

NALC BRANCH 758

NEWSLETTER

APRIL 2019

" They Said "

By: Phil Bzura

So, I heard the other day, a CCA carrier indicated our union is weak. Yet, we have not seen a CCA at a union meeting other than Sarah, who took the courageous action to become a union steward to continue the righteous fight on behalf of the members of this branch. Rather than deal with facts and the contract, to many people say "they said". To date no one has figured who "they" are, or where "they" came from, but apparently "they" know all. This is not a wise path to go down, as "they" are often wrong and mislead carriers into potential discipline.

It is easy to criticize based on perception and emotion, because it is much safer than to deal with the facts and the contract. One thing this union does is enforce the collective bargaining agreement and protect the rights of the membership of this branch. It's not a matter of if we agree with the terms of collective bargaining; it is about enforcing the agreement. So, Lets deal with facts and ignore what "they "say.

Food Drive History

The NALC National Food Drive is the outgrowth of a tradition of community service exhibited repeatedly by members of the letter carriers union over the years. These carriers, who go into neighborhoods in every town six days a week, have always been involved when something needed to be done, whether it be collecting funds for a charity like the Muscular Dystrophy Association, watching over the elderly through the Carrier Alert program, assisting the American Red Cross during time of disaster, or rescuing victims of fires, crime, and other mishaps. For many years, a number of branches had collected food for the needy as part of their community service effort. The national, coordinated effort by the NALC to help fight hunger in America grew out of discussions in 1991 by a number of leaders at the time, including NALC President Vincent R. Sombrotto, AFL-CIO Community Services Director Joseph Velasquez and Postmaster General Anthony Frank. A pilot drive was held in 10 cities in October of 1991, and it proved so successful that work began immediately on making it a nationwide effort. Input from food banks and pantries suggested that late spring would be the best time since by then most food banks in the country start running out of donations received during the Thanksgiving and Christmas holiday periods. A revamped drive was organized for May 15, 1993—the second Saturday in May—with a goal of having at least one NALC branch in each of the 50 states participating. The result was astounding. More than 11 million pounds of food was collected—a one-day record in the United States—involving more than 220 union branches. From Alaska to Florida and Maine to Hawaii, letter carriers did double duty—delivering mail and picking up donations. It just grew and grew from that point. In 2010, the food drive surpassed the 1 billion pound mark in total food collected over its history.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- 1** Presidents Article , Food Drive Report
- 2** Health Benefits Report
- 3** MBA Article, Sgt. Of Arms Article, Secretary Article
- 4** Treasury Article
- 5** April 2019 Report - National Business Agent – Region 6
- 6** April 2019 Report - National Business Agent – Region 6
- 7** 2019 NALC Food Drive Poster
- 8** Branch Officers, Calendar of Events

Health Benefits

By: Harry LaFleur

Sit less, live longer: If you want a longer life, spend less of it sitting around. That's the conclusion of a new study of nearly 8,000 people, ages 45 and older, who wore activity monitors for four years so scientists could track their movements. Researchers found that replacing 30 minutes of sedentary activity a day with half an hour of light physical exertion- even just a walk down the street- was linked to a 17 percent lower risk of early death. Doing moderate to vigorous exercise instead was associated with a 35 percent reduction in risk. Those health benefits were experienced only by participants who were not highly active at the start of the study period. The study, hopes the findings will encourage people to get more active. "You don't have to take 10 minutes break and go run and down the stairs. Simply taking a 1-minute movement break and going to the bathroom furthest from your desk rather than closest to it may be enough to help you accrue this healthful activity.

Fiber's many benefits: In a blow to proponents of low-carbohydrate diets, a landmark study has found that people who eat more fiber-found in fruit, vegetables, and whole-grain cereals, pasta, and bread- are less likely to die early or suffer from a chronic condition such as cardiovascular disease or cancer. An international team of researchers commissioned by the World Health Organization analyzed more than 180 studies and 50 clinical trials from the past 40 years. They found that people who ate the most fiber were 15 to 30 percent less likely to die prematurely than those who ate the least. Those heavy fiber consumers were also 16 to 24 percent less likely to suffer a stroke or develop heart disease, type 2 diabetes, or colon cancer. The optimal fiber intake, researchers determined, was 25 to 29 grams a day; American adults consume an average of 15 grams.

Health Scare of the week: Sleep loss and heart disease. A terrible night's sleep isn't just bad for your mood- it could also damage your heart, according to a new study. Researchers recruited nearly 4,000 people with an average age of 46 and no known history of heart disease, and for seven nights had them wear a small device that measures the length and quality of sleep. The participants also had a cardiac CT scan and 3-D ultrasounds of their heart and arteries at the start and end of the study. After factoring out other risk factors for heart disease, the team found that people who slept for fewer than six hours a night were 27 percent more likely to have atherosclerosis- the buildup of plaque in the body's arteries, a common cause of heart attacks and strokes- than those who slept seven to eight hours. Those who woke often during the night or who struggled to doze off were 34 percent more likely to have condition than those who got a good night's snooze. We have to include sleep as one of the weapons we use to fight heart disease. It's a factor we are compromising every day.

Tell Your Children: As marijuana continues its "inevitable march in all 50 states," Americans have largely accepted the pot lobby's claim that the drug is relatively harmless. "But what if it's not?" One study showed that heavy users have a six times greater chance of developing schizophrenia and there is evidence that marijuana can be a gateway drug, leading to opiate or cocaine use.

Mutual Benefit Association

By: Jose Eplin

The United States Letter Carriers Mutual Benefit Association (MBA), founded in 1891, was created for the benefit of National Association of Letter Carriers members and their families. The MBA is the life insurance division of the NALC. Today, the MBA has more than \$224 million of life insurance in force on its members.

Insurance plans offered by the MBA are designed to give NALC members and their families the best possible protection for the lowest cost. The Mutual Benefit Association (MBA) is revising its life insurance products offered to letter carriers and their family members. These revised products include: MBA Whole Life, MBA Whole Life Paid-Up in 20 Years, MBA Whole Life Paid-Up at Age 65, Independence (Single Premium) Whole Life, and MBA 10 Year Renewable and Convertible Term Life. The new products will be available effective Sept. 1. For applications and brochures, contact your branch president or branch MBA representative, or call the MBA office at 202-638-4318.

Monthly Meeting

By: Joe Zelasko

It is a little disappointing to attend these meetings and find that there are more retired members than there are working members. Ok, so you say retirees have nothing better to do, WRONG, we have plenty of things to do. The only time that a lot of members show up is when there is a problem or they want something out of the ordinary. It's only an hour or so each month. So what if there is somebody you might not care for that is an officer, you should know what's going on. Get the info at the meetings and not second hand. Hope to see more members at the next meeting.

Union Attendance

By: Ursa Allen

I would like to introduce myself. I am Ursa Allen, Secretary of the NALC Branch 758, I am happy to say that I am a proud member of this union. I was happy to see more members attending the union meeting in March 2019. There were (16) sixteen in attendance and everyone had questions and input into what is happening in the office and on the routes. Let's continue to grow our attendance. Hope to see more of you at the next meeting!

LCPF Disclaimer

By making a contribution to the Letter Carrier Political Fund, you are doing so voluntarily with the understanding that your contribution is not a condition of membership in the National Association of Letter Carriers or of employment by the Postal Service, nor is it part of union dues. You have a right to refuse to contribute without any reprisal. The Letter Carrier Political Fund will use the money it receives to contribute to candidates for federal office and undertake other political spending as permitted by law. Your selection shall remain in full force and effect until cancelled. Contributions to the Letter Carrier Political Fund are not deductible for federal income tax purposes. Federal law prohibits the Letter Carrier Political Fund from soliciting contributions from individuals who are not NALC members, executive and administrative staff or their families. Any contribution received from such an individual will be refunded to that contributor. Federal law requires us to use our best efforts to collect and report the name, mailing address, occupation and name of employer of individuals whose contributions exceed \$200 per calendar year. Any guideline amount is merely a suggestion, and an individual is free to contribute more or less than the guideline suggests and the Union will not favor or disadvantage anyone by reason of the amount of their contribution or their decision not to contribute.

FORM 3996 – LINE J ENTRIES

Submitted by: Maurice Marentette

Listed below are some of the possible entries/explanations for Line J of a Form 3996.

There are obviously many variables to be considered in providing your estimate. The key factor to remember is that you are only providing an estimate. Try to make it as realistic as possible and keep in mind that if you underestimate and cannot return by the agreed upon time, it will be your responsibility to notify management from the road. If you do not, you may be subject to the discipline charge of “use of unauthorized overtime” or the old standby “failure to follow instructions”.

Protect yourself in all cases by not making decisions that are the responsibility of management, always give management the opportunity to make any decision and then follow the instructions as given.

1. Route is out of adjustment (as documented by count and inspection) 2. Late leaving. 3. Change of address cards. 4. Stand-up talk. 5. Safety talk. 6. Window service (spoke with patron) 7. Phone calls (from patron) 8. Excessive parcels. 9. Full coverage(s) 10. Review mail from CFS. 11. Hot case mail. 12. Excessive accountables. 13. Inclement weather (extreme hot/cold, rain, wind, etc.) 14. Feeling ill – under medication. 15. Medical restrictions. 16. Waiting for mail (careful here, could get later start time) 17. Late dispatch (same as #16) 18. Unfamiliar with route. 19. New case labels. 20. Carrying mail cased by others. 21. Cased PM mail from previous day. 22. Thin mail. 23. Thick mail. 24. Sloppy mail (ADVO inserts, etc.) 25. Samples. 26. Traffic/construction delays. 27. Odd-shaped mail. 28. Medical appointments (work related) 29. Mark-up parcels. 30. Carrier endorsements. 31. Utility bills. 32. Checks, food stamps, etc. 33. Deviate for Express Mail. 34. Revised Form 1621 (route information) 35. Work on case labels. 36. DPS mail problems (not enough paper to itemize) 37. Going through bad DPS mail in PM. 38. Check of Form 3982's (pink cards) 39. Power outage, fire drill, etc. 40. New deliveries.

Space provided for additional reasons. Please note that neither DOIS Projection or Reference Volume were mentioned. It is not recommended to cite numbers that we do not recognize; to do so is to give them legitimacy.

National Association of Letter Carriers – Region 6 National Business Agent

April 2019 Report

Brothers and Sisters,

Has management ever given you an instruction and you think to yourself, “What a bonehead order”? Well, this probably happens more than I care to think about. Recently, our office was informed of a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) that was issued regarding what carriers should do when there had been an Amazon parcel left in a customer’s mailbox by someone other than a U.S.P.S. letter carrier. The instruction is to leave the parcel in the mailbox and take a picture of the label, then, forward that picture to your supervisor. UNBELIEVABLE! First, I want to make it clear, you must follow any instruction unless it puts yourself or someone else in harm’s way. Specifically, it states in the Joint Administrative Contract Manual (JCAM):

“...there is the “iron rule” stating that an employee must “obey now and grieve later.” Second, there is a narrow exception to that rule which an employee to disobey where he or she has a reasonable or good-faith belief that to obey would cause *imminent danger to life or limb*. A mere belief that a safety hazard exists is usually insufficient reason to disobey an order.”

I have two questions to ask the manager that issued this instruction:

1. Isn’t there still a Private Statute that makes it illegal for anyone other than a U.S.P.S. employee to place mailable matter into a mailbox? And,
2. What piece of equipment will you be issuing me in order to carry out your instruction of taking a photo?

Your branch officers have asked these same questions; however, the “higher ups” are the one’s responsible for this bonehead instruction. The NALC has long advocated the threat against privatization of the Postal Service. Common sense would dictate that even Postal management would want to protect the sanctity of our customer’s mailboxes, right? So why do they want to give away our most prized, protected entity to our mission?

We have sent out a grievance starter template to branches within our region to file a grievance to stop this unlawful management instruction. I ask our members to be patient while we fight to protect our jobs from our supposed leaders of the Postal Service.

As far as using your own personal smart phone to take pictures, I would tell your supervisor no. What about the obey now, grieve later rule? Yes, you might have an investigative interview and could be issued some form of discipline; however, I feel confident regarding the outcome of any form of discipline. Please

keep your steward apprised of any questioning by management and always request a steward if you believe that management's questions could lead to discipline.

State Conventions

This month our office will be attending both the Indiana and Michigan State Conventions – June will be the Kentucky State Convention. Per the NALC Constitution, state conventions are to be a time and place for our legislative arms to exercise their muscle. Other than conducting the state business to be functional, the conventions will hold trainings and entertain guest speakers in order to strengthen our position legislatively and politically. Not only do we live in a time where unions are constantly under attack, but also the Postal Service. One of the main purposes of our conventions is to grow together as a union to stand up for what we believe in – the right to work for a fair day's pay and benefits and to promote the well being of ourselves, our families and the country.

The legislative and political forums are a necessary conduit as leaders of today's NALC. Yes, our primary job is to represent our members – what better way than to influence and shape our community, state and national political culture. If we roll over and cow down to those that want to do away with our livelihood and national treasure – we do not represent our membership very well. It's not a political party "thing". It's a livelihood "thing". If you like the pay, benefits and security of your job, please become a legislative activist with the NALC. Yes, you do have to be an elected delegate to participate in your state's convention. But until you run and are elected as such, there is another way you can start by contributing to the Letter Carrier Political Fund (LCPF). The voluntary contributions from our members help with securing friends in the political forum that vote favorably on letter carrier and U.S.P.S. issues. Members of Congress need our help and we need theirs. It's the second oldest bartering system in the country – but this one's legal. Your financial help can help us save our jobs and our national treasure. Give your local branch a call and tell them you want to help save our jobs – you want to start contributing to the Letter Carrier Political Fund!

In Solidarity,

Troy Clark

National Business Agent – Region 6
Kentucky – Indiana – Michigan (KIM)



LETTER CARRIERS'
FOOD DRIVE
 SAT., MAY 11, 2019

PUT YOUR NON-PERISHABLE DONATION IN A BAG BY YOUR MAILBOX.
 WE'LL DELIVER IT TO A LOCAL FOOD BANK.

NATIONAL PARTNERS



BRANCH OFFICERS

President – Phil Bzura (734) 306-3114

Vice President - Keith Zelasko (734) 771-7081

Secretary – Ursa Allen

Treasury – Maurice Marentette

Sgt. Of Arms – Joe Zelasko

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Harry LaFleur (734) 283-1623

NALC Mutual Benefits Officer / Editor - Jose Eplin

Stewards: Phil Bzura, Daniel Watson,

Sarah Niedowicz

MDA: Keith Zelasko

Trustees:

Chris Williamson, Rhonda Franklin, Karen
Balamucki

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

NALC BRANCH 758 UNION MEETING
PLAV Post #7
438 FORD AVE, WYANDOTTE, MI, 48193
THURSDAY, APRIL 25, 2019 7:30 PM

NALC FOOD DRIVE
SATURDAY, MAY 11, 2019

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Strive not to be a success, but rather to be of value. –Albert Einstein