



Since July 25, 1890

November 2020

Queen City Letter Carriers - NALC Branch 43 News & Views

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Ted Thompson
President

From the President's Desk

I, along with the rest of you, am tired of the work and lifestyle changes we have had to deal with due to the novel coronavirus. COVID-19 fatigue has set in for many of us. As of this writing, Ohio continues break its single-day records for the number of coronavirus cases reported. Hamilton County is on the verge of turning purple (Level 4 Public Emergency with severe exposure to spread). Due to the raging virus throughout Ohio, Governor Mike DeWine recently made a visit to Cincinnati. He has stated, "The virus is raging throughout Ohio. There is no place to hide. All of us must come together to fight this enemy. We must fight this invader." While COVID-19 is spreading at an alarming rate in southwest Ohio, so is it amongst our ranks.

Every time a branch member, or an employee working in an office from which we represent, becomes infected with COVID-19 I get notified of the work location and craft of employee (not a name). While I have been notified many times in the past, I have not been notified at such a high rate before. Currently, I am getting daily notifications. Sometimes as many as 6 per day. While decimating our ranks at work and creating even more open assignments during a busy time, these notifications usually mean someone was infected while inside a postal building potentially spreading the virus. In some cases, the individual had no idea they were infected and were not experiencing any symptoms. In other cases, individuals have reported to work when a household member was infected, or they were waiting for their test results to come back. If you live in a household with an individual under quarantine or

isolation, do not come and potentially bring that to your coworkers. Local schools and businesses are closing down again due to the spread inside their buildings. While our buildings will never close down, we must all remain diligent in our efforts inside and outside work. With fatigue, it's sometimes best to go back to the basics.

Governor DeWine stressed the basics; wearing a mask, maintaining a safe social distance and washing your hands. This remains important as the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) updated its guidelines now reporting that spending 15 minutes within 6 feet of someone infected with the virus over the course of a day is considered a close contact. With so many great family and friend holidays coming, along with our peak season, I ask everyone to be as safe as possible so we can all enjoy our holidays as safe as possible and deliver our critical mission to the public.

In postal news, a federal judge has ordered the postal service to take extraordinary measures to deliver mail-in ballots. Carriers and clerks in your unit on the local election taskforce have been working with postal service management daily on political and election mail to make sure all are handled with the utmost importance. A federal judge also ordered the postal service to restore high-speed mail sorting machines and to reverse mail collection limits. These orders, effectively, rescind any operational changes implemented by the postal service over the summer. Judge Emmet Sullivan, of the district court for the District of Columbia stated, "USPS personnel are instructed to perform late and extra trips to the maximum extent necessary to increase on-time mail deliveries, particularly for Election Mail."

The NALC agreed with the postal service on September 3rd (M-01928) to allow the regular career workforce to carryover 520 hours of accumulated annual leave from leave year 2020 to leave year

Continued on following page



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.

2021. This memorandum did not change the provisions of the Employee and Labor Relations Manual (ELM) for payment of accumulated leave. Thus, at the time, employees could carryover up to 520 hours, but in the event it was not used by the end of the 2021 leave year, the employee would forfeit anything over 440. Also, for employees retiring in leave year 2021, any leave over the 440 would not be compensated through terminal leave. For those that choose to carryover more than the 440, you would still need to use this leave by the end of leave year 2021 or forfeit your leave. This memorandum also did not change the provisions of local agreements that address choice leave and incidental leave. However, recently the postal service and NALC did agree that employees who retire beginning pay period 2 of 2021 (which starts January 2, 2021) through the 2021 leave year can receive a terminal leave payment of up to 520 hours. For those planning on retiring in 2021 you can now receive terminal payment up to the 520 hours. For those who carried over more than 440 hours and not retiring in 2021, any unused leave over 440 by the end of the 2021 leave year will be forfeited.

The NALC and USPS have continued with interest arbitration hearings to resolve the current impasse over the 2019 collective bargaining agreement. NALC attorneys have argued our case with a series of presentations on testimony submitted by various professional expert witnesses. NALC president Fred Rolando and Executive Vice President Brian Renfro have provided further testimony. Additionally, two panels of letter carriers have already testified. One panel has testified about how the letter carrier job has changed through the years becoming more demanding, difficult, and dangerous. The second panel has testified about their experiences as city carrier assistants (CCA). Current or former CCAs make up a large percent-

age of our workforce and now have provided testimony over their experience in this classification as a result of the Das award. Our current arbitration panel is chaired by neutral arbitrator Dennis Nolan. While interest arbitration hearings continue and are scheduled through the end of November, the NALC continues to engage in discussions with the postal service over the current impasse in effort to resolve. Either way, we have been working without a contract for over a year now and hopefully our impasse will either be resolved or awarded in the next couple months.

Lastly, I would like to remind everyone of the NALC Health Benefit Plan this open season. Open season begins on Monday November 9th and runs through Monday December 14th. I am personally enrolled in the NALC high-option family plan and I thoroughly enjoy my cost to benefit health plan. On page 8, there is more information on the NALC Health Benefit Plan, but information is also available at the office or through our national website www.nalc.org and branch website www.branch43.org.

Fraternally,
Ted Thompson

Motions made at the October Membership Meeting

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

Carried

To accept financial reports for March, April, May, June, July & August and pay the bills.

Carried

To give eligible delegates that attended the State Convention in Cincinnati in 2019 their share of the state delegate fund. **Carried**
To transfer money that would have gone to eligible delegates for the 2020 National Convention in Hawaii to the building fund.

Carried

To donate \$500 to the FreeStore Foodbank.

Carried

To set aside the bylaws to accept delegate sign up until the November membership meeting.

(2/3 vote). **Carried**

To adjourn. **Carried**



Pat Dougherty
Vice President

From the Vice President

Branch 43 Vehicle fires

As has been previously written in the Postal Record, USPS is testing and releasing in some areas of the country prototypes for the Next Generation Delivery Vehicle (NGDV) with the goal of replacing its aging fleet of Long Life Vehicles (LLVs). Branch 43 has had two vehicle fires in the last two years. In 2019 we had a LLV vehicle fire in Cleves one of our associate offices and just recently in 2020 another LLV in the Sharonville office caught fire. We need to ensure we are doing vehicle checks every day, as letter carriers will be operating LLVs for the foreseeable future. As LLVs continue to age, the threat of vehicle fires and the risk to letter carriers increases. We need to be aware of our rights and responsibilities when operating Postal Service vehicles and the steps to take should problems arise. In addition, shop stewards should hold management accountable for proper maintenance and repairs to all Postal Service vehicles.



The Postal Service is required to provide safe working conditions for all employees. This requirement includes ensuring vehicles are maintained and safe to operate. Sections 1 and 2 of Article 14, of the 2016-2019 National Agreement, state in part:

Section 1. Responsibilities -- It is the responsibility of management to provide safe working conditions in all present and future installations and to develop a safe working force.

Section 2. Cooperation -- The employer and the union insist on the observance of safe rules and safe procedures by employees and insist on correction of unsafe conditions. Mechanization, vehicles and vehicle equipment, and the workplace must be maintained in a safe and sanitary condition, including adequate occupational health and environmental conditions. The employer shall make available at each installation forms to be used by employees in reporting unsafe and unhealthful conditions.

Letter carriers recognize that many LLVs are worn out and in need of repair. Repairs should be prompted by your daily inspection of the vehicle, which is your responsibility in accordance with Section 832 of Handbook M-41, City Delivery Carriers Duties and Responsibilities, and Section D of Handbook EL-814, Postal Employees Guide to Safety. M-41 Section 832: Inspecting Vehicle – Inspect vehicle as described on Notice 76, Expanded Vehicle Safety Check for deficiencies, body damage, or inoperable items. EL-814 Section 10. D. – D. Vehicle Regulations 1. Vehicle Safety Inspections – Make a daily safety check of your assigned vehicle as outlined in Notice 76, Expanded Vehicle Safety Check, before leaving the post office parking lot or garage. USPS Notice 76 is a checklist of 27 specific items that should be inspected prior to operating any postal vehicle, whether right or left-hand drive. A sample of the checklist is seen on page 84 of the Handbook M-41. Letter carriers also should inspect their vehicle upon returning to the office to determine if any issues arose while delivering on the street. Mechanical defects or failures as well as major body damage should be reported as soon as they are discovered, as stated in Section 842 of the Handbook M-41: 842.1 Reporting Defects – Driver must (a) report all mechanical defects or failures and major body damage on Form 4565, Vehicle Repair Tag as soon as noted, and (b) immediately turn in the completed form to a dispatcher or manager. Minor body damage can sometimes await repair until the next regular inspection and need not be reported more than once. 842.2 Preparation of Form 4565 -- Whenever a motor vehicle requires repair, complete Form 4565 in triplicate as follows: (a) Enter vehicle number and the hour and date vehicle was checked in. (b) Put check mark opposite item requiring repair, or, if not listed, enter opposite Other Repairs. (c) Describe details of repair under Remarks. For example, if brake block is checked, state pulls to the right, brakes fading, etc. 842.3 Disposition of Form 4565 – 842.31 Deliver to the garage dispatcher or manager for initialing. Driver copy will be returned

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

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

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

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

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

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

 USPS Holiday
  CCA Holiday
  Branch Meetings
  Paydays
  Y.O.P.C

2021 Leave Year: Jan. 2, 2021-Dec. 31, 2021. 2021 Annual Leave will be credited on Jan. 22, 2021 pay date

STEWARD'S CORNER



Steve Carlin
Formal A Rep

First and foremost, thank you brothers and sisters of Branch 43 for all your hard work and efforts over this past year battling this global pandemic. The job we perform daily is taken for granted by most of our customers and management, but know that anyone who has done it, especially recently, understands just how demanding it is. If at any time it becomes overwhelming, please talk to someone. Reach out to a fel-

low carrier, steward, or contact EAP for help or advice if life becomes unbearable. For those who do not know, EAP, the Employee Assistance Program, is an amazing resource the Postal Service offers to their employees. It offers counselors to employees and their families at no cost to them, and all conversations or information given to them is confidential. If at any time this is something you need, please contact them at (800) EAP-4YOU.

Now let us talk about clock rings and reasons proper ones are so important. Clock rings give the road map to how you spent your workday. They tell when you started, what routes you were on, when you were in the office or on the street, and many other things. When done properly they can validate the length of your route, help expose forced overtime, and prove when management improperly alters them.

Clock rings are extremely important to the way time is credited to your route. For those who do not know, there is a standard applied to your office time. When inspecting your route management takes the lower of the two office times, your actual time or the office standard for mail volume you had. Conversely, there is no set standard pace for your street time. Obviously, clocking to the street at the proper time is of the utmost importance to crediting your route with its true length on the street.

Second, clocking to the proper route is vital to any overtime grievance. If you are forced to work on another route and go into overtime, please make sure you use your clock rings to credit the time you worked to the correct route. If you fail to ring to the other route, when processing the potential infraction, your steward and any other union representative in the grievance process will have a much more difficult task proving your forced overtime.

Finally, by making the right clock rings you eliminate the need for management to "fix" them. If for some reason you forget to clock in or clock out,

you show up as an error on a report and management must input the missing clock ring. This is especially critical when clocking out because management more than likely will be forced to guess when to end your tour. This can be fixed, but without proof of the time you left work it can be difficult.

In closing, clock rings may seem insignificant and pointless, but they paint the picture of your workday. This picture is your best witness and evidence when there is something off about the time you worked on that day. It can prove things like forced overtime and if a route is overburden. Please make it a point to input your proper clock rings, they are the little things that make a world of difference.

In Solidarity,
Steve Carlin



Dave Utz
Formal A Rep

PIVOT??

To pivot or not to pivot that is the question. Pivot time should be used if a carrier has down time in the office but with the parcels, political mail and now the start of our peak season, I find it hard to believe any carrier has pivot time. Carriers should use this to their advantage, the dropping of a parcel will take 1 to 2 minutes. A lot more time if the house is far from the street or parking issues. If a carrier's average parcels are 20 a day and today the carrier has 33 parcels this is at least 13 to 26 minutes management has not figured into your time. What about the load tool this does take time contrary to what management thinks. It seems management thinks it takes no time to scan parcels and spurs. No routes have been inspected while using the load tool. If it takes 15 minutes or so to load then guess what no pivot, *sorry boss*. So, when management says you have a pivot reply yup but mine was used by load tool and parcel delivery now its overtime.

With the scanner following our every move this can easily be shown. Make sure carriers are smarter than management, you cannot beat the scanner do not try. Use it to our advantage you get two 10-minute breaks, a 30-minute lunch and comfort stops. These rules are for all carriers CCAs and regular carriers. CCAs learn that you are entitled to have daily breaks and lunch. It does not matter if you have one day in the Postal Service or months in

Continued on following page

Steward's Corner cont.

you have the right to breaks, lunch and personal need breaks daily.

Something I think needs repeating; carriers must inform management when they cannot make 8 hours. In the morning verbally tell supervisor to take all mail will be 8.5 hours or whatever you need. Request 3996 if supervisor tells you to leave mail put PS Form 1571 on the mail. Send message on scanner by 2:30, what I do is " route 4356 out till 6:30".

I want to say **thanks** to all carriers when was the last time you heard that. Have a great holiday season enjoy the time with your family.

In Solidarity,
Dave Utz

Vice President cont.

to you and should be kept as proof that damage was reported. 842.32 Attach dispatcher copy to Form 4570. 842.33 Mechanic copy is sent to the garage with vehicle.

The Postal Operations Manual Section 736, Fleet Maintenance, states: The Vehicle Maintenance Facility (VMF) is responsible for providing quality and timely maintenance to the Postal Service fleet as outlined in the guidelines established by Vehicle Maintenance, Headquarters. Management should contact the VMF promptly upon submission of PS Form 4565, Vehicle Repair Tag, to initiate repairs. A second copy of PS Form 4565 should be provided once repairs are complete. Carriers should request a receipt of this document before putting the vehicle back in use. If the vehicle is used fewer than 500 miles per month, it is to undergo routine servicing twice a year (26-week cycle). If driven more than 500 miles per month, it is to undergo servicing three times a year (17-week cycle). Letter carriers should request proof that vehicles are being properly serviced. If proper servicing is not taking place, carriers should contact their steward to investigate why the vehicles are not being properly maintained. USPS created PS Form 4546-B, United States Postal Service Preventive Maintenance Inspection Guidelines Light Delivery Vehicles, to identify the required elements of routine maintenance and to document that the maintenance was performed. Whether the Postal Service completes the required maintenance itself or contracts out the work to non-postal facilities, letter carriers have the right to verify that routine maintenance is taking place. If the maintenance is not being completed, letter carriers should submit PS Form 1767, Report of Hazard, Unsafe Condition or Practice. Carriers should speak to shop steward and steward

should investigate and if necessary, file a grievance citing Article 14 of the National Agreement if the maintenance is not being completed.

If a vehicle fire occurs, stewards should investigate to determine if management's failure to perform routine maintenance was a contributing factor. Use the steps below to determine what went wrong and how to correct the problem:

- 1) Request and review the vehicle maintenance records for the vehicle involved in the fire/mishap, then determine whether USPS conducted a required preventative maintenance inspection (PMI).
- 2) Request copies of PS Form 4546 for the involved vehicle. Review the forms and compare them with the PMI guidelines for light delivery vehicles beginning on page 22 of Vehicle Maintenance Bulletin V-07-98 found on the NALC website at nalc.org/safety.
- 3) If necessary, interview the mechanics (postal or contractor) to make sure that the inspection/PMI was done correctly.
- 4) Interview the carrier to determine what he or she recalls of the events leading up to the fire or equipment failure.
- 5) Prior to the fire or equipment failure, were we conducting thorough vehicle inspections? If so, did we report any items on the PS Form 4565, Vehicle Repair Tag?
- 6) Was the vehicle properly serviced? If not, what did management do with the vehicle? Request copies of all repair tags submitted and resulting repairs.

Current business and safety needs require USPS to document the number and nature of Postal Service vehicle fires. This information is necessary to pin down root causes, and to capture the data needed to determine commonalities, in these fires. Unfortunately, vehicle fires are a reality and carriers need to protect their personal safety. Instances have been reported in which carriers have unloaded mail and parcels while the vehicle is on fire. Preserving mail is an admirable intention, but do not put your safety at risk. Your safety is always priority number 1!

In Solidarity,
Pat Dougherty



Last Punch Bunch



Terry Lunn - Murray



Greg Trice - Symmes



Steve Murray - Symmes



NALC Health Benefit Plan



The NALC Health Benefit Plan will be holding virtual events October 26, 2020 through December 9, 2020. Register for an event date and time that works best for you by visiting www.nalchbp.org.

These sessions are designed to offer options that fit around you. Each live 90 minute session will include the same presentation. Attendees will hear about the three plan options we offer, key benefits, 2021 changes, special programs, rates and more. You will also have access to a presentation that may help you avoid common financial pitfalls when selecting a health insurance plan. This presentation will even include ways the NALC Health Benefit Plan can help put money back in your pocket.

Enroll today to be part of this first ever virtual experience and learn about the NALC Health Benefit Plan.

Type of Enrollment	Enrollment Code	Non-Postal Premium				Postal Premium	
		Biweekly		Monthly		Biweekly	
		Gov't Share	Your Share	Gov't Share	Your Share	Category 1 Your Share	Category 2 Your Share
High Option Self Only	321	\$241.58	\$94.83	\$523.42	\$205.47	\$91.47	\$81.41
High Option Self Plus One	323	\$517.46	\$226.64	\$1,121.16	\$491.06	\$219.45	\$197.89
High Option Self and Family	322	\$562.25	\$198.69	\$1,218.21	\$430.49	\$190.88	\$167.46
CDHP Option Self Only	324	\$163.91	\$54.64	\$355.15	\$118.38	\$52.45	\$45.35
CDHP Option Self Plus One	326	\$361.62	\$120.54	\$783.51	\$261.17	\$115.72	\$100.05
CDHP Option Self and Family	325	\$380.75	\$126.91	\$824.95	\$274.98	\$121.84	\$105.34
Value Option Self Only	KM1	\$134.53	\$44.84	\$291.48	\$97.16	\$43.05	\$37.22
Value Option Self Plus One	KM3	\$296.78	\$98.92	\$643.01	\$214.34	\$94.97	\$82.11
Value Option Self and Family	KM2	\$312.62	\$104.20	\$677.33	\$225.78	\$100.04	\$86.49

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HRSSC FMLA EASTERN

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Greensboro NC 27497-0905

FAX: 651-456-6041

October Membership Meeting Raffle Winners

Split-the-Pot - Charlie Williams (\$27.00)

MDA

Bill Stratman, LaTonya Brown, Jerry Giesting,
Burt Hughes, Dave Utz, Marlon Casey,
Andrew Garbett & Gerald Tiemeier

Michael	Beeler
Glen	Brashears
Loraine	Bresett
Richard	Briede
Carl	Brinck
Mike	Brooks
Danny	Butler
Robert	Chambers
Kenneth	Chancey
Ronald	Chapman
Jan	Eischen
Diana	Enwright
Roger	Flener
Michael	Holzinger
David	Hutchinson
Grady	Jobe Jr.
Michael	Kleintank
Bernard	Kluesener
Gary	Kohne
David	Lenahan
Lillie	Manning
Jim	O'Hara
Kenneth	Pflanz
Rhonda	Pringle
John	Ryan
Richard	Schloemer
Gordon	Schnur
Larry	Searle
Patrick	Shay
Henderson	Smith
Matthew	Steenken
James	Velosky

November Retiree Birthdays

**October YOPC
Attendees**

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

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



**November Gold
Carders**

- | | |
|---------|------------|
| William | Bohlander |
| Louis | Branno |
| John | Brotherton |
| Moe | Burkhart |
| Gary | Clore |
| Robert | Douglass |
| Michael | Ehlinger |
| Thomas | Feist |
| Charles | Leesman |
| Robert | Mangold |
| Alfonso | Marmora |
| Paul | Mason |
| Ronald | Nicholas |
| Timothy | Ridder |
| George | Taylor |
| Larry | Wells |



**Noah Mathias
James McDonald**

**Join fellow retirees
for lunch
1:00 pm - 1st Monday
of each month**

December 7th

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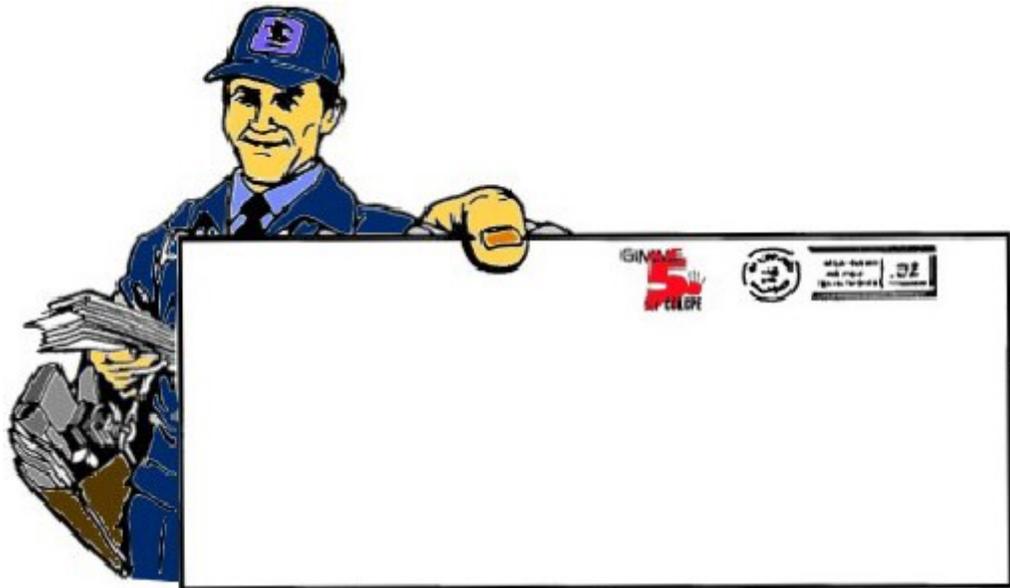
*Balance must be at least \$10,000 or greater to qualify. For loan balances below \$10,000 only the 90 day deferment will be offered. Member must qualify for the loan under normal underwriting guidelines. Minimum rate floor of this offer is 2.99% APR. Interest will accrue over the 90 day deferment period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

NALC Branch 43
4100 Colerain Avenue
Cincinnati, Ohio 45223

"ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED"

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



Upcoming Events

Veteran's Day - Wednesday, Nov. 11th

Breakfast Cancelled

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

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

Thanksgiving - Thursday, Nov. 26th

December YOPC - Wednesday, Dec. 2nd

