

BR. 14 NEWSLETTER



VOL 53, NO. 10

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF BRANCH 14, NALC
SERVING LOUISVILLE, FORT KNOX, BARDSTOWN, RADCLIFF, LAGRANGE,
LEBANON, EMINENCE, SHELBYVILLE, VINE GROVE, SPRINGFIELD, & CAMPBELLSVILLE

OCTOBER 2024

Louisville, Kentucky

This is the official notice to all members of Branch 14 of the nominations and elections for all officer positions for the three (3) year term beginning January 1, 2025. There will also be nominations and election of delegates to the 2025 Kentucky State Association of Letter Carriers convention.

Nominations will be accepted at the regular monthly meetings of Branch 14 on Tuesday, August 27 and Tuesday, September 24, 2024. ***Elections will be held on Wednesday, October 23 from 4:00 P.M. until 8:00 P.M. and on Thursday, October 24 from 5:00 P.M. until 9:00 P.M.*** All nominations and voting will be conducted at the Branch 14 Union Hall, 4815 Poplar Level Road, Louisville, KY, 40213. The Kentucky State Association Convention will be held in Bowling Green, Kentucky on June 8 & 9, 2025.

The number of delegates allowed to attend the convention will be determined in accordance with the Constitution of the National Association of Letter Carriers. In accordance with Branch 14 By-Laws, the President, Executive Vice-President, Vice-President, Recording Secretary, Assistant Recording/Financial Secretary and Treasurer will be automatic, paid, delegates to the Convention. The remaining number of paid delegates to the convention will be determined in accordance with Branch 14 By-Laws.

Voting will be by secret ballot and the results will be posted on the Branch 14 website at www.nalcbr14.com and read at the regular monthly meeting on Tuesday, November 26, 2024.

Any member that will be unable to vote during the times that the polls are open may request an absentee ballot. The request must be made in writing, with name and address of the member requesting the absentee ballot. The request must have a legible signature by the member requesting the absentee ballot.

Requests for absentee ballots must be received by the Branch 14 Election Committee between the dates of September 25 and October 10, 2024. Requests should be sent to: NALC Branch 14 Election Committee, PO Box 34572, Louisville, KY, 40232-4572. Absentee ballots must be returned to the Election Committee by October 24, 2024. All requests for ballots received after October 10 and returned ballots that are received after October 24, 2024 will be void. These requests and ballots will be kept as a matter of record by the Election Committee.

All regular members in good standing shall have the right to nominate a candidate for any officer position or delegate to the National Convention. Self-nomination is permitted. All qualified regular members shall be eligible to be an officer, delegate or an alternate delegate to the State Convention except as provided for in accordance with Article 5, Section 2 of the Constitution of the National Association of Letter Carriers and Article 7, Section 2 of the Branch 14 By-laws.

Stephen A. Terry Sr.
Branch 14 Secretary

BRANCH 14 NEWSLETTER

Published monthly by
Branch 14 National Association of Letter Carriers
4815 Poplar Level Road
Louisville, KY 40213

964-3200

964-3276

Officers & Staff

President.....Tony Weddle
Executive Vice-President.....Ron Gast
Vice-President.....Jarett Sims
Recording Secretary.....Steve Terry
Treasurer.....Bob Hack
Asst. Recording/Financial Secretary.....Bill Davis
Health Benefits Rep./Retirement.....Tom Webb
Sergeant-at-Arms/Scribe.....Adriane Shanklin
Community Activities Coordinator.....Missy Harris
Trustee.....Daria Duvall
Trustee.....Larry Terry
Trustee.....Tina Davis
Trustee.....Greg Ray
Trustee.....Gary Edison

Branch 14 Stewards

40202.....Leroy Gutierrez
40203/08/10.....Yodari Balcarcel
40204.....Leroy Gutierrez
40205.....Thomas Derringer
40206.....Natalie Garnett
40207.....Russell Johnson
40209/14/15.....Trevor Gay
40209/14/15.....Mark Wright
40211/12.....Damon Braxton
40213.....Kyle Moert
40216.....Jon Endelmann
40217.....Vacant
40218.....Jarett Sims
40219.....Vacant
40220.....Rodgerick Streater
40222.....Nick Schneider
40228/91.....Tina Davis
40229.....Brandon Reid
40241/42.....Adriane Shanklin
40243.....Ron Gast
40258.....Chad Grosso
40272.....Lance Schwede
40299.....Jarett Sims
Bardstown.....Ryan McCormick
Campbellsville.....Ryan McCormick
LaGrange.....Stephanie Diaz
Lebanon.....Ryan McCormick
Shelbyville.....Bailey Hendrix
Springfield.....Ryan McCormick
Fort Knox.....Vacant
Radcliff.....Mike Watson
Vine Grove.....Timothy Embry

**TONY WEDDLE***President*

Louisville route inspections have been completed for 2024 and, although we may not have the outcome we used to, we have agreed to delay implementation until January.

Route inspections for the Louisville installation have finally wrapped up for the year. We conducted six-day count and inspections at 40205, 40213, 40218, 40222 and three routes at 40215. Since we have an agreement with the Louisville P.O. to conduct joint inspections, I'm glad to get them over with since it is quite time-consuming to review carrier times and to make sure route examiners are being fair in their assessments.

In our efforts to get ready for route inspections, the branch conducted route protection training for our members every Wednesday in the month of September. However, attendance for the training was very low. Evidently, route protection is not much of a priority to a lot of carriers anymore. And it'll show when the final numbers for carrier assignments have been reached and adjustments are made to the assignments that were inspected.

Our agreement requiring joint inspections permits us (Union and Management) to amend the terms covering six-day count and inspections to enable us to arrive at fair evaluations for carriers and reasonable route times that local management can better manage. Otherwise, carriers would just receive an office evaluation based on the mail volume from the week of inspection, and a street evaluation from the eight-week analysis from the carrier's historical performance or from the carrier's performance from the week of inspection.

We'll be negotiating with management to reach final evaluations in the coming weeks but the mail volume for three of the zones (Annshire station) was very low. And even with our agreement with the Louisville P.O. we will experience several routes being added to and possibly a couple of junior carriers losing their assignment. We've agreed with management to implement the route adjustments for the zones we inspected in the

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month of January which will allow carriers to continue delivering assignments they are familiar with as we struggle through this election cycle and peak season.

We're not sure what lies ahead next year when it comes to route inspections for the branch, but it's likely management will decide to continue inspecting delivery units under the six-day count and inspection process listed in the M-39. There have been rumors that the national parties may agree to another modified inspection process like the TIAREAP process for next year but I'm not confident that will happen anytime soon (or impending or forthcoming or whatever). But it will not matter if a modified inspection process is agreed to or the outdated and ancient six-day count and inspection process continues, if carriers don't get better at protecting their bid assignments, then get ready to do more work in the same amount of time.

I've ended my articles for several years with the following saying that can help protect carrier assignments. But it can also help carriers place the right mail in the right box, establish assignments that are easier to manage and help lessen the number of injuries to our members.

If you're going to do the job, you might as well take the time it takes to do the job right!



The following unassigned regular carriers were assigned to the listed residual assignments effective 10/05/2024:

05071	PATEL	BIPINKUMAR	B
18077	MASDEN	ANDREW	T
18089	GREENFIELD	BRYAN	S
18059	RIVERA	BENJAMIN	J
15040	VANCE	MAKAYLA	L
15071	GARNETT	NATALIE	A
14093	KING	LAROD	
11071	THOMAS	KENNETH	D

The following PTFs were converted to unassigned regular carriers in their listed work location effective 10/05/2024:

SHIVELY

CHRIS WEST-06543551

RICO JOHNSON-06544421

HEATHER EDDINS-06551325

PATRICK MUSTARD-06541492

DOWNTOWN

ALLEN HATHCOCK-06544487

MIKAYLA HERTHEL-06544188

LYNDON

MICHAEL REED-06544089

PRP

ADRIAN SOTO-06548794

J-TOWN

CORWIN SHIELDS-06374363

MLK

ARON ALMON-06543977

Congratulations brothers and sisters



**RON GAST***Executive Vice-President*

Have you ever wondered about the safety rules concerning delivering in the dark?

There are many issues we deal with as letter carriers, from heat to cold, rain to snow and ice, and other various issues regarding weather conditions that we can make accommodations for. In the summer we can dress lightly, drink plenty of water, and take extra breaks to account for the heat. We can wear rain gear to keep ourselves and the mail dry (yeah, right). We can layer in the winter and cover exposed areas of skin to protect against the cold. But there is one issue that we can do little about, and that is the time change that occurs on November the 3rd. As has been for many years now, letter carriers will be carrying mail in the dark. Yes, you can wear a headlamp or other light source to assist, but you are still walking in the dark, sometimes in unfamiliar areas, where there are many dangers. So, with this fact, the question is; what do I do about it?

First and foremost, do your best to keep yourself safe. How do you do that? Work smart in everything you do. The issue has been brought up many times about carrying in the dark and the one issue that is always stressed is that it is up to the carrier to make the decision on their safety. Even though many of you may disagree, carrying mail in the dark does not create a safety hazard by itself. There are many instances where working in the dark creates limited to no safety hazards. Such as delivering mail inside where proper lighting is available. Or on some streets where street lights and porch lights are plentiful. The problem, is that these instances are not what most of us experience in the Fall and Winter. Usually you are walking outside, with limited street lights and porch lights. These are the instances that I am talking about today, and hope to shed some “light” on.

When being instructed to work in the dark, you the profession letter carrier must make an estimate of the safety concerns. You are not allowed to refuse to deliver mail simply because it is dark. As dumb as that sounds, here is what you must do to protect yourself against possible discipline. I

recommend that you first verbally inform management that you feel going out in the dark to deliver mail is unsafe. If they insist, then you must make the attempt. You need to go out to the delivery point, park your vehicle and attempt delivery. If at that time you are able to make the determination that delivery would create a safety hazard, then you should note those hazards, return the mail to the office and report to the Supervisor. Inform them of the “specific” hazards you experienced and why continuing would have endangered your safety. Example: When you parked your vehicle and attempted to deliver, you noted that there were very limited street lights illuminated causing a hazard in parking and crossing streets. You may also note that while walking through yards, you noted that there was no light, causing hazards from low hanging tree limbs and uneven landscape (holes in yards). You may even note that porch lights were not on, causing you a danger in going up steps and making an approach to the mailbox. These are of course only a few items that may cause you concern, but you as a professional letter carrier should be able to determine if the situation is safe.

Once you have made the informed decision that delivery would be unsafe, the important thing to do is to inform the supervisor of the issues. Upon return to the office, present the undelivered mail to the supervisor and tell them what you experienced on the street and why it was unsafe to continue. Request a PS Form 1571 to report the undelivered mail. Some carriers will purchase headlamps or other lights to assist them in delivering in limited light situations. This is your call as to whether you want to do this, as you cannot be forced to. Even if management provides you with a headlamp, you still may have specific safety issues when delivering. If threatened with discipline, you should report this to your steward.

The main thing to remember through all of this is that you, the letter carrier, must make an informed decision in every incident of limited light as to whether you feel there are safety concerns. Please do not refuse to go out just because it is dark. Make the attempt and then decide if it is safe enough for you. There is nothing wrong with delivering mail in the dark if you feel safe. If you find no concerns, whether you have a headlamp or not, then feel free to safely deliver the mail. Just remember that your safety is more important than any piece of mail that has ever been delivered.

We must keep ourselves safe while completing

our duties as letter carriers. Management's concern is not always about your safety, but more so about getting the mail delivered. While this is important, as it is the reason we are here, delivering mail is not more important than your safety and health. So, stay safe, do your best to complete your assignment, and go home every day feeling like you have done your job. Before you know it, we will be looking at the spring time change and getting ready to complain about the heat.

Lastly, we finished nominations at the September meeting for Branch Officer positions and delegates to the Kentucky State Association Convention for 2025. I am proud to say that Tony Weddle will continue to be your President into the new year. We also have a few changes; Jarett Sims will be your new Executive Vice President and Lance Schwede will be your Vice President. Other notable changes will be Greg Ray as your Treasurer and Coulter Marvell III as your Health Benefits/Retirement/Mutual Benefits representative. We have 6 members running for the 5 Trustee positions and several to fill the 10 delegate positions to the convention, so please come out to the hall to vote on Wednesday, October 23rd from 4:00 until 8:00 pm or Thursday, October 24th from 5:00 until 9:00 pm.

Our next union meeting is on Tuesday, October 22nd at 7:30 pm.

Knowledge is power. Solidarity forever!



JARETT SIMS
Vice-President

PS Form 3971, Request for or Notification of Absence completion is your responsibility. Don't pass that responsibility on to management and wonder why when it was not done right.

It's already been quite a month in the first two weeks of October. Between a week of annual (I love vacation!) and several Notice of Removals and 14-day paper suspensions and my first arbitration hearing, it is hard to tell if I am coming or going. Before I continue on the Pre-

Disciplinary Interview focus, I started last month, I once again want to address the PS Form 3971.

The 3971 is the request for or notification of Absence form. It should be completed when requesting any type of leave, including annual, sick, FMLA, LWOP and so on. The biggest concern I see with Branch 14 letter carriers is they are ceding their responsibility to complete the 3971 to management. Do not do this! For financial reasons, you want to make sure that whatever type pay you are seeking is correctly entered. Also, if management is seeking to issue discipline, it is great to have proof to dispute their claims.

When you return to work from absence, request a 3971 from management. Complete it in its entirety, specifically requesting the type of leave you would like. Return it to management and have them sign that they received it and make a copy for your files. Management must acknowledge and sign it received when presented by an employee. If they refuse to do so, ask for your steward to file a grievance.

If you have failed to complete a 3971 and management is requiring you fill out before a PDI, please don't just sign each of them without reading. Management often will complete the form and put "AWOL" or use the wrong type of leave. If you sign off on it without reading, you may be accidentally admitting fault and helping management build a discipline case against you.

Back to the PDI process. As I stated last month, this is your day in court. You have a right to due process. If you are charged and issued discipline, the union will argue that management must follow all the procedures of the just cause principle. The first rule of Just Cause is "Is there a rule?" To reiterate last month, Management will now read you ELM provisions and they will ask you if you understand. ***If you don't understand, don't just say "yes", require management to explain the provision.***

The most common section that management asks about in the PDI is ELM 665, which deals with Postal Service Standards of Conduct. Specifically, ELM 665.3 Cooperation in Investigations: Employees must cooperate in any postal investigation, including Office of Inspector General investigation.

As a union official, I agree on this. This is the

chance to clear the air and state the facts on any charge management may produce. Management is required to let you know what type of charge you are facing prior to the PDI. When you consult with your steward, let them know exactly what is going on. Any information you provide may possibly help your case. Always be honest and concise with your answers. Remember to only answer what is being asked of you. If management chooses to issue discipline, the answers you choose will almost always appear in the charge letter.

We will cover more next month. Remember it is the obligation of management to make you aware of the rules. If you are ignorant of a rule, say it in the PDI. The union can argue that management is accountable to make letter carriers aware of all rules.

As I close, this is a busy month at Branch 14. We have our first ever "Trunk or Treat" on October 28 between 6-9. If you have kids or grandkids, this will be a fun chance to have them receive candy in a safe environment. If you don't have kids, it is a great opportunity to enjoy the fraternity and fellowship of our union.

Also, we have branch elections this month as well. Please make your voice heard. We have a large field of qualified candidates running for various positions. It is very exciting to me to see so many new and old faces who care enough to step up to represent our members.





RETIREMENT TRAINING



PRESENTED BY
ROBBIE GARDNER
NALC



**NOVEMBER 3RD
1-5 PM**



BRANCH 14 UNION HALL
4815 POPLAR LEVEL ROAD

**OPEN TO ALL BRANCH 14
MEMBERS AND GUESTS**

SNACKS AND BEVERAGES
WILL BE AVAILABLE



**TOM WEBB*****Health Benefits/Retirement***

Everyone should go to the Branch14 web site and see the very latest information concerning the activities and events that are upcoming very soon. Bill Davis did an outstanding job putting together all the latest information concerning the local and national issues. He created a full section dedicated to the upcoming 2025 Postal Service Health Plan. All the information that we have to date, is in this section.

The 2025 premium rates are posted in this article. The 2025 Open Season dates are Nov. 13, 2024 thru Dec.11, 2024. Everyone has to sign up for the health plan you are going to join for 2025, even if you opt stay in your current plan, you are required to sign for that 2025 plan. If you opt not to sign a plan, the Office of Personnel will assign you a plan that is close to matching your current plan.

There will be a retirement seminar on Sunday, Nov. 3, 2024. at 1:00 pm at the Union Hall. Robbie Gardner will be here to present a program concerning the retirement process and answer all of your questions. These sessions last between 3-4 hours and are very informative. Spouses are welcome. Light snacks and refreshments will be provided. Hope to see you there.

2025 Premiums**PSHB High Option Premiums**

	Enrollment Codes	Biweekly Employees Pay	Monthly Annuitants Pay
Self Only PSHB High Option	77A	\$109.98	\$238.29
Self Plus One PSHB High Option	77C	\$266.08	\$576.50
Self and Family PSHB High Option	77B	\$238.42	\$516.58

PSHB CDHP Premiums

	Enrollment Codes	Biweekly Employees Pay	Monthly Annuitants Pay
Self Only PSHB CDHP	77D	\$59.13	\$128.11
Self Plus One PSHB CDHP	77F	\$133.88	\$290.08
Self and Family PSHB CDHP	77E	\$144.92	\$314.00

**MISSY HARRIS*****Community Activities Coordinator***

I want to thank everyone who has come to a fundraiser, donated prizes, helped park cars, participate in golf scrambles, and bowl a thons. With your help we have raised \$16,997.21 as of now!! I am beyond proud of that total. That's the most we have ever raised, and we have 1 more event remaining this year. Branch 14 MDA Bowl-A-Thon is November 10th at Ken Bowl Lanes. All you need to do is get donations from coworkers, friends, family. We will take registration at 12:30 and bowling starts at 1 pm. This is a holiday weekend, so come on out and have a good time knowing there is no work the next day. Make a, station to station challenge. Downtown is the reigning champion right now. I hope to see you all there.

We also have the "Trunk or Treat" event on October 27th from 6-9 pm. Come out and decorate your car. The best decorated car will receive \$25 gift card from me. We will have hot dogs and snacks, cupcakes, etc... This is a safe place to bring the kiddos to get candy for trick or treat.

I will be looking for volunteers in late November to decorate the hall for Christmas. Anyone interested, please call me at 759-2276. Uniform days are Tuesdays 6-8. If you need different arrangements because of work, text me and we can work something out.



**Deliver
the Cure
with MDA**

***Next Union Meeting
October 22nd, 2024 at 7:30pm
United we bargain, Divided we beg***

UNION MEETING

Date: 9/24/2024

Br 14 Union Meeting Attendance by Zone	
Annshire 40205	1
Annshire 40213	3
Annshire 40218	3
DTCU 40202	1
DTCU 40203	1
DTCU 40204	0
DTCU 40208	0
DTCU 40210	3
Fern Creek 40228	2
Fern Creek 40291	1
Hikes Point 40220	2
Iroquois 40209/14	1
Iroquois 40215	1
J-Town 40299	1
Lyndon 40222	2
Lyndon 40241/42	2
Middletown 40243	0
MLK 40211	2
MLK 40212	1
Okolona 40219	0
Okolona 40229	4
PRP 40258	1
PRP 40272	1
Shelby 40217	0
Shively 40216	1
St Matthews 40206	1
St Matthews 40207	2
Bardstown 40004	0
Campbellsville 42718	0
Eminence 40019	0
Ft Knox 40121	0
LaGrange 40031	1
Lebanon 40033	1
Radcliff 40160	0
Shelbyville 40065	1
Springfield 40069	0
Vine Grove 40175	0
Retired	17
Guests	0
Total	57

Officers & Stewards Excused: Embry,
Watson

Officers and Stewards Absent: None
None

MDA 50/50 Drawing.....\$83 MDA
.....\$83 Damon Braxton

\$50 Door Prize.....Larry Terry

SHIVELY POST OFFICE RETIREES**7th ANNUAL REUNION****"CHRISTMAS BREAKFAST"**

DATE: FRIDAY, DECEMBER 6th, 2024

TIME: 10:00AM

LOCATION: "Metro Diner" 4901 Outer Loop
(In the Academy Sports Store Strip Mall)

IF YOU'VE EVER WORKED AT ANY OF THE
SHIVELY POST OFFICE LOCATIONS, ANY
CRAFT, FEEL FREE TO COME!

RESERVED SECTION SEE YOU THERE!!



QUESTIONS? CALL OR EMAIL MIKE SPAULDING 502-439-1154 Spauldingky@gmail.com

**Branch 14 elections
will be held on
Wednesday, October
23 from 4:00 P.M. until
8:00 P.M. and on
Thursday, October 24
from 5:00 P.M. until
9:00 P.M.**

NALC BR.14



06:00PM - 09:00PM

October 27th, 2024
4815 Poplar Level Rd.
Don't forget to wear your costume!

NALC/MDA Fundraiser BOWLATHON

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 10TH

50/50 pot and Door prize raffles

**KenBowl Lanes
7021 Southside drive
Sign Ups 12:30**

See Missy Harris for
donation forms
502-759-2276



Open to everyone, bring your friends and family

National Association of Letter Carriers
Falls City Branch 14
4815 Poplar Level Road
Louisville, KY 40213
10/24

Address Service Requested



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Organization
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1420 Gardiner Ln. Room 66

Louisville, KY 40231

P: 502-458-2681

F: 502-458-2682

Downtown Branch:

600 Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Place

Room 166

Louisville, KY 40202

P/F: 502-584-3579

We're putting the "US"
back in TRUST!

Talk to a Member Service Rep today &
start seeing your money grow.



DON'T GET PLAYED,
BEAT YOUR RATE!

We strive to have the lowest rates for
our members. If we can't beat your
auto rate, we'll match it!*

*Restrictions Apply

