

Volume 76, No. 7

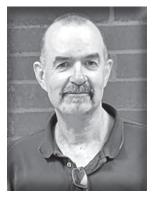
"Diversity is our Strength and Unity is our Power"

July 2025

# 2025 – 2026 JOHN H. HAAKE SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS



Bracketing the left and right photo are John H. Haake Scholarship committee members
Pamela Stepney and Tom Schulte along with Br. 343 President John McLaughlin.
Pictured front row left to right with family members behind are
Jacob Robert Webster-Brown, Charles Andrew Heppe and Aniya Tais Bradley



# President's Article ... By John McLaughlin

#### **NEW RULES!!!**

hile the Hall does not currently have a hard copy of the new contract, I have taken the liberty to highlight some of the key items in the new contract.

Article 8 adjustments along

with the New Hire Retention/Mentoring adjustments begin on July 1, 2025. If you want a more detailed read of the contract, I suggest you go on the *NALC*. org website and pull it up there or look at the most recent issue of the NALC Activist.

#### **Article 8 - Overtime Lists:**

- OT only on Scheduled Workday: willing to work up to 12 hours per day.
- **2. OT only on Scheduled Day Off:** willing to work up to 8 hours on your SDO.
- **3. BOTH LISTS, OT any day:** willing to work up to 12 hours every day (no change).

All carriers, even if you are presently on the OTDL, must sign up again.

**Equitability:** distribute equitably the OT opportunities among those on the same list.

**Equitability:** time voluntarily worked in excess of 12 or 60 hours will not count towards equitability.

Carriers wishing to work over 12 per day or 60 per week - can do so verbally day-to-day.

Carriers wishing to work over 12 per day or 60 per week - will be paid automatically.

Annual Leave = \$\$\$: Career carriers will be permitted to sell back up to 40 hours of annual leave prior to the beginning of the leave year if: (1) they are at the maximum leave carry-over ceiling at the start of the leave year (440 hours) AND (2) have used fewer than 75 sick leave hours in leave year immediately preceding.

**JOINT Route Adjustments:** The new MOU clearly states these reductions apply only in a future joint

route adjustment process. If done so during a unilateral inspection, it is a violation.

Line #	Work Function	Old Time	New Time
Line 14	Accountables	6 minutes	2 minutes
Line 15	Withdraw mail	5 minutes	0 minutes
Line 19	Vehicle Inspection	3 minutes	3 minutes
Line 21	Other office work	9 minutes	10 minutes

**Placed off clock continue Pay:** If a carrier is placed off the clock in an off-duty status, they may utilize their accrued AL during this time.

**Bereave grandchildren:** Carriers will have up to three workdays of leave to bereave the death of a grandchild now.

**B Team Help:** Grievances backing up at the B Team step. Old contract, we had to get agreement between the NBA and area manager to activate the back up team or send them to another B Team. Now, if a case is not heard within 14 days of receipt of a grievance, the parties WILL activate the back-up team or send it out to another B Team.

**Bigger B Team:** New contract expands who can be on the B Team. If you are a certified back-up Step B representative, you can serve on any B Team in the nation.

**Hire more CCAs:** St. Louis installation is presently not hiring CCAs. While the percentage of CCAs has stayed the same, the classification of carriers who are counted has gone up. Before, only full-time city carriers were counted. Now, all career city carriers count which will include PTFs.

CCAs/PTFs Advanced AL: Beginning July 12, 2025 (PP 16), forty (40) hours of AL will be advanced to PTFs prorated to the end of the year and annually thereafter. CCAs will be advanced forty (40) hours when they are reappointed to another 360-day term and all new appointments thereafter.

**New Hires Retention/Mentoring:** Before leaving Carrier Academy, which means before they ever step foot in a station, new carriers will receive the following:

- Station phone number
- Supervisor's office phone number
- · Reporting date and time
- Defined work schedule for first week
- Anticipated start and end time
- Daily work hours
- Schedule day off per service week
- · Instructions on how to get paid
- Reflective vest
- Mail pouch
- Hat
- Introduction to steward and management
- Joint tour of facility
- Bulletin boards

#### **CCAs and PTFs:**

Weeks 1-4 (1st month): Maximum hours, 8 per day and 40 per week

Weeks 1-8: work only from assigned station

Weeks 5-8 (2nd month): Maximum hours, 10 per day and 56 per week

Weeks 9-11 (3rd month): Maximum hours, 11.5 per day and 60 per week

# Armed, off-duty police security provided at every meeting at the Union Hall



#### MOVING? WE NEED YOUR NEW ADDRESS!

If you have moved, please notify the branch office directly. Personnel does not notify us of your change of address.

	,	,	0	
Name				
Address				
City/State				
Zip				

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#### Please be advised of the "NEW"

#### **LABOR PARADE**

When: Sunday, August 24, 2025

**Time:** 7 a.m. line up, 9 a.m. parade starts

Where: Eagen Center, Parker Road and Waterford Dr., Florissant, Mo.

Parade finishes at Knights of Columbus pear

Parade finishes at Knights of Columbus near Lindbergh and Washington Ave.

# Picnic, games and refreshments at the end of the parade

#### What do we need:

The union needs a couple of pickup trucks to drive in the parade

Asking for volunteers to carry two banners in the parade

Asking for two volunteers to assist with pedestrian traffic

# Contact the Union Hall at 314-241-4297 to volunteer

There will be more details in the August issue of the MCC. I will also be putting out a bulletin.

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.

# MARK YOUR CALENDAR DON'T SIT ON THE SIDELINES ... GET INVOLVED! July 10 Regular Branch Meeting July 13 CSRS/FERS Retirement Seminar (see ad) Aug 6 Retirees Meeting Aug 7 Shop Stewards Meeting Aug 14 Regular Branch Meeting Aug 24 Labor Parade, Florissant, Mo. (see ad)

# Executive Vice President ... By Brian Litteken

#### OVERTIME OPTIONS

Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was signed on May 27, 2025 which determined that provisions in Article 8 of the 2023-2026 National Agreement shall be implemented on July 1, 2025.

# carrier an additional 50% of the base

and/or 60 hours in a service week.

Management will then input adjustments in GATS to compensate all

hourly straight time rate for all hours worked in excess of 12 hours in a day or 60 hours in a week.

#### **ARTICLE 8**

#### Article 8.2D

Full time employees who are not on an "Overtime Desired" list or on the Work Assignment list, shall not be required to work beyond eleven and a half (11.5) hours of work in a day or sixty (60) hours of work in a service week, and shall not be subject to disciplinary action for terminating their tour of duty when these limits on hours of work are reached.

#### Article 8.2D.3

All PTFs will be guaranteed a minimum of one (1) nonscheduled day each service week, except during the penalty overtime exclusion period. Management will notify PTF employees of their assigned nonscheduled day by the Wednesday preceding the service week.

All CCAs will be guaranteed a minimum of one (1) nonscheduled day each service week, except during the penalty overtime exclusion period. Management will notify CCAs of their assigned nonscheduled day by the Wednesday preceding the service week.

#### Article 8.4.G

For any hours worked beyond twelve (12) hours in a service day or sixty (60) hours in a service week the employee is to be paid at the rate of two and one-half (2 1/2) times the base hourly straight time rate.

The Postal Service payroll system may not be updated by July 1, 2025 to automatically compensate carriers at 2½ times the base hourly straight time rate. Until the payroll system is updated, management at the district level will identify the city carriers who have worked in excess of 12 hours in a service day

#### Article 8.5.A

Employees desiring to work overtime shall place their names on either one or both of the "Overtime Desired" lists defined below or the "Work Assignment" list during the two weeks prior to the start of the calendar quarter, and their names shall remain on the list until such time as they remove their names from the list. Employees may switch lists during the two weeks prior to the start of the calendar quarter, and the change will be effective beginning that new calendar quarter.

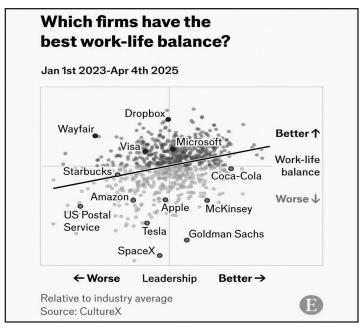
- 1. Full-time letter carriers, including those on limited or light duty, may sign up for either one or both of the following regular Overtime Desired Lists:
  - Employees desiring to work up to twelve (12) hours per day on their regularly scheduled day(s). Employees signing only this list are not on the Overtime Desired List on their non-scheduled day(s). However, employees signing both regular Overtime Desired Lists are eligible to work up to twelve (12) hours per day on their regularly scheduled day(s) and their non-scheduled day(s).
  - Employees desiring to work eight (8) hours per day on their non-scheduled days. Employees signing only this list are not on the Overtime Desired List on their regularly scheduled days or beyond eight (8) hours on their non-scheduled days. However, employees signing both regular Overtime Desired Lists are eligible to work up to twelve (12) hours per day on their regularly scheduled day(s) and their non-scheduled day(s).

	OVERTIME OPTIONS				
No List	ODL - Scheduled Day	ODL - NSD	ODL - Both Scheduled & NSD	Work Assignment	
No change	New - July 1	New - July 1	New - July 1	No change	
May only be required to work OT in limited situations on their regularly scheduled day or their non-scheduled day (NSD)	Can be required to work up to 12 hours on scheduled days only. May only be required to work OT on their NSD in limited situations.	Can be required to work up to 8 hours on NSD. May only be required to work OT on their scheduled day in limited situations	Can be required to work up to 12 hours on both scheduled and non-scheduled days. Same as the old 12-hour prefer- ence ODL.	May only be required to work OT off their assignment in limited situations on their regularly scheduled day. May only be required to work OT on their NSD in limited situations.	

#### Article 8.5.G

Full-time employees not on the "Overtime Desired" list may be required to work overtime only if all available employees on the "Overtime Desired" list have worked up to twelve (12) hours in a day or sixty (60) hours in a service week. Employees on the "Overtime Desired" list:

 May be required to work up to twelve (12) hours in a day and sixty (60) hours in a service week (subject to payment of penalty overtime pay set forth in Section 4.D for contravention of Section 5.F); and



- 2. Excluding December, shall be limited to no more than twelve (12) hours of work in a day and no more than sixty (60) hours of work in a service week unless they volunteer to work beyond those limits pursuant to paragraph 3 below; and
- 3. May volunteer to exceed twelve (12) hours of work in a day or sixty (60) hours of work in a service week (subject to the payment of Section 4.G). Those who do not volunteer shall not be subject to disciplinary action for terminating their tour of duty when the limits on hours of work in paragraph 2 above are reached.



# Vice President Financial Secretary

... By Marvin Booker

#### **NEW RULES!!**

New Overtime Rules for Letter Carriers: Changes to Article 8 (2023–2026 National Agreement)

The 2023–2026 National Agreement brings major changes to Article 8, which governs the overtime rules for full-time letter carriers. These changes were designed to protect employees from being overworked, give them more control over their time, and ensure they are treated fairly when it comes to long work hours and compensation. The new rules address daily and weekly hour limits, discipline protections, and how overtime is managed and paid.

#### **Daily and Weekly Work Limits**

Under the new agreement, full-time letter carriers now have **clearly defined limits** on how many hours they can be required to work in a single day and during a service week. According to the **Employee and Labor Relations Manual (ELM) Section 432.32,** employees may not be required to work more than **12 consecutive hours,** including lunch breaks. Since a lunch break is 30 minutes, this means that most carriers cannot be forced to work more than **11.5 actual hours** per day.

The only exception to this rule is for full-time letter carriers who are on the Overtime Desired List (ODL) or the Work Assignment List (WAL). These employees may be required to work up to 12 hours of actual work per day, which comes out to 12.5 total hours on the clock when including lunch.

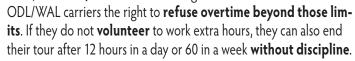
In the past, if a non-ODL or non-WAL carrier was told to work more than 11.5 hours, they had to either obey and file a grievance later or risk being disciplined for refusing. Now, things are different.

#### Right to End Tour Without Discipline

A major improvement in the new contract is found in Article 8, Section 2.D. It states that non-ODL/WAL letter carriers cannot be required to work more than 11.5 hours per day or 60 hours per week, and if they reach either of those limits, they may end their tour of duty without fear of discipline, even if they are given a direct order to stay. This gives letter carriers real power to protect their health and personal time. It also prevents management from using pressure or threats to force employees to go beyond reasonable limits.

#### **New Protections for ODL and WAL Carriers**

Letter carriers who are on the ODL or WAL lists have also received new protections. In the past, they were required to work up to 12 hours per day and 60 hours per week, with little say in the matter. Under the new agreement, Article 8, Section 5.G.3 now gives



However, if an ODL or WAL carrier wants to **voluntarily** work beyond these limits, they can do so. But again, it must be their choice, not a requirement.

#### **Automatic Overtime Pay for Voluntary Extra Hours**

In the past, if a letter carrier worked more than 12 hours a day or 60 hours a week, they had to file a grievance to get extra pay for those hours. That has now changed.

**Article 8, Section 4.G** now states that anyone who **voluntarily** works beyond those limits will **automatically** receive **2.5 times their regular hourly pay** for those hours. No grievance is needed. This ensures that carriers are fairly paid for the extra time they choose to work and reduces the paperwork and delays that come with filing complaints.

#### New Options on the ODL

Previously, carriers signing up for the ODL could choose to work up to either 10 or 12 hours per day. The new agreement has removed the 10-hour option and replaced it with more flexible choices:

- 1. Work up to 12 hours per day on scheduled days only
- 2. Work up to 8 hours on non-scheduled days only
- 3. **Do both** the traditional ODL option (12 hours on all days)

This allows carriers to better manage their work-life balance and choose how much overtime they are willing to accept.

The changes to Article 8 in the 2023–2026 National Agreement provide letter carriers with stronger protections, more choices, and greater control over their time. They now have the power to stop working when they hit legal limits without fear of being punished. Overtime is now more clearly defined, more fairly managed, and properly compensated. These changes are a major step forward in improving working conditions, preventing overwork, and respecting the rights and health of letter carriers.

# Region 5 NBA Report ... By David A. Teegarden

#### **HEAT SAFETY**

ummer is here and we all must take the time necessary to protect ourselves from heat illness. Hydrating, cooling down and resting before we begin to get overheated or exhibit heat illness symptoms are a must. Please take whatever time is needed to protect your health in the short and long term. If you have any problems with local management, please contact us at the NBA office at 314-985-8040.

We have many new employees who will be working through the summer heat for the first time and will feel intimidated to push themselves to finish routes. I am asking all carriers to look out for each other. If someone doesn't look right, isn't talking right or experiencing any symptoms of heat illness, please speak up to local management, the steward and the affected carrier. It might just save someone's life. Branch officers and stewards, please make sure new employees have been taught to recognize the heat illness symptoms and are given Heat Illness Prevention Program (HIPP) training before they go out to the street on their own.

#### **POLITICAL NEWS**

The political situation we face as an organization and a union has not gone away. It has only been postponed. The House just recently passed a version of the reconciliation bill that strips FERs employees of their retirement benefits. One of the provisions originally on the chopping block would have required all FERs employees to contribute 4.4% towards their retirement. Another would have made retirement calculations based on a high five instead of a high three, resulting in a monthly loss to retired annuitants.

Some feel if they are paying 4.4% then it's okay if everyone does so the increase just evens us all out. My way of thinking is we should be lobbying and using our efforts to make all employees pay only 0.8%. That was the agreement that the federal government struck with its employees long ago and it should be held to that. If we do nothing and do not fight these attacks on our retirement system, the 4.4% will only continue to increase. Through the NALC's political action, we were able to get the 4.4% and the high-five calculation out of the bill in the House. But that does not mean it couldn't get back into the final product.

Right now, the reconciliation bill has moved to the Senate, and we ask that you contact your Senators and tell them to oppose any efforts to change or weaken letter carrier retirement benefits. You can go to the NALC website, and it literally takes seconds to complete this action. Go to the Government Affairs tab and click on Take Action, then scroll down to the first Take Action button and click it. You will be directed to enter your first and last name, zip code and last 4 of your social security number. You will be directed to a new screen and click on Go! And that is all it takes. Please pass this on to your fellow carriers.

#### **REGION 5 LMOU TRAINING**

In the two weeks leading up to the LMOU period opening, we conducted training in 10 different locations across the region. These 10 training courses were attended by over 30 branches. We have also assigned outside stewards to negotiate in over 30 installations that do not have a functional branch or officers. We have had reports from lots of branch officers that LMOU negotiations are going well, and they are getting agreement on their local agreements. All of you should be proud of the effort you have put into trying to increase the benefits in your LMOU for your members.

#### **ROUTE ADJUSTMENTS**

We are in the process of training leaders to work on a region 5 route adjustment team. We have completed the first phase of this project and trained about 20 individuals on the M-39 Chapter 2 Route Adjustment Process. Understanding the Chapter 2 process is imperative in any joint or unilateral route adjustment process. We have moved to the second phase of our approach, training individuals on the forensics of route adjustments i.e. finding the time they inappropriately deleted and how to grieve the violation. In this phase we will also be training a few more specialists and developing templates for both the forensic and grievance sides to make it easier to put together good route inspection grievances. Once this phase is complete, Region 5 should be in a great place to ensure route adjustments are conducted fairly or grieved effectively and disseminate our product with branch officers and stewards across the region. Our goal is to complete this by the third week of July. In the meantime, we do have individuals that have already been trained and are being used for both the forensic and grievance sides of route adjustments. If you would like to speak with us or one of those specialists about route adjustments in your office, please reach out to us at the NBA office.

#### **REGION 5 TRAINING**

We will have Steward College Informal A training in three places this summer: Des Moines, KCMO and Lincoln. Class size is limited to 30 participants. As usual the host branch gets first choice on the number of participants they send, then first come first served. There will be two Steward College Formal A trainings done in the region this summer, one in St. Louis the other in Wichita. To attend the Formal A Steward College course you must have attended the Informal A training course and graduated from that class. I will announce the dates and confirm the time of the classes in an email to branch presidents within the next two weeks. The classes will begin on Sunday at approximately noon and conclude on Wednesday afternoon.

An OWCP advanced training class is also being planned for late summer or early fall, most likely in the Kansas City area.

Until next time stay safe out there.

# Recording Secretary ... By Richard Brown

reetings to all. I hope all the fathers had a good Father's Day and enjoyed the time with your families. That day seems not to be as popular or widely celebrated as others, but know that we are just as important and special as moms.

#### **SUMMERTIME**

Yes, it's that time again, when heat cramps start to plague us and it seems as though you can't get enough fluid to keep you from overheating. Well, you must find the right combination of fluid, food and rest that best suits your body. The only thing that holds true for everyone is that you can't drink just water, and no electrolyte supplement. Just the same, you can't do the opposite. Please, avoid alcoholic beverages and sugar-filled drinks before and immediately after work as your system will try to process them and your body may work overtime trying to overpower the ingredients.

Coconut water is a great source and balance to keep you hydrated. Try bringing watermelon, honey dew or other melons to work with you. These fruits help keep your insides cool due to the amount of water content. Obviously, you want to keep it on ice or some other method of cooling so that it stays cool throughout the day. Try to eat some type of breakfast and a light lunch so that you don't get too sluggish.

Be sure to take breaks in the shade as needed. For the curbside drivers, try getting out of the vehicle and standing or sitting in the shade. If you drive a van or Pro-Master and like to get in the air conditioning to cool off, be careful with that. Blasting the air and then jumping back out to the heat can be detrimental too. This forces the body to adjust quickly, which confuses the body and mind, and you may not react well to that over time.

The above is just your possible personal experience. There is also management that will likely tell you that you are taking too long on the street (stationary time). However, they will conduct stand-up talks, telling you to be careful and you will receive messages on your scanner first thing in the morning, informing you to rest in the shade when needed. I know this is contradictory, but you know as well as I do, that it happens. Please be careful and safeguard YOU, no one knows how you feel but you.

#### **INSPECTIONS (AGAIN)**

We are not in a hurry to get these routes completed, especially those offices who have recently undergone route adjustments.

Every route is not the same, so what can be done on one route, may not be the case for another. The same holds true for letter carriers. What one person can do doesn't



mean another can. Don't allow management to convince you that because someone else delivered a certain amount of mail in a particular timeframe, that you can do the same. Take your two 10-minute breaks and extra (comfort stops) when you need to.

It takes what it takes to get these assignments done, so just do your job and be as safe as possible doing it. I realize that some of the recent route adjustments have caused routes to be much longer than an 8-hour assignment should be. I too have been affected by the adjustments. You can look at your new assignment in a couple of ways.

- You have built in overtime due to management's foolish attempt to save the Postal Service money.
- b. After **six weeks** of going over your eight hours, by at least 30 minutes a day for three days out of each week, you can request a special inspection.

There are a lot of things that the inspection team didn't do properly before, during and after the inspections. Grievances are being filed at the stations due to these violations but there is a process that must be followed. As such, it could take some time to reach a resolution on these grievances which can be annoying in and of itself. Patience is a virtue, and you will need plenty to get you through.

#### **LMOU**

Many of you may not realize this, but each time a new National Agreement (contract) is negotiated, the Local Memorandum of Understanding (LMOU) can be negotiated for changes in language. This LMOU is essentially a subsidiary of the contract and has details of Letter Carrier Rights that pertain specifically to the St. Louis Installation and has language that is not necessarily referenced in the National Agreement.

That LMOU process is currently underway due to management wanting to make some changes in the language. So far, the meetings have not been very productive, but the union is committed to negotiating in good faith in hopes of reaching an agreement. More information about this may be shared by our other officers so read the rest of this issue of the Mound City Carrier for further information.

Until next time, Who is responsible!



#### **National Association of Letter Carriers**



## **Initial Heat Injury Report**

Date of Injury:	/	
Employee Name:		
Contact#:	(cell preferred)	Email address:
Work Location:	Installation and Station	State:
Branch President:		Branch:
Contact#:	(cell preferred)	Email address:
Events leading to	injury:	

Please send a copy of this form to NALC Director of Safety and Health at NALC Headquarters or email to "peralta@nalc.org"

NBA David Teegarden, 1828 Craig Rd, St. Louis, MO 63146 or email to "teegarden@nalc.org"

# Health Benefits Plan/OWCP ... By Barry Linan

uly greetings to all the brothers and sisters of NALC Branch 343. Lo and behold, after a personal vetting by President Trump, David Steiner was selected by the Postal Board of Governors to be the next PMG. Mr. Steiner is also coincidentally on the board of FedEx, one of the USPS' biggest competitors. Also coincidentally, FedEx contributed \$1 million to Trump's inauguration fund. Steiner made numerous anti-union comments in his previous post as an executive for Waste Management. Buckle up because it's going to be a rough ride folks!

#### **HBP NEWS**

I have copies of our HBP brochure available at the hall, or you can go online to *nalchbp.org* for information about your plan benefits. There are numerous programs available at no cost to our members in the "Wellness and Other Special Features" section (page 101).

#### **OWCP NEWS**

In lieu of local management's recent decision to try sending injured carriers downtown to help with understaffed mail processing, let's review the regulations on job offers and limited duty work assignments. First, remember to always have a copy of your current medical restrictions available and keep copies of any job offers issued to you.

Per ELM 545.31 "If a specific alternate position is available, the control office or control point must advise the employee in writing of the specific duties and physical requirements of the position." Advising in writing is called a job offer and the USPS uses Form 2499 - Offer of Modified Assignment to detail the offer to the injured carrier. Further, under ELM 545.32 "the job offer must include the following:

- a. a description of the duties of the position
- a description of the specific physical requirements of the position and any special demands of the workload or unusual working conditions
- c. the organizational and geographical location of the job
- d. the effective date of the position
- e. the date the employee must accept or refuse the job offer
- f. pay rate information for the offered position.

The job offer may be made verbally, as long as a written job offer is provided to the employee within two business days of the verbal job offer."



The Form 2499 Job Offer must list "specific duties" and vaguely worded duties such as "other work as assigned" or "office duties" are invalid and should be reported to your steward so a grievance can be filed. The "specific physical requirements" needed to perform those duties should fall within your physician's medical restrictions, and you can't exceed them. Again, if the physical requirements exceed your restrictions, contact your steward so a grievance can be filed. The Job Offer must list the "location" (office) of the work being offered. Listing the location as "St. Louis Installation" or "as assigned" is improper as it does not identify an actual location. If management wants to assign work at a different office, for instance to do "mounted delivery," then the office with the mounted work should be listed as the location.

The regulations for assigning limited duty work are found in ELM 546.142 Obligation, "the Postal Service must make every effort toward assigning the employee to limited duty consistent with the employee's medically defined work limitation tolerance. In assigning such limited duty, the Postal Service should minimize any adverse or disruptive impact on the employee. The following considerations must be made in effecting such limited duty assignments. 1) To the extent that there is adequate work available within the employee's work limitation tolerances, within the employee's craft, in the work facility to which the employee is regularly assigned, and during the hours when the employee regularly works, that work constitutes the limited duty to which the employee is assigned." This is the first step in the pecking order for assigning limited duty work and it minimizes any disruptive impact. This pecking order is further delineated as a "Priority of Choice" graph in the EL-505 section 7-5. I note that assigning an injured carrier to Limited Duty work "Outside" their regular facility (office) is the fifth priority on the graph and should not be done unless the other four priorities are not available. Work in another craft should be provided in their office before resorting to sending the injured carrier to another office.

When responding to a job offer you can "Accept," "Accept - Under Protest," or "Refuse" the offer. Do not refuse a job offer unless the job duties clearly exceed your medical restrictions and you should then list how they are exceeded next to your signed refusal. If you accept - under protest, you are disputing a portion of the propriety of the job offer. Clearly write the words

"Under Protest" next to your acceptance and list the reason(s) why. An example being your work hours were changed from 0800-1650 to 1000-1850 and there is suitable work available during your regular 0800-1650 schedule. In either case of refusal or accept - under protest, your steward needs to be informed and a grievance filed.

Priority of Choice	Regular Craft	Regular Tour	Regular Facility
1st	Within	Within	Within
2nd	Outside	Within	Within
3rd	Within	Outside	Within
4th	Outside	Outside	Within
5th	Within	Within	Outside
6th	Outside	Within	Outside
7th	Within	Outside	Outside
8th	Outside	Outside	Outside

# The Noise from Gravois ... By Andrew Garces

#### **DUTY OF CARE**

his ain't the job for everybody. How many times has it been said? And why is that? We are laborers. We are workers. The post office has a rich history of a diverse workforce. We want workers. We want people who care about the job. The one thing you can be guaranteed as a postal employee is that you will work.

Workers with disabilities, workers with injuries, workers with mental illness are not less than anybody else. It shouldn't need to be said. We strive to be the best every day. We strive to be the most efficient workers from day one. Joe can do the 200-delivery cluster box in 30 minutes even with 60 parcels. The new kid completed his assignment in two hours and has a truck full of pee bottles. You can deny it all you want, but we like to move. We like to be the best. We like to win the day. And we like to see the truck empty.

Work-life balance is a mystery to postal workers. When you've slept through the entirety of Christmas day and never opened your presents, you know you're stretched thin. This is the reality. This is not an exaggeration. We aren't very good at the balancing act, and we aren't always that great at taking care of ourselves.

It also comes as no shock then that the organization we work for also falls short of its obligation for "duty of care." If you haven't heard this term, it can be put simply as, "What we owe each other," or in the case of an employer, "What care and consideration does your employer owe you?" I can't imagine how many of us will read that line and chuckle. I don't know any postal workers who aren't tough, but I do know a lot of injured ones.

If you work at the post office long enough, you will get hurt. For me it was both ankles swollen, a few dog bites, and a strained rotator cuff. A job that is physically taxing like our job, comes with a cost. So, with that in mind, I think it's time we all stop thinking of this place as an ecosystem where only the strongest survive. A job with this much stress and physicality might not be for everyone, but if we're not careful with ourselves, it could become a job for no one.

# Retiree Report

... By Guest Recording Secretary Mike Chenot

Chairman Tom Schulte called the meeting to order at 12:40 p.m. Chaplain Lawrence McHaynes led us in the prayer and Pledge of Allegiance. Tom thanked NBA David Teegarden and his staff for the excellent BBQ lunch with all the sides and the desserts. Tom collared Bill Lister following the meeting to provide lunch for the July meeting.

**Sick Call:** Tom reported on the medical status of Ray Breakfield, Nicki L. Prado and "Doc" Urbanek. Get well cards were signed and sent from the retirees.

**Introduction of New Members:** The retirees welcomed brother Sylvester Idleburg.

**Minutes From the Last Meeting:** In lieu of the absence of Ms. Prado, Tom read the minutes from the April meeting.

**Treasurers Report:** Mike Chenot reported a checking balance after deposit of \$1,145.36 and cash on hand of \$365.

NBAs Report: David Teegarden introduced his staff of Charlie Sexton, Larrissa Parde, Pat Baker and Kyle Turner for their help with the preparations with the lunch. Dave encouraged the retirees to log on to the NALC.org website and sign up under the Government Affairs/ Take Action dropdown menu to register and have access to send messages directly to our respective Senators and congressmen regarding postal related issues.

Branch 343 Presidents Report: President McLaughlin reported on the attempts to negotiate the St. Louis Installation LMOUs, but the post-master chose not to engage on these issues. Management is proposing elimination of first phase bidding by installation and changing the process of vacation selections.

**Legislative Report:** Tom announced that Mike

Weir was on vacation and that there would be no report. Standing ovation and applause followed.

**Chairmans Report:** Tom took the time to report on the health of Ray Breakfield, Doc Urbanek and Nicki Prado and asked for prayers for their recovery.

**Deceased Members:** A moment of silence was observed for active Town & Country letter carrier Chris Carter.

50/50 Winner: \$15 Won by Rich Rhyner

**Closing Prayer:** Offered by Chaplain Lawrence McHaynes.

Meeting Adjourned: 1:10 p.m.

# CSRS/FERS RETIREMENT SEMINAR

**SUNDAY, JULY 13, 2025** 

10 A.M. TILL 2:30 P.M.

LETTER CARRIERS' HALL 1600 S. BROADWAY ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI 63104

ALL MEMBERS AND SPOUSES
WELCOME

Training will be conducted by former National Business Agent Mike Weir

Please RSVP to Mike Weir at 314-348-8722

Lunch will be provided

# **South County** ... By Matt Gleiforst

ello from South County. I hope that everyone had a wonderful Fourth of July and is having an amazing summer with their families.

It is no secret that there have been numerous attacks against the working class since the beginning of the year. Between DOGE aimlessly cutting government jobs and legislation being written that tries to take away benefits that we have been promised and we have worked for, it has been a stressful time to be a letter carrier. The future seems uncertain which can take a toll on us mentally. And let's face it, there really is a lot of waste in the USPS. We're also constantly being told that we are hemorrhaging money. Unfortunately, upper management thinks the fix for this is to eliminate letter carrier positions. The reality is, however, letter carriers are not where the waste is, not even close.

The waste is sadly plentiful, but it is in positions that are well above our pay grade. It seems like every single day before I go to the street and when I come back from the street there is a supervisor being forced to listen to a telecom where one or more (usually more) of their bosses are droning on and on about absolutely nothing. Usually, I'll hear the voice of the acting MCSO going over reports from the previous day, questioning the supervisors about every little thing, or berating them for not being perfect. After these telecoms, what changes? Absolutely nothing! There is no guidance or training that comes from this. Carriers usually get a brief standup talk later that sounds something like, "Our bosses are really looking

at SPM scans or inactivity time so be careful." The supervisors are on these calls daily for I would guess at a minimum of three hours, sometimes more. Now let's do the numbers. Being as conservative as possible I am going to use \$84,000 as base pay for a starting supervisors pay. For 25 stations with just one supervisor per station on a call for three hours, the cost is approximately \$3,028. That is just the supervisors' cost. I didn't include anybody higher than them and there are often several of their bosses on these calls. Again, that is \$3,028 a day, at minimum for something that could have been put in an email. And the sad reality is, that estimate is well below what is the actual real price.

We also have an incredible amount of waste in the route adjustment process. Teams of supervisors are tasked with going into stations and destroying them by cutting as much as they can. The USPS must pay these supervisors not only their salaries, but also the cost of their travel, hotel stays, etc. ... They also are intentionally doing these in such an aggressive way that they will inevitably be grieved, and the stations will likely need to be reevaluated.

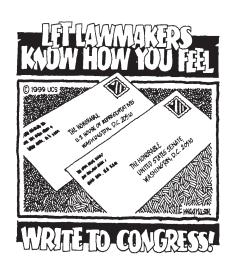
Now why is upper management okay with this waste but want to nitpick every second of a letter carrier's day? It's simple. It is their job security to do so. So many of these peoples' salaries are unnecessary, and they know so. The result is they come up with terrible policies and waste other people's time to justify their positions.

I recently heard a letter carrier at my station complain about how another letter



carrier was stealing from the USPS for going too slow and taking too long to do their route. I can understand feeling this way at times if it feels like you are working harder than your peers, but we need to always have the backs of our brothers and sisters in our craft. They are not the problem. The small amount of overtime that they may be spending is pennies on the dollar compared to the amount of money being wasted above us. That is where the real "stealing" is at. At least the letter carrier's overtime is getting the mail delivered. Upper management can't even get the correct mail to the correct stations a lot of the time.

Hopefully, one day an actual assessment will be made of the financial waste in our institution and more of an effort will be put into creating a better service for the public, but until then keep your head held high and keep surviving!





# 2025 – 2026 John H. Haake Branch 343 Scholarship Report



... By Pam Stepney and Tom Schulte

We are pleased to announce the three 2025-2026 John H. Haake Scholarship winners. They are:

**Charles Andrew Heppe** 

**Aniya Tais Bradley** 

Jacob Robert Webster-Brown

2025 marks the 35<sup>th</sup> year the John H. Haake Scholarships have been awarded to deserving sons, daughters and grandchildren of active, retired and deceased letter carriers from Branch 343. We congratulate not only the students who participated in this year's competition, but also their proud parents and grandparents.

As in previous years we have secured the services of Dr. Barbara Anderson ex-officio from National Education Association - St. Louis, who has served as the chairperson of our independent selection committee since the inception of the scholarship program back in 1990. She, along with her committee, evaluates the credentials of each of our applicants and selects our three John H. Haake Scholarship winners. As in all previous years, the decision of the judges is final.

Over the course of the last several years, there has been a dramatic decrease in the number of scholarship applicants. We attribute that to the postal hiring freeze in the early 1990s into the early 2000s. This created a huge gap between older letter carriers, whose children have already graduated from high school and the newly hired, who may not have high school aged children. To that end, we modified the brochure in 2020 to include the grandchildren of active, retired, and deceased members and changed the four \$1,500 college scholarships to three and added a \$1,500 scholarship to a student interested in attending an accredited vocational/trade school.

Many of the professional trades are desperate to find interested individuals seeking to learn a skill working with their hands. We believe that earmarking one of our scholarships to an accredited trade school would be beneficial to a son or daughter learning a skilled trade that requires a shorter time period, at less cost than a college degree, and offers a lucrative opportunity for financial success.

Our awards presentation took place at the regular branch meeting on June 12 and we were very pleased that all three of our awardees were present along with their parents and family members. Each of the scholarship winners were presented to the branch membership and a brief profile was read highlighting their accomplishments and their aspirations. (See profiles on the following pages). The recipients were then presented with a certificate from Branch 343 President John McLaughlin.

The scholarship committee was very impressed with the academic credentials of all our applicants, as well as the leadership qualities exhibited in their extracurricular activities and the hopeful tone and insightful nature of their essays. Although only three of the students have been awarded scholarships, all the applicants are to be commended for their accomplishments.

The scholarship committee would like to thank John Haake for his leadership and vision in establishing this program 35 years ago. The scholarship program had been a dream of John's for many years, and we cannot think of a more fitting recognition of his efforts to bring his dream to fruition than the fact that it bears his name.

Thanks also to Branch 343 President John McLaughlin, Exec. VP Brian Litteken and VP Financial Secretary Marvin Booker for their ongoing support and guidance in continuing the scholarship program. On a personal note, I would like to recognize the dedication and commitment of my fellow scholarship committee member Pam Stepney who keeps the membership apprised of the applicants and all the critical deadlines our students must meet in her monthly branch reports.

Each year, we reevaluate the criteria we require to participate in the next year's scholarship awards. This year will be no exception as we will take a hard look at the requirements necessary to make the selection process competitive. Over the last three years, there has been a significant uptick in the number of applicants, due, no doubt, to the decision that was made by the scholarship committee to include the grandchildren of active, retired and deceased members. In fact, this year, many of our applicants were the grandchildren of our membership.

To this year's applicants, we would like to extend our best wishes in your personal academic endeavors. Judging from the excellence of our candidates each and every applicant was aptly qualified, and we wish you all success in your college careers and beyond.

In the September issue of the Mound City Carrier, we will publish the application for the 2026-2027 John H. Haake Scholarships. For now, please spread the word to any Branch 343 union member who will have a son, daughter, or grandchild entering their senior year in high school in the fall. The deadline to apply for next year's John H. Haake Scholarship is December 31, 2025.



#### **CHARLES ANDREW HEPPE**

is the son of Charles and Laura Heppe from Chesterfield, Mo., and the grandson of retired letter carrier Charles Heppe. Charles is a senior at Lafayette High School where, with his Advanced Placement courses, he carries a weighted

cumulative grade point average of 4.55.

Frank Consolino, chemistry and AP Physics instructor at Lafayette High, said that he has known Charles since August of 2023. "During that time Charles showed me that he was a talented, dedicated and passionate student.

"AP Physics 1 is a challenging course for most students. Charles was able to navigate the course successfully and perform well in both the class and on the AP exam. Throughout the year Charles was able to master all the topics that we covered, no matter the difficulty. He was a model student during that time. Charles always kept up with his work, even with a busy extracurricular schedule that included being a member of the Lafayette Swim and Dive team.

"Charles was also a leader in the classroom. During lab activities, Charles would often take charge of his group and make sure that they stayed on task and accomplished all the objectives in the lab. He would also make sure that all the lab partners understood the lab and the underlying concepts behind the data analysis. Charles also made sure to turn in his lab reports on time, if not early, and they were always of the highest quality.

"His passion for physics, and school in general, can be seen in his attention to detail in his assignments and his willingness to take challenging classes. Throughout Charles' entire high school career, he chose to take the accelerated, honors, and AP classes rather than sticking with grade level classes that would have been easy. Even in his senior year, he continues to take difficult classes, including AP Physics 2, so he can push himself to learn more and be better prepared for college.

"I would highly recommend Charles, without any

reservations, to receive your scholarship. It will help him to continue his learning and allow him to become a successful university student and eventually a successful member of society."

For Charles, college opens doors and provides opportunities. "I have decided to major in computer science because I think though challenging, it will be a beneficial experience that will give me the skills necessary to find a job that compensates me well enough to where I can comfortably provide for a family.

"This scholarship will allow me to focus on my studies without the distractions of the financial burden that attending university places on students and their families. This will enable me to invest more time and energy in my studies. Since computer science is complex, not having to stress out about finances will definitely give me a boost in my classes. It will also afford me the time to devote to internships, networking opportunities, and other activities available in college that will give me an advantage during my job search following graduation.

"A computer degree will also give me the opportunity to give back to the community and society. A degree in computer science will enable me to contribute to solving an array of problems in the community, such as the digital divide between those who have access to technology and those who don't. Our community is already very dependent on technology, and with the variety of skills that a degree in computer science offers, I will be able to provide assistance in many fields such as health, communication, and education.

"I hope to be able to help younger students with goals similar to mine to guide them toward going to college and learning more about technology. I look forward to possibly working with local nonprofit or charity organizations in the development of solutions to local problems with the use of technology. This scholarship will surely place me in an advantageous position in serving my community and helping others around me."

Charles will be attending the University of Alabama in the fall.



ANIYA TAIS BRADLEY is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Richard Bradley, the grand-daughter of retired Carrier Square letter carrier Marion Harris, and sister of Ari Bradley who won the John Haake Scholarship in 2023. Aniya is a senior at Jackson Academy in Jackson

Mississippi where she carries a weighted cumulative grade point average of 4.00.

In addition to being a member of the National Honor's Society, Aniya is also a member of the Latin Honor Society, National English Honor Society, and the Mu Alpha Theta Math Society. Her extracurricular activities include being a member of the APAC Theatre Arts Program, Blueprint Youth Ministry, International Thespian Society, Sounds of Unity Youth Choir and Summer Reading Book Club just to name a few.

Jackson Academy social studies department Chair Dee Cooper Ball speaks highly of Aniya. "It is my pleasure to recommend this outstanding student and remarkable young lady for your scholarship. Aniya is a reserved, thoughtful young lady who is passionate about learning. I have known Aniya as a student in Advanced Placement United States and AP American Government classes during her junior and senior years at Jackson Academy. In my classroom her intellectual ability and her superb work ethic set her apart from others. Her comprehension and analysis of information show a strong understanding of often complex issues. She always has a great attitude, motivation to excel, and her assignments are done as superbly as possible. Her pursuit of excellence in my classroom has been exceptional.

"At Jackson Academy Aniya has excelled in a very competitive academic program that includes mostly Advanced Placement and honors courses. She has been recognized by the College Board as an AP Scholar, indicating that she is well prepared for higher education. Aniya is a member of the nationally prestigious Cum Laude Society. Her intellect and disciplined approach to excellence in education point to a tremendous capacity for intellectual growth.

"Aniya is a versatile young lady who is enthusiastic in all that she does. In addition to being academically gifted she is active in school, community, and church activities. The character and values that she displays on a daily basis are qualities that will lead her to be successful in college and her chosen career."

Aniya wants everyone to know that her academic path was anything but easy. "My educational journey has been anything but what I expected. Transferring to a new school after my freshman year disrupted my comfort, leaving me feeling lost for a moment. However, through this challenge, I found my bearings and emerged resilient and stronger than before. My faith in God deepened and I became more focused and confident in my pathway to becoming who I want to be. Change is not the end of the world. In fact, it often constitutes the beginning of a new journey in our lives.

"Change sets the stage for new connections, new relationships and new opportunities to grow. Change is not something to fear. Change is the space where patience, courage, and endurance and faith flourish.

"I've always been an introvert, but I've always had the confidence in my academic abilities. I've always tried to immerse myself in my studies. I may be shy, but my pursuit of excellence is always my goal. My family has always been my rock and I know that I am surrounded by love.

"It is my desire to help people feel beautiful and confident, and my aim is to pursue a degree in the field of dermatology and aesthetics. I believe that when you look good, you feel good ... and when you feel good, you "do" good ... for yourself and for others!

"I am a high performing, goal-oriented critical thinker. I carefully consider the implications of my actions before moving forward. This reflective mindset allows me to approach challenges with a strategic perspective, ensuring that I make choices that align with my long-term goals and values. As Maya Angelou once said, 'When I understood that, when I comprehended that, more than that, when I internalized that, I became courageous."

Aniya will be attending Spellman College in the fall.



JACOB ROBERT WEBSTER-BROWN is the son of Ms. Lori Brown from St. Louis, Mo., and the grandson of the late letter carrier Lawrence Brown. Jacob is a senior at Oakville High School in the Mehlville School District, where he carries a weighted

cumulative grade point average of 3.97.

Jacob recently navigated the project requirements earning 15 merit badges above and beyond the 21 merit badges necessary to obtain the rank of Eagle Scout with the Boy Scouts of America. The Eagle Scout Service Project Plan he developed titled: the Bi-State Pet Food Pantry Benches involved the design and construction of park benches. Requirements included establishing a budget, sourcing the materials, assembling a construction crew of volunteers to construct the benches, and delivering the completed project. The project was started and completed in the same day with the help of six volunteers.

Joseph Sadewasser, scout executive/CEO Eagle Scouts offered his congratulations. "Earning the Eagle badge says a lot about you. To employers, it means you have exhibited leadership skills and are willing to work hard to meet a goal. To your community, it says you have demonstrated the moral and ethical standards upon which our society was founded. To college recruiters, it says you have the desire to learn, to try new things, and to see a task through to its completion. As a fellow Eagle Scout, I can assure you that the pride you are feeling today will remain with you throughout your life, as will the foundation for success nurtured by the Scouting program. Congratulations on a job well done."

Aside from Jacob's extracurricular activities his academic credentials speak for themselves. Jacob ranks at the top of his advanced placement courses in honors biology, English, Algebra II, and history.

Oakville mathematics teacher Ronda L. Brown speaks highly of Jacob. "I have had the privilege

of knowing Jacob for a year now. He is currently enrolled in my pre-calculus course. He is a hard worker who consistently goes above and beyond what is asked of him. He is active in the community, and is very caring towards others. Jacob shows a willingness to help others in any way and is quick to do what needs to be done without being asked. He shows great determination and grit in class because he works hard to understand each concept on a deep level. I strongly believe Jacob will be a success in whatever field he chooses in his life."

Like many people his age Jacob says he's struggled much of his life trying to find his passion. "I enjoy many things, but nothing has struck me as being a lifelong job or a hobby, until my sophomore year when I took a chemistry class and I was hooked. I absorbed as much information as I could in that class, even doing extra work outside of my assignments. For once I finally found I want to do with my life. I want to be a chemist.

"I've taken several AP classes, and am currently taking an advanced pre-calculus course. My search for available colleges brought me back to Missouri University of Science and Technology where I earned several merit badges with the Boy Scouts. As I conducted my research, it was clear that Missouri S&T was the perfect school for me. Its proximity, price, and recognition fit every requirement I had set. Recently I received my acceptance letter, meaning this time next year I'll be on campus as an official Miner. I'm beyond excited.

"I wish to pursue a career in chemistry. I plan to do whatever I can to gain experience in this field. I've applied for numerous scholarships in hopes of avoiding as much college debt as possible. I come from a single income household and my mom has sacrificed a lot for me.

Outside of schooling, I wish to further explore my interests of writing, photography, and working with my hands. And I will always be involved with volunteering and giving back to my community."

# Safety & Health ... By Richard Thurman

# All carriers are required to identify animal hazards on their route and obtain an animal control agreement signed by the customer.

issouri does **not** have a statewide "dangerous dog" ordinance — instead, local governments regulate based on individual behavior. Here's how it works:

Non-compliance can lead to **fines, seizure, impoundment**, or even **humane euthanasia** in severe cases.



# 1. III State-Level Changes: Banning Breed-Specific Laws

- As of January 1, 2024, Missouri state law nullified all local breed-specific ordinances (BSL), meaning cities cannot single out breeds like Pit Bulls anymore.
- Now, localities must regulate based on each dog's actions, not its appearance.

# 2. Focus on Dangerous/Vicious Dog Behavior Most Missouri municipalities now use behavior-based ordinances. Common triggers include:

- Unprovoked attacks or bites on humans or animals,
- Menacing behavior like chasing or growling,
- A pattern or evidence of aggressive disposition For example, in **Greenwood**, **Mo.**, a dog may be declared "dangerous" if:
  - It "has bitten a human being, without provocation,"
  - It "has killed or seriously injured a domestic animal,"
  - It displays "habitually snapping, charging, growling..."

#### 3. Conditions Imposed on Owners of Dangerous Dogs

Once a dog is labeled "dangerous" (typically after an incident and due-process hearing), owners must follow strict rules, including: (See chart below)

#### 4. Examples from Missouri Cities

- Stockton: Requires locked confinement, leash/muzzle in public, signs, \$50k insurance, incident reporting within 10 days.
- **Linn Creek:** Specific enclosure details (5'x10'), photos, fluorescent collar, muzzle/leash rules, prompt reporting.
- **Marshfield:** Court can impose insurance, spay/neuter, restriction to one dangerous dog, seizure on violations.
- Mound City: \$500k insurance, photos, signage, report, transfer rules, and offspring removed within six weeks.

#### 5. Liability & "Strict Liability" for Dog Bites

Under Missouri **state law,** dog bites are governed by **strict liability** — meaning owners are financially responsible for any harm, regardless of prior knowledge. This applies even without a dangerous dog designation.

#### **✓** Bottom Line for Missouri Residents

- 1. No breed-specific bans are allowed as of Jan 1, 2024.
- 2. Local jurisdictions can classify dogs as "dangerous" based on behavior.
- Designated dogs face strict containment, muzzle/leash rules, signage, insurance, sterilization, and reporting.
- 4. Failure to comply can bring fines, confiscation, or euthanasia.
- **5. All owners** are strictly liable for any bite damage under state law.

If you are concerned about a *specific city or county,* look up the ordinance!

	Requirement	Typical Local Ordinance
	Secure confinement	Must be locked indoors or within a fenced, locked pen/enclosure
	Leash & muzzle	Required in public; leash ≤ 4–6 ft., muzzle prevents biting but allows breathing
1	Warning signs	"Beware of Dog" or similar signs posted at home & kennel
Ø	ID measures	Photographs (left & right profile) and fluorescent collars on the dog
<b>E</b> \$	Liability insurance	Policies ranging from \$50k to \$500k per incident are common
**	Spay/neuter	Courts may require sterilization
6	Reporting incidents	Owners must report biting, escape, death, or transfer of ownership

Join us at our "New" location

# ROLLING HILLS GOLF CLUB

#### **REGISTER YOUR TEAM TODAY!**



38<sup>th</sup> NALC Br. 343 Golf Tournament for Muscular Dystrophy ENTER NOW! WHEN: 8 A.M. OCTOBER 12, 2025
WHERE: ROLLING HILLS GOLF CLUB

5801 Pierce Ln. Godfrey, IL 62035

**COST:** \$85 PER PERSON (\$340 PER TEAM)

Price includes 18 holes of Golf, Electric Cart, Prizes, Refreshments, Buffet Lunch, Burger, Bratwurst, Baked Beans, Potato Salad

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 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.

Clin and Mail

- 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, Ext. 2

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PLEASE PRINT:	EMAIL
1. NAME	PHONE
2. NAME	PHONE
3. NAME	PHONE
4. NAME	PHONE

# West County Retiree ... By Pam Stepney

ey there, sisters and brothers of Branch 343. How's everybody holding up? Hopefully, upright and caffeinated. Let's talk about the latest episode in the long-running sitcom we call "route adjustments." Spoiler alert: it's not a comedy, unless you count the part where someone thought a computer could do our jobs better than humans.

Let's start with Monica Jeanis, who was gifted a new route by our digital overlords — one that has her delivering backwards down a one-way street. Yep, the computer clearly never took a driving test. And over on the business-heavy side, Kelvin Ward and Dallas Mitchell are working routes that are 92% business mail. Translation: they're expected to deliver by end-of-day ... on Mars time. Meanwhile, eight routes were axed, including Twana Gordon's, even though there were three folks with less seniority still standing. Fair? Not even close.

Rance Hope? Let's just say "Hope" is all he's got left. Not one stop of his original route survived the algorithm apocalypse. And poor Priscilla Bailey, after bending over backwards on countless details to make management look good, she got "rewarded" with a walking apartment route. Can someone please explain how this makes sense, because we're still trying to connect the dots.

And let's not forget the cherry on top: Thanks to these Frankenstein routes, customers are *barely* getting DPS and parcels. That's it. No letters, no full delivery. But guess

what is coming your way in July? A shiny new stamp price, **78 cents**. Almost a dollar to *maybe* get your mail? What a deal!

Now look, I know buying stamps and mailing letters feels like shouting into the void sometimes, especially with mail disappearing from boxes like socks in the dryer. But we're still delivering something, on good days. So why not start showing support for the service you represent? Put a stamp on it. Literally.

Now, something close to home. On May 16, St. Louis was hit hard by devastating storms that left many of our neighbors without power, homes, or peace of mind. Some of our own fellow postal workers were impacted, and now's the time for us to show them the solidarity we're known for.

Here's how you can help:

- Donate to local relief funds, such as the United Way of Greater St. Louis or the St. Louis Community Foundation.
- Contribute supplies to local shelters — essentials like bottled water, toiletries, clothing, and non-perishables go a long way.
- Check in on your coworkers — you never know who's quietly struggling. A simple "Are you okay?" can mean the world.
- Volunteer time if you're able, whether it's helping clear debris, delivering supplies, or assisting elderly neighbors.

We've been through storms, literally and figuratively, and we always

come out stronger together. Let's continue that tradition.



Speaking of things that need adjusting, how about supervisors' schedules? I mean, if a computer can flip our routes upside down, surely it can also notice which supervisors roll in late, clock out early, or take scenic naps in their cars. There's one coming in at 2 a.m. to moonlight as a clerk (or just dodge real responsibilities?), and another one who shows up just to not help. Data entry errors, misplaced gas receipts, supervisors walking around with the accountable cart like it's a parade float. Tell me again who's being held accountable?

Maybe, just maybe, if management had spent half as much time supporting carriers and customers as they did plugging numbers into a glitchy system, we wouldn't be in this mess. But here we are. Routes are scrambled, mail's arriving out of order, and carriers are calling daily with tales of undelivered chaos. Unbelievable? Nope. All too real.

#### On a more serious note:

If you're 57 with 30 years in, now might be the time to consider retirement. Why? Because that sweet little benefit called the *supplement* could vanish faster than a tray of first-class flats. This perk lets you leave before age 62 and still receive an annuity *plus* supplement pay until Social Security kicks in. Sounds good, right? Act before legislation yanks it away, again.

#### Now for something a little lighter ...

Who's ready to **march** again? No, not on management (tempting), but in the Labor Day Parade! It's happening Sunday, August 24, in Florissant. Clean uniforms, candy tossing, and all the labor solidarity your heart desires. Bring the whole crew — family, friends, pets if they behave — and show some carrier pride. Afterward, we'll head to the Knights of Columbus for some well-earned celebration. You've earned it.

Congratulations to Twana **Hackey** on her marriage to Kenny Gordon! From mail routes to matrimony, finally a union we can all celebrate. 🥕 👔

And please keep sister Nicki Prado in your thoughts as she recovers from heart surgery. We're praying for your strength and healing. Same goes for brother Ray Breakfield. Keep fighting the good fight. One day at a time, sweet Jesus.

Remember to do your best, leave the rest, don't stress, GOD bless, register to vote, exercise your right to vote, and thank you for coming.



# The Stand-In ... By Mike Laury, Retired Letter Carrier

s I write this article on Father's Day, June 15, I fondly recall some of the stories my dad has told me and my siblings about him and our grandpa Laury. On July 4, 1952, my mom and dad were married. Two weeks later, on July 17, my dad's brother Ray married my aunt Betty. Both my dad and Uncle Ray were home on leave, Dad from the Coast Guard, and my uncle from the Army. It was two frantic weeks of preparation for my Grandma Laury, and she pulled off the "double wedding" plans almost without a hitch. (Except for the two couples who did get "hitched.")

July 4 and July 17 occurred during a sweltering heatwave. During the six-hour period between weddings and receptions, both wedding parties exchanged their fancied-up clothes for swimsuits and a cool dip in Grandma and Grandpa's pool. Grandma Laury had all their clothes cleaned, dried and ready for the now fast approaching receptions those two nights. Grandma also performed two other "fuller miracles" and had each wedding dress fresh and dry as a daisy for each of the brides. Both weddings were resounding successes, thanks to Grandma Laury. Grandpa Laury's contribution was staying out of Grandma's way.

Memories are the "mortar" that strengthen and sometimes weaken the brick dwellings of our lives. On July 4, 1970, my uncle Roland phoned my dad during breakfast and had to break the news that their dad had passed away earlier that morning. It was on my mom and dad's 18th wedding

anniversary, and it was also the first time I had ever seen my dad cry.

Grandpa Laury was born on February 5, 1895, and married Charlotte in 1919. Grandpa owned his own grocery store and would let people "pay him later" during The Depression. My dad bought Grandpa's store in 1954 and sold it in 1965, after being robbed a couple of times. It was obvious by their actions that there was a deep respect and love between Dad and Grandpa, even though I never heard them speak the words "I love you" to each other.

Perhaps my favorite story was the one Dad told us about his "proposal to our mom." While out to sea in 1951, Dad had written and asked his dad to be a "stand-in" or in this case a "kneel down" and propose marriage to our mom in his absence. A couple days later, Grandpa finally worked up the nerve and knocked on my mom's apartment door. Mom seemed confused, curious and nervous as she began to fear the worst. Grandpa assured her that Dad was all right and as he painfully knelt, he opened the box with the engagement ring inside and said, "Rosemary, since Charles couldn't be here, he asked me to propose to you in his place." Mom of course said "yes" and after helping Grandpa stand back up, she gave him a big hug.

I belatedly honor both my dad and grandpa for teaching us how to love by the way they lived their lives. Dad will be 95 this November 2025. Thank you, "Pops." And to all the dads out there, I wish you in spirit and in life, "Happy Father's Day."

# Final Totals and Images from the 33rd Annual Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive May 10

FOOD COLLECTED INCLUDING CASH CONVERSION TOTALED: 144,064 LBS.





































# **BRANCH MEETING**

Branch 343, St. Louis, Missouri June 12, 2025

#### **Summary of Branch Action**

MSC	To pay the branch bills.
MSC	That the branch pay the sponsorship fee to this year's Labor Parade at the cost of \$500.
MSC	That Branch 343 say thank you to the St. Louis Area Foodbank by making an \$850 donation, for all their assistance during the Food Drive.
MSC	That the branch keeps with tradition and purchase GOOD candy to hand out to children along the parade route, not to exceed \$300.
MSC	That the branch purchase the usual black and white ½-page, (35/6" x 5") ad in the 2025 Labor Day Issue of the Labor Tribune @ a cost of \$439.

#### **Deceased Member**

Christopher Carter ..... 5/29/2025

#### **New Members**

Marcelena Bennett.	Oldham	5/2/2025
Anthony Cole	Normandy	4/18/2025
John Duffy	Sappington	5/18/2025
Micheal Flemon	Mackenzie Point	e 6/2/2025
Felicia Gaines-Johnso	nNorth County	5/9/2025
Kaylin Gordon	Des Peres	5/17/2025
Erika Greenlee	Maryville Garde	ns5/17/2025
Anthony Marler	Mackenzie Point	e 5/9/2025
Steven Mumbowa	Sikeston	5/9/2025
Camille Smith	Normandy	4/18/2025
Rosa Tate		
Taneal Whitfield	,	
Jerred Wooten	Ferguson	5/2/2025

# **Recently Retired Members**

Alvan Gaus	Union	5/30/2025
Jesse Montgome	ryGravois	5/30/2025
_	Park Hills	

# BRANCH MEETING ATTENDANCE PRIZES

1.	Cardinals vs Cincinnati Reds	June 22	Camille Smith, Coyle
2.	Cardinals vs Chicago Cubs	June 24	Michael Goheen, Creve Coeur
3.	Cardinals vs Washington Nats	July 8	Pamela Stepney, Retired
4.	Cardinals vs Washington Nats	July 9	Richard Brown, West Co.
5.	Cardinals vs Washington Nats	July 10	Marvin Booker, Union Hall
	50/50   120 RAFFLE   120	¢.F.O	Channa Dandla Carriar Carrara

\$58

BRANCH LEGAL PLAN

Advice and Consultation on General Practice and Civil Actions.



JOHN H. GOFFSTEIN
ATTORNEY

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Shonna Randle, Carrier Square

### **Highlights**

The meeting was called to order at 7:34 p.m. The invocation and pledge of allegiance were led by Chet Drain and the minutes were read by Recording Secretary Richard Brown and accepted.

NBA's Report, Dave Teegarden: Dave had everyone go to the NALC website using their cell phones. You would use the menu button and go to "take action" to send the message to your Senator regarding the Reconciliation Bill (FERS Retirement Plan). Dave also advised us to look at the News & Info section on the website, which has a special "National Agreement issue" of the Activist which has detailed information about the new contract.

**Retirees Report,** *Tom Schulte:* Greetings from the 30 in attendance at the last meeting. Tom thanked Dave and the NBA's office for providing lunch.

Labor Council Report, Pam Stepney: Pam spoke about John's speech at the last Labor Council meeting. She also talked about the council's purpose and how members of Local 42 gathered in North City to assist the tornado victims with clean-up. There will be a protest on June 14, and the information can be found on the Labor Council's website.

MBA Report, Saronda Sutherland: Saronda spoke on a new Roth IRA plan that is available through MBA, and she has pamphlets available for information.

**Health Benefit Report,** Barry Linan: Barry asked everyone to consider joining the NALC Health Plan during the open season. If you are already in the plan, sign-up for Hello Heart and you can get a free monitor if you have heart or diabetes issues.

Mound City Carrier Report, Tom Schulte: Tom spoke on Ole Timers Day and the awards given to the various members. He also reminded us of the upcoming retirement seminar on July 13, which will be held at the Union Hall and run between 10 a.m. - 2:30 p.m. Lunch will be provided.

Safety and Health Report, Richard Thurman: Richard thanked those who contributed to the Disaster Relief Fund. He talked about the number of people who have reached out to him that were affected by the tornado and the number of emergencies this year. Richard advised everyone to log items that are in their home, in the event of another disaster. Richard also spoke on the number of dog attacks this year. He

then spoke on the heat safety training which is supposed to be a class that we all are to have.

**OWCP Report,** Barry Linan: Barry advised all to go to ecomp. dol.gov to set up an account just in case you are injured on the job. He also advised that your claim can be filed directly on that site. Barry encouraged everyone to participate in TSP to enhance their retirement income.

Trustees Report, La'Tecse Litteken: Books audited and found in good standing.

**Executive Vice President/Treasurer Report, Brian Lit**teken: Brian reported that the portion of the Big Beautiful Bill which included the increase to FERS contributions has been stripped from the bill. However, they are trying to eliminate the payment of stewards by the post office. Brian spoke on the new overtime lists and rules. He also referred to the "New Employee Retention Program" and how it works. The new database will be up and running next week for the officers at the Union Hall to use. It will be opened for Step A stewards to use in a couple of weeks.

**Vice President/Financial Secretary Report,** Marvin Booker: Marvin read his report and spoke on the food drive, stating that we collected about 144,000 pounds this year. We could have done better, but he found that some of the cards were never delivered, just as a lot of food was never picked up.

**President's Comments,** John McLaughlin: We have been attempting to negotiate the St. Louis Installation LMOU, and the postmaster chose not to engage. Some of the things management has proposed is to eliminate first phase vacation bidding by installation, and to change the process by which we bid for vacation selections. He referenced the number of routes eliminated from the last inspections (14-Maryville, 13-Southwest and 8-West County). Management wants to put some routes back into Affton because of their faulty adjustments. Documentation has been requested at each unit, but most of it has not been provided. The Labor Parade will be in August, and we are looking to put a couple of trucks in the parade. We also want to have people carry the Hell No banner and the Haake banner. There will be refreshments at the end of the parade.

> Respectfully Submitted, Richard Brown, Recording Secretary

# Citizen Activism for Democracy ... By Mike Weir

hat do you do when you have a wannabe dictator as president and a Congress unwilling (or politically incapable) of asserting their own power under the Constitution to "reign" him in? If you are a concerned citizen, you show up to protest against the rampant abuse of executive power, and to advocate for a return to the principles of our democracy and the rule of law which have defined our country for 249 years. On June 14, that is exactly what millions of our fellow citizens did throughout the United States.

The "No Kings" protests were scheduled to coincide with the parade in Washington, D.C., to celebrate the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the U.S. Army. (The official date of birth of the United States of America is July 4, 1776, which is the date that the Continental Congress issued the Declaration of Independence. However, the Army has been in existence for 250 years, having been founded on June 14, 1775, as the Continental Army.) Certainly, celebrating this milestone anniversary was a worthy undertaking. Unfortunately, President Trump was more interested in celebrating his birthday (same day), so he insisted on having an extravagant parade which cost taxpayers at least \$45 million. (Apparently, cutting costs for benefits that citizens need to survive is okay, while cutting costs for over-the-top events to cater to the president's ego is inappropriate.) As a result, the military parade was marked by low turnout and even lower energy. By contrast, in the St. Louis Metropolitan Area alone, thousands of patriotic citizens turned out at several different sites in coordination with the more than 5 million citizens who rallied across the nation during the "No Kings" protests.

I joined the protest in Ballwin at Weidman and Manchester Roads. This was the second protest in this area and was chosen because 2nd District Representative Ann Wagner's office is located there. Of course, Representative Wagner did not join us at the protest. (Actually, she has never shown up to interact with her constituents at any time since she became our representative in 2013.) I was proud to join nearly 7,000 fellow citizen activists who lined both sides of Manchester Road for several miles. There was so much energy and goodwill among the protesters and the people in their cars passing by that



the mood was infectious. The two hours we were scheduled to be there seemed to fly by. We bonded over our shared concerns for the welfare of our fellow citizens and the preservation of our democracy. The protest was well organized and very peaceful. People carried many different signs reflecting their angst over the various policies and actions of the Trump administration over the last five months. A short summary of these messages included: No one is above the law; Support immigrants, Deport fascists; The only orange monarch we want is a butterfly; Draft dodgers don't deserve a military parade; If we wanted ICE in the summer, we'd go to Quik Trip; We have a Constitution, not a king; and When the Rich and the Racist try to rule the rest of us, RESIST! Drivers and passengers in the cars passing by had their own signs, waved American flags, and honked their horns in support of our efforts. During the entire time I was there, I only saw three middle fingers thrust in our direction. It appears that recent polls are accurately reflecting the mood of the electorate toward Mr. Trump and his illegal, unethical, and unconstitutional edicts.

Meanwhile, the Senate continues to work on Trump's "Big, Beautiful Bill" (which is anything but that). The House sent them their version of the legislation which, as we have noted in previous articles, extends and enhances the 2017 tax breaks for the wealthy and corporate America and provides crumbs for the rest of us. This legislation will accelerate the trend of shifting wealth away from the

# Political Action Honor Roll

RICHARD RHYNER★★★★ JOE FITZJARRELL★★★★ ART BUCK★★★ TONY JASPER★★★ LYNN RAY PRATT★★★ IN MEMORY OF JIM ROBERTS★★★ MIKE WEIR★★★

CATHERINE CIARAMITARO★★

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JOE CANMAN★ BEVE CREELY★ ROBERT EVERS★ SAMUEL GOODMAN★ GENO IBERG★ LAURA KEIM★ MEAGHAN LAKEY★ BILL LISTER★

JOHN McLAUGHLIN★ IN MEMORY OF JOSEPH P. REGAN★ MICHAEL RHODES SR.★ TOM SCHULTE★ PAMELA STEPNEY★ NBA DAVID TEEGARDEN★ DEAN WERNER★

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ROY HATCHARD JR. LAWRENCE McHAYNES JR. SHONNA RANDLE

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middle class and the poor and upward toward the billionaires and millionaires in our country. (I wonder if the billionaires who contributed so much money to Trump's reelection campaign were aware this would happen ...?) Additionally, as with many pieces of legislation, it is lengthy, complex and has other provisions buried in its pages that usually do not come to light until after it becomes law.

In the House's version, there is a provision to limit federal courts' ability to enforce injunctions, therefore undermining their capacity to do anything if and when the Trump regime violates a court order. This is bad enough; however, it seems that the Senate has decided to take this approach to a whole new level. Their version would force people to pay large sums of money (millions or even billions of dollars in some cases) before a court could temporarily block an illegal federal policy. This would price everyday people, families, unions, public interest groups, etc. out of the courtroom. They would not be able to get urgent legal protection, even if a Trump policy caused them serious harm, unless they could afford to pay a bond

big enough to cover government's alleged costs. So far, federal courts have been the only effective check against Trump's illegal and unconstitutional actions. These provisions would hasten the transformation of the president to an autocrat and our country to an oligarchy.

There is no question that we are living in dangerous times. If we do not remain vigilant, engaged, and willing to stand up for our rights and our freedoms, we could very well lose them. Protests such as those on June 14 are an important means to express our concerns. Calling and writing our Senators and Representatives at the state and federal levels are important tools as well. And, unfortunately, when it comes to moving the political needle, money speaks as loudly as everything else. Please contribute to the Branch 343 PAC Fund and the Letter Carrier Political Fund. If you want to save our jobs, protect our families and preserve our democracy, join us in this fight. I hope to see you on the front lines at a future event!

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1st Wednesday of the month. Lunch at noon, meeting at 12:45 pm

> Deadline for articles for the AUGUST issue is JULY 14, 2025

> > \* \* \*

REGULAR BRANCH MEETING THURSDAY, JULY 10, 2025 7:30 pm

\* \* \*

SHOP STEWARDS MEETING THURSDAY, AUGUST 7, 2025 7:30 PM

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