

THE LETTER CARRIER REPORTER



CARL J KENNEDY BRANCH PROUDLY SERVING

TUCSON • GREEN VALLEY • SIERRA VISTA • CASA GRANDE • SAFFORD
DOUGLAS • GLOBE • WILLCOX • COOLIDGE • SAN MANUEL • MIAMI • BISBEE

April 2023

**Website: www.nalcbranch704.org
Email: nalcbranch704@outlook.com**

Printed by Branch 704

FOOD DRIVE SATURDAY MAY 13!



COMMUNITY
FOOD BANK
OF SOUTHERN ARIZONA

3003 S. Country Club Rd
Tucson, AZ 85713
Phone (520) 622-0525 | Fax (520) 624-6349

Thank you for all you do in the Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive!

The second Saturday of May is always amazing to us. It is the biggest food drive of the year; astounding for us to see so much food come in. And it only happens because of your hard work.

The National Association of Letter Carriers' Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive stands out as a hugely successful food drive year after year.

This year, we hope to collect 250,000 pounds of food for our community!

That's only possible because of your effort to put in the extra work that day. We know you are already busy handling your regular job duties. When you step forward to willingly pick up the bags of food left at mailboxes, you make a difference that is felt throughout our community.

"Letter carriers are the true heroes of this food drive," says Charm Liggins, Community Events Manager at the Food Bank. "It's incredible to watch truck after truck come in loaded with food to be sorted at the post office stations."

Your hard work on Saturday, May 13th, helps bring in enough food to keep us going during the critical summer months. And with families hit hard by rising food prices, that makes an enormous impact across the five counties we serve.

We're so grateful for your participation!

Thank you for the important role you play in helping our community that day.

**NEXT UNION MEETING FIRST THURSDAY OF THE MONTH: April 6th
Meeting will begin promptly at 7:00PM**

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

I would like to take this opportunity to invite you to attend Branch 704 Letter Carrier Picnic at Kennedy Park (Fiesta Section) 3700 S Mission Rd Tucson from 11:00 am to 3:00pm Sunday April 16, 2023. Over the past few years quite a few carriers have retired and a lot of new CCAs have been hired creating new regulars in Tucson. We all work each day doing our jobs and management doesn't allow time in the office in the mornings to have an opportunity to be social with each other making it hard to hang out and just have time to create friendships.

I have been asked by quite a few carriers to have a picnic so we can all be together, have some time to hang out with family and letter carriers doing something other than work. With the pandemic the last couple of years it's been impossible to provide this to you.

I would like to take this opportunity to invite you and your families out to or Branch 704 Letter Carrier Picnic. Admission will be 5.00 dollars a ticket, each ticket will be placed in a raffle for prizes and is your ticket for food. There will be games and activities for the kids with prizes, tournaments with prizes for the winners along with bragging rights for the adults, music, speakers from National, a fundraiser for MDA and information that you can take to read about the NALC.

The most important thing we hope you take is the comradeship of being amongst other letter carriers and their families having fun. The stewards will be selling tickets at the stations and retired carriers can call the branch office for tickets. The more that come the nicer the prizes so bring your family and join us in a day of friendship.

Route Inspection are underway at **Mountain View** 2/25/23 to 3/03/23 using the TIEREAP process. This is the process were there will be no manager counting you in the morning or following you on the street, instead all the information will be provided thru your clock rings and the information from your scanner. the next Station scheduled are as follows:

1. **Green Valley Main Office** (85614) – Live Week: MAR 18 – 24 (Postpone)

2. **Tucson Desert Foothills** (85718) – Live Week: APR 29 – MAY 5 (Postpone)

3. **Tucson Sun Station** (85716) – Live Week: APR 29 – MAY 5

Just before the printing of this newsletter we received notice that **Green Valley** and **Desert Foothills** would be postponed until the fall of 2023, due in part to over scheduling. When I receive any news of the exact dates I will inform everyone.

February 22, 2023 NALC and the Postal Service open negotiations for sixteenth collective bargaining agreement. We have had quite a lot of changes in the postal Service the past couple of years. Some of the changes: pandemic, new CCAs, new Regulars, two national elections and the crucial roles letter carriers played in the successful delivery of vote by mail ballots, 12-year effort to finally enact bipartisan postal reform that protected this invaluable network by repealing the pre-funding mandate, which had burdened the Postal Service for over a decade, Postmaster General 10 year plan, to name a few. With all of this as the backdrop for NALC to go to negotiations with the USPS, all we can hope that our National Officers know they have our support.

Retiree **Royce Kelly** is trying something different in the newsletters, in the last month newsletters he put in randomly placed vouchers, that were redeemable for Fry's gift cards. Sadly, there were no winners. So what is the takeaway of this? Randomly, Royce may place surprises in the newsletter, so make sure to open it and read it you never know what you might find.

In Solidarity

Kathy Walter

**ALL LETTER CARRIERS AND
THEIR FAMILIES:**

**Join us on April 16th, 2023 from
11:00am to 3:30pm for the First
NALC Branch 704 Picnic!**

FROM THE DESK OF THE VICE PRESIDENT

Its April and it is the start of Spring! Which means the weather will be getting warmer and warmer. Please make sure you use plenty of suntan lotion, wear sunglasses and a hat and drink plenty of water. Your safety is extremely important!

Did you know that everyone had to go to the post office to get mail—until the Civil War helped change one man's mind?

In 1863, Free City Delivery—i.e., free delivery of mail at your home—was first launched in Cleveland, Ohio. Joseph Briggs, a postal clerk at the Cleveland Post Office, is said to have come up with the idea over the previous winter when he saw so many women customers who were forced to wait in long lines at the post office, freezing and fretting, since the only way to get news of their loved ones fighting in the war was via the mail. His Free City Delivery idea was such a success that it quickly spread to other cities before becoming a national norm. What's more, Civil War veterans got first dibs on applying for the newly created mail carrier jobs. One other postal innovation prompted by the Civil War was the creation of money orders, so that the Union soldiers could send their money home safely.

A very important event occurred during the period of March 18 thru March 25, 1970 that every present and future Postal Employee should appreciate! Time magazine had the headline that read "The strike that stunned the country." What was it? It was the US Postal Strike of 1970. The strike lasted eight days. **President Nixon** called out the United States armed forces and the National Guard in an attempt to break the strike and to help process the mail. The strike crippled the nation's mail system. The stock market fell due to the strikes's effect on trading volume. Some feared that the stock market would have to close entirely.

The strike began in New York City and spread across the country. The strike against the federal government was regarded as illegal and the largest wildcat strike in US history. It led to the first national postal stoppage in the US. Approximately 200,000 workers participated in the strike. It was the first and largest walkout ever against the Federal Government.

What caused the strike? At the time, postal workers were not permitted by law to engage in collective bargaining. Striking postal workers felt wages were low, benefits poor and working conditions unhealthy and unsafe. A lot of postal workers actually qualified for food stamps. The US Post Office Department's management was outdated and, according to the workers, hazardous. Postal union lobbying of Congress had proven fruitless. Some could

call it collective begging. But, the immediate trigger for the strike was a Congressional decision to raise the wages of postal workers by only 4%, while Congress raised their own pay by 41%.

The result of the strike was that the Post Office Department finally figured out it needed postal workers. It went into serious bargaining with the postal unions. Within one day, they reached a preliminary agreement and the postal workers went back on the job. After, a final agreement was hammered out a month later, the postal workers won a 6% wage increase. That summer, President Nixon signed the Postal Reorganization Act giving postal workers an additional 8% raise.

The Postal Reorganization Act of 1970 transformed the post office into the more corporate United States Postal Service and guaranteed collective bargaining rights (though not the right to strike). Postal workers and the unions earned the right to bargain collectively for wages, benefits and working conditions. Postal workers and the union also achieved a binding arbitration process for resolving contract disputes.

The point to this overall is all the improvement to postal workers' salary and working conditions because of the union and its members! I urged all NALC members to recruit co-workers to join the union! The more members we have the more powerful the union becomes.

We are lucky to have a member who was involved in the strike! His name is **Ray Root!** If you should see him please go up to him and thank him for what he and the other strikers did for us and our union!

Please, as a member become more involved in our branch and the union. You can volunteer to become trainers for the new CCAs at your station. Volunteer at the branch office, learn about NALC history, attend branch meetings in person or through Zoom, become a customer connect coordinator or a food drive coordinator for the branch or your station. Sign up to receive updates about legislative activities that affect postal workers and their families and then contact our legislative representatives to ask them to vote for or against the bill. Remember that Congress, the Senate and the President can wipe out all that you and the union has achieved with the passage of legislative action and a signature!!!

Please be safe and drink plenty of water!

In Solidarity,
Mark Follet
Vice President

Chaplain's Corner

Discovering the value of eternal investments

Its no secret that society today has a preoccupation with possessions and money. We're constantly bombarded with the lie that we will never have enough. But in the scheme of things, will all of our stuff amount to much more than a hill of beans? The Bible makes it clear that money and things will ultimately never satisfy. "You cant take it with you" may be a cliché, but its true. The good news is that God loves us for who we are, not what we own. "If we have enough food and clothing, let us be content" (**1 Timothy 6:8**). Spend your energy and time investing in pursuits that pay eternal dividends. The rate of return is out of this world! Don't store up treasures here on earth, where moths eat them and rust destroys them, and where thieves break in and steal. Store your treasures in heaven, where moths and rust cannot destroy, and thieves do not break in and steal. Where your treasure is, there the desires of your heart will also be. **Matthew 6:19-21**

Taken from *God is good, y'all! Inspirations To Bless Your Heart*

Ken Peterson Editor , Tyndall House Publishers Inc.

Blessings to All,

Rick Evans

520-248-9643

Chaplain



CALENDAR DATES

Branch Meeting

Thursday, April 6th, 7:00pm

Steward's Meeting

Thursday, April 13th, 5:30pm

E-Board Meeting

Thursday, April 27th, 6pm

NALC Letter Carrier's Picnic

Sunday, April 16, 2023

11am – 3:30

NALC National Food Drive

Saturday May 13, 2023

Condolences

To Jorge Sonoqui on the loss of your mother

To Rene Garcia on the loss of your Mother-in-law

To Katherine Guerena on the loss of your Grandson

To the family of Branch Member- Caroline Kriesen

Contract Talk

THE FAMILY MEDICAL LEAVE ACT (FMLA)

The Family Medical Leave Act was signed into law on February 5, 1993 by President Clinton. FMLA is an act to protect you from absences from work because of a serious illness to you or a family member. As an employee of the USPS, you are eligible for coverage under FMLA. Additionally, in order to be eligible, you must have worked for the USPS for twelve months. Second, you have to have a minimum of 1250 hours worked during the past year. Third, the facility you work in must have a minimum of 50 workers within a 75 miles radius from the facility where the employee requesting leave under the FMLA currently serves. So, even as a USPS employee, if you do not meet the employment requirements you will not be eligible for protection under FMLA.

Employees are entitled to a maximum of 12 weeks per year. It can be taken all at once or intermittently during the entire year. They are not paid, you have to use your own leave. For your own case, you can use your own annual leave, sick leave or leave without pay. For a serious illness of a family member you can use up to 80 hours of dependent care sick leave then you will need to use your annual leave after that period. All FMLA leave is protected federally and cannot be cited against you or used for any

type of disciplinary purposes. Use the proper PS Form 3971 to annotate all approved leave and to protect yourself from it being improperly recorded by management as an unscheduled absence.

Qualifying reasons for FMLA are the birth of a newborn child, fostering or adopting a child. Others include any type of illness that keeps you out more than three days and requires an antibiotic. Most surgeries are approved in advance. Any potential qualifying reasons has to explain what the serious medical condition is, how long it's going to last and further-

more about how much time per day, week or month you are potentially going to be absent from work . If you have a case where you missed 10 days because of a viral infection that would be a one-time case number for ten days to excuse you from that absence. If you have an ongoing issue with a bad knee, you may have an open ended FMLA case number because you are using it intermittently. Another example, is when you have Migraines, you would have an open ended FMLA case number because you would use it intermittently. You can have more than one case number open at a time. Each case number is specific to the condition that has been approved.

In order to get your conditions approved you must get FMLA paperwork. You can trigger FMLA paperwork thru calling the sick line (ERMS Line), management or your steward. The Office of Personnel Management (OPM)

forms consist of four pages. However, the NALC has developed simple one and two-page forms that can be used to file a claim under FMLA. Go to nalc.org and search for FMLA. You will be directed to several links to each form that you would need to fill out. The forms come with an instruction page that will walk you through the process which includes information

about the person with the medical condition and the medical facts surrounding the case that the doctor will write up and sign.

One important thing to note is that one of the questions asked of the doctor is how long the condition will likely persist. The folks at the FMLA office that approve these cases do not like answers like, "forever," "indeterminate," and "lifetime." So please ask your doctor to set a time limit and if necessary, the form can be updated when that time period is over. As long as the form is fully filled out and a medical profes-

FROM THE PEN OF THE SERGEANT-AT-ARMS

If you are reading this newsletter, I say fantastic. In the March newsletter I randomly placed coupons redeemable for Fry's gift cards and none of them were claimed. Did you not read it? Might the letter carrier forgot to deliver yours? Did your dog eat it? Or maybe you were just plain tired? Whatever the reason, I forgive you. Just keep a look-out and read your newsletter. You never know.

Royce

CONTRACT TALK...cont.

sional signs the document, there should not be any issue having your claim approved.

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Once the paperwork is complete you can mail it to the HRSSC, FMLA Western, PO Box 970910, Greensboro NC 24797-0910 or FAX the form to Western Area HRSSC FMLA; 1 (651) 456-6071. If you do not have access to a FAX machine, you can bring it by the Union hall and we will be happily fax it for you.

Please note that approval is not necessary when adding a new child to your family. Whether by birth, adoption, or placement into foster care, and employee is simply notifying management of the happy event and letting them know that they will be taking time off to bond with the new arrival! I would suggest filling out NALC Form 6: Employee's Notification of New Child in the Family and PS Form 3971 to make them aware that you will be using FMLA and the time period in which you will be off work. (Note: this time off would be covered by annual leave and/or LWOP.) If taken as one block of time, management has no recourse but to accept that you will be absent, tending to your new family member. The time can also be spread out over the course of one year, but in that case, management would have to agree to the scheduled absences in advance.

NALC has six (6) forms that cover FMLA conditions/reasons that you can print nalc.org. They are the following:

NALC Form 1: Medical Certification-Employee's Own Serious Health Condition.

NALC Form 2: Medical Certification-Family Member's Serious Health Condition.

NALC Form 3: Certification of Qualifying Exigency for Military Family Leave.

NALC Form 4: Certification for Serious Injury or Illness of Current Covered Service Member for Military Caregiver.

NALC Form 5: Certification for Serious Injury or Illness of a Veteran for Military Care Giver Leave.

NALC Form 6: Employee's Notification of New Child in the Family.

Military Qualifying Exigency Leave: The Postal Ser-

vice must grant an eligible employee up to 12 workweeks of FMLA leave during the 12-month FMLA leave period for qualifying exigencies that arise out of the fact that the employee's spouse, son, daughter or parent, who is a member of the regular Armed Forces, National Guard, Reserves, or a retired member of the Regular Armed Forces or Reserves, is under a call or order to covered active duty (or notification of an impending call or order to covered active duty) during the deployment of the member with the Armed Forces to a foreign country. For those military members in the National Guard or Reserves, the call to active duty must also be in support of a contingency operation.

Military Care giver leave: The Postal Service must grant an eligible employee who is a spouse, son, daughter, parent or next of kin of a covered service member or covered veteran with a serious injury or illness up to a total of 26 workweeks of leave during a Single 12-month period to care for the covered service member or covered veteran. While the 12-month period for every other category of FMLA leave coincides with the postal leave year, the 12-month period for military care giver leave begins on the date that the eligible employee first takes military care giver leave.

Fraternally,

Mark Follet

Vice President



RETIREE REPORT

On Sunday April 16th, our branch will host a spring picnic for all active and retired carriers along with their families. It will be held at Kennedy Park on Ajo Way just west of Mission Road. The special events area of the park has been reserved for our use. It is located in the southwest area of the park and the entrance can be accessed from Ajo Way just west of La Cholla Boulevard. We will have use of the area from 11am till 330pm. Many activities are planned, including corn hole, face painting, and jumping castles for the children. Food and non-alcoholic beverages will be provided. Tickets and information can be obtained by calling the branch office (520) 323-2117. Hope to see you there.

Again I would like to thank all the retirees who volunteer their valuable time to the branch and assist in the completion of many tasks, including the preparation for mailing of the monthly newsletter. Be well, stay safe.

In Solidarity,

Art Higven

520 304-4196

HEALTH BENEFITS REPORT

Heart disease is the leading cause of death for both men and women. You can make healthy changes to lower your risk of developing heart disease. Controlling and preventing risk factors is also important for people who already have heart disease.

To lower your risk:

- * watch your weight
- * quit smoking and stay away from secondhand smoke
- * control your cholesterol and blood pressure
- * if you drink alcohol, drink in moderation
- * get active and eat healthy

Heart Attack and Stroke Symptoms: Warning Signs

Heart Attack Symptoms

Chest Discomfort - most heart attacks involve discomfort in the center of the chest that lasts more than a few minutes, or that goes away and comes back. It can feel like uncomfortable pressure, squeezing, fullness, or pain. Discomfort in other areas of the upper body - can include pain or discomfort in one or both arms, the back, neck, jaw, or stomach.

Shortness of breath - with or without chest discomfort

Other signs may include breaking out in a cold sweat, nausea, or lightheadedness

Stroke Symptoms Spot a stroke *F.A.S.T.*

Face Drooping Does one side of the face droop or is it numb? Ask the person to smile.

Arm Weakness Is one arm weak or numb? Ask the person to raise both arms. Does one arm drift downward?

Speech Difficulty Is speech slurred, are they unable to speak, or are they hard to understand? Ask the person to repeat a simple sentence, like "the sky is blue." Is the sentence repeated correctly?

Time to Call 9-1-1 If the person shows any of these symptoms, call 9-1-1 and get them to the hospital immediately.

Make your health a Priority.

Amber Underwood

520.323.2117

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF LETTER CARRIERS

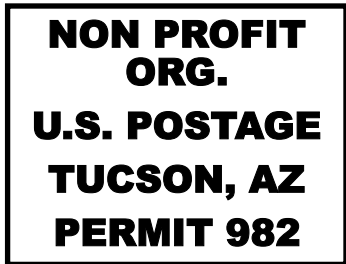
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April 2023



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