



Since July 25, 1890

October 2025

Queen City Letter Carriers - NALC Branch 43

News & Views

NALC Branch 43 Proudly Serving

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Ted Thompson
President

From the President's Desk

The constitution of the National Association of Letter Carriers includes provisions for the organization's governance, including the establishment of a national convention and national conference. Further, the constitution outlines the structure of the union, the rights and responsibilities of its members and officers, and the procedures for ratifying amendments to the NALC constitution, which is the key aspect of our framework. Locally, Branch 43 bylaws dictate that the president appoint a bylaws committee made up of three members. This year, in addition to drafting branch bylaws, I have tasked our branch bylaw committee and its chair, Alex Harper, constitutional amendments sought by some members of the branch. Once such amendments are final, Branch 43's Executive Board will discuss them for possible vote to be brought as an officer recommendation during a Branch 43 membership meeting.

Earlier this year, the branch voted to reject a motion to sign on to a letter calling on President Renfro to hold a special meeting, and I personally agreed with the vote against that motion. Through conversation with other branch presidents and some of

our members, the intent was to use this meeting to pass motions to require President Renfro to do things that are not outlined in our constitution. In my view, any motion to require something of that nature, among others, must be provided for in the constitution if there is going to be any kind of a vote on behalf of membership. Until a change is made, our voting governance is done by local branch delegates at national convention. Article 3 section 1 of the NALC constitutions requires that a biennial national convention be held in even numbered years. In odd years, Article 3 section 4(b) requires the national president call a national conference in odd numbered years with expenses to be borne by the local branch. These are known as Rap Sessions. This year, I will be attending the Rap Session next month.

The reason I bring this process up is because I have had much dialogue with members of our branch, and others, on provisions in our national constitution that they would like created, modified, or deleted. If any member is interested in altering any language in the constitution, please contact the branch office to discuss further. Social media today does not always represent reality or truth and cannot call for unsanctioned voting. Wishing does nothing. If we want something - we have to make it our law.

Fraternally,
Ted Thompson

**NEWS & VIEWS**

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Jacob Bingham, 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



Alex Harper
AFL-CIO

AFL-CIO

Election 2025: A Chance for Cincinnati to Stand with Letter Carriers

As Cincinnati prepares to elect a new city council, the stakes extend beyond potholes, zoning, and parks. This election offers a vital opportunity for voters to choose candidates who will stand up for public services, collective bargaining, worker protections — and in particular, for letter carriers.

We are essential public servants who keep communities connected, especially for seniors, people with limited mobility, small businesses, and those in underserved neighborhoods. The health of our organization is, in many ways, a bellwether for our commitment to public infrastructure, equity, and democratic access.

Yet letter carriers and the USPS are facing rising pressure: privatization and the reduction of service obligations threaten not only worker rights, but also service reliability. In Cincinnati, the threat of violence also looms large: I'm sure I don't have to remind y'all how many letter carriers have been assaulted or robbed in Cincinnati in the last couple of years. Any local government that claims to champion public safety must factor in protection for workers making their rounds.

How City Council Decisions Can Help (or Harm) Letter Carriers.

It may seem that city council actions are far removed from the USPS— but in reality, local government choices can either bolster or undermine letter carriers in meaningful ways. Some levers include:

Advocacy and Local Pressure. City council members can adopt resolutions supporting the Postal Service. They can publicly communicate to state and federal officials that Cincinnati rejects any effort to undercut the postal service's mission. In doing so, local leaders can help shift the political climate and raise the cost of attacks on postal labor.

Coordination for Safety. Since we as carriers traverse city streets every day, city governments can coordinate with USPS and local police to improve safety. That includes helping to organize infrastructure for well-lit routes, safe walking conditions, and prompt reporting and follow-through on incidents of robbery or assault, including pressuring the local installation head/USPIS to pursue federal charges for offenders.

Prioritizing Labor Over Privatization. Finally, city council candidates can commit to a broader pro-labor agenda: endorsing union rights, pushing for local procurement from unionized employers, and resisting outsourcing of core public services. A city that respects its own workforce is more likely to stand in

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Pat Dougherty
Vice President

From the Vice President

How to request overtime and complete a PS Form 3996

The morning routine of estimating your workload for the day is often difficult to do, even for experienced letter carriers. Whether you are just starting your career or are an older experienced carrier, the rules remain the same when you believe that the route you are assigned to carry has more work than you can complete within eight hours, or you believe that you cannot complete all the work assigned to you for the day within your scheduled time. I will provide you with six steps to help you successfully request overtime and complete a PS Form 3996.

Step 1. Verbally inform your supervisor/manager if you don't think you can complete your assignment in eight hours. Sections 131.41 and 131.42 of Handbook M-41, City Delivery Carriers Duties and Responsibilities, the USPS handbook that outlines the duties of a city letter carrier, require you to tell the supervisor/manager when you cannot carry all the mail distributed to your route in eight hours or within your normal schedule. Once you have verbally informed management, they are required to tell you what to do. If you are instructed to take all mail and stay in eight hours and you still believe that you will not be able to finish your route in eight hours, proceed to step 2.

Step 2. Request PS Form 3996 from management. Article 41.3.G of the National Agreement and Section 122.33 of Handbook M-39, Management of Delivery Services require the manager to provide you with a PS Form 3996 when you request one. Handbook M-39 is a guide for management detailing their responsibilities

when dealing with city letter carriers, but it often provides explanations to help city letter carriers. No matter what your manager says to you, say the words, "I am requesting a PS Form 3996" and explain the reason(s) for your request. If you are denied the form, immediately request to see your union steward. If your request to see your union steward is denied, make sure that another carrier hears you say the words. After you have verbally informed management that you don't believe you can finish your route in eight hours, have made them aware that their instruction has not changed your belief that you can stay in eight hours, and have been provided a PS Form 3996, proceed to step 3.

Step 3. Fill out the form 3996 completely.

It is important that you fill out the form completely. In the "Reason For Use of Auxiliary" box, you must write down why you believe that you cannot complete your assignment in eight hours. If your belief is related to your mail volume or type of mail you have, you should write comments that are specific and not general as to why you are requesting overtime. Your reason also could be related to your street duties. Some examples: known road construction, weather-related issues (inclement weather ice, snow, heat), excessive accountable, flats, letters, and DPS (normal 4 trays today 10 trays), etc. Comments like "heavy volume" or "route overburdened" aren't sufficient for this section. Often, there are other circumstances that might be the reason why you will need overtime or auxiliary assistance on a given day. Always list the circumstances that will prevent you from finishing your assignment in eight hours on PS Form 3996 as explained be specific not general comments. Statements from management such as "This is your demonstrated performance," and "You are not making standards," are not legitimate and do not change the situation.

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Corey Isham
Formal A Rep

Steward's Corner

Every time it's my turn to write one of these, I find myself wondering what to talk about. You'd think after doing this for a while, it'd come easy, but honestly, it doesn't. This time, the answer came to me during our last union meeting. A lot of people mentioned concerns about the NEERMP program. The NEERMP discussion lasted so long, I got up, went to the bathroom, grabbed an adult soda out of the fridge, came back to my seat, and we were still talking about NEERMP. That's me poking fun. I enjoy the conversation. A lot of people mentioned concerns about the NEERMP program and offered views of how it's going at their station compared to others. That's when it hit me: why not talk about something that's clearly on everyone's mind?

Now, I have two options.

1. Pretend I'm some expert on NEERMP because I'm the steward, this is my corner, and people expect answers.

2. Be real and admit I've got questions and concerns about the program too. Obviously, I chose option #1(Just Kidding.)

Truth is, obviously I am not an expert either. At Groesbeck, where I'm steward, we are dealing with our own issues with NEERMP. So rather than give advice, I figure I'd just share my perspective.

One of the biggest frustrations I have with the Cincinnati Installation's roll out of the new program is this belief from management that PTFs have a 60-hour a week cap. That's only partly true. From weeks 9-11, yes, they're limited to 60 hours. Before 9 they're limited to even less. From Weeks 1-4 they're limited to 40 hours, and weeks 5-8 they're limited to 56. But beginning week 12, the MOU clearly states PTFs hours are limited to those described in ELM 432.32 (11.5 hours per

day). Let's not forget they're still entitled to one guaranteed day off each week.

We can't control how management chooses to schedule, but if they're sending auxiliary assistance carriers home after 60 hours past week 11 and forcing non-ODL carriers to work overtime, that's not just frustrating, it's a violation. At first, I'll admit, I felt kind of bad taking a stance against what I thought was management's way of protecting our newer folks. I even thought, "Maybe they're just trying to give the PTFs a break" but then I heard someone from management say, "we have to send them home, so they don't get penalty overtime." Which made me think "oh yeah that's right PTFs get penalty after 56 hours in a service week". I laughed aloud.

Here I was feeling like the bad guy for telling management the newer employees had to work more hours, to avoid a contract violation, and thinking their stance was about fairness. When really it was about avoiding penalty pay. That one made me chuckle. I guess it's not fair for me to say it was all about avoiding penalty pay, but penalty pay definitely had something to do with it and for some reason I find that to be hilarious, but I appreciate it at the same time. I too want newer employees to be paid at a fair rate and be able to enjoy a nice work- life balance. I give management credit for hiring, I have some really good PTFs at my station that's providing great customer service to the American people, so we as the more experienced letter carriers need to make sure, we are taking care of them. For example, I found out at my station that a PTF was told to turn his shirt inside out because he was wearing a NALC shirt. At first, I'm not going to lie, I was furious. I thought maybe this was to intentionally embarrass the guy or maybe it was some weird stance against the NALC. But I talked to the member of management who asked him to

Continued on page 8

Robert Keller Memorial Retiree / Veterans Day Breakfast



Tuesday, November 11th, 2025
Doors open at 9:00, Breakfast at 10:00



**Branch 43's Annual
Breakfast in Honor of
Gold Card Members,
Retirees, & Veterans.
Breakfast open to ALL
members**

Guest Speakers TBD

Name: _____

Address: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Number attending: _____

Retired (yes/no) Year? _____ Gold Card Member? _____

Veteran (yes/no) Branch? _____

Please complete the above registration form and send it to:
Queen City Letter Carriers - 11070 Southland Road - Cincinnati, Ohio 45240
Seating limited to 75 so please make your reservations early!

Letter Carrier PAC contributions accepted at the door.



Officer's Corner

New Employee Experience Retention and Mentoring Program

Jacob Bingham
AFL-CIO

In addition to which Branch 43 union steward and branch officer Corey Isham discussed, I want to discuss the rules and mentors role. As of July 1, and coinciding with the arbitration mandated contract, the Postal Service and the NALC are now required to install a mentoring program to ease the transition into the letter carrier craft of newly hired employees. This program is the New Employee Experience Retention and Mentoring Program (NEERMP).

NEERMP intends to fix the abhorrent retention numbers the Postal Service has operated under since Covid-19. It is attempting to ease a new carrier into the career over a 12-week period while also providing that individual with a mentor to help guide them through the earliest period.

Beginning in weeks 1-4, a PTF or CCA cannot work over 8 hours in a day or 40 hours in a week and cannot be sent to another office to render help. Between weeks 5-8 they are limited to 10 hours a day and 56 hours a week and are again restricted to their employing office. Weeks 9-11 they can work 11.5 hours a day and 60 hours a week but at this point they can be sent outside their employing office. Week 12 on 11.5 hours per day consistent with the ELM 432.32.

New employees are guaranteed at least one scheduled day off a week throughout all their work weeks, also only carriers assigned to one of the six Sunday parcel delivery hubs can work parcel delivery during weeks 1-8. Meaning PTFs assigned to Groesbeck, Murray, Mid-City, Sharonville, Anderson, and Westwood will work parcel delivery during weeks 1-8, and carriers assigned to the rest of the offices will begin parcel delivery

during week nine.

In addition to the 40 hours of Academy instruction and the 40 hours of On-The-Job instruction a new employee will receive one day of training doing parcel delivery with someone experienced.

All of these work limitations are being crafted to ease the work/life balance of a new carrier but it is the role of the mentor to help provide positive encouragement on the job. The MOU states that time for communication between mentor and mentee is not limited. Each office should have at least one designated mentor. This person can be an OJI trainer, or someone separate who can assure that a new PTF or CCA is being given all the tools to succeed.

A mentor needs to ensure that park points and the number of relays are written on a PS Form 3996, taking care to flag or bundle DPS when a new carrier is carrying a route for the first time. It is our responsibility as carriers to take ownership of our poor retention rate because many of those employees that quit stated they didn't feel they received much support. That's on us. That's on me. I have failed in that regard as a trainer myself and it is unacceptable.

I am a mentor in my office, and I want to be because I survived through the beginning as a CCA because I had carriers in Lockland that helped me along the way. Dave Stewart taught me the basics of carrying mail, Angela Stone taught me mark-ups and forwards when I didn't know the difference between First Class and marketing mail, and Mike Mize got me to see the birth of my son when I was forced in on the day of his birth. I wouldn't be writing this right now if it weren't for people like that. It truly does take a village.

In solidarity,
Jacob Bingham

Vice President cont.

Never let these comments get to you and stop you from requesting the overtime or assistance you need. Sometimes managers will tell you that you don't need the requested overtime or assistance because of what DOIS projects for your route. The national parties have agreed that computer-generated time projections are not the sole determinant of your leave or return time. Nothing can replace the opinion of the professional letter carrier.

Step 4. Keep your cool. Don't lose your cool. While this process can be frustrating, you will do nothing to help yourself by becoming angry. If management denies your request for overtime or assistance, tell them you will do your best. Then ask what they want you to do if you are not able to deliver all the mail by the time they want you back. Often, their answer will be "I just told you what I want you to do," or "Deliver all the mail and be back in eight hours." Your manager has just put the ball back in your court and placed you in a situation that you can't do.

Step 5. Don't argue with management. There is no reason to argue with your manager at this point. The only thing you will accomplish by arguing with your manager is to become frustrated and angry. The smartest thing you can do is say, "Ok, I'll do my best," and ask for a copy of your PS Form 3996. Article 41.3.G of the National Agreement and Section 122.33 of Handbook M-39 require management to provide you with a copy if you request it.

Step 6. Don't make decisions. Letter carriers get paid to deliver mail. Management gets paid to make decisions. If you realize that you will not be able to deliver all the mail and get back to the office by the time management approved, you should do everything you can to put any further decisions back to management. The best way to handle this situation is to call your supervisor prior to 3:00 pm or send a RIMS message and let them know where you

are at and how long you think it will take you to finish. Ask management whether they want you to bring mail back to be able to meet the approved time or give authorization to complete the route. If the supervisor/manager refuses to tell you what to do with the rest of the mail, or if you can't finish your assigned duties in the amount of time authorized, you should return to the office within the allotted time and ask for further instructions. Don't ever return mail to the office and leave it without getting instructions on what to do with the mail from someone in management.

You should also complete a PS Form 3996 to track the amount of time you spend assisting or working on another route. If you are instructed to provide auxiliary assistance to another route, management should provide you with a PS Form 3996 indicating this additional work. Make sure that you fill out the bottom of each PS Form 3996 showing both your travel and delivery times for whatever assistance you are carrying. If you don't believe that you can complete the work in the amount of time authorized, you should notify management as soon as possible.

The above listed advice will assist you anytime you need to fill out a PS Form 3996 and submit it to your supervisor/manager.

In Solidarity,
Pat Dougherty



Steward's Corner cont.

do this, his stance was he wanted the PTFs to wear solid color shirts and no logos at all. Reflecting on the situation, I saw many PTS that day wearing logo shirts, so the stance may have very well been anti-union. Nevertheless, while I still thought his initial stance was petty, I understood the reasoning and realized I was partially to blame for the issue. From Page 259 of the National Agreement in relevant part:

No later than the first day in the employing office following completion of the carrier academy, or as soon as administratively possible, all newly hired letter carriers will receive:

A new USPS- branded reflective vest, mail satchel, and hat. These employees will also receive dog spray and all other items regularly supplied to new employees.

I realized management was right, the PTF's NALC shirt should not have been visible, it should have been covered by his USPS branded reflective vest, that he never received, and that I didn't ask nor grieve to find out about its whereabouts. I

had another PTF who was getting questioned about bringing mail back. I remember her saying to me "Corey it was my first day on the route, and I didn't know the park points."

From page 261 of the National Agreement in relevant part:

Employees will have access to updated route books and maps. Prior to delivering a new route assignment, employees will be provided with reasonable time to review the route book and, if desired, converse with another carrier familiar with the assignment.

I say all this to finish with this, as the steward get familiar with the MOU, and the language in the National Agreement. Protect your people and educate management. In my office alone we've had two retirements in the last month. These PTFS will be needed to provide strong service to the public and ensure that you're able to retire.

As Always
In Solidarity,
Corey Isham

**Veterans & Retirees Breakfast
November 11, 2025**

President Ted Thompson is proud to announce the return of the Veterans and Retirees breakfast to be held at the Branch 43 headquarters office on Tuesday, November 11, 2025. Since moving into our new building, we have been unable to host this yearly event because of the remodeling needed. However, the remodeling is done so this is an excellent time to see old friends and to see the new Branch 43 headquarters.

The doors will open at 9am and the breakfast will be served at 10am. Following the meal, several guests will be speaking on topics affecting active and retired members. We will also be presenting 60-year Gold Card members in attendance, with their letters and pins.

To participate in this event, you must contact the union office at 513-542-6400 no later than October 31, 2025 to secure a reservation for you and your guest. Since seating is limited, please do not wait to make your reservation.

**Respectfully Submitted
Burt Hughes
Financial Secretary**

AFL-CIO cont.

solidarity with all workers — including letter carriers.

What Voters Should Look for in Candidates. As we all evaluate city council hopefuls this election cycle, those serious about defending letter carriers should demand the following:

A clear public position in favor of USPS funding and against privatization or job cuts. Voters should press candidates: will you support city resolutions to defend the postal service? Will you communicate with federal lawmakers on behalf of postal labor?

Commitment to worker safety. Do they pledge to coordinate with USPS and police to protect letter carriers? Do they support measures to report, investigate, and prosecute attacks on postal workers?

Pro-labor credentials. Have they supported unions, collective bargaining, living wages, and protections for workers? Do they pledge to bring those values to city governance?

Willingness to raise local voice to state / federal levels. Local officeholders should see themselves as part of a broader network of advocates: willing to lobby, partner, and push back against privatization threats to the Postal Service.

By electing city council members who will fight for postal workers, we can send a message: that we value connectivity, fairness, and public infrastructure. And in doing so, we not only help ourselves as letter carriers — we help preserve a core institution of democracy itself. If you live in Cincinnati, please exercise your right to have your voice heard on November 4th at your local polling location.

Remember, in 2022 city council passed a proclamation on USPS to address staffing shortages. In 2023 city council passed a resolution addressing the crime against letter carriers. In 2025 city council passed a resolution calling for the Postal Service to remain a government entity in the face of Privatization. All these are on display at the Branch 43 office in the conference room. These are the city council candidates that the AFL-CIO endorsed in our September Meeting:

Anna Albi, Laketa Cole, Seth Walsh, Evan Nolan, Mark Jeffreys, Jeff Cramerding, Jan-Michelle Lemon Kearny, Ryan James, and Scotty Johnson.

In solidarity,
Alex Harper

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, 2026, through December 31, 2027. 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 two years prior to the beginning of the term. Nomination notices shall be posted in each station on October 14th and remain posted through the close of business on October 24, 2025. If necessary, ballots will be distributed, and members shall vote in their respective stations from November 14th through November 29, 2025.

Burt Hughes
Financial Secretary
Branch 43

Ricky	Allen
Joan	Bauer-Gast
Susan	Baxter
Daniel	Bill
James	Boothe, III
James	Brauning
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
Allen	Kelly
Jeffrey	Lewis
Craig	Magnarini
Thomas	Mathews
James	Metz
Diane	Murray
Robert	Newland
Timothy	O'Brien
Stephanie	Pick
Gary	Richter
Sharon	Rucker
Karen	Runion
Todd	Smalley
Paul	Steffen
Richard	Tabeling
Edward	Thomas
James	Weber
Debra	Wiesman

October Retiree Birthdays

September YOPC Attendees

Deborah Bryant
Liz Darby
Sue Egbers
Diana Enwright
Jerry Giesting
Art Holt
Burt Hughes
Dick Keller
Gerry Mees (look right)
Robert Wilkinson

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

October Gold Carders

Edward	Bishop
William	Bowman
John	Dobranski Jr.
James	Gaynor
Edgar	Groen, Jr.
Robert	Hay
James	Hoelle
Robert	Huelsman
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



Gerry Mees

YOU WILL BE
missed.

**Join fellow retirees
for lunch**

**1:00 pm - 1st Monday
of each month**

November 3rd

Lake Nina

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Cincinnati, OH 45239**

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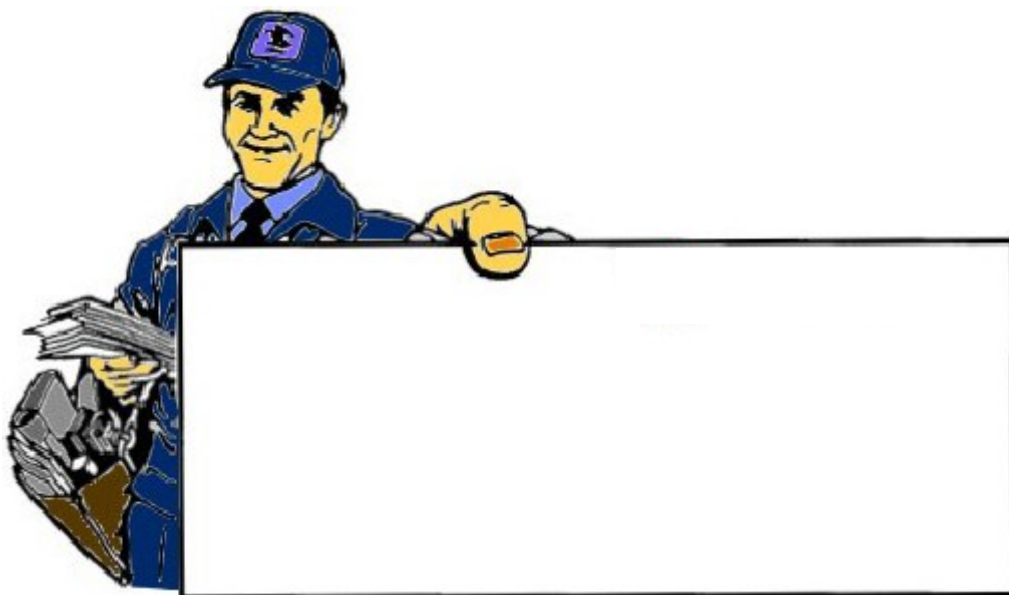
*Balance must be at least \$10,000 or greater to qualify. For loan balances below \$10,000 only the 90 day deferment will be offered. Member must qualify for the loan under normal underwriting guidelines. Minimum rate floor of this offer is 2.99% APR. Interest will accrue over the 90 day deferment period 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

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Cincinnati, Ohio 45240

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Upcoming Events

Steward Seminar - Oct. 2nd, 6:00 PM

Officers Meeting - October 9th, 6:00 PM

Branch Meeting - October 9th, 7:30 PM

Columbus Holiday - Monday Oct. 13th

NALC HB Seminar - November 3rd - 5th

November YOPC - Wednesday, Nov. 5th

Hall Clean Up - Sun. Nov. 9th, 9 AM

Veteran & Retiree Breakfast - Tuesday,
November 11th, 9 AM

Motions made at the September Membership Meeting

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

To send up to 4 people, at the President's discretion, to the NALC RAP Session in Cleveland, Ohio November 21st through 23rd to include wages, travel, per diem, and hotel expenses.
Carried

To accept the June and July financial report and pay the bills. **Carried**

To adjourn. **Carried**