

MOUND CITY CARRIER

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"Diversity is our Strength and Unity is our Power"

July 2021

TWO STEPS FORWARD, ONE STEP BACK

PRESIDENT'S ARTICLE ... *By JOHN McLAUGHLIN*

The Postal Service took two steps forward. 1. A bipartisan group of U.S. senators introduced a bill that will, after 17 years, finally repeal the \$5 billion a year mandate for retiree health care expenditures. In the bill it will also require retirees to enroll in Medicare, but it should pass with little delay. 2. There has been the general relaxation of COVID-19 restrictions and a return to normalcy now that vaccinations have increased substantially under the new administration. The one step back is it appears our idiot PMG wants to decrease service even more and increase the cost.

This is part of his new 10-year plan to destroy the USPS. In a nutshell, PMG DeJoy is giving up on first class mail. The standard for first class mail was two-to-three days locally and four days nationally. In 2015, the Postal Service decided to relax the standard. In 2020, they again relaxed the standards and extended the standard to three-to-four days. Each drop in the standard was met with an equally abysmal lower percentage of first-class mail which met these new lower standards. So, they have gone to creating such a low standard that they will then be able to say they achieved their very low standard. By widening out first-class mail delivery to four- and five-day delivery in some cases, USPS is looking to cut costs and provide a more consistent level of service — a metric USPS management believes its customers value more than overall speed. Consistently slow is success to the PMG. Instead of trying to stop the bleeding from the drop in first-class mail volume, the new PMG has decided to cut our nose off, to spite our face. For more details about DeJoy's 10-year plan, EVP Brian Litteken has an in-depth article in this month's issue of the MCC.

The problem now appears to be the massive consolidation of distribution centers. Whereas in the past, carriers would make up for the slow service and deliver all the mail given to them each morning. Now, the Postal Service cannot even get the mail to us. It sits in some plant. It is no wonder that our members receive their MCC up to three months late. We have less caseable mail than ever and more technology than ever. Yet, we get less mail at our case each morning. Carriers used to start as early as 5:30 a.m. Now, many don't start until 8 a.m. I guess it's the new less, and later post office now. The Postal Service has finally even thrown in the



towel on their flats sequencing system (FSS) machines. This was the equivalent of DPS for flats. It was never implemented in the St. Louis installation, but it was in Kansas City. How much did this boondoggle cost us?

In DeJoy’s plan, the idea is to move away from what they refer to as, unreliable and expensive plane transport, and towards more reliable and cheaper ground transport. Coincidentally, DeJoy still has financial ties with XPO logistics firm which so happens to have a large fleet of trucks for the transport of such mail. It wouldn’t be the first time a president made a political appointment which turned out to be a financial bonanza for them. This is particularly egregious because, as the former president did, he was asked to but did not divest himself completely from the business before assuming the position. When the PMG was questioned about the length of his stay considering the rising number of people asking for his resignation, he remarked that he wasn’t going anywhere and to, “Get used to me.” Ugh!

STATE CONVENTION

COVID-19 caused the cancellation of the state convention for June this year, but the Missouri State Association was able to reschedule it for the weekend of September 25-26. It will be held at Margaritaville Lake Resort in Lake of the Ozarks, formerly known as Tan-Tar-A. State President Kevin Holmes relayed to me that there will not be a mandate at the hotel that people be vaccinated, but Region 5 Business Agent Mike Birkett strongly urges that everyone in attendance get vaccinated. Since we already missed one state convention last year, we will have a lot of business to cover in September. Among other things, they will cover training, by-law changes, and elections. All delegates will be notified concerning their paid eligibility.

MEETING ATTENDANCE

We have been holding our general and stewards meetings in-person for most of the COVID-19 pandemic while abiding by all the CDC and St. Louis City COVID-19 guidelines. Retirees Chairman Tom Schulte decided to resume in-person retirees meetings in June. There was a great turnout with over 30 retirees in attendance. As was expected, attendance at both our steward meetings and general meetings have taken a downturn during the pandemic. We are hoping that with the break in the pandemic that attendance will return to normal. The drop in attendance is reflected in the increased number of calls we receive at the Union Hall. Information we ordinarily convey to our membership at our monthly meetings is falling on fewer ears. It is astonishing how many times we cover an issue at a stewards meeting and, because we have fewer in

attendance each month, we find ourselves answering questions to topics we just had training on. Shout out to North County carriers who attended the general meeting in June in force. It was great to see a station bring carriers to a meeting.

Until next month, do your job safely and accurately. Show up to your union meeting. You might learn something. We don’t write the rules; we just have to play the game. Sláinte.

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**MOVED OR MOVING?
KEEP US INFORMED**
To all members of Branch 343.
Please keep us informed of your current address. Address correction services are expensive and cost the branch money that can be better spent. Failure to have an updated mailing list could also result in delayed communication to you and if you are a shop steward, a delay in getting paid. Don’t assume that the Postal Service keeps the Union Hall advised of your address change, they don’t.
You can call the Letter Carrier’s Union Hall at 314-241-4297 or mail us your new address at:
Letter Carrier’s Hall
1600 S. Broadway
St. Louis, MO 63104

 **Mark Your Calendar**
Don't sit on the sidelines...Get involved!

July 8	Regular Branch Meeting
Aug 4	Retirees Meeting
Aug 5	Shop Stewards Meeting
Aug 12	Regular Branch Meeting
Sept 1	Retirees Picnic, Creve Coeur Park (see ad)
Sept 25 & 26	Missouri State Convention, Margaritaville, Lake of the Ozarks

EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT ... BY BRIAN LITTEKEN



DELIVERING FOR AMERICA POSTMASTER DEJOY'S 10 YEAR PLAN

FIGURE 1: Total Plan Benefit



On March 23, a 10-year plan to achieve financial sustainability and service excellence for the USPS was released. The plan includes four components to achieve financial sustainability and service excellence.

1. Legislative and administrative action is required to address unwarranted retiree health benefit and pension funding obligations, which includes redefining retiree health benefit obligations and appropriate accounting for Civil Service Retirement System funding.
2. Postal Regulatory Commission approval of pricing flexibility for USPS market-dominant products and aligning prices to the marketplace for competitive products.
3. The cost of mail processing, transportation, retail, delivery will be reduced.
4. Revenue will be increased with package growth, new competitive products and pricing changes.

FERS HEALTH BENEFITS – MEDICARE INTEGRATION & ELIMINATE PRE-FUNDING

In this article, the legislative action that is required will be discussed. The Postal Accountability and Enhancement Act (PAEA) of 2006 required the USPS to pre-fund retiree health benefits through payments to the Postal Service Retiree Health Benefits Fund (PSRHBF). Currently, 6.4 cents of every revenue dollar the USPS earns is expensed on retiree health care. The 10-year plan forecasts a net loss of approximately \$160 billion over the next 10 years if the projected retirement-related obligations are still required.

The USPS and its employees pay taxes into Medicare – \$35 billion in combined payments since 1983. The USPS is the second largest contributor into Medicare, but unlike virtually any other entity that offers and funds retiree health benefits, the USPS is not permitted to make Medicare enrollment mandatory for retirees. About 24% of postal retirees do not enroll in Medicare Part B, placing the full onus of their retirement health funding on the FEHBP.

The USPS requests that Congress require the integration of Medicare with Postal Service specific health plans and eliminate pre-funding obligations imposed by PAEA. Health plans specific to the Postal Service would be established within FEHBP. These plans would be fully integrated with Medicare. Postal employees would then have Medicare as their primary payer and FEHBP as their secondary payer. Only current employees would be required to enroll in Medicare Parts A and B when they retire and become eligible for Medicare. Medicare Part D would be implemented through an Employer Group Waiver Plan so that retirees and employees can benefit from subsidies for prescription drug benefits. The existing requirement to pre-fund retiree health benefits would be eliminated. This pre-funding requirement is not imposed on other private or public entities. OPM would be directed to calculate retiree health benefit liability only for those employees and retirees currently eligible to receive retiree health benefits.

CSRS HEALTH BENEFITS – TREASURY PAY THEIR PORTION

The administrative action required will now be discussed. In 1971, when the Post Office Department was converted into the Postal Service, it was required to keep most of the workforce enrolled in the Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS). OPM apportions the cost of CSRS benefits for employees that worked at both the Post Office Department and the Postal Service between the Treasury and the Postal Service. Since 1971, every time those employees received a pay increase, their CSRS pension benefits grew in value. However, Treasury pays only those benefits which were accrued up to 1971. The USPS pays for all increases in pension benefits resulting from pay increases made after 1971.

A 2003 law, as well as the PAEA, required the use of generally accepted actuarial practices and principles in determining the CSRS liability of the Postal Service, including the use of dynamic assumptions to account for employee's anticipated future pay increases. However, OPM has applied these assumptions only to the Postal Service share of the costs. The USPS/CSRS funding obligations increase each year, while the federal government's obligations remain unchanged.

The USPS will request that the administration correct the long-standing, unfair allocation of CSRS benefits for legacy post office department employees. The administration should require OPM to use a simple and fair method to apportion government contributions to CSRS annuities.

VICE PRESIDENT FINANCIAL SECRETARY

... BY MARVIN BOOKER



ARE WE THERE YET?

Of the many calls we receive daily, the most asked question is, “I just returned from my second furlough, am I a PTF?”

Pursuant to the Memorandum of Understanding Re: City Carrier Assistants - Conversion to Career Status, CCAs who have not been converted to career status by the time they reach 24 months of relative standing in their installation will now be converted to PTF career status in their installation rather than continuing as non-career employees. This automatic conversion after reaching 24 months of relative standing will take place in every size office throughout the country, providing full fringe benefits and peace of mind to non-career carriers.

Those CCAs who have reached 24 months of relative standing without being converted to career will be converted to PTFs and placed in a new PTF Step AA in Table 2. The Step AA hourly rate will equal the full-time Step A hourly rate, and PTFs in Step AA will receive proportional COLAs as described above. 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 they will retain their time credit toward the next step.

CCAs who reached 24 months of relative standing on or before April 9 will be converted to PTF career status effective May 8. CCAs who reach 24 months relative standing on or after April 10 will be converted to PTF career status by the first day of the third full pay period that follows the date the CCA achieves 24 months of relative standing. CCAs converted pursuant to this provision will not have to serve a probationary period, since they already will have successfully completed one 360-day term as a CCA.

Once converted to PTF, a promotion to full-time regular (FTR) will subsequently follow as residual full vacancy(s) become available. After being promoted to full-time regular (FTR) you may encounter problems when attempting to bid on assignments through the automated system. The system may indicate you are not eligible. **Bid anyway** or submit a manual bid card. If you have been promoted to full-time regular (FTR) prior to the close of the bid cycle your bid will be considered.

KNOW THE WARNING SIGNS FOR HEAT AND SUN

We work outdoors most of the day, and in the summer, that means exposure to the dangers of heat and sun. Now that summer is in full swing, letter carriers should take responsibility for their own outdoor safety by taking proactive steps to avoid danger, knowing the signs of trouble and being prepared for it. “Don’t wait until it is too late to protect yourself from heat and sun.” “Do what you need to do to work outside in summer.”

Even the most seasoned carrier must be wary of extreme heat. Being in top

physical shape isn’t enough — it’s knowing how to prevent heat stress that keeps a letter carrier safe on a hot day. That starts with hydration. Water is essential to the body’s natural cooling process, so drinking copious amounts of H₂O, starting before you leave the office, is the first step in heat safety. Continue to drink while on your route and even afterward to replace vital body fluids. Be sure to dress appropriately for the weather. On warm days, wear light-colored, loose-fitting, breathable clothing. The light colors reflect more sun and the loose fit and breathable fabric let heat escape the skin faster.

Find shade wherever you can. Carriers who work in hot, sunny climates often make a mental shade map of their routes to avoid prolonged exposure to the hot sun, especially in the middle of the day. Know the signs of heat stress. Even if you take all the precautions, your body may succumb to severe heat stress. You should be prepared to recognize the signs of the two kinds of severe heat stress:

- Heat exhaustion symptoms include headache, nausea, dizziness, weakness, thirst and heavy sweating. It can turn into heat stroke quickly if immediate action is not taken.
- Heat stroke is the most serious heat-related illness and requires immediate medical attention. Symptoms include confusion, fainting, seizures, very high body temperature, and hot, dry skin or profuse sweating. The visible signs of heat stroke are red, hot, dry skin, or excessive sweating, seizures and fainting.

Don’t hesitate to take action if you see the signs of heat stress in yourself or a colleague. Find shade or a cool place indoors, drink water, and notify your supervisor or call 911 if necessary.

FOOD DRIVE UPDATE

After much consideration, NALC decided to cancel the Letter Carriers’ Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive for 2021 because of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. We look forward to having a traditional Letter Carriers’ Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive the second Saturday in May 2022, just as we have done for nearly three decades. The NALC considered trying to hold the door-to-door food drive this fall, but after consultation with the Postal Service, decided instead to aim for next May.

For now, the focus turns to the NALC’s ongoing Stamp Out Hunger Donor Drive. Created in June 2020, this effort helps to fulfill the nutritional needs of the 1 in 8 Americans who face food insecurity in communities across the country — including millions of children, elderly and military veterans. By visiting nalc.org/food, donors can find a food bank in their area to support with an online donation. The site links directly to donation pages on each food bank’s website.

Until next time be safe and be professional.

RECORDING SECRETARY ... BY TINA HUNT



Hello from the recording secretary's desk! I need to ask a favor of all the regular letter carriers out there. Would you be so kind as to show the CCA carriers in your office this publication? Then, show them the Postal Record. So many CCAs don't know that these two items even exist. Let them know of the amount of information provided to help them succeed in their careers. So many of their questions can be answered. If they are not receiving either publication at their home, ask them to call the hall (314-241-4297) to update their address. If they don't want to read a hard copy, let them know both are available online. The Mound City Carrier at www.Branch343.org and the Postal Record at www.NALC.org. Thank you!

FMLA

Lately, a rash of discipline has been coming from management regarding attendance. Letter carriers are required to be regular in attendance, but there will always be circumstances where absences can not be avoided.

If possible, sick leave should be scheduled in advance using PS Form 3971. By scheduling in advance, you avoid the "unscheduled absence" that management can use in discipline. For absences of more than three days, documentation from a health care provider may be required by your supervisor. This documentation does not necessarily excuse you from your absence and if not scheduled, management may still use those days against you as unscheduled absences.

If you have a situation which may require you to miss work more frequently, consider getting you or your family members condition covered with FMLA protection.

The Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 (FMLA) is a United States federal law requiring larger employers to provide employees job-protected unpaid leave due to a serious health condition that makes the employee unable to perform his or her job, or to care for a new child or sick family member.

Absences Covered: For an absence to be covered by the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA), the employee must have been employed by the Postal Service for an accumulated total of 12 months [in the previous seven years] and must have worked a

minimum of 1,250 hours during the 12-month period before the start of the leave.

Absences that qualify as FMLA leave may be charged as annual leave, sick leave, continuation of pay, leave without pay, or a combination of these. Leave is charged consistent with current leave policies and applicable collective bargaining agreements.

Eligible employees must be allowed a total of up to 12 workweeks of leave within a Postal Service leave year for the following reasons:

- For incapacity due to pregnancy, prenatal medical care or childbirth.
- To care for the employee's child after birth, or placement for adoption or foster care.
- To care for the employee's spouse, son, daughter, or a parent who has a serious health condition.
- For a serious health condition that makes the employee unable to perform the functions of his or her position.
- For qualifying exigencies arising out of a covered family member's active duty or call to active duty in the National Guard or Reserves in support of a contingency operation.

Approval:

Leave must be requested on a PS Form 3971, Request for or Notification of Absence, together with documentation supporting the request, at least 30 days before the absence if the need for the leave is foreseeable. If 30 days' notice is not practicable, or where the need for leave is not foreseeable, the employee must give notice as soon as practicable. Ordinarily, this means that notification of the absence should be relayed to the employee's supervisor before the start of his or her tour.

The Postal Service will mail forms to you when you request FMLA leave. These forms are lengthy. The NALC has one-page forms available for each qualifying condition. These forms can be found on the NALC.org website.

If you do receive discipline for "Failure to Maintain a Regular Work Schedule," please see your steward immediately.

Stay safe out there! Drink plenty of water and wear your sunscreen. See you on Thursday.

HEALTH BENEFITS PLAN/OWCP ... BARRY LINAN



July 2021 greetings to all of the brothers and sisters of NALC Branch 343. As I mentioned last month, our warm and humid Saint Louis weather requires you to take time to hydrate and for necessary breaks while delivering the mail. I have already heard of a case of heat stroke as of this writing and I guarantee there will be more. Take care of yourself and stay safe out there!

HBP NEWS

If you are a newly converted part-time flexible or full-time regular, you have 60 days to make an election for a health benefits plan. Please consider the only union owned, union administered, and all union employee plan, our own NALC HBP! If you need information on all of the benefits available thru the NALC HBP, you can search the website at www.nalchbp.org or call the plan at 888-636-6252. I am also available to assist our members locally on Tuesdays and Wednesdays at the Branch 343 office 314-241-4223.

Our High Option Plan offers the most comprehensive benefit coverage and provides numerous services at no additional cost to you. For example, a routine physical exam is at no fee, one annually for age 22 or older, if provided by a PPO (preferred provider organization) physician. The NALC HBP PPO is the Cigna Organization and they have thousands of physicians nationwide. You can search to see if your physician is a Cigna PPO provider on the NALC HBP website or you can also search for a new PPO provider by speciality.

Another example is that by having LabCorp or Quest Diagnostics perform your covered lab services, there is no cost to you. You would ask your physician to schedule your blood panel testing at LabCorp or Quest, go get the testing done at one of their locations, and the lab results will then get sent directly to your physician. Both providers have multiple locations in the Saint Louis area and they can also be searched on the NALC HBP website.

OWCP CORNER

Heat exhaustion and/or heat stroke are compensable thru OWCP and are more common injuries

to letter carriers than you might think. Early summer heat and humidity may cause more injuries because your body has not yet adjusted itself to the stress. Risk factors for heat illness include: high temps, humidity, direct sun exposure, no breeze/wind, low liquid intake, physical labor, and no recent exposure to hot workplace. As you can see this list certainly applies to us and the only one we can control is "liquid intake." OSHA states "at least 1 pint of water per hour is needed." OSHA also states to take "frequent rest periods with water breaks in shaded or air-conditioned areas." Symptoms of **heat exhaustion** include: headache, dizziness, fainting, weakness, irritability or confusion, and nausea/vomiting. Notify management if you suffer from these symptoms, get to a cool place, and request medical treatment for an on-job-injury. The symptoms of **heat stroke** include: confusion, pass out/collapse, seizures, and stop sweating. If you're at this level, I suggest someone call 911.

You would file your on-job-injury claim for heat exhaustion by filing Form CA-1 — Report of Traumatic Injury with your supervisor. Request Form CA-16 — Authorization for Treatment for your physician of choice or ER/hospital. When you receive your initial medical treatment, make sure your treating physician completes the CA-16 attached page "Physicians Report." Note that for OWCP, a physician's signature is required. Physician assistant or nurse practitioner is not an acceptable signature and could result in your claim being denied. Keep copies of all pages of medical documentation and all OWCP forms for your records. Submit all documents to your supervisor and once you have a claim number, also to OWCP. If you're unable to fill out the CA-1 immediately, you can also access it on the dol.gov website and file electronically thru their ECOMP portal. If you need time off to recover, get your physician to list your diagnosis and the dates of disability from work. Form CA-17 – Duty Status Report can be used if you are returned to work, but with medical restrictions. As always, request your steward if you need assistance or call the hall if no steward is available.

NOTES FROM THE MANAGING EDITOR

... BY TOM SCHULTE



BIPARTISAN BILLS TO OVERHAUL U.S. POSTAL SERVICE ADVANCE

On May 11 Representative Carolyn Maloney, D-N.Y.-12, introduced the Postal Reform Act of 2021 in the U.S. House of Representatives. The bipartisan legislation encompasses an agreement made between House Committee on Oversight and Reform and the Senate Homeland Security and Government Affairs Committee. The respective bills are HR 3076 in the U.S. House and S 1720 in the U.S. Senate.

The near identical pieces of legislation address two of the National Association of Letter Carriers top priorities:

First is the repeal of the Postal Service pre-funding of future retiree health benefits, which was enacted through the Postal Accountability and Enhancement Act of 2006 and embracing the bipartisan USPS Fairness Act.

Second is reform of the Federal Employees Health Benefits (FEHB) to maximize participation in Medicare once active postal employees (as of January 1, 2023) retire and reach age 65. Annuitants as of January 1, 2023, will be given the choice of whether to remain in the existing FEHB system or participate in the postal version of the program that requires enrollment in Medicare Parts A and B. Retirees over the age of 65 who have chosen not to enroll in Medicare Part B will be given a one-time opportunity to do so with no late-enrollment penalty. Annuitants who elect to remain in the existing FEHB will not be required to enroll in Medicare. NALC also successfully lobbied to ensure exceptions to the requirement to enroll in Medicare for those covered under other insurance arrangements (such as Veterans Affairs) and for those who live in a place where there are not Medicare-participating providers.

HR 3076 and S 1720 also included language that requires the Postal Service to maintain an “integrated” network of both mail and packages six days a week. If this legislation becomes law, the USPS will be required to maintain mail delivery six days a week without the necessity to renew this provision yearly, which has been the case since 1983.

Additionally the bills require the Postal Service

to provide semiannual reports to Congress on the implementation of its 10-year strategic plan; provides for a public dashboard using nationwide delivery metrics to track delivery performance; directs the Postal Service to use the most efficient means to transport mail; mandates a Postal Regulatory Commission (PRC) review of competitive and non-competitive products and a nationwide study of processing efficiency of flats; and provides the PRC with independent budget authority through the Postal Fund.

Legislation to address the Postal Service’s dire finances has languished in Congress for years. But with enough Republican support to pass in the Senate, the announcement of the Postal Service Reform Act of 2021 is a welcome indication of bipartisan compromise in a divided Congress.

Senator Gary Peters, D-Mich., stated, “For decades, the Postal Service has struggled to overcome unfair and burdensome financial requirements that risk its ability to continue providing reliable service in the long run. This common-sense, bipartisan legislation would help put the Postal Service on a sustainable financial footing, ensure it is more transparent and accountable to the American people, and support hardworking postal workers who deliver rain or shine to communities all across the country.”

National Association of Letter Carriers President Fredric Rolando said, “The NALC has worked for years to educate members of Congress on the importance of having postal reform legislation that repeals the pre-funding mandate and coordinates the proper integration into Medicare for our members. We have significant work to do, but NALC’s influence and advocacy on these issues is the reason they were included in this vital legislation. Bipartisanship alone is not enough anymore. Resolution of issues and good government policy are clouded by political tension and the politicization of the Postal Service ... we must overcome all these obstacles to see postal reform legislation enacted into law.”

REGION 5 NBA REPORT ... BY MIKE BIRKETT



Attendance — Almost monthly we discuss the most pressing issues affecting branch officers and members here in Region 5. Based on our observations of the grievances that are filed and impressed at the Step B teams, and either settled at prearbitration meetings or at arbitration, training sessions are created and taught (online during the pandemic). Attendance discipline has been and continues to be a problem. This issue has been amplified by COVID-19 and related illnesses and childcare issues. Fortunately, Congress passed the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (now expired), which has been followed by EFEL (Emergency Federal Employee Leave), established under the American Rescue Plan Act and became effective March 11. EFEL provides up to 600 hours to employees who are unable to work because of qualifying COVID-19 reasons. Many years ago, the FMLA (Family Medical Leave Act) became a law which protects employees from being disciplined for medical conditions which they or their immediate family members have. Too often, letter carriers don't take advantage of these laws and complete the paperwork that would protect their jobs until it's too late.

Let me be blunt. Arbitrators across the nation, in private industry and within the Postal Service umbrella, continuously rule that, "Employers have the right to expect that employees be regular in attendance."

Safety — While it may sound like a broken record, everyone needs to once again be reminded of heat related illnesses. Within Region 5 we have already had a few instances where carriers have become ill and had to seek medical treatment. New carriers and carriers returning from extended absences are especially susceptible. Remember to stay hydrated, find shade where possible, and if need be, find somewhere to cool off if you are overheated.

A recent Postal Service press release states that over 5,800 carriers were bitten by dogs again last year (5,803 in 2019). All dog bites are painful, many are disfiguring. Please don't put yourself at risk just in order to deliver someone's mail.

State Conventions — It looks like we are on schedule to have all of our state conventions in person this fall. Of course, this is predicated upon the coronavirus continuing to wane. I know that all of us in the Region 5 office are looking forward to seeing everyone in person at these events. I urge everyone who will be attending to

get vaccinated and follow any safety protocols which may be put in place by the hotels or state associations.

Legislation — The Senate version of HR 3076, a bipartisan bill that aims to provide financial and operational stability to the Postal Service, was introduced by the House Committee on Oversight and Reform Chairwoman Carolyn Maloney, D-N.Y., and Ranking Member James Comer, R-Ky., on May 11. It was dropped last month, as **S 1720**. Again, please reach out to your representative for support of HR 3076 and senators to support S 1720. Here are the steps to send them an email:

1. Go to *NALC.org* on your computer.
2. The third tab over is the Government Affairs Tab. Hover your cursor over it to access the drop-down menu. The second tab down is the "Legislative Activities." Hover your cursor over that and scroll over to "Legislative Action Center." Click on the "Legislative Action Center."
3. Once there, go to the right hand side of the page at the bottom and Login: Login Below with: First Name + Last Name + ZIP + Last 4 digits of SSN.
4. Once you enter the above information, click on the "GO" button.
5. The middle box in the screen will be the "Take Action" box. Click the "read more" button.
6. You will then see a take action page that says, "Pass the Postal Service Reform Act of 2021." Click the "take action" tab underneath it.
7. A page with your representatives in the House and Senate will appear. There will also be a form letter with your name as a signature.
8. Scroll down to the bottom and select a topic (if there is no postal topic, you can pick any other that you think is situated to you). You can enter your phone number, but it is optional. The click the "GO" tab once more.
9. You will then be taken to a page that states your messages have been delivered to your representatives. After this, you can go to the right side of the page and log out.

The whole process takes a couple minutes. This is similar to what we did with the take action network when we were trying to get stimulus funding for the post office. **Thank you for taking time to help us get this important postal reform passed!**

RETIREE REPORT

... BY GUEST RECORDING SECRETARY NICKI L. PRADO



MINUTES FROM THE JUNE 2 MEETING

Chairman Tom Schulte called the meeting to order at 12:45 p.m. Chaplain Gus Frank led us in prayer and the Pledge of Allegiance. Tom thanked the family of the late Ted Hemen, who provided the funds to enjoy a lunch from Hodak's in Ted's memory. Tom also thanked Geno Iberg for picking up and serving the luncheon. He also welcomed the retirees back after a long 15-month absence due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Volunteers: Brother Rich Rhyner volunteered to provide lunch for the July meeting. Mike Weir volunteered himself and surprised Clif Nelson to provide lunch for August.

Minutes from the previous meeting: The minutes from the March 4, 2020, meeting were read by guest Recording Secretary Nicki L. Prado.

Treasurers Report: Treasurer Clif Nelson reported a balance after expenses of \$1,725.85. Clif also shared his experience with prostate cancer last year and expressed the importance of early detection and yearly prostate exams.

Branch 343 Presidents Report: Tom introduced the newly elected officers of Branch 343 to the retirees and thanked them for their participation in last year's officer's elections. Tom commented that the largest voting block came from the retirees.

President McLaughlin reported on the new national agreement that was recently ratified. The branch is engaged with CCA orientation for all new hires. Ken Young's recent Buddy Bass Tournament earned \$7,000 for MDA. Last year's MDA Trivia Nite and MDA Golf Tournament netted over \$10,000.

John reported that the Urban League of St. Louis and the Missouri National Guard spent two days at the Union Hall in March distributing over 600 COVID-19 shots to letter carriers and retirees. John reported that Postmaster Louis DeJoy is solely responsible for the mail delays throughout the country.

Legislative Report: Brother Weir spoke about the failed January 6 insurrection on the Capitol and the Republican Senate that refuses to investigate the attack. Mike also spoke about the numerous voter suppression laws being passed in Republican held states and the blatant disregard for minority rights.

PMG DeJoy announced an increase in the price of stamps from 55¢ to 58¢ beginning in August, while at the same time cutting

service and delaying the mail. He's trying to get rid of the Postal Service. President Biden nominated three people who are now being vetted as new members of the USPS board of governors. It is hoped that once confirmed they can vote out PMG DeJoy.

Please follow Senate Bill 1720 and House Bill 3076 that would finally eliminate the crippling prefunding of future retiree health benefits.

Chairman's Report: Tom thanked all the members of the retirees who served in the Armed Forces and especially all the veterans who made the ultimate sacrifice in the service of this country.

Tom offered congratulations to former Br. 343 Vice President Ken Meyer and his lovely wife, Judy, celebrating 50-years of wedded bliss.

Because of the COVID-19 shutdown we were unable to recognize our gold card and 60-year honorees last year. Tom asked President McLaughlin to present several commendations to those who were present: Tom Grafton, 50-year gold card; Rich Rhyner, 50-year gold card, Clif Nelson 60-year pin; and a 70-year plaque presented to Jim Kluempers from Nicki Prado and Retiree Chairman Tom Schulte. Finally, John presented an award to Gus Frank, from the officers of the branch in recognition of Gus's late wife and long-time Branch 343 secretary, Janet, for her long and faithful service to this union.

Unfinished Business: Tom announced that we are making preparations to hold our annual Ole Timers Day on either October 23 or 30. Awardees from 2020 and 2021 will be recognized. Also plans are being made to hold our annual retiree picnic on September 1 at Creve Coeur Park.

Deceased Member: Tom asked the retirees to remain seated as he read the names of the 44 members who died since we last met in March of 2020. A moment of silence was observed.

50/50 won by Ken McCarthy who donated it back to the retirees.

Closing Prayer: Offer by Gus Frank who thanked everyone for their kind expressions to him and his family on the passing of his wife, Janet.

Meeting Adjourned: 1:35pm

RETIREES HONORED

Because of the suspension of meetings and the postponement of last year's Ole Timers Day, five retirees were recognized and presented with their belated awards at the June 2 retiree meeting from Branch 343 President John McLaughlin.



Tom Grafton – Gold Card



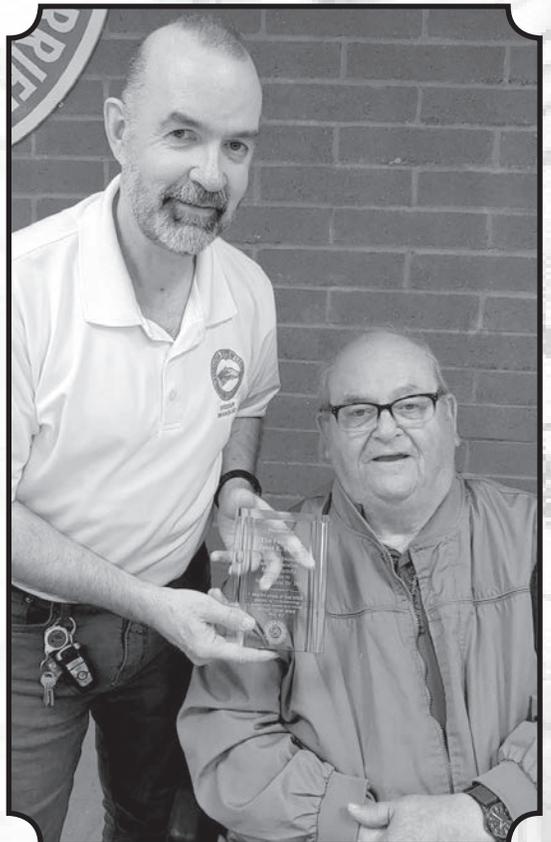
Richard Rhyner – Gold Card



Jim Kluempers – 70-Year Plaque



Clif Nelson – 60-Year Pin



Gus Frank accepting an award of appreciation from Branch 343 for his late wife, Janet Frank, former Br. 343 secretary

ATTENTION RETIREES

RETIREE PICNIC AT CREVE COEUR MEMORIAL PARK

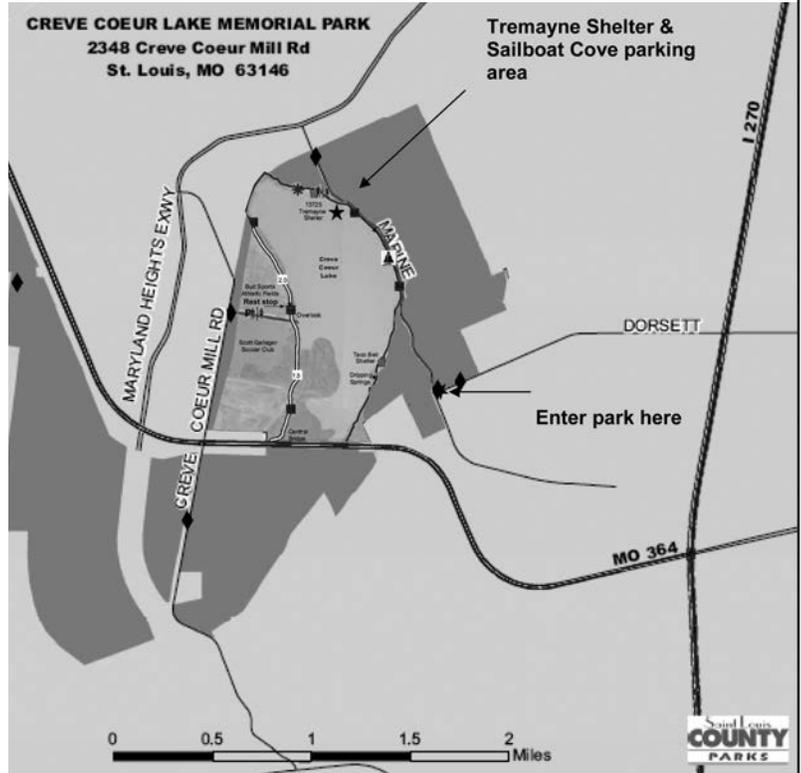
DATE: WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 1

TIME: 11 a.m. until 4 p.m.

LOCATION: Creve Coeur Memorial Park
2348 Creve Coeur Mill Rd.
Maryland Heights, MO 63043

Tremayne Shelter off of Maryland Heights Expressway (Hwy. 141) and Marine Dr.

or take Hwy 270. Exit at Dorsett Rd., Take Dorsett Rd. to Marine Rd., Bottom of Marine past the lake on the left.



Food and beverages will be provided

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FENTON	STE. GENEVIEVE
FERGUSON	TOWN & COUNTRY
GRAVOIS	UNION
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Exposure to heat can cause illness and death. The most serious heat illness is heat stroke. Other heat illnesses, such as heat exhaustion, heat cramps and heat rash, should also be avoided.

There are precautions your employer should take any time temperatures are high and the job involves physical work.

Risk Factors for Heat Illness

- High temperature and humidity, direct sun exposure, no breeze or wind
- Low liquid intake
- Heavy physical labor
- Waterproof clothing
- No recent exposure to hot workplaces

Symptoms of Heat Exhaustion

- Headache, dizziness, or fainting
- Weakness and wet skin
- Irritability or confusion
- Thirst, nausea, or vomiting

Symptoms of Heat Stroke

- May be confused, unable to think clearly, pass out, collapse, or have seizures (fits)
- May stop sweating

To Prevent Heat Illness, Your Employer Should

- Establish a complete heat illness prevention program.
- Provide training about the hazards leading to heat stress and how to prevent them.
- Provide a lot of cool water to workers close to the work area. At least one pint of water per hour is needed.



For more information:
OSHA® Occupational Safety and Health Administration
 www.osha.gov (800) 321-OSHA (6742)

OSHA 3154-06R 2014

OSHA® QUICK CARD™

- Modify work schedules and arrange frequent rest periods with water breaks in shaded or air-conditioned areas.
- Gradually increase workloads and allow more frequent breaks for workers new to the heat or those that have been away from work to adapt to working in the heat (acclimatization).
- Routinely check workers who are at risk of heat stress due to protective clothing and high temperature.
- Consider protective clothing that provides cooling.



How You Can Protect Yourself and Others

- Know signs/symptoms of heat illnesses; monitor yourself; use a buddy system.
- Block out direct sun and other heat sources.
- Drink plenty of fluids. Drink often and BEFORE you are thirsty. Drink water every 15 minutes.
- Avoid beverages containing alcohol or caffeine.
- Wear lightweight, light colored, loose-fitting clothes.



What to Do When a Worker is Ill from the Heat

- Call a supervisor for help. If the supervisor is not available, call 911.
- Have someone stay with the worker until help arrives.
- Move the worker to a cooler/shaded area.
- Remove outer clothing.
- Fan and mist the worker with water; apply ice (ice bags or ice towels).
- Provide cool drinking water, if able to drink.

IF THE WORKER IS NOT ALERT or seems confused, this may be a heat stroke. CALL 911 IMMEDIATELY and apply ice as soon as possible.

If you have any questions or concerns, call OSHA at 1-800-321-OSHA (6742).



For more information:
OSHA® Occupational Safety and Health Administration
 www.osha.gov (800) 321-OSHA (6742)

WEST COUNTY ... *By PAM STEPNEY*

Greetings sisters and brothers of Branch 343. How's everybody doing? Fine, I hope. Safety first, it's flame throwing hot outside and we must take care of ourselves. Take a minute for safety by drinking plenty of liquids, wear loose fitting clothing, eat fruits and vegetables, close the vehicle door, fasten your seatbelt, and proceed to your route to deliver safely. Remember you are in the postal vehicle, not your own, so drive like you are on the job with your cell phone and headphones in your bag and pay attention to traffic.

We must look out for each other by putting all of our empty equipment in its proper place, gassing up vehicles when they are empty and cleaning out the vehicle when you are done with it. Our new employees are watching everything we do, so be an example showing the right way each time.

If the supervisor gives you an instruction and you don't agree, follow the directions and grieve it later. If you are given an instruction and you feel it is unsafe, tell them you cannot follow the instruction. There are a lot of new CCAs supervising and they don't know their jobs yet, so be professional and grieve everything later if you have a problem. The Postal Service needs to give more training to every new supervisor. They should require that each person going into management works at least five years or more in the letter carrier craft. Too many problems are going on in the Postal Service and most of them

are dealing with new carriers and supervisors. Training is the only thing to cure the problems we face daily on the workroom floor.

CCAs are leaving at an alarming rate. The pressure of working every day in your own station, getting done and being sent to work two to four hours in another station is overwhelming for all who have families, as well as single moms and dads going home to their families. Regular carriers on the overtime list have worked six days per week since March 2019 and are still doing so right now. Stress and tension are high every day. Management gets two days off per week. Clerks and carriers are working overtime every day up to 12 hours, and it is exhausting. Now that everything has opened back up from the COVID-19 restrictions, hopefully, we can get the employees currently out due to taking care of their kids and elderly family members, back to work. It would be nice to get two days off in one week, instead of one and come right back the next day.

Moving on. If the postmaster or supervisors are on the workroom floor talking about any employee with other employees, report it. Too many times they enlist other employees to put down struggling employees, in order to turn them against one another or maybe the union stewards. If you have a question for the steward and you feel as though you are not getting the answer, feel free to call the Union Hall at 314-241-4297 EXT: 0. Melvin McNair and Lawrence McHaynes would always say, "Call

the hall if you have a question about anything." Stop listening to the lies management is telling you and stand with your sisters and brothers. Stop trying to get brownie points with management in order for you to get what you want. We, as letter carriers, are under one umbrella and the same contract.

Please lift retired letter carrier Dewayne McCabe up in prayer. He's home recovering from heart surgery. Also please lift retired letter carrier Charlie Prather up in prayer.

Make plans now to come out to march in the Labor Day parade on Monday, September 5, with your union and family members.

Thank you to Sue Roque and supervisor Allison Holbrook who still pay for donuts for the whole office and thank you to Rance Hope, Claude Moore, Priscilla Bailey, Gwen Moore, Lakesha Hayes, Phil Winkler, Kelvin Ward, and Dan T for buying watermelons for Watermelon Wednesday's.

A special shout out to Priscilla Bailey, Gwen Moore, Kim Rudd, Kelvin Ward, myself, and everyone who helped make Kurt Mullins retirement party a big success and a special thanks to his family (wife Paula, daughters Gracie and Claire), and his good friend, retired letter carrier Mike McCoy.

Remember to do your best, leave the rest, don't stress, get your voting ID today, God bless, and thank you for coming.



SOUTH COUNTY ... BY MATT GLEIFORST



Hello from South County. As children we got to see our parents go to work each day not really knowing exactly what their day entailed. When they got home from work it was hard to know what they had been through all day. I remember knowing that my dad was starting his day at the post office by our house and that he delivered mail several blocks away, but that was all I really knew of his job. I also knew that he wore a uniform that several of his friends also wore. To be honest, I had no interest in ever putting on that uniform. I didn't really know what I wanted to be when I grew up. It changed from day to day it seemed, but I, for some reason, never really thought about following in my father's footsteps.

It wasn't until I was 24 years old and working at a warehouse where I made little money when my dad called me. He told me that the post office was hiring career positions and that if I had any interest, now was the time to apply. This turned out to be the best advice my father has ever given me. I applied, took the test, got interviewed, and received the job offer. Without hesitation I put my notice in at that warehouse and began my career as a mail carrier, just as my father had done a few decades prior. It did not take long for me to realize why he spent his whole career as a union letter carrier. I think we would both say this was one of the best decisions that either one of us had ever made.

CARRIER SPOTLIGHT

One great thing about working at the post office is that there are many people who work here that have a similar story. This month I got to interview someone just like me. Most of you probably know or have met Tiffany Hager at some point. She is another terrific carrier who takes good care of her customers and knows the value of this career. She is also a legacy at the post office. Both her father Drew Schuld, and Grandfather Jack Schuld, worked at and retired from the United States Postal Service. Drew even worked with my father Brad Gleiforst at Coyle for a time.

Tiffany began her career in September of 1998, worked at Southwest, and came to South County roughly 10 years ago. Her favorite part of the job is getting to know the people on her route and talking with them each day. Her favorite memory is when she met her best friend, Ramona Droege, when they were both at Southwest before they both came to South County. She genuinely cares about the people on her route and said that her best interaction with a customer was when she returned a lost dog to its owner and the owner was just so grateful to her.

Outside of work Tiffany enjoys spending time outdoors cooking and relaxing in her swimming pool. She also enjoys spending time with her daughter, Brittney, and going to different sporting events and restaurants with Brittney and Ramona. Tiffany also has great advice for new carriers. She says to frequently ask fellow carriers questions when they are not sure and to stay organized when delivering your routes. She also wants to implore any new carriers to join the union if they have not already done so.

These are definitely wise words from a wise woman. From now on when wearing your uniforms in front of your kids, imagine them in that same uniform. Who knows, they might just follow in your footsteps just as Tiffany and I followed in our dads' footsteps. Until next time keep your head held high and keep smiling.

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FENTON ... BY STEVEN POWERS

HAPPY 4TH OF JULY!

I do hope that everyone will take a moment to remember the importance of the 4th of July this year. Our democracy has recently been put to the test and I think it is more important than ever to reassess our values, examine what we all stand for, and what type of future we want for ourselves and our children. No matter the discord that may exist between us; Democrat or Republican — there is no weakness in compromise. We are all Americans, and we absolutely can find common ground to move forward. Too many have fought and died for this great nation to just toss our values away. Let us all take a moment to remember what this holiday is about — it is to celebrate our independence from King George III of Britain to become a united, free, and an independent nation.

John Adams (our second president and first vice president) wrote the following to his wife, Abigail Adams, in 1776:

“You will think me transported with enthusiasm, but I am not. — I am aware of the toil and blood and treasure that it will cost us to maintain this Declaration and support and defend these States. — Yet through all the gloom I can see the rays of ravishing light and glory. I can see that the end is more than worth all the means and that posterity will triumph in that day’s transaction, even although we should rue it, which I trust in God we shall not.”

Let us all remember that this

great nation was formed through sacrifice, blood, tears, and hard work. We have defeated impossible odds and formed the greatest country to ever exist. We should take enormous pride in calling ourselves Americans and remember that we are all Americans, no matter our political party. Our differences and ability to compromise and coexist is just one of the many reasons which make this country so strong and great. Let us remember the fallen, let us celebrate our independence, and let us remember that united we are stronger. Happy 4th of July everyone and God bless the United States of America!

FENTON LOCAL CONTRACT

I wanted to go over some of the changes in our new local contract in Fenton. We were incredibly pleased that the local contract was agreed upon instead of having to go to arbitration like we did our last contract. There were only a couple of major changes this time with a few small minor ones.

The first major change was with incidental leave. We replaced the 14 and 5 day requests for less than a week and changed it to 60 and 5 days. It also “will” be approved unless we exceed the 13% allowed off for that day. There was no change to the “a week or more” request, that can still be done at any point in the year if there is an open spot on the vacation schedule.

The second major change was

the way we select vacation. It seems every year we have had issues with the old methods. The problem is that our station has grown so much and added too many carriers to use the old methods accurately and effectively. We have now adopted the procedure in which St. Louis chooses vacations. There will be two rounds, and everyone will get a bid card for each round to be turned on the 26th of November and December. It will be different, but both parties agree that it will be more efficient for our station. That was just a brief run-down of the major changes, but remember, there were some more minor changes as well, so please take it upon yourself to go into the breakroom and read over our new local contract for a full breakdown of every change. Until next month, be safe and stay hydrated!



Former Branch 343 Vice President Ken Meyer and his beautiful wife Judy celebrated their 50-Wedding Anniversary on June 12 with family and friends

PROUD TO SERVE "LAMARK BROWN DAY"

... BY TOM SCHULTE

It's not every day that we have the opportunity to report a goodwill story about the Postal Service, but the following article bears witness to the fact that if you indeed dedicate yourself to doing a good job, people do notice.

The day started typically for Clayton letter carrier LaMark Brown until he reached the International Schoolhouse for Spanish Immersion on his route. The school is designed to help children become bilingual and foster cultural awareness in their early childhood years.

As LaMark pulled up to the parking lot he could see the kids and teachers awaiting his arrival. As he walked up to deliver the mail he was greeted with cheers and applause from all six grades as well as the teachers and administration. He was told by the director of academics that this was officially "LaMark Brown Day."

"I was overwhelmed and choking back tears, said LaMark, they clapped for 10 minutes. When they stopped, I was directed to start at the front of the first-grade class and make my way through to the six-grade class. Each child presented me with a letter or postcard thanking me for my service. Each of the children were dressed in USPS paper hat and each carried a mailbag. It was awesome."

When LaMark reached the end of the line the school children serenaded him with a song in Spanish. He was then taken inside the school and presented with two baskets filled with snacks and treats from each teacher's home country. There were items from Spain, Peru, Columbia, Puerto Rico, Mexico and Venezuela. As he thanked them, the teachers and children shouted, "We love you, LaMark."

"As you might expect, I was an emotional mess by the end of the event. It was one of the three best days of my life and definitely the best postal day I've ever had. He added, if I had a message for our less tenured carriers, it would be: We deliver people their mail. We don't just deliver mail to mailboxes. Your route and each mail day is what you make of it. Creating relationships with your customers doesn't take much. Mother Theresa said, 'Do small things with great love.' We should be doing this every day throughout our routes as well as our personal lives."



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WHY IT'S IMPORTANT TO BELONG TO A UNION

... BY RETIRED COYLE LETTER CARRIER JANET DESMITH

It seems like just yesterday when I burst through the dock doors of the post office and asked, "Where is the union shop steward? I want to sign up!"

Having read "The Jungle," by Upton Sinclair as he gave an in-depth description of the deplorable conditions of factory workers, I became an avid supporter of the union organization.

My great-grandparents migrated to Ilasco, Mo., where the old Portland Cement plant operated. Horrible accidents were the norm with heavy equipment falling on workers resulting in severed limbs and even deaths.

Read the stories of Mother Jones and the progression of the labor movement. Read about the coal miners' strikes and the murder of union organizers.

Think about the benefits you now enjoy. They weren't given to you by a benevolent employer. They were earned by the blood, sweat, and tears of union men and women who fought for higher wages, health benefits, working conditions and paid vacations.

Be a proud union member and always support your union.



Br. 343 President John McLaughlin congratulates retiring Coyle letter carrier Janet Desmith.

THANK YOU

TO THE MEMBERS OF NALC BRANCH 343

To start, I would like to say how incredibly grateful I am to have received the John Haake Scholarship. This will be very helpful in my college journey next year and I am so thankful for each of you, as your dedication and efforts have made this possible for me. I will remember this experience next year and during all of my college years and will always be grateful for the opportunity that you have provided me with.

Being the second generation in my family to receive this award is a huge honor. You have inspired me to perform, lead, and excel both in and out of school.

Thank you for your efforts to help young students and may God bless you.

Ethan Elder

THE "U" ... BY FRANK ENLOW



IT'S GETTING' HOT OUT HERE.

By now, your station should have had several stand-up talks with tips to help prevent heat exhaustion or heat strokes. The heat is here and in order to stay safe out, you should drink plenty of water to stay hydrated the night before, while you are working, and after work. Those of you that are working park and loop routes should wear some type of hat on your head when you are working directly out in the sun, also ask your supervisor or manager if they have any cooling towels.

This is also the time you should be watching out for man's best friend, dogs! Some of our customers have gotten lazy and or just opening the door without looking to let their dogs out. Carriers should consider all dogs as potentially hazardous and you should always carry dog repellent when delivering mail, along with your satchel, which will provide some protection. You should always be alert to signs that a dog may be

present and when delivering to a mail slot, refrain from sticking your fingers in the mail slot. Carriers use your dog warning cards and input the information into your scanners. Do not attempt to feed or pet the dogs.

Now, are you ready for round 2?

Cities, states, sports venues, restaurants, and tourist attractions are opening back up to full capacity, and in many of these places a mask is not required. Brothers and sister, this is not the time to get comfortable. There are still too many of us who have not been vaccinated. If you know someone who has not been vaccinated, ask them to choose life and get vaccinated. Please continue to wear your mask in crowded places, continue to wash and sanitize your hands, and if you have symptoms, please get checked out.

Let's talk about the minor change to Article 11 (Holidays)

We have six holidays left in this year and because of the change in our 2019 thru 2023 contract,

Article 11 (Holidays), you now have the option instead of receiving holiday pay, to elect to have your annual leave balance credited up eight hours for each holiday you worked. Get it, worked.

Article 11 (Holidays) states to be eligible for holiday pay, an employee must be in a pay status the last hour of the employee's scheduled workday prior to or the first hour of the employee's scheduled workday after the holiday.

Section C of article 11 states an employee scheduled to work on a holiday who does not work shall not receive holiday pay, unless such absence is based on an extreme emergency and is excused by the employer.

None of us want to work 12 hours on a holiday, we all want to just work eight hours and go home. Brothers and sisters, give us this day. If no other day, come to work on the holiday

Until next time

CARDINAL BASEBALL TICKETS



Due to the elimination of the pandemic restrictions imposed due to COVID-19, the branch will have some

St. Louis Cardinal baseball season tickets available for purchase.

Please call the Union Hall at 314-241-4297.

Tickets are \$130 for a pair. Bring cash or a check.



BRANCH MEETING

BRANCH 343, ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI

JUNE 10, 2021

Summary of Branch Action

MSC To pay the branch bills.

Deceased Members

James "Big Jim" Davis.. 35 Year Member

Recently Retired Members

Janet Desmith Coyle 05/31/21
 Kurtis Mullins West County 05/31/21
 Vincent Hellmann Southwest 05/31/21

New Members

Alexandra Abellana ... Gaffney..... 4/17/2021	Jalin Kelley..... Clayton..... 5/8/2021
Stephen Bauman..... Southwest 5/7/2021	Steven Lehman Coyle..... 4/17/2021
Dillian Beam..... Rolla..... 4/27/2021	Ellise McInnis..... Town & County 4/17/2021
Kathryn Bloodworth.. Kirkwood 5/8/2021	Keosha Moore..... Kirkwood 5/8/2021
Jamyra Chapman Southwest 4/17/2021	Paige Moore Jennings..... 4/24/2021
David Colvin Maryville Gardens... 4/17/2021	Robert Morris Park Hills 4/20/2021
Eriele Combs..... Weathers 4/23/2021	Courtney Nebbitt Mackenzie Pointe 4/9/2021
LeRoy Cooper Mexico..... 4/7/2021	John Nichols Weathers 4/30/2021
Astrid Cureton Park Hills 5/4/2021	Jerry Parsons..... Park Hills 5/13/2021
James D'Onofrio..... Union..... 4/17/2021	Mike Phasanith Affton 4/23/2021
Latisha Dunn Weathers 4/30/2021	Mark Reese Town & Country 4/17/2021
Andrea Elliott..... Gaffney..... 4/17/2021	Arlandis Roddie Chouteau 4/24/2021
Laguisha Essex..... Weathers 5/1/2021	Venus Salone..... Mackenzie Poine 4/24/2021
Mitzi Forrest Mexico..... 4/7/2021	Mikella Smith Park Hills 4/20/2021
Danielle Frazier Mackenzie Pointe 4/9/2021	Tia Stewart..... Gravois 4/24/2021
Christopher Fulton ... Coyle..... 4/17/2021	Jamila Tate Mackenzie Pointe 5/1/2021
Michael Gaines..... South County..... 4/17/2021	Cody Thonas Fenton..... 4/17/2021
Jesse Garth..... Maryville Gardens ... 5/8/2021	Christian Tolar Mackenzie Pointe 4/30/2021
Christine Gendle..... Park Hills 4/27/2021	Kayle Turner Park Hills 5/4/2021
Elaine Gudger Kirkwood 4/24/2021	Richard Vannoy..... Southwest 4/24/2021
Michael Harris..... Gravois 4/23/2021	Erica Wilde Wentzville 5/1/2021
Curtis Hill..... Southwest 4/30/2021	Gloria Williams..... Gravois 5/1/2021
Michael Hulsey Park Hills 4/27/2021	Imani Williams Creve Coeur 4/23/2021
Lawrence Jackson..... Weathers 4/17/2021	Brian Wilson..... Maryville Gardens... 5/8/2021

BRANCH MEETING ATTENDANCE PRIZES

- | | | |
|---|------|-----------------------------------|
| 1. Pottery Barn Card | \$25 | Tracy Beckham, North County |
| 2. Target Card | \$25 | Marvin Booker, Union Hall/Retired |
| 3. Google Play Gift Card | \$10 | Barry Linan, Retired |
|  | \$12 | Celeste Smith, North County |

Highlights

The meeting was called to order at 7:36 p.m. The invocation and pledge of allegiance were led by Pam Stepney and the minutes were read and accepted.

NBA's Report, No report

Retirees Report, Tom Schulte: Tom sent greetings from the retirees and reported that the first retirees meeting since the COVID-19 pandemic was held June 2. Lunch was provided by the family of deceased retiree Ted Hempen. The family donated \$200 and Hodak's chicken was served.

Labor Council Report, Pam Stepney: Pam reported that Republicans are trying to change voting laws. Pam reminded everyone that it will be easier to vote if you make sure your ID is correct. There is no theme yet for the Labor Day parade.

MBA Report, Saronda Sutherland: Saronda offered information on the MBA Hospital Plus Plan. The plan will pay enrollees for days spent in the hospital. For more information, contact Saronda.

Health Benefit Report, Barry Linan: Barry encouraged new PTFs and recently converted regular carriers to consider joining the NALC HBP. Barry reported that with the plan, there is no charge for blood work if using Quest Diagnostic or Lab Corp.

Mound City Carrier Report, Tom Schulte: Tom reported that the June issue featured an article on Dr. Barbara Anderson. Dr. Anderson from the National Education Association - St. Louis has been Branch 343's independent selection committee since the inception of the scholarship program back in 1990. The deadline for the July issue is Monday, June 14.

Haake Scholarship Report, Pam Stepney: No Report

Safety and Health Report, Richard Thurman: No report

OWCP Report, Barry Linan: Barry reported that injured employees should be contacted by the Department of Labor within two weeks with a claim number. Barry reported that OSHA has published a quick card about heat stress. Barry reminded everyone to be careful in the heat.

Trustees Report, Frank Enlow: The books were audited and found to be in good order.

Legislative Report, Mike Weir: Mike reported

that with the appointment of three new members by President Biden, all vacancies on the board of governors have finally been filled.

Political Action Committee Report, Mike Weir: Mike read the names of the PAC contributors. Mike discussed the importance of HR 3076, The Postal Reform Act, which will eliminate the post office's burden of pre-funding future retiree health benefits.

Executive Vice President/Treasurer Report, Brian Litteken: Brian reported that he is seeking quotes on updating the branch's operating system which will allow stewards remote access. LMOU negotiations ended May 28. The branch's Wells Fargo account was recently reviewed, and the portfolio was adjusted for more growth options. The flooring in the offices and conference room will be installed June 21.

Vice President/Financial Secretary Report, Marvin Booker: Marvin read the financial report for June. Marvin reported that the national agreement states that CCAs will be converted on the first day of the third pay period after 24 months of service. Marvin reported that when a newly converted CCA uses eJob bidding on Lite Blue, a "not eligible" message will occur. **Submit your bid anyway! It will be counted!**

President's Comments, John McLaughlin: John reported that upcoming MDA events are being planned and he hopes to see participation from the members. John reported that the St. Ann Post Office merged with the Hazelwood Post Office. The two unions will need to merge. The branch may have Cardinal tickets available as attendance prizes now that Busch Stadium has opened to full capacity.

Respectfully Submitted,

Tina M Hunt, Recording Secretary

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WHERE: NORMANDIE GOLF CLUB
7605 St. Charles Rock Rd.
St. Louis, MO 63133

COST: \$80 PER PERSON (\$320 PER TEAM)
Price includes 18 holes of Golf, Electric Cart,
Prizes, Refreshments, (Beer, Soda, Brats,
Hamburgers, etc.)

FORMAT: Best Ball Four Man Scramble
"Shot Gun Start"

HOW TO ENTER: A check or checks totaling \$320 with the
names and addresses of team members must
be received ASAP (Please list at least one
phone number and email)

MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO:
MDA Golf, Branch 343
1600 S. Broadway
St. Louis, MO 63104

REGISTRATION INFORMATION:

1. Registration will start at 8 a.m.
2. Shot Gun Start – 9 a.m.
3. There will be a cutoff at 36 teams due to time restrictions. Money will be refunded to any team who enters after the cutoff.
4. Teams must arrive 30 minutes prior to tee time.

If you have any other questions about the tournament that have not been answered here, contact:

Brian Litteken
Letter Carriers Hall
314-241-4297

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MOUND CITY CARRIER

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or

You may submit articles and photos from
 events and retirement photos to:

tomnalc@sbcglobal.net

If you submit a photo, please identify all
 members in the photo.

All copy should be TYPED in upper and
 lower case, double spaced and written on one
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AUGUST 4, 2021

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**Deadline for articles for
 the AUGUST issue is
 JULY 12, 2021**

★ ★ ★

**REGULAR BRANCH MEETING
 THURSDAY, JULY 8, 2021
 7:30 pm**

★ ★ ★

**SHOP STEWARDS MEETING
 THURSDAY, AUGUST 5, 2021
 The Letter Carriers Building
 1600 S Broadway**



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