwell, Vice President

With extreme cold temperatures and snow arriving throughout many parts of the country, dressing properly is an important solution to keeping safe this winter. Dressing for cold weather is not difficult, but careful planning helps. Prolonged exposure to freezing or cold temperatures may cause serious health problems such as trench foot, frostbite and hypothermia. Danger signs include shivering, fatigue, confused behavior, reddening of the skin, swelling, numbness and tingling. These are just some of the early symptoms. Cold stress has the ability to cause illness, injury or become life threatening.

Some important things to consider:

Layering

Choose your clothing carefully. Layering is the best way to keep warm. Add a first layer consisting of a light fabric that will wick sweat away from your body. Avoid pure cotton, linen or other similar materials, because these fabrics retain moisture and can cause you to become colder. In addition, layer a knit sweater or sweatshirt over the top of the first layer. Finally, add your coat or jacket as the top layer. Not only will the multiple layers keep you warm, but if temperatures increase, you can easily remove a layer to remain comfortable.

Protect Face and Extremities

Your face and extremities, such as your hands and feet are the most vulnerable when exposed to cold and windy temperatures. It is important to protect your face and extremities from the cold and wind. Wrap a scarf around your neck and pull it over your mouth and nose to guard against the cold air. Additionally, wearing a winter hat can protect your ears and head before going outside, these are the areas that lose the most heat the quickest. And lastly keep your hands warm and protected with gloves or mittens.

Stay Dry

When planning how to dress for cold weather, staying dry should be a top priority. It is usually a good idea to get a coat that has a waterproof or water-resistant outside layer, especially if you will be exposed to rain, sleet, hail or snow. Additionally, wearing water-resistant footwear serves as a barrier between the feet and outside elements. Remember, the thicker the insulation, the greater the protection is between your feet and the adverse effects caused by winter. Your socks are just as important. Wear synthetic liner socks which are made of a thin synthetic material such as polypropylene can be worn under a pair of thicker socks, to wick moisture away. If your clothes get wet, it is important that you remove and replace them to avoid frostbite.

Eat Healthy & Keep Hydrated

Drink warm, sweet beverages (sugar water, sports-type drinks) and avoid drinks with caffeine (coffee, tea, sodas or hot chocolate). Eat warm, high calorie foods such as pastas and soups.

So, remember.... Dress appropriately for the weather, and as always, if you feel that you are experiencing weather-related issues, notify your supervisor immediately.

BRANCH 84, NALC

THOMAS FLAHERTY SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATIONS

WHO MAY APPLY: High School Seniors whose parents or legal guardians are current members in good standing in Branch 84, and have been, for at least six months prior to the date of this application.

TO WHAT SCHOOLS: Any credited college, university, junior college, community college or technical school.

APPLICATION DATE: February 1, 2018 through May 1, 2018.

AWARDING DATE: May 2016. Each winner and respective alternate to be selected by the Scholarship Committee.

THE SUCCESSFUL APPLICANT: Must have proof or records to indicate that he/she will graduate or have a High School Diploma before the beginning of the school term to which the scholarship aid of \$1,000.00 (payable \$500.00 per semester) will be paid. Scholarship monies will be remitted to the school the winner plans to attend.

If schooling is interrupted by military service, scholarship aid will be held in abeyance for not more than two years, unless military service is extended by Selective Service Board. When returning from military service, scholarship winner must apply for re-admittance to school within 90 days and return to school within six months thereafter.

Before the scholarship aid will be paid, the winner must have proof of being admitted to the school of his/her choice, for the first semester and again for the second semester. One half of the total scholarship award will be paid for each semester.

If parent or legal guardian is suspended by Branch 84, the scholarship aid will be suspended.

In the event of a cancellation or suspension of scholarship aid, the money, all or part, will revert back to the Scholarship & Building Fund.

It shall be the duty of the winner to make all arrangements for admission to school and to maintain good standing for the period of the scholarship award. Branch 84, NALC reserves the right at any time to terminate or cancel the program, provided that scholarships or awards already granted and/or announced shall run to the end promised and publicly stated.

THE SCHOLARSHIP COMMITTEE

Ted Colcolombe
Carole Ann Connelly
Robert Williams

(over)

BRANCH 84, NALC

THOMAS FLAHERTY SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION

Applicant: _____
(LAST) (FIRST) (MIDDLE INITIAL)

Date of Birth: _____
(MONTH) (DATE) (YEAR)

Father's Full Name: _____

Mother's Full Name: _____

Approximate length of membership in Branch 84: _____
(must be at least six months)

High School Now Attending: _____

(Name, Address & Telephone No.): _____

School Principals Name: _____

College, University etc applicant plans to attend: _____

CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify that all the statements provided on this application are true and correct and I consider myself eligible to apply for scholarship aid under rules and regulations established by Branch 84, NALC.

(DATE)

(SIGNATURE OF APPLICANT)

This application meets with my approval:

(DATE)

(SIGNATURE OR PARENT/GUARDIAN)

(ADDRESS)

(STATION OR WORK LOCATION)

(TELEPHONE NUMBER)

Mail Application To:

Scholarship Committee
% Letter Carriers Building
841 California Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15212-3870

(Deadline for acceptance of application is May 1, 2018) (See other side for additional information)
(over)

Good of the Association

NALC APP

As you know, over the past year or so we've been urging NALC members to take advantage of the new NALC Member App for smartphones as the best way to stay informed and help advance our goals.

Bid Schedule.

The bid schedule for the city offices for 2018 is below:

Bids open:	Bids close:	Effective date:
Jan. 20	Feb. 2	Feb. 17
March 3	March 16	Mar 31
April 14	April 27	May 12
May 26	June 8	June 23
July 7	July 20	Aug 4
Aug. 18	Aug 31	Sept. 15
Sept 29	Oct. 12	Oct 27
Nov. 10	Nov. 23	Jan. 5, 2019

Calendar

Jan 22	Shop Steward Training-7pm
Jan 25	Branch Meeting- 7:30pm
Feb 19	President's Day Holiday
Feb 22	Branch Monthly Meeting – 7:30 pm
Feb 25-28	Rap Session Atlantic City
Mar 12	Stewards Meeting- 7pm
Mar 17	St. Patrick's Day
Mar 18-20	Congressional Breakfast
Mar 22	Branch Meeting- 7:30pm
Apr 11	New CCA meeting
Apr 15	MDA Bowling Event
Apr 23	Shop Stewards Meeting- 7 pm
Apr 26	Branch Meeting- 7:30pm

Annual Leave Selection.

Offices should now be circulating, or in some cases, should have completed circulating, vacation lists for the 2018 leave year. As a reminder, with the new contract, CCA's are afforded one week once the regulars have been canvassed in either choice or non choice.

Branch 84 Spring Golf Outing.

I know the weather is miserable & gloomy, but before you know it we will be enjoying warm, sunny days. What better way to chase the winter blues away by thinking of our Annual Spring Golf Outing.

We are tentatively setting up this Spring Golf Outing as promised by the great response at the Fall outing. Details have not been ironed out, we will communicate when they are.

So Please start planning your foursome's and give us any suggestions and your possible interest/participation of this event. The Fall outing was a great success from the comments we received.

Financial Report

The Branch had the following bank balances as of December 31, 2017:

Associate Fund	\$ 52,634.85
Convention Fund	35,741.26
Officers Fringe Benefit Acct.	26,385.45
Building/Scholarship Fund	<u>87,665.83</u>
Total All Funds	\$202,427.39

Retired Letter Carrier Association

Next Meeting will be at 7:05 before the regular Branch 84 meeting on Thursday March 22.

Clothing Donations:

Are you retired, getting ready to retire, or have you outgrown your uniforms? Please donate your old, clean uniforms to the Branch. Your donations help the new CCA's that don't get their clothing allowance until they are out of their probation. You can drop off any still wearable uniform items at the branch office during regular business hours or on any meeting night.

National Assoc. Of Letter Carriers
Clyde Kelly Branch 84
841 California Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15212

Non-Profit Org.
U. S. Postage Paid
Pittsburgh, PA
Permit No. 3141

Return Service Requested

The Branch is considering purchasing Branch 84 polo shirts and jackets. We are gauging membership interest in this purchase. The price for shirts will be between \$40 and \$45 jackets will run between \$70 and \$75. Clothing is all Union Made. We are planning on using the same company the National uses to produce the clothing they sell. If you are interested, please fill out the form below and return to the Branch office so we have a count of who is interested in purchasing. We are only looking for interest not placing an order at this time.

Name: _____ Telephone number: () -

Address: _____ Gender: _____

Interested In Shirt/Jacket