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February 2021

Queen City Letter Carriers - NALC Branch 43 News & Views

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Ted Thompson
President

From the President's Desk

The NALC began mailing a copy of the 2019-2023 proposed National Agreement, a contract summary, and voting material to all eligible active letter carriers on January 11th. These mailings concluded on January 20th. The original deadline to vote on your ballot and be received was February 16th. Because certain areas around the country continue to have service issues this deadline has been extended until March 1st. February 5th is the deadline to request a replacement ballot if you have not received your original mailing. I highly encourage all eligible members vote to ratify this contract. If you have not done so already, please take a moment to exercise your right to vote on this proposed contract and return your ballot as quickly as possible. Headquarters anticipates the counting of ballots to be completed around the middle of March. If ratified, it should not take long to get a regular contract sent to the printer and distributed. Headquarters also anticipates we should not have the issues with the past agreement (Article 12) holding up the finalization of a new Joint Contract Administration Manual (JCAM). I have spent much time discussing contract details in past meetings and articles, however if anyone has questions, issues, or concerns, please contact the branch office to address them. Most importantly, please vote!

I was advised in late January that the NALC lost more members to COVID-19 related deaths in January than any other month since the pandemic began. The branch office has received may calls and inquiries on vaccination and availability. Nationally, with advo-

cacy from the NALC, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) included postal workers in Phase 1b. This phase is for frontline essential workers (first responders, corrections officers, food and agricultural, U.S. Postal Service workers, manufacturing workers, public transit workers, education workers, and childcare workers). Ohio is not following national recommendations. Currently, Phase 1b vaccines are available to individuals 70 years of age or older and employees of K-12 schools that wish to remain or return to in-person learning or hybrid models. On February 8th, Ohioans 65 years of age and older will become eligible. On February 15th, Ohioans with certain severe underlying medical conditions will become eligible. As stands, Ohio has not indicated a time vaccination will become available to essential workers not in a school or healthcare industry. Information on Ohio's COVID-19 vaccination program can be found at <https://coronavirus.ohio.gov>. Some branch members have shared their frustration with the current rollout and timeline of vaccination. While I understand that frustration, hopefully letter carriers will be eligible shortly. The Postal Service has committed nationally to getting carriers off for vaccination. The Postal Service will not pay administrative/other paid leave but have committed that if a carrier can get an appointment for vaccination to get that time off. Legislatively, the NALC is working to secure leave and funding through COVID-19 relief, fill vacancies on the USPS Board of Governors, and produce postal reform.

The NALC has priorities that must be included in any COVID-19 congressional bill. First, with the December 31st expiration of the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA), letter carriers are no longer eligible for the 10 days of paid coronavirus leave. This leave must be restored retroactively and for the

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**NEWS & VIEWS**

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EDITOR'S 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.

duration of the pandemic. Second, emergency appropriation funding must be secured for the Postal Service. Massive sums have been paid on personal protective equipment for postal employees and funding must be provided.

There are currently 6 members on the USPS Board of Governors (6 Republican, 4 Democratic) leaving 3 vacancies. By law, majority party can only have 1 more member than the minority party, thus allowing the opportunity to have 3 Democrats added to the board. Any member added must share the same vision of the USPS as the NALC does. The NALC is currently in the vetting process of candidates and when names are given, need support for confirmation. Most importantly, this body has oversight over Postmaster General DeJoy, who quite soon, will be coming out with a plan for the future of the USPS that most likely includes several cost cutting measures the NALC cannot support. Majority members who share our vision of growth will be critical to counter any perfidious policy change or goals the PMG tries to make. We must get this to be a fully staffed functioning board.



Lastly, the Postal Service is still in need of long-term comprehensive reform, but desperate for immediate reform. This starts with anti-privatization and elimination of the pre-funding mandate. The House of Representatives already has House Resolution 47, which calls on Congress to take all appropriate measures to ensure the United States Postal Service remains an independent establishment of the Federal Government and is not subject to privatization. In the last two Congresses, this had overwhelming bipartisan majority support. In the last Congress, elimination of the pre-funding mandate was passed through

the House of Representatives, but the Senate (Mitch McConnell) refused to hear the bill for debate or vote. With over a decade of absence in postal legislation and with the makeup of the current Congress, indispensable legislation can no longer be disregarded. Long-term comprehensive postal reform will address many stakeholder interests (Postal Service, unions, mailing industries) as the Postal Service is the major player in a trillion-dollar economy. Future discussions will include the same as the past in restoring or maintaining service standards, 6-day mail delivery, door-to-door delivery, etc. However, they will also include opening us up to postal banking and other services to be capitalized on. As the world around us continues to evolve, we must advance with it. Innovation along with progressive vision and astute adaptation are key fundamentals, but futile without appropriate legislation. Reform is necessary for the longevity of our employer and I hope you all join me in demanding it this year.

The branch will be having a budget meeting on February 18th at 6:00 PM. This event is open to all members and anyone interested in hearing pertinent officers discuss annual budgets is more than welcome to attend. In an ordinary year, we would have just completed our annual bowl against dystrophy tournament. However, we did not have it this past weekend. This falls in line with other events that have been cancelled including our Labor Day picnic and veteran retiree breakfast. Because gatherings and events have been cancelled in peoples professional and personal lives and in hopes of giving employees a fun contest, the Cincinnati installation is having a pet photo contest (page 4). I encourage any pet lovers out there to participate with a chance to win several prizes. If you need help or would rather me submit any photos, please let me know.

Fraternally,
Ted Thompson



Pat Dougherty
Vice President

From the Vice President Route Inspections

There are several city and associate offices that are scheduled for spring route inspections. Management has scheduled inspections starting February 6 and running through the end of May.

This is an extremely aggressive scheduling and I find it hard to believe they have the necessary trained personal to achieve this goal. However, at the time of this writing we are a full go with route inspections but stay tuned for several zone cancelations. Now is a great time to go over some important information to help you protect your route and what to expect during the route inspection process.

In order to adjust a route, management must first evaluate the time of the route using the procedures in Chapter 2 of the M-39 Handbook. The data collected during the week of mail count and inspection is then used to evaluate the time of each inspected route. The procedures require separate and distinct methods for determining the office and street time components of the total route evaluation.

Office time is based on the time used by the regular carrier during, or the standard time computed from the count week. Street time is based on average times of the regular carrier and auxiliary assistance provided, either during the week of mail count and inspection or from a random analysis of weeks throughout the year. Office time is based on the lower of two computations: 1) Average actual office time of the regular carrier during a week of mail count and inspection, minus time spent counting mail and completing the 1838-C (line 23) and time, if any, spent performing unusual activities not done in a normal work week (line 22.) This time is based on actual clock rings, less hand-recorded lines 22 and 23 times; or 2) The average standard office time of the regular carrier during a week of mail count and inspection. This time is based on hand-recorded counts of volumes and times. Calculations are then made, including the 18/8 standard.

Street time is based on one of two computations: 1) The average street time of the regular carrier, including any street auxiliary assistance, during the week of mail count and inspection; or 2) The average street time of the regular carrier, including any street auxiliary assistance, from an 8-week time card analysis. Management may not choose a street time

based solely on the fact that the time is the lowest.

Management is required to perform certain activities and procedures before the week of mail count and inspection. Management must conduct a route and unit review at least once each year. That review includes workhours, volumes, possible deliveries, and certain operational conditions. When management determines from that review the necessity to adjust one or more routes, the results of the review must be shared with the regular carriers serving those routes. Management must review certain operating procedures and correct unsatisfactory conditions prior to the start of mail count and inspection. Those procedures include adequacy and condition of carrier case equipment and labels to be replaced if needed.

Management must provide instruction and practice in completing a sample 1838-C prior to the count week. The 1838-C is the form you will complete each day during count week. This practice session is called a dry run. All carriers in the unit must receive this training. The dry run must be completed within 21 days of the start of the count. A notice giving the schedule of the count week and day and date of inspection for each route must be posted at least five (5) working days before the start of the count. One day advance notice must be given if management decides to inspect on day(s) other than the scheduled day of inspection.

The overtime provisions of Article 8 remain in effect during the week of count and inspection, with two exceptions: 1) On the day during the week of inspection when you are accompanied by a route examiner, management may require you, even if you are not on any overtime desired list, to work overtime on your own route in order to allow for completion of the inspection. 2) On the other days during the week of inspection when you count the mail, management may require you, even if you are not on any overtime list, to work overtime on your own route for time necessary to count the mail.

On the day of inspection, the route examiner will count the mail and fill out the Form 1838-C worksheet. The examiner will also follow you on the street, completing a Form 3999. Upon request, you have the right to verify the inspector's count. This includes all DPS, S999, and any machine counted mail as well. The examiner must act as an observer and not a supervisor. You should not be told to change the way you usually deliver your route. NALC and the USPS have agreed that there is no standard or minimum street pace that a carrier is required to maintain. Do not allow yourself to be intimidated into speeding up on the day of inspection.



Cincinnati USPS

Pet Photo Contest

Submit photos of your pet to win one of several PRIZES!!



Rules:

Photo should contain something Postal related

Can contain family, but should highlight your pet

Cannot contain anything inappropriate

Pet can be dressed up, but should be appropriate

Entries must contain your name, name of your pet, and the type of animal

Mail Photos to Sycamore Post Office

4914 Cooper Rd, Cincinnati, OH 45242

-OR-

Email photos to

Kimberly.S.Wisdom@USPS.gov

Photos must be received by February 15th

Photos are judged by DM Jean Lovejoy

Submit photos from

February 1st - February 15th





NALC, USPS reach tentative National Agreement

Nolan interest arbitration proceeding suspended pending ratification vote

The National Association of Letter Carriers and the U.S. Postal Service have reached tentative agreement on a new 44-month national labor agreement, covering approximately 205,000 active city letter carriers across the United States. The agreement emerged after several months of continuous bargaining sessions, even as the parties pursued a resolution through an interest arbitration conducted via video link with a three-member panel chaired by Arbitrator Dennis Nolan. The Nolan proceeding has been suspended pending the results of a membership ratification vote.

The tentative agreement provides four annual general wage increases and seven cost-of-living adjustments (COLAs). In addition, effective Nov. 19, 2022, a new top step (Step P) will be added to the career letter carrier pay scales, which will be \$444 annually greater than Step O. The agreement also provides for the automatic conversion of city carrier assistants (CCAs) to career status no later than after 24 months of relative standing, providing full fringe benefits and peace of mind to non-career carriers. It also maintains existing protections against subcontracting and layoffs.

NALC President Fredric Rolando issued the following statement after the NALC Executive Council unanimously recommended approval of the tentative settlement:

"I'd like to thank all the officers and staff—as well as our counterparts in postal management—who worked so hard to reach this tentative National Agreement. As I have reported repeatedly over the past several months, NALC followed a dual-track approach to achieve a new contract with both ongoing negotiations and the presentation of the best possible case for our proposals in interest arbitration. That we have done. I am proud of the case and the evidence we amassed in the interest arbitration proceeding up to this point, but I am even more pleased that letter carriers will get to decide whether or not to accept this tentative agreement in a ratification vote, following the procedure outlined in the *NALC Constitution*. The Executive Council unanimously recommends ratification of this contract."

The major features of the contract are summarized below. Full details about the tentative agreement, along with projected pay charts, other contractual changes, and information about new and amended memorandums of understanding (MOUs), will be presented in the December issue of *The Postal Record*. They will also be distributed through the union's electronic platforms in the days to come.

In view of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, we are still discussing how to conduct a virtual rap session on the new contract and the mechanics for safely convening a ballot committee to oversee a contract ratification vote in compliance with the *NALC Constitution*. We will use all of our communication channels in the days and weeks ahead to inform the membership as we work out the details.

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF LETTER CARRIERS HIGHLIGHTS OF TENTATIVE AGREEMENT WITH THE U.S. POSTAL SERVICE

2019-2023 NATIONAL AGREEMENT

Contract term

The 2019 National Agreement will last 44 months, covering the period Sept. 20, 2019, to May 20, 2023.

General wage increases

All letter carriers, career and non-career alike, will receive four wage increases under Article 9 as follows:

- 1.1 percent effective Nov. 23, 2019, paid retroactively.
- 1.1 percent effective Nov. 21, 2020, paid retroactively.
- 1.3 percent effective Nov. 20, 2021.
- 1.3 percent effective Nov. 19, 2022.

CCAs will receive additional wage increases of 1 percent on these four dates for a total of: 2.1 percent on Nov. 23, 2019 (paid retroactively); 2.1 percent on Nov. 21, 2020 (paid retroactively); 2.3 percent on Nov. 20, 2021; and 2.3 percent on Nov. 19, 2022. These additional 1 percent increases will be paid in lieu of COLAs for CCAs.

Cost-of-living adjustments for career letter carriers

All career letter carriers will receive seven COLAs based on changes in the Consumer Price Index (CPI-W) using the existing COLA formula and the July 2019 CPI-W as the base month. The first two will be paid retroactively:

- The first COLA will be \$166 annually effective Feb. 29, 2020, paid retroactively.
- The second COLA will be \$188 annually effective Aug. 29, 2020, paid retroactively.

The remaining five will be paid in the future as follows:

- The third COLA will be effective March 2021.
- The fourth COLA will be effective September 2021.
- The fifth COLA will be effective March 2022.
- The sixth COLA will be effective September 2022.
- The seventh COLA will be effective March 2023.

The COLAs will be applied to the two pay tables for career city carriers in the same manner used in the 2016 National Agreement.

Wage schedule changes

The contract provides for the addition of a new top step to Tables One and Two on Nov. 19, 2022. The new career Step P will be \$444 annually greater than Step O. Carriers with at least 46 weeks in Step O on Nov. 19, 2022, will advance to Step P. Those with fewer than 46 weeks will advance to Step P upon reaching 46 weeks in Step O.

Effective June 19, 2021, the CCA Step CC hourly pay rate (currently \$17.29) will be eliminated, and CCA Step BB and its higher pay rate (currently \$17.79) will become the new entry step for newly hired CCAs.

A new PTF Step AA, with a waiting period of 46 weeks to PTF Step A, has been created as the starting wage for CCAs converted to career under the new 24-month automatic conversion. The hourly pay of PTF Step AA will equal the hourly pay of Full-time Regular Step A.

New 24-month automatic conversion of CCAs to career status

While the Postal Service will maintain additional CCAs afforded to it under the Sunday package formula mutually agreed to during the previous contract, all CCAs in every size office who would have otherwise continued as non-career employees after 24 months of relative standing will now be automatically converted to career status. Those CCAs who have reached 24 months of relative standing without being converted to career will be converted to part-time flexibles and placed in a new PTF Step AA in Table Two. The Step AA hourly rate will equal the Full-time Step A hourly rate, and the waiting period in PTF Step AA to PTF Step A will be 46 weeks. Upon conversion to full time, regardless of the PTF step they are currently in, PTFs will be placed in the full-time step commensurate with their number of weeks as a PTF, and retain their time credit toward the next step.

Recently retired letter carriers

Letter carriers who have retired over the last several months will receive applicable retroactive general wage increases and COLAs. The Office of Personnel Management will also make any annuity adjustments made necessary by the retroactive increases.

Health insurance

In 2020 and 2021, there is no reduction in the Postal Service's share of premium costs for career letter carriers' health insurance (73 percent of the weighted average Federal Employees Health Benefits [FEHB] Program plan premium, capped at 76 percent of any given plan's premium). The Postal Service's share will decline by a percentage point to 72 percent in 2022 and 2023, and will be capped at 75 percent of any given plan's premium. The biweekly impact of this Article 21 change will depend on which plans carriers enroll in, but will, in any case, represent a small fraction of the biweekly pay increases provided by Article 9 of the tentative agreement.

On health insurance for CCAs, the tentative contract maintains the Postal Service's biweekly contribution of \$125 toward self-only coverage in the USPS Non-career Health Plan for Plan Years 2020 and 2021. For CCAs who wish to select self-plus-one or self-and-family coverage under the USPS plan, the first-year contribution by USPS will be 65 percent in Plan Years 2020 and 2021, rising to 75 percent in their second year of service. However, effective in Plan Year 2022, the Postal Service will contribute 75 percent of the premiums for self only, self plus one or self plus family, regardless of the year of employment.

Uniform allowance

Increase in uniform allowance on May 21, 2021, to \$487 (5 percent increase from current rate) and on May 21, 2022, to \$499 (another 2.5 percent increase). Additional allowance credits for newly eligible employees have been increased by the same percentages.

Job security protections for letter carriers

The no-layoff clause that protects letter carriers after six years of service as career employees is retained in the tentative agreement, as well as the prohibitions against contracting out city carrier work.

Another option for full-time letter carriers who work their holiday

Article 11, Sections 3 and 4 have been modified to now allow full-time employees who work their holiday to elect to have their annual leave balance credited with up to eight hours of annual leave in lieu of receiving holiday pay.

Other notable MOUs

The new contract updated, revised and combined several MOUs, continued dozens of others, and added several new MOUs on a variety of topics. Among the most notable new MOUs are:

MOU Re: Qualifying period—exception for City Carrier Assistants—CCAs with a minimum of 90 days of service prior to conversion to career status without a break in service are exempt from the Ninety-Day Qualifying Period in *ELM* 512.313. Previously, all newly converted employees, regardless of time in service, were required to complete 90 days of employment as a career employee prior to being allowed to take annual leave.

MOU Re: Managed Service Point Scans—No later than 60 days from the ratification date of the 2019 collective-bargaining agreement, Managed Service Points (MSPS) will be removed from the street delivery portions of city letter carrier routes.

MOU Re: City Delivery and Workplace Improvement Task Force—This renamed MOU modifies the MOU Re: City Delivery Task Force and expands the role of the task force for the purposes of jointly seeking methods to improve the cultural and operational environment in city delivery offices.

MOU Re: City Carrier Uniform Task Force—Establishes a national-level task force to improve the efficiency and accessibility of the uniform program and to improving the overall quality of available uniform items in a cost-effective manner. The task force will also explore ways to incorporate improved materials and uniform designs into the uniform program while continuing to supply city carriers with sufficient uniform items.

Finally, of special interest to NALC branch leaders, the contract set the dates for local MOU negotiations:

MOU Re: Local Implementation—The local implementation period will be April 29, 2021, to May 28, 2021.

Look for updates on the NALC Member App and visit nalc.org for further information on the new contract and the ratification process. A more detailed summary of the contract will be provided in the December issue of *The Postal Record*.

National Association of Letter Carriers

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STEWARD'S CORNER



Mike Mize
Formal A Rep

Prepare for Winter / Safety

I wrote about this issue before but given the time of year I thought it might be a good idea to go over it again because of all the new employees we have. As you know this winter has not been that bad yet but here in Ohio you can see all four seasons in one day. As carriers we need to be prepared for what comes our way. That means starting the night before work with hydrating and clothing for the next day. Everyone should have a locker at work, if not talk to your supervisor. If you're new think about bringing extra gloves and socks, and warm clothes to leave in your locker. You never know when you or another carrier will need them. I also try to keep a box of handwarmers in my locker to pass out, no one remembers these till the day its really going to be cold. Speaking of the cold remember safety is your responsibility, we are required to work in a safe manner. So, if you are outside here are some signs to look out for when it does get cold.

What are the signs and first aid of frostbite? Frostbite is when skin and underlying tissues freeze after being exposed to very cold temperatures. The areas most likely to be affected are the fingers, toes, ears, cheeks, and chin. Early signs of frostbite are a numb, pale patch of skin, or skin that feels hard or looks waxy. What are the most common symptoms of frostbite? The following are the most common symptoms of frostbite: redness or pain in a skin area a white or grayish-yellow skin area, skin that feels unusually firm or waxy, numbness blisters. How do I give first aid for frostbite? First-aid steps for frostbite are as follows: Check for hypothermia. Get emergency medical help if you suspect hypothermia. Protect your skin from further damage. If there is any chance the affected areas will freeze again, get out of the cold. Once you are indoors, remove wet clothes and wrap up in a warm blanket.

Here are some safety tips for you in your work vehicles. Remember if the vehicle is running your headlights need to be on and your butt needs to be in the seat, not outside the running vehicle scrapping the window. I know sometimes it does not make sense, but this is what we are paid to do. If management does not want you taking 20 to 30 minutes cleaning ice off your windows, they will buy cans of deicer. Also, we no longer get the bags of sand so if you do

not think you can make a delivery safely and without getting stuck, move on, the snow will melt, or the customer will clear the way. I do not know all of you out there, but I do want all of you to go home at night the same way you came into work, so please keep safety in mind when you are working.

Remember your safety is your responsibility. Now along with the cold comes the snow and ice. Ice on painted porches is just one hazard to look out for, remember you can cut the mail delivery for a safety hazard. It is not worth the risk of a slip and fall that will cause you to be off work for months. You can always deliver the mail tomorrow. There are too many different hazards to go into so remember your safety is your responsibility.

I also wanted to talk about getting to work. In the past we have had some heavy snow falls. If a level three snow emergency is called, we are not considered essential personnel. You need to make an attempt to come to work, but if there is too much snow and ice, and you can not get to work, you need to turn around and call your supervisor. We have had to file grievances in the past to get carriers paid on days when we could not get to work due to the weather. One of the big factors in winning these grievances is how many other carriers made it to work. If you're new to carrying mail ask one of the old timers, not me of course I am not that old but some of us have been through a few winters and could possibly give you some good tips on surviving harsh winter months. Just remember we want you to go home at night the same way you came into work that morning, so be safe.

One more thing, with everything going on this past year and what may be coming, let's keep an eye out for each other. If you see a brother or sister in need of help, give them a hand or remind them about the EAP program (Employee Assistance Program) you can call 24 hours a day to 1-800-327-4968 or [www. EAP4YOU.com](http://www.EAP4YOU.com). We all need someone at times.

Fraternally your
Sgt@arms
Mike Mize



Vice President cont.

In addition to your lunch and break periods, you may take any comfort stops reasonably necessary while performing your street duties. Reasonable comfort stops will not be deducted from your actual time. In fact, the examiner may not suggest or forbid any rest or comfort stops.

Finally, after the mail count and inspection week management is required to consult with the regular carrier assigned to a route, concerning both the evaluated time of, and any proposed adjustment to, the route. Management must give the carrier completed copies of Form 1838 at least 5 calendar days in advance, and a partially completed copy of Form 1840 at least one day in advance, of the evaluation consultation. The Form 1840 must have the front side completed and the reverse side must include any proposed time disallowances and related comments. At the evaluation consultation, management must discuss mail volume, the evaluation of the route, and proposed evaluated street time adjustments. If management proposes to adjust a route, management must hold an adjustment consultation and discuss the proposed relief or addition, the reasons for the proposed adjustment, whether the carrier agrees or disagrees, and the comments and recommendations of the carrier. When route adjustments or changes are implemented, management must complete a new Form 3999 to reflect the current authorized route travel pattern and schedules, etc. Any stations that are scheduled for the upcoming spring route inspections at the February meeting I can provide your station stewards with a copy of the 2018 NALC Guide to Route Inspections to help prepare you and the members in your station for the coming inspections.

Standard Work Instructions for Maintaining Social Distancing While Conducting a PS Form 3999. Management must follow these guidelines when conducting a PS Form 3999 on a letter carrier during this Covid-19 pandemic. Examiners will remain at least 6 ft. away from the carrier at all times in the office, including during clock ring activities, DPS retrieval, vehicle load and unload, and retrieving and returning empty equipment. Comply with social distancing at all times. Examiner and carrier will wear face coverings in accordance with local ordinances and when social distancing cannot be maintained. Practice good respiratory etiquette and hygiene. Sanitize DCD before and after use.

Examiners will remain at least 6 ft. away from the carrier at all times on the street. This will include mail delivery, relay/reloading, accountable delivery, package delivery, MSP scan & collection and lunch/

breaks. Observations, notes and DCD entries can be made from a 6 ft. distance. If a vehicle is needed, examiner must utilize a separate vehicle. Examiner and carrier are prohibited from being in the same vehicle. While vehicle is in motion, examiners must operate vehicle safely, professionally, and without distraction. Examiners should not attempt to utilize the DCD or take notes while driving. Carriers should always request a copy of the original PS Form 3999 and the edited version of the PS Form 3999. If the carrier does agree with the PS Form 3999 ask to see your shop steward so they can investigate this and possibly file a grievance on your behalf.

In Solidarity,
Patrick Dougherty



Steve Carlin
Formal A Rep

It is Your Time, Take It.

Every morning management has no issue telling you the DPS count and their estimate for how long you should be in the office based on your mail volume. All too often they fail to include your 28 minutes of fixed office time in the morning. This fixed office time is the minimum amount of office time a carrier is allotted in the morning regardless of mail volume. The breakdown of this time is found on PS Form 1838. Ironically, this form can be found in management's handbook the M-39 on page 103. According to management's own form, here are the breakdowns of the minimum allowances. Each morning carriers get 6 minutes for accountable items including keys, registered and certified mail. They get 5 minutes to withdraw mail from distribution cases, trays, sacks, hampers, etc. Morning vehicle checks get 3 minutes. 5 minutes for personal needs including getting gear needed for the day like rain gear. Finally, 9 minutes for recurring office work not covered by the form 1838.

Remember, it is up to you to perform these tasks every morning and these times are minimums. When a carrier is too busy to do these tasks, he or she creates false undertime on the route and is asking for more work on the street. As carriers we are to give a fair day's work for a fair day's pay. I do not see passing on easy tasks you are given time to perform to do more difficult tasks as being fair, do you?

Continued on following page

In closing, I would like to personally thank all my union brothers and sisters for their continued dedication through all these unprecedented times. To many of our customers we are one of the few certainties and constants in their lives. Without us they would not get their medication, needed supplies, and several would have no human contact. Your efforts truly do make a difference.

In Solidarity,
Steve Carlin



Mike Winters
Formal A Rep

Estimating your Daily Work Assignment: PS Form 3996

Every day you report to work you begin with the same routine. First you clock in and get your vehicle keys and check your vehicle to ensure that it starts and that it is in proper working order for your day. After the vehicle check you hit the hot swings to get the mail that the clerks have sorted for your route.

You then proceed to your case and begin casing your mail up to get it ready for your street delivery. Your case will have additional mail at it, tubs of mail, spurs, and flats which had been spread by the clerks earlier that morning. The mail at your case, the quantity of parcels in your tub, accountable mail pieces to be delivered that day all contribute to your workload. In addition to this mail volume there are other factors to consider. The weather, construction on your route and whether you make your established leave time should be factored into your daily estimate of the time you need to complete your deliveries for any day.

Management has a predetermined idea of how long your route will take to deliver prior to you walking in the door. Management uses "PET," Performance Enhancement Tool, to determine their estimate of your assignment for any given day. Problem with this tool is it is only as good as the information management puts into it, "mail volumes for that day," garbage in garbage out. The PET Tool does not consider your parcel volumes, 33 minutes of "fixed office time" (vehicle check, service talk, etc.), accountable mail, weather, your leave time or any other situations that may affect your workload for any given day. Management feels that the letter carrier is always trying to cheat the Postal Service so they rarely if ever agree with the carrier's estimate of their route times.

The PET Tool is not an accurate predictor of your route times, but it is bible as far as management is concerned. It is the carrier's responsibility to ex-

press to management how much time you need to deliver your route in a safe and professional manner. Management will make statements like, "You had less mail last week and you stayed in 8," "You hardly have any mail," or "DOIS says that you should have pivot time." While management thinks these statements make a difference, they are incorrect. If, after discussing, the time you need to deliver your route is not agreed upon with management, you must request a PS Form 3996 from management and fill it out completely and accurately listing the factors leading to your decision that the route can not be completed in the time frame management is requesting. Reasons could be DPS volume, cased mail volume, parcel volume, types and amounts of accountable mail, 3rd bundle, and anything else that effects your estimate of workload for that day.

If management disapproves your 3996 do not argue with them, simply proceed to your route and begin delivering your mail. Call management at the designated time and let them know if you are not going to make their estimated times and ask for instruction as far as finishing the delivery of your route. If management asks why you are not going to make their times, simply read off the 3996 form you filled out that morning and list the reasons why you are not going to make their time projections. Follow managements instructions, be back by their designated time, or to finish delivering the mail. Management must authorize you for overtime to complete your assignment. By denying your 3996 they are not authorizing overtime. If management instructs you to deliver all the mail, then they are authorizing you to use overtime. Make sure your instructions from management are clear. Management may say, "Deliver all the mail and be back by 6:00pm." If that is not possible, you must ask, "Do you want me to deliver all the mail or be back by 6:00pm, I can't do both." Then you follow their last instruction.

Always be respectful in your dealing with management on this issue but understand that you have the right to provide your estimate. Management is supposed to take your estimate into consideration when determining your workload. We know from past practice this is not the case. Following these guidelines will ensure that you are complying with the contract and help with defending any unjustifiable discipline management may issue for "Unauthorized Overtime" or "Failure to Follow Instructions."

In Solidarity,
Michael J. Winters

Sammarco Law Firm LLC

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Pat Mulvaney (513) 284-1504

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Human Resources Share Service Center

1-877-477-3273 Option 5, then Select 6

TTY: 1-866-833-8777

MAILING ADDRESS:

HRSSC FMLA EASTERN

PO Box 970905

Greensboro NC 27497-0905

FAX: 651-456-6041

January Membership Meeting Raffle Winners

Split the Pot - Dave Durbin

**MDA - Mike Blair, Dave Stewart,
Craig Young, & Genevieve Culberson**

Charles	Adkins
Robert	Baty
David	Bellemore
Terry	Brinck
Alice	Combs
Timothy	Coning
Steven	Doctor
Michael	Donoghue
Dennis	Fangman
Charles	Fletcher
Sandra	Franklin
Ruby	Griffey
Vernita	Hallee
John	Hyland
James	Kelly
Richard	Martin
Darren	McCants
David	Pitman Sr.
Lewis	Raugh
James	Rodgers
Thomas	Roos
Linda	Schreiber
Kenneth	Shepherd
Donald	Sloan
David	Thompson
Kimberly	Winters
Donald	Wolf Jr.

February Retiree Birthdays

January YOPC Attendees

- Deborah Bryant
- Liz Darby
- Diana Enwright
- JR Ford
- Jerry Giesting
- Art Holt
- Burt Hughes
- Dick Keller
- John Macon
- Gerry Mees
- Bob Shepherd
- Robert Wilkinson

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



Join fellow retirees for lunch

1:00 pm - 1st Monday of each month

March 1st

**O'Charley's
5075 Crookshank Road
Cincinnati, OH 45238**

Call Burt Hughes
(513) 807-4143
Or Greg Stulz

Contact Information for U S Representatives

& Senators

OHIO

Steve Chabot – 1st District

<http://chabot.house.gov>

202-225-2216

513-684-2723

Brad Wenstrup – 2nd District

<http://wenstrup.house.gov>

202-225-3164

513-474-7777

Sherrod Brown –Senator

www.brown.senate.gov

202-224-2315

513-684-1021

Rob Portman – Senator

www.portman.senate.gov

202-224-3353

February Gold Carders

James	Clemons
Robert	Daugherty
Raymond	Deidesheimer
Michael	Eaton
Clarence	Fath
William	Hartlaub
Harold	Hunt
Henry	Jones
John	Singleton
Robert	Welch

Motions made at the January Membership Meeting

To dispense with the roll call of Officers and reading of the previous month's minutes. **Carried**

To accept financial reports and pay the bills. **Carried**

To adjourn. **Carried**

“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!

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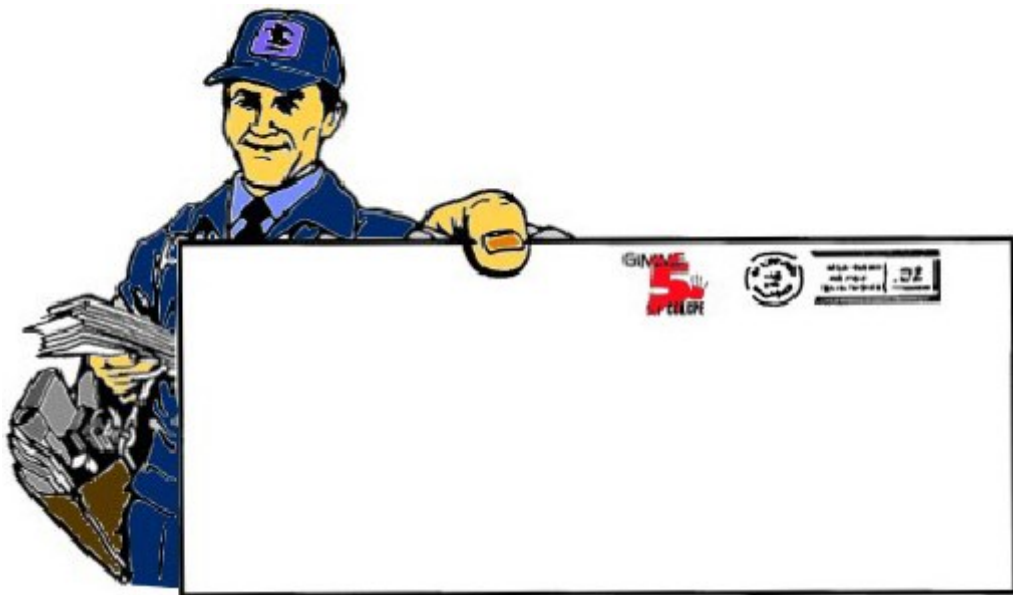
*Balance must be at least \$10,000 or greater to qualify. For loan balances below \$10,000 only the 90 day deferment will be offered. Member must qualify for the loan under normal underwriting guidelines. Minimum rate floor of this offer is 2.99% APR. Interest will accrue over the 90 day deferment period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

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Upcoming Events

- Officers Meeting - Feb. 11th, 6:00 PM**
- Branch Meeting - Feb. 11th, 7:30 PM**
- Presidents Day Holiday - Mon., Feb. 15th**
- Budget Meeting - Feb. 18th, 6:00 PM**
- March YOPC - Wednesday, Mar. 3rd**

