Queen City Letter Carriers - NALC Branch 43

News & Views

Since July 25, 1890

November 2026

NALC Branch 43 Proudly Serving

Amelia - Batavia - Bethel - Blanchester - **Cincinnati** - Cleves - Georgetown
Greenfield - Harrison - Hillsboro - Lebanon - Loveland - Manchester - Mason
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Ted Thompson
President

From the President's Desk

Last month I wrote about the NALC election for national officers for the next four years. On October 3rd the National Election Committee announced the results. As I expected, this was a contested election for many positions. James Henry will be our new President and Corey Walton will be our new Executive Vice President. I spoke with each of them, congratulated them, and offered the support of Branch 43 in any way we may be of assistance. Installation of officers has been set for December 12th, although unofficially many are currently transitioning into their new roles. This month, I want to discuss the results of the election, Branch 43 voter turnout, and where we go from here as a union.

The 2026 referendum of the NALC's official summary by region and branch of the voting for the national officers has been released. For President, Branch 43 members cast a total of 299 votes. Mike Caref received the most votes with 97, followed by James Henry with 86, Nicole Rhine with 66, and Lew Drass with 50. For Executive Vice President Branch 43 cast a total of 288 votes, of which Corey Walton received the most with 175. Branch 43 endorsed 3 candidates in this election. Mark Camilli was the first for Vice President. Out of 289 Branch 43 votes cast, Mark received 187. He subsequently won his election for Vice President. Dan Toth, running for Director of Retired Members, was the second endorsed candidate by Branch 43. Of Branch 43 votes Dan received 178 of the 288 votes cast. Ultimately Dan lost the election. I personally reached out to thank Dan for everything he has done for me and Branch 43. I will surely miss working with Dan. The last candidate Branch 43 endorsed was Mike Hayden for National Business Agent. Mike received 167 of the 287 votes cast by Branch 43 members. Mike won his election for NBA. Mike thanked me and the members for our support. I want to thank each Branch 43 member that took the time to educate themselves, discuss the election, and ultimately voted.

Moving forward, Corey Walton has stated the Concerned Letter Carriers (CLC) are no more, and I could not have said it better. It is time for this union to become united once again as the challenges we face are significant and we need a national body representing us that works together in unison. These challenges include supporting an employer hell bent on putting itself out of business, a hostile administration, and getting letter carriers a fair contract.

Fraternally,
Ted Thompson

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Board of Officers
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Recording Sec: Sue Egbers
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Alex Harper,
Corey Isham, 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



Bill Stratman
Formal A Rep

STEWARD CORNER

Open Season 2027

Open season is upon us. Open season for the 2027 benefit year runs from November 9, 2026, to December 14, 2026. As you may or may not know, this is the only time of year that changes can be made to your health insurance unless you have a qualifying life event. It is also time to enroll in your flexible spending accounts and to make changes to your vision and dental coverage. So, start planning now to make sure any changes you have to make are made.

This article, however, is to inform our members of a great benefit that we have simply because we are members of the NALC. I am of course talking about the NALC Health Benefit Plan. Many of you already take advantage of this while too many seem to not be informed about the NALC Health Benefit Plan. I have talked to my fellow carriers and regularly hear, "I have had this plan for years; I am not changing." I understand this mentality to a point. I, for one, tend to stick with what I know and don't change things much. However, with the rising cost of health insurance several years ago, I investigated and decided to switch to the NALC Health Benefit Plan. I have not regretted it for a day.

So, what is the major selling point of the NALCHBP? Let's start with the biweekly premiums. For 2027, the High Option NALCHBP premiums are as follows. For self only, $116.06 biweekly; for Self plus one, $290.00 biweekly; and for Self and family, $270.37 biweekly. This signifies a reduction of $5.08 for self, $ 3.31 for self plus one, while self and family only rose by $2.95.

How does that compare to other plans? Well, I have chosen to look up the rates for what I believe is probably the most popular insurance that is not NALCHBP with our members, Blue Cross Blue Shield (BCBS). For 2027, the BCBS Standard premiums are $196.30 for self, $435.86 for self plus one, and $490.62 for self and family. As you can see, for self and family, that equals $220.25 per paycheck or $5,726.50 per year. For a top-scale carrier, that equates to a 7% yearly raise just for switching to the NALC HBP. For a newer Step B carrier, that number rises to 11%. Seems that for that kind of money, it does at least require a look.

I know that premiums are not the only thing to look at when choosing your health insurance, though. I could mention that the NALCHBP has a $25 copay for doctor's visits while BCBS's is $30. But again, that goes along with the premium difference. You may ask about coverage. I am glad you asked, because I invite everyone reading this article to compare plans for plans. The great thing is OPM makes this easy with a healthcare comparison tool on opm.gov. Simply go to opm.gov, click on insurance, then Post-

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Pat Dougherty
Vice President

From the Vice President

Delivering Mail and Darkness

Daylight Savings Time concludes at 2:00 am on Sunday, November 1, 2026, when the clock will "fall back" one hour. Days continue to get shorter and with shorter daylight hours, and later starting times, carriers are once again dealing with delivering mail after dark. This causes issues every year. So, what is safe? Safety depends on you and your route. There is no blanket policy regarding delivery after dark because the core issue to contend with is whether a particular carrier on a particular route can safely make mail delivery. Bottom line each carrier must weigh individual circumstances about the type of delivery to be carried (door-to-door walking, mounted, apartments, cluster boxes, etc.), surroundings (unfamiliar territory, high crime area, many steps, and hills, etc.) and the individual carrier needs to consider their past experiences with after dark deliveries.

Arbitrators have ruled that darkness alone does not make conditions unsafe. Therefore, do not tell your supervisor that you will not return to your route simply because it is dark. There is no contractual provision that prohibits management from scheduling carriers to work outside daylight hours. If instructed to continue, you must go back out and attempt to deliver the mail.

While darkness can contribute to unsafe conditions, it cannot be the sole reason for stopping delivery. For example, if you are on a walking route that is poorly lit and you trip over a crack in the sidewalk or stumble over an extension cord powering a large inflatable Santa Claus, you may declare that specific relay unsafe and move on to the next one. The same principle applies as you continue your route: if the area is well lit, continue delivering. If you encounter unsafe conditions due to poor lighting, stop and proceed to the next relay.

There are several precautions you can take to stay safe while delivering in the dark: If you are on a walking route and lighting is poor, do not cut across lawns. Instead, stay on sidewalks or driveways, which are generally safer.

When it is too dark to see addresses clearly, do not finger mail while walking. Since poor lighting reduces your peripheral vision, watch where you step carefully. You may also face challenges delivering on cluster box, dismount, or mounted routes after dark. For example: If you must turn on your vehicle's overhead light to sort mail, give your eyes time to readjust to the dark before driving to the next stop. At cluster boxes, lighting may be inadequate for sorting. You might need to sort mail in your vehicle and then walk to the boxes to deliver. For dismount delivery, treat it like a walking route — if it's too dark to safely sort while walking, stop and ensure you can see properly before proceeding. Finally, keep in mind that delivering mail in the dark will take longer than during daylight hours. Take the necessary precautions to stay safe while completing your route.

With the current staffing levels, you will find yourself delivering mail in the dark on a route you are not familiar with. Everyone needs to look out for one another and case in the dog warning cards. It becomes more difficult to tell where the barking dog is when it is dark. You are the only one who can keep yourself safe. If you choose to bring back undelivered mail, let your supervisor know and list the reason on PS Form 1571 and have the supervisor sign it. You will more than likely need to be able to defend the decision with specific safety problems on the territory you brought back undelivered mail or parcels. It is important to note it is not the intent to endorse or encourage the unnecessary curtailment of any mail. It is about each carrier's safety and the

Continued on following page

Vice President cont.

protection of the mail in our charge and management's responsibility to manage. It very simply is the responsibility of each carrier to measure safety and report to supervisors any unsafe conditions encountered during their shift. It is management's responsibility to provide a safe working environment.

We have been taking phone calls from carriers inquiring about the maximum hours on a service day they can be required to work during the month of December. If you are a carrier on the Overtime Desired List (ODL) the 12 hours in a service day and 60 hours rule in a service week does not apply for the month of December. Additionally, Article 8.5.G provides that the limits do not apply during December when full-time employees on the overtime desired list may be required to work more than 12 hours. These exceptions do not apply to City Carrier Assistants (CCAs), Part Time Flexible (PTFs), or full-time carriers who are not on the overtime desired list, all of whom are effectively limited to 11.5 hours of work per day by Employee Labor Manual (ELM) Section 432.32, even during December. So, in closing only the ODL carriers can be required to work more than 12 hours in a service day for the month of December. The 60-hour service week rule for all full-time employees does not apply for the month of December. All CCAs, PTFs, and full-time carriers not on the overtime desired list reach their maximum hours in a service day at 11.5 hours worked even in the month of December. That would be a total of twelve (12) consecutive hours including your lunch. If you start at 8am you can clock out at 8pm, that would be twelve (12) consecutive hours, and 11.5 hours worked in a service day. The penalty overtime exclusion period this year runs from November 28 through December 25, 2026.

Article 8, Section 4.G is a new section of the contract added to the 2023 National Agreement in accordance with Arbitrator Dennis R. Nolan's award dated March 21, 2025. This section states: G. For any hours worked beyond twelve (12) hours in a service day or sixty (60) hours in a service week the employee is to be paid at the rate of two and one-half (2 ½) times the base hourly straight time rate. (The preceding paragraphs, Article 8.4.F. and 8.4.G., shall apply to City Carrier Assistant Employees.) Unlike the penalty overtime exclusion period, there are no exceptions to Section 4.G. This provision, which provides pay at two and a half times the base hourly straight-time rate for work beyond 12 hours a day or 60 hours a week for all letter carriers, is applicable even during the penalty overtime exclusion period.

In solidarity,
Pat Dougherty





You continue to serve your country—
THANK YOU!

NALC Veterans Group

Complete this form and mail it to:
NALC Veterans Group, c/o NALC,
100 Indiana Ave., N.W., Washington, DC 20001-2144

NAME:_____

ADDRESS:_____

CITY, STATE, ZIP:_____

NALC BRANCH NUMBER:_____ BRANCH OF SERVICE:_____

I BELONG TO THE FOLLOWING VETERAN GROUP(S):

❑ AMERICAN LEGION ❑ DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS ❑ VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS

❑ OTHER:_____

Queen City Letter Carriers

Ted N. Thompson
President
Patrick M. Dougherty
Vice President

2027

NALC Branch 43
www.branch43.org
phone:513-542-6400
fax: 513-542-0043

January

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1 $ F	2 F
3	4 A	5 B	6 ✱ C	7 D	8 E	9 E
10	11 F	12 A	13 B	14 ♦ C	15 $ D	16 D
17	18 E	19 F	20 A	21 B	22 C	23 C
24 31	25 D	26 E	27 F	28 A	29 $ B	30 B

February

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 C	2 D	3 ✱ E	4 F	5 A	6 A
7	8 B	9 C	10 D	11 ♦ E	12 $ F	13 F
14	15 A	16 B	17 C	18 D	19 E	20 E
21	22 F	23 A	24 B	25 C	26 $ D	27 D
28						

March

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 E	2 F	3 ✱ A	4 B	5 C	6 C
7	8 D	9 E	10 F	11 ♦ A	12 $ B	13 B
14	15 C	16 D	17 E	18 F	19 A	20 A
21	22 B	23 C	24 D	25 E	26 $ F	27 F
28	29 A	30 B	31 ✱ C			

April

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1 D	2 E	3 E
4	5 F	6 A	7 B	8 ♦ C	9 $ D	10 D
11	12 E	13 F	14 A	15 B	16 C	17 C
18	19 D	20 E	21 F	22 A	23 $ B	24 B
25	26 C	27 D	28 E	29 F	30 A	

May

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1 A
2	3 B	4 C	5 ✱ D	6 E	7 $ F	8 F
9	10 A	11 B	12 C	13 ♦ D	14 E	15 E
16	17 F	18 A	19 B	20 C	21 $ D	22 D
23 30	24 E 31 D	25 F	26 A	27 B	28 C	29 C

June

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1 E	2 ✱ F	3 A	4 $ B	5 B
6	7 C	8 D	9 E	10 ♦ F	11 A	12 A
13	14 B	15 C	16 D	17 E	18 $ F	19 F
20	21 A	22 B	23 C	24 D	25 E	26 E
27	28 F	29 A	30 ✱ B			

July

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1 C	2 $ D	3 D
4	5 E	6 F	7 A	8 ♦ B	9 C	10 C
11	12 D	13 E	14 F	15 A	16 $ B	17 B
18	19 C	20 D	21 E	22 F	23 A	24 A
25	26 B	27 C	28 D	29 E	30 $ F	31 F

August

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	2 A	3 B	4 ✱ C	5D	6 E	7 E
				STATE CONVENTION		
8	9 F	10 A	11 B	12 ♦ C	13 $ D	14 D
15	16 E	17 F	18 A	19 B	20 C	21 C
22	23 D	24 E	25 F	26 A	27 $ B	28 B
29	30 C	31 D				

September

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 ✱ E	2 F	3 A	4 A
5	6 B	7 C	8 D	9 ♦ E	10 $ F	11 F
12	13 A	14 B	15 C	16 D	17 E	18 E
19	20 F	21 A	22 B	23 C	24 $ D	25 D
26	27 E	28 F	29 A	30 B		

October

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1 C	2 C
3	4 D	5 E	6 ✱ F	7 A	8 $ B	9 B
10	11 C	12 D	13 E	14 ♦ F	15 A	16 A
17	18 B	19 C	20 D	21 E	22 $ F	23 F
24 31	25 A	26 B	27 C	28 D	29 E	30 E

November

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 F	2 A	3 ✱ B	4 C	5 $ D	6 D
7	8 E	9 F	10 A	11 ♦ B	12 C	13 C
14	15 D	16 E	17 F	18 A	19 $ B	20 B
21	22 C	23 D	24 E	25 F	26 A	27 A
28	29 B	30 C				

December

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 ✱ D	2 E	3 $ F	4 F
5	6 A	7 B	8 C	9 ♦ D	10 E	11 E
12	13 F	14 A	15 B	16 C	17 $ D	18 D
19	20 E	21 F	22 A	23 B	24 C	25 C
26	27 D	28 E	29 F	30 A	31 $ B	1 B

USPS Holiday CCA Holiday ♦ Branch Meetings $ Paydays ✱ Y.O.P.C

2027 Leave Year: *Jan. 9, 2027 - Jan. 8, 2028.* ***2027 Annual Leave*** *will be credited on Jan. 29, 2027 pay date*

December Exclusionary Period: *November 28, 2026 - December 25, 2026 (PP 26 and PP 27)*

Motions made at the October Membership Meeting

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

To get Emily Rivers a $100.00 gift card. **Carried**

To pay the bills. **Carried**

To adjourn. **Carried**

My fellow letter carriers, mailman, or whatever your customers call you.

First off, I'd like to say good job and keep it up. We don't hear that enough. The reason for this letter isn't just about what we do in the office or on the street every day and every week. It's about Cincinnati and how we continue to improve on organizing. For the last decade it has been a running joke within our branch how Groesbeck was unorganized and how the station has dragged its feet into maintaining our unionized numbers. As of August of 2026, we have gotten almost 100% unionized. I'm sure there is a plethora of reasons why or how this has come to be. But from my vantage, I've come up with some theories. First, Corey Isham, he has made it a station that no matter what the situation he has shown that he will have our back and will fight for every single carrier. I think that his mentality on protecting each carrier has a trickle-down effect. Second, over the last few years many of you have seen throughout the US how important having a union is and will be in the future. Another theory is that I think our conditions have been sometimes unbearable and the only people we have to look toward are the carriers that are beside you every day. One of my favorite quotes "misery loves company" and I can tell you from experience, there's nothing better than seeing all of your coworkers getting back from a wildly messed up day and you see that mailman grin of "did I do it yeah, did I hate every second, hell yeah".

But it's not all sunshine and rainbows just because Groesbeck has unionized. There are 100 different lives, families, circumstances, etc. and each one has their own thoughts and ideas. Management knowingly or not will try to take advantage of these differences. I've seen first-hand how carriers will get mad at other carriers. But stop and think, did the carrier do it or was it management's failure on delivering everything that previous day. Us as carriers don't have control over what or how much gets delivered, that is management responsibilities. Carriers don't have control on what "pivot" or overtime that we get assigned. But what we can control is how we treat each other. Respect for the career that we have all signed up for at least 30 years. We can control doing the best we have each day, I know you're not always 100%, this place will beat you down sometimes. We can control butting in for your fellow carrier when management decides that they need a scapegoat or a target.

All of this to say, yes unionization is about the percent/number of carriers that participate within the Branch. But what we really need is to have each other's back. We need to show up to events, meetings, retirement parties etc. Because that is what the union is really here for. A group of people

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2027 NALC
Health Benefit Plan Premiums

Your 2027 premiums are here. If your current plan still fits your needs, your coverage continues automatically. If you'd like to make a change, **Open Season** runs **November 9 to December 14, 2026.**

	High Option Plan	CDHP Plan
	Biweekly	Monthly
Self Only	**$116.06 (77A)**	**$251.46 (77A)**
Self Plus One	**$290.00 (77C)**	**$628.33 (77C)**
Self and Family	**$270.37 (77B)**	**$585.80 (77B)**

Member View cont.

with a similar goal, to reach retirement and deliver for the American people. So, my challenge I guess, is one of a few things. 1) come to a union meeting on the second Thursday of each month, I'll buy your first drink. 2) When management is giving someone a hard time, back them up. You don't have to say anything but be their witness if something goes wrong! 3) Find carriers with different seniority and lifestyle and talk to them; find that commonality. As the song 'Breakfast at Tiffany's" goes "Well, that's one thing we got"

In Solidarity,
Travis Nehus

Steward Corner cont.

al Service Health Benefits Program, then FEHB Plan Comparison Tool. Next, you will choose Postal Service Health Benefits Service in the blue box in the middle of the screen. Scroll to the bottom of the page and choose Browse Plans. You will be asked to input basic information about yourself. On the next page, simply click Skip to Plans. Then you simply choose up to 3 plans to compare at a time. This comparison tool not only shows you premiums and coverage but also shows you the results of member surveys for each plan.

You already pay your union dues, so why not take advantage of all that it means to be a member of the NALC?

In solidarity,
Bill Stratman

November Retiree Birthdays

Michael	Beeler
David	Benter
Glen	Brashears
Richard	Briede
Carl	Brinck
Mike	Brooks Sr
Danny	Butler
Steve	Cassini
Kenneth	Chancey
Ronald	Chapman
Michelle	Doud
Janice	Eischen
Diana	Enwright
Roger	Flener
Michael	Holzinger
Kenneth	Horn
David	Hutchison
Grady	Jobe, Jr.
Gary	Kohne
David	Lenahan
Jim	O'Hara Jr
Kenneth	Pflanz
Edwin	Redmond, Jr.
Richard	Schloemer
Larry	Searle
Patrick	Shay
Henderson	Smith
Julia	Smith
Kevin	Spires
Matthew	Steenken
Betty	Van Horn
John	Vanderpohl
James	Velosky

October YOPC Attendees

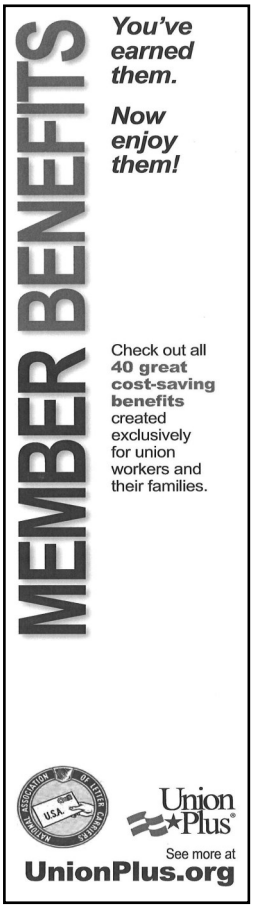
Deborah Bryant
Sue Egbers
Diana Enwright
Jerry Giesting
Burt Hughes
Dick Keller
Ken Pflanz

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



November Gold Carders

Loraine	Bresett
John	Brotherton
Gary	Clore
Robert	Douglass
Michael	Ehlinger
Thomas	Feist
Michael	Kleintank
Paul	Mason
John	Ryan
Larry	Wells



Join fellow retirees for lunch

1:00 pm - 1st Monday of each month

December 7th

Chili's Grill & Bar

5000 Houston Rd
Florence, KY 41042

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

POSTAL Family Credit Union, Inc.

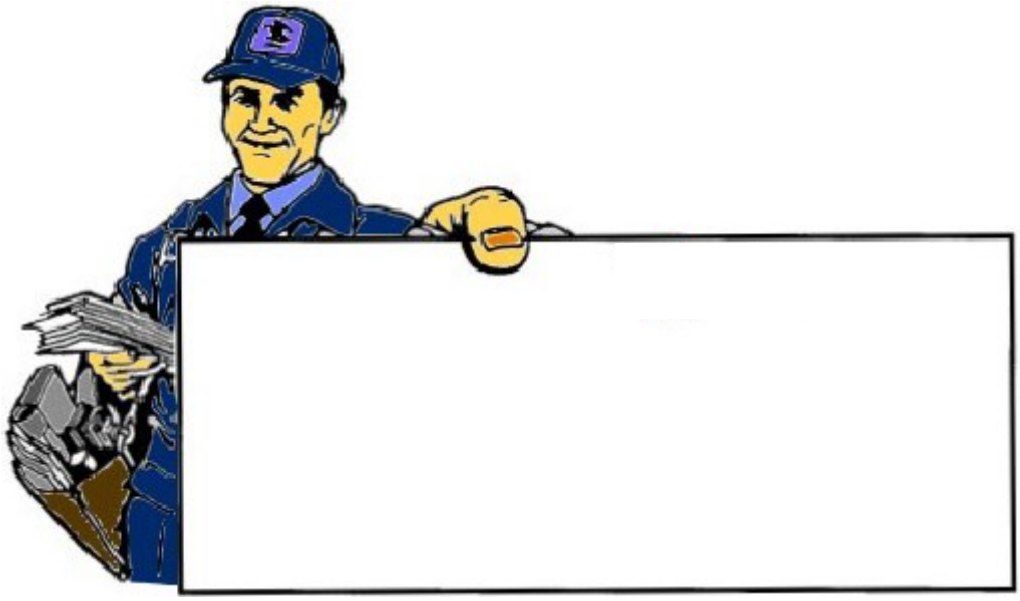
1243 West 8th Street • Cincinnati, OH 45203-1004 • 513-381-8600
1111 East Fifth Street • Dayton, OH 45402-2299 • 937-228-7691
Mail: P.O. Box 14403 • Cincinnati, OH 45250-0403
Toll Free 1-800-265-4527 • www.URmyCU.org

*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"

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Upcoming Events

Veterans Day - Wed., November 11th

Officers Meeting - Nov. 12th, 6:00 PM

Branch Meeting - Nov. 12th, 7:30 PM

Thanksgiving Holiday - Thur. Nov. 26th

December YOPC - Wednesday, Dec. 2nd

LETTER CARRIER POLITICAL FUND
DELIVERING NALC'S MESSAGE TO WASHINGTON

