



Since July 25, 1890

October 2023

Queen City Letter Carriers - NALC Branch 43 News & Views

NALC Branch 43 Proudly Serving

Amelia - Batavia - Bethel - Blanchester - Cincinnati - Cleves - Georgetown
Greenfield - Harrison - Hillsboro - Lebanon - Loveland - Mason
Middletown - Milford - Monroe - Morrow - New Richmond - Oxford
Ripley - South Lebanon - Springboro - Wilmington



Ted Thompson
President

From the President's Desk

Recently I attended a Regional Branch president's meeting that was joined by NALC Executive Vice President Paul Barner. While on this meeting, some branch presidents expressed their frustration with the lack of transparency or updates in contract negotiations. I too join them in their frustration as many of you have been asking me while I am out at a post office, at branch meetings, and through phone calls or emails to me and the branch office for updates or with questions concerning the negotiations or our official bargaining positions and demands. While I can answer some of those questions by resolutions in the past that have been passed during national conventions, I cannot answer more of the specifics as far as back and forth proposals. During the president meeting, Paul expressed that patience wears thin, and he understands that. Paul also emphasized that the NALC is the second largest bargaining unit in the United States and that as such, any negotiations revolve around a massive amount of money. I will explain the bargaining process, and where we are at in negotiations thus far.

For those unaware, our national representatives are required to bargain for resolutions that pass national convention. After our last national convention in Chicago this past summer, as well as from previous conventions, resolutions were passed that must become the NALC's official bargaining position

when it comes to contract negotiations. Last summer I wrote over two separate months about many of those resolutions, and thus will not repeat here. A good example of these resolutions was at the Chicago convention where the delegates in attendance voted on eliminating Table 2 of the pay scale. Thus, that must be the NALC's official bargaining position. However, that does not mean that will be the outcome of those negotiations as the Postal Service could counter that proposal. Proposals then would go back and forth until both parties can come to agreement, and a tentative agreement would be reached requiring a vote and ratification from the membership, or an impasse would be declared and the contract would be heard in front of a national interest arbitration panel that is comprised of three arbitrators; one selected by the NALC, one selected by the USPS, and one jointly selected to chair. Timewise, while also frustrating, we are on pace with past contracts.

Contract negotiations are ahead of where we were during the negotiation of 2019, and around the same as negotiations in 2016. Negotiations are broken down into two separate categories. The first category is workroom or work rules. This part deals with contract language and issues that impact letter carriers from a rules or rights standpoint. There are over 200 proposals currently presented at the negotiating table. I have been notified that there is a strong likelihood that many NALC proposals will be accepted by the Postal Service if the economic, or the second category, of the contract can be jointly accepted. The economic side of the contract is the one that drives the bus. This is the portion that includes anything

Continued on following page



NEWS & VIEWS

Volume 134, Number 10
Published Monthly by:
Queen City Letter Carriers
NALC Branch 43
11070 Southland Road
Cincinnati, Ohio 45240

www.branch43.org
Phone: 513-542-6400
Fax: 513-542-0043

Board of Officers

President: Ted Thompson
Vice President: Patrick Dougherty
Financial Secretary: Burt Hughes
Recording Sec: Sue Egbers
Treasurer: Connie Griffith
H.B.R. / M.B.A.: Jim Metz
Sgt.-At-Arms: Brian Bailey
Comp. Officer: Matthew Bauer
Dir. of Retirees: Gerald Giesting
Dir. of Legislative & Political Affairs:
Matt McCarren
President Emeritus: Gary Gabbard
President Emeritus: Gerald Giesting
President Emeritus: David Kennedy

Trustees:

Denny Doud, Dave Durbin, Diana
Enwright, Skip Grant, Randy Utz
A.F.L.- C.I.O. Delegates:
Exec. Council - Ted Thompson
Corey Isham, Kevin Hensley,
Lamont Seaborough, Natasha Wever,
& David Utz

EDITOR'S (Ted Thompson) NOTES
Branch 43 members are encouraged to
send articles to the *News & Views*. Items
of interest about your station, current
events, etc. are welcome. The following
guidelines apply:

- (1) We may edit your article for grammar, punctuation, spelling, etc.
- (2) If it should prove necessary to edit an article for space or coherence, every effort will be made to preserve the substance and intent of the article.
- (3) Unsigned articles will not be printed. Letters, criticism and suggestions for improving the *News & Views* are also welcome. If your letter is not intended for publication, please state so. Letters held to 150 words are less likely to be edited.
- (4) Articles must arrive at the Branch office by the 15th in order to make the next month's issue. Digital format is preferred. Send items to: thompson@branch43.org

Printed in House

President cont.

involving dollars and cents. This is also the portion from which Branch 43 has been receiving the most questions. So, let me discuss what I know of where we are at with an economic package.

For starters, while members may be frustrated with the amount of time the process is taking, time should be in our favor. Recently the Teamsters union ratified a contract with United Parcel Service (UPS). Currently, the United Auto Workers (UAW) are on a stand-up strike with the major three automakers. For the first time in our history, a United States President stood with union members on a picket line. The tides are changing, and the wind is shifting in our country regarding wages and the labor movement. For both the Teamsters and the UAW, they are seeing or seeking wage increases and demanding claw backs to concessions after the 2008 great recession. While the 2008 recession resulted in gains for employers, with the current historical gains employers have been earning, the unions, and their members, have been demanding greater wages, benefits, and working conditions. The country sees these demands, and outcomes, and so will any neutral arbitrator that may oversee our contract.

Currently, the elephant in the room is what the Postal Service will agree to on pay. I have been notified that the NALC will not continue negotiations if the Postal Service refuses to accept a different pay table. Currently, both Paul, and NALC President Brian Renfroe, are in negotiations with the Postal Service weekly. Shortly however, if there is no acceptance, then the NALC will want a selection of a neutral arbitrator for interest arbitration. I have also been notified the NALC has

demanded a significant difference in pay at the entry level, intermediate level, and ending stages of our pay scale. NALC leadership has committed to me that they will not propose a contract that does not properly reward letter carriers and if they do not receive a final proposal that does that, we will seek these rewards through arbitration and feel confident we will do well. Another topic that is being discussed in national contract negotiations is crime, so I would like to share where we are in this major issue we're facing.

As I reported last month, Branch 43 held a rally against crime titled, "Enough is Enough." Again, I want to thank anyone who helped or participated in this event to make it a success as we are starting to see the rewards from this rally. One major goal was to generate media attention and put letter carriers in the public spotlight. The amount of media attention we received from this event cannot be ignored. Since this event, I have been contacted and spoke with members of the media, the law enforcement community, and our elected officials at both the local and national level. Next month I will give an update on where we are on crime at the national level, this month I will focus on where we are at the local level. On September 27th, I was invited to Cincinnati City Hall to receive a proclamation (page 7) in honor of all your sacrifices with the increase in crime you have faced. While addressing the Mayor and Councilmembers, I addressed the gravity of the situation and what can be done locally. While including law enforcement, many Councilmembers affirmed their commitment to doing what they can. Councilmembers Jeff Cramerding and Mark Jeffrey's committed to involving local city councils to address

Continued on page 9



Pat Dougherty
Vice President

From the Vice President

Appeal routes to denied OWCP claim.

Under the Federal Employees Compensation Act (FECA), an injured worker has the “burden of proof” for submitting evidence to establish that a claim meets all five basic elements to be approved. **1)** That the claim was timely filed. **2)** That the injured worker is a civil employee. **3)** Fact of injury-factual and medical. **4)** That the injury occurred in the performance of duty. **5)** That there is a causal relationship between the injury and work factors. A formal decision is required in any case where one or more of the five basic elements of the claim has not been met. As a claim is being developed, injured workers must be provided with an opportunity to perfect their claim. Before preparing an initial case denial, the Office of Workers Compensation Programs (OWCP) must develop the claim and advise the injured worker in writing of their burden of proof in establishing entitlement to benefits. A development letter will be issued informing the injured worker of the deficiencies in the evidence submitted, the information necessary to correct them and the deadline for submitting the evidence and the consequences for failing to do so.

After all appropriate development, if one of the five basic elements has not been met, the case will be denied. A formal decision with appeal rights is sent to the injured worker, explaining the deficiencies in the claim. OWCP reviews each of the five basic elements in order and will stop reviewing the claim file when one of the elements has not been met. In many cases, the fact of injury element is not met when the medical evidence does not have a valid diagnosis. In this instance, OWCP stops reviewing the claim, the claim will be denied for fact of injury, and the performance of duty and causal relationship elements will not be reviewed. Injured workers should read OWCP decisions carefully. After a review of the background of the claim and the evidence in the claim, the decision usually has a few key sentences explaining the exact basis for the denial. Take the denial letter to the doctor office. The specific deficiencies in the basis for denial must be resolved for a successful appeal. In most cases, the claim is denied based on the lack of a doctor’s explanation of the causal relationship between the diagnosed condi-

tion(s) and work factors. A medical report that satisfies the deficiencies noted in the denial letter will be needed for a successful appeal.

The FECA provides several avenues of appeal. Each appeal route has statutory time limits for when the appeal must be made.

An appeal to the Branch of Hearings and Review (BHR) for an oral hearing or review of the written record must be made within 30 days from the date of the denial decision. In many cases, this may be the best appeal route for initial denials. Hearings representatives at the BHR are highly experienced claims examiners. An oral hearing allows the injured worker to ask for and understand exactly what is needed to get the claim accepted. If the injured worker submits sufficient documentation for the claim to be accepted, the hearings representative can accept the claim without going to a hearing. Reviews of the written record at the BHR have similar advantages. All decisions by the BHR are merit decisions, entitling the injured worker appeal rights to reconsideration with the Employees Compensation Appeals Board (ECAB).

The next avenue of appeal is to request reconsideration, which must be filed within one year of the date of the denial letter. While the one-year deadline is nice, injured workers should never wait that long to file an appeal. To receive a merit decision entitling further appeals, the request must be accompanied by relevant new evidence or argument not considered previously. While no special form is required, the request must be in writing, and it must be signed and dated by the claimant or the authorized representative. The request should also identify the decision and the specific issue(s) for which reconsideration is being requested. Requests for reconsideration are adjudicated by an OWCP quality assurance and mentoring examiner (QAM) or higher authority who was not involved in making the decision being appealed. All reconsideration decisions, whether affirmative or negative, must be issued by QAM or higher authority.

The final avenue of appeal is to the Employees Compensation Appeals Board (ECAB). The ECAB will examine only the evidence in the claim file on the date of the decision. In most cases, an injured worker should not appeal an initial decision directly to the ECAB. NALC workers’ compensation specialists generally appeal to the ECAB in cases where previous decisions failed to sufficiently review medical evidence or points of law. NALC members are encouraged to contact the business agent office and speak with the regional workers compensation



Corey Isham
Formal A Rep

STEWARD'S CORNER

First, thank you to all carriers represented by Branch 43. You all do a fantastic job even with the unrealistic expectations put on you every day. I must admit I am genuinely concerned. I am concerned about the things that are going on around the city. It's disappointing hearing about carriers writing statements on other carriers. I am not speaking on crimes that unfortunately a handful of carriers have committed while on the job. Which is a disservice to our customers and the American public. If you see a crime, I have no problem with you reporting that. That is actually our job. Our integrity is one of the many examples of how we differ from management. The other day I heard a story that carriers at a specific office wrote multiple statements because a carrier was becoming verbally aggressive with a manager. Carriers in that office wrote statements for the manager against the carrier. That is disappointing because if the shoe were on the other foot and regularly it is, that gesture would not be returned. I've yet to see a floor supervisor or manager write a statement supporting a carrier being verbally abused on the work room floor by a manager.

Another story I heard was that carriers wrote statements supporting a manager in a local office against the union over a city-wide problem. That same manager then turned around and wanted to impasse a grievance that was filed to make a carrier whole over a personal item. Why are we doing this? Statements are one of the most important documents a steward can put in a grievance packet. No-one can paint a picture for an arbitrator better than someone that was there. Why are we going against each other? According to Merriam-Webster the definition of the word "union" is *something that is made one: something formed by a combining or coalition of parts or members*. You wouldn't write a statement against yourself, would you? So why are we writing them against our brothers and sisters who help make us stronger? If we lose those parts, we are weaker as a union which diminishes our seat at the table. When we stick together the louder our voices become. Which is beneficial not only at the bargaining table but in our everyday local post office which is a vessel we use to provide for our families. If you see a manager violating a carrier's rights to a mutual respect atmosphere, write a detailed statement when your shop steward comes around asking for statements.

Don't fear retaliation. If that is the case, we'll get that in the grievance and arbitration process as soon as possible. We will beat that too! Article 16 of the National Agreement protects us from punitive discipline. Article 16, just like all of the other articles in the National Agreement, was bargained by letter carriers for letter carriers. Want to get more involved? If you're righteous and want to fight for others' contractual rights, then sign up to be a steward in the upcoming fall steward elections. The union starts with "U." Nevertheless, you all are amazing and do an excellent job! I hope to see you all at the next union meeting. Let's make it a packed hall! Stay Safe!

In Solidarity,
Corey Isham



Matt McCarren
Leg. & Pol.

Get Out and Vote

Fall has come and mail volume is picking up. With increased volume comes increased demand for staffing and we are sure to be working long hours. The beginning of autumn also marks the time to vote in Ohio! I encourage everyone, regardless of individual political viewpoints, to exercise their opinions and uphold their civic duties. Voter Registration must be completed by October 10th and early voting begins October 11th. Absentee ballot applications must be received by October 31st at the board of elections (BOE). You can vote in person at the Hamilton County BOE, including weekends, or vote by mail. Please check the BOE website for early voting hours. Local polling is on November 7th from 6:30am - 7:30pm.

While the 2023 elections do not include presidential or congressional contests, there are many issues Ohio is facing. Your voice on these issues needs to be heard! Among others, some of the headline making issues include abortion rights and cannabis regulation. To be further informed you can review a sample ballot on the Secretary of State's website at Ohiosos.gov.

As demand increases at work you might think, "how could I possibly have time to cast a vote at my local poll?" Know your rights! USPS must provide you with the ability to exercise your civic duties. Employee Labor relations Manual (ELM) 519.32 provides postal policies surrounding voting. For career employees (every city carrier in Cincin-

Continued on following page

Steward Corner cont.

nati installation), management is required to provide 3 hours from either when polling begins or ends, to vote. As a policy, the time spent inside your work schedule (typically 8-9:30) should be granted as voting leave. If you plan to vote in person November 7th, please fill out PS Form 3971 as far in advance as possible requesting voting leave to vote. Vote like your rights depend on it. I look forward to seeing you at the polls.

In Solidarity,
Matt McCarren

Vice President cont.

officer before appealing your denied claim to the ECAB. Members are also encouraged to reach out to the branch office when a members claim is denied. Many times, someone at the office may be able to help with reconsideration. And, as always, members are encouraged to utilize branch officers. In the case of OWCP, Matt Bauer is the Compensation Officer for Branch 43. He is here for you.

In Solidarity,
Pat Dougherty

Cincinnati City Hall - Resolution to Recognize Letter Carriers



You're Invited to a
Labor Lunch

with

**CONGRESSMAN
GREG LANDSMAN**

*Catch up with Greg over some food
and drinks! All are welcome.*

**Wednesday, November 1st
12pm**



UA Local 392

1228 Central Pkwy
Cincinnati, OH 45202

*Please RSVP to Alex at
alexandra@landsmanforcongress.com*

Paid for by Landsman for Congress

City of Cincinnati

Resolution No. **R / 064-2023**

RECOGNIZING our local letter carriers and **EXPRESSING** the appreciation of the Mayor and Council for the dedication, courage, and resilience that letter carriers display in the course of their duties each day.

WHEREAS, letter carriers are the backbone of our community, assisting in carrying out our elections, delivering medicines, ensuring checks arrive on time, transporting important documents, and more; and

WHEREAS, letter carriers provide an essential service, delivering around 162 million pieces of mail each day; and

WHEREAS, robberies of letter carriers have been on the rise with seventeen such instances occurring locally in the last three years, and nationally, surging 78 percent to nearly 500 occurrences in 2022, according to data provided by U.S. Postal Inspection Service; and

WHEREAS, the recent rise in robberies of letter carriers presents a threat to the safety of our letter carriers, our democracy, the health of our citizens, and the fabric of our society; and

WHEREAS, letter carriers work every day, regardless of heat, rain, snow, sleet, or hail, to deliver our mail and ensure that we are able to carry on with our lives, and this service underpins much of our lives; now, therefore,

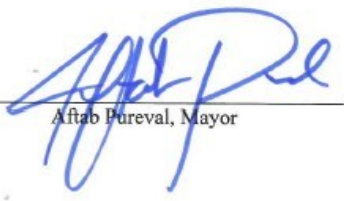
BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the City of Cincinnati, State of Ohio:

Section 1. That the Mayor and this Council recognize local letter carriers for the dedication, courage, and resilience that letter carriers display in the course of their duties each day.

Section 2. That this resolution be spread upon the minutes of Council and that a copy be provided to Ted Thompson through the office of Councilmember Reggie Harris.

Passed: September 27, 2023

Attest: 
Clerk


Aftab Pureval, Mayor

Submitted by Mayor Aftab Pureval, Councilmember Reggie Harris, Vice Mayor Jan-Michele Lemon Kearney, and Councilmembers Jeff Cramerding, Mark Jeffreys, Scotty Johnson, Liz Keating, Meeka Owens, Victoria Parks, and Seth Walsh.



Cincinnati AFL-CIO Labor Council
COPE DINNER 2023

“Putting It All On The Line for Working People”

Featured Speakers:

US Congressman, Greg Landsman
Ohio House Minority Leader, Allison Russo

Friday, November 3, 2023

NEW VENUE! Cincinnati Kolping Center

10235 Mill Rd, Cincinnati, OH 45231

6:00 PM Social Hour
7:00 PM Dinner and Program

Please complete and return this portion to reserve your seats for this unforgettable, unprecedented event!

UNION OR ORGANIZATION: _____

Primary Contact: _____ Phone: _____ Email: _____

Street: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

- Enclosed is my check/reservation for \$1,500 for a **Premium VIP Table** of 8 (Closest to the stage).
- Enclosed is my check/reservation for \$1,200 for a **Standard Table** of 8.
- Enclosed is my check/reservation for the amount of _____ for _____ Regular Seating at \$150 per seat.
- I/we are not able to attend. Please accept this contribution of _____ to support the good work COPE provides.

(Please check on of the following: My check is enclosed -or- Please invoice me for our contribution).

The COPE Dinner is an important fundraiser for the Committee on Political Education. COPE sponsors voter registration, voter education, candidate screenings and endorsements, Meet-the Candidates Night, sample ballots, Chronider, and Get-Out-the-Vote activities. Contributions to the Cincinnati AFL-CIO COPE are not deductible for income tax purposes. Tickets may be purchased individually, out of general funds or out of political action accounts.

To reserve your seats, make your check payable to **Cincinnati AFL-CIO COPE** and send along with this registration form to Cincinnati AFL-CIO Labor Council, 1385 Tennessee Avenue – 2nd Floor, Cincinnati, OH 45229. Please respond by Friday, October 27, 2023.

For further information contact the CLC Office at 513-421-1846 or drop us a note at info@cincinnatiaflcio.org.



NALC Health Benefit Plan



NALC Health Benefit Plan

Customer Service

For eligibility, claim and benefit information

1-888-636-NALC (6252)

For additional information visit our website at:

www.nalc.org/depart/hbp

www.nalchbp.org

President cont.

our issue and recognize individual letter carriers. Councilmember Scotty Johnson discussed getting with the Ohio state legislature to address laws and penalties for those who accost a letter carrier. Mayor Aftab Pureval recognized your sacrifices and reaffirmed his commitment to letter carrier safety. Finally, we are moving in the right direction, but we have much still left to accomplish.

Fraternally,
Ted Thompson

September Membership Meeting

Raffle Winner

Split the Pot - Jim Metz

Steward Election Notice

This shall serve as notice to all members that pursuant to Article 7 of the Branch by-laws, Branch 43 will hold Steward elections this year for the term beginning January 1, 2024 through December 31, 2025. Anyone desiring to run as Steward in their office must be a member in good standing who has not held or applied for a supervisor position for 2 years prior to the beginning of the term. Nomination notices shall be posted in each station on October 15th and remain posted through the close of business on October 25, 2023. If necessary, ballots will be distributed and members shall vote in their respective stations from November 15 through November 30, 2023.



You continue to se

THAN

NALC Vet

Ricky	Allen
Joan	Bauer-Gast
Susan	Baxter
James	Boothe, III
Donald	Brentlinger
Lyle	Burns
Lori	Cox
Thomas	Demaree
Rex	Dixon
Sandra	Fatora
Roger	Gregory
Robert	Heis, Jr.
Anthony	Hoffman III
Andrew	Jackson
John	Jaspers
Thomas	Kampel
Jeffrey	Lewis
Craig	Magnarini
Thomas	Mathews
James	Metz
Diane	Murray
Timothy	Obrien
Stephanie	Pick
Gary	Richter
Sharon	Rucker
Karen	Runion
Paul	Steffen
Steven	Susong
Richard	Tabeling
Edward	Thomas
James	Weber
Debra	Wiesman

October Retiree Birthdays

September YOPC Attendees

Join fellow retirees next month for sharing old times, playing cards and lunch

- Deborah Bryant
- Ed Colegate
- Sue Egbers
- Diana Enwright
- Art Holt
- Burt Hughes
- Dick Keller
- Bill Lipp
- Gerry Mees
- Ken Pflanz
- Robert Wilkinson

October Gold Carders

- | | |
|---------|---------------|
| Edward | Bishop |
| William | Bowman |
| Tom | Brown |
| John | Dobranski Jr. |
| James | Gaynor |
| Edgar | Groen, Jr. |
| Robert | Hay |
| James | Hoelle |
| Robert | Huelsman |
| William | Ivory |
| Richard | Keller |
| Michael | Nagel |
| Melvin | Paul |
| Stephen | Peelman |
| Paul | Ridder, Jr. |
| Glenn | Rose |
| John | Schwallie Jr |
| William | Stigler |
| Wilson | Turner Jr. |
| Ernest | Vanover |
| John | Walker |
| Robert | Wendell |
| Charles | Wilder Jr |
| Morris | Woods |

Motions made at the September Membership Meeting

To dispense with the roll call of Officers and reading of the previous months minutes.

Carried

To hire Hartman Painting to paint the outside of the office building, as stated in their bid, to include trim, at a cost not to exceed \$10,000.

Failed

To pay the bills. **Carried**

To adjourn. **Carried**

Join fellow retirees for lunch

1:00 pm - 1st Monday of each month

November 6th

Lake Nina Restaurant

7200 Pippin Road
Cincinnati, OH 45239

Call Burt Hughes
(513) 807-4143



“Bring your loan HOME”



- ✓ **Receive a \$100 Gas Card! ***
- ✓ **Defer your payments for 90 days!**
- ✓ **We will match or beat your rate! ***

Transfer an existing loan or credit card balance from another institution and bring your loan home!

How can you say no?

Stop in or call 513.381.8600 Ext. #3



1243 West 8th Street • Cincinnati, OH 45203-1004 • 513-381-8600
1111 East Fifth Street • Dayton, OH 45402-2299 • 937-228-7691
Mail: P.O. Box 14403 • Cincinnati, OH 45250-0403
Toll Free 1-800-265-4527 • www.URmyCU.org

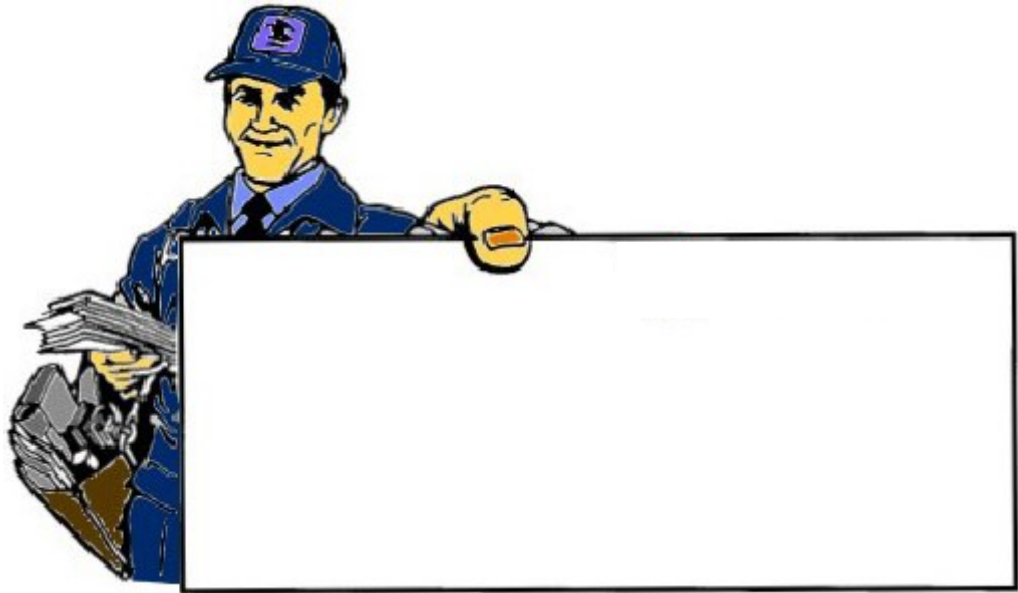
*Balance must be at least \$10,000 or greater to qualify. For loan balances below \$10,000 only the 90 day deferment will be offered. Member must qualify for the loan under normal underwriting guidelines. Minimum rate floor of this offer is 2.99% APR. Interest will accrue over the 90 day deferment period regardless of balance. Member must be able to provide verification of existing rate. Existing PFCU loans are excluded. This institution is not federally insured. **MEMBERS' ACCOUNTS ARE NOT INSURED OR GUARANTEED BY ANY GOVERNMENT OR GOVERNMENT-SPONSORED AGENCY**

Queen City Letter Carriers

NALC Branch 43
11070 Southland Road
Cincinnati, Ohio 45240

"ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED"

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Cincinnati, Ohio
PERMIT No. 6919



Upcoming Events

- Steward Seminar** - Oct. 5th, 6:00 PM
- Columbus Holiday** - Monday, Oct. 9th
- Officers Meeting** - Oct. 12th, 6:00 PM
- Branch Meeting** - Oct. 12th, 7:30 PM
- Fall Hall Clean** - Sun, Oct. 15th, 9:00 AM
- November YOPC** - Wednesday, Nov. 1st

