



CARL J. KENNEDY BRANCH 704

THE LETTER CARRIER REPORTER

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August 2019

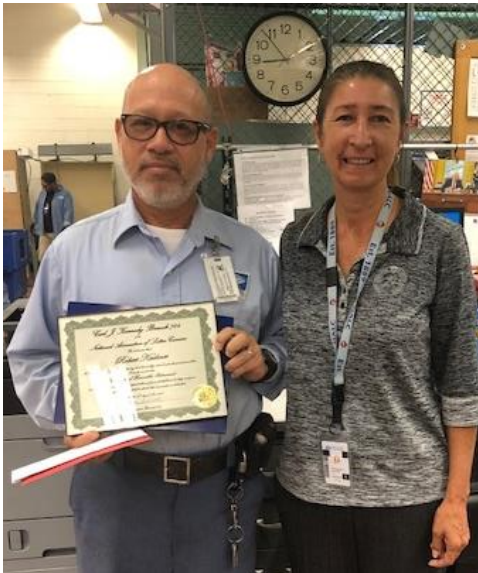
Email Address: nalcbranch704@outlook.com

Printed by Branch 704

CONGRATULATIONS...

On Your Retirement!

Robert Kushner
Sun Station



Steven McKinney
Coronado Station

Not Pictured

On Your Conversion!

Jason Breeden

Eric Lopez

Michael Williams

For Being a Gerald Patrick Gaskin Scholarship Winner!

Mia Coca from Br. 1902

Morgan Decker from Br. 1902

Brandon Willmon from Br. 704

WEBSITE: www.nalcbranch704.org

**Branch Meeting Thursday August 1, 2019 is
to begin promptly at 7:00 pm.**

President's Report

Dear Brothers and Sisters,
Hope everyone had a great 4th of July with family and friends. The Tucson Postmaster informed me that zones 10 Rincon, 15 Ft Lowell, 16 Sun, 18 Desert Foothills, 04 Casas Adobe and 30 Rincon will be going through route inspections in the spring. Coronado lost 3 routes; Sun lost 1½ routes and San Xavier added 1 route. When management does route inspections it is not for the main part to add routes but to eliminate routes. Everyone should be concerned about their routes and what plans management has for conducting 170 route inspections in Tucson. The Union is continuing to train stewards on route inspections to insure everyone is fairly represented, and the route inspection procedures are upheld. I encourage all letter carriers Regular or CCAs to work your routes the way you are paid to work the routes. This includes following all the regulations that go with delivering mail and staying safe out on the street. If routes are under 7:50 hours management has been given instructions to eliminate the route. We could be looking at losing a minimum of 9 to more routes in Tucson. This will impact routes available for bid as carrier will stay on their routes longer, less routes for converting to regular, longer routes on the street especially after summer when winter visitors come back and the holiday season. As you remember routes before automation used to be 500-700 deliveries then after automation, the routes were 800-1200 deliveries; some routes at Coronado are 1300-1500 deliveries.

Some of the reasons for the increase in deliveries was automation. Other reasons include mail volume that has dropped, now we lost Amazon parcels and at this point have not rebounded from the loss of parcels. If management has the route inspections in September, the data they will be able to get for the 8 weeks analysis will be as far back as November of 2018 excluding June, July, August and December to get a street time for adjustments. We must all do our job to the best of our ability following all the rules and safety. If you're not sure what you are supposed to do, the M-41 is in your route book and has the descriptions of your job. Education for stewards to represent you is important but you taking the time to read what your job is and know what the rules are helps us to represent you because you can let your steward know when management doesn't do it right. We will need your help to ensure these coming route inspections go as fairly possible.

I want to thank interim vice president Claudio Retes for his hard work at the branch office. Claudio is willing to learn new areas and is a good listener. His interest and enthusiasm in union projects is a very good asset to the branch. Claudio brings youth and energy to the branch; I hope you have been able to get to know him, also through his news articles or at meetings. I

appreciate having the opportunity to work with Claudio and get to know him better.

As of July, I have appointed Pat Toms to the position of interim vice president for the next three months. He is the shop steward at Rincon (for last 3 years). I look forward to the opportunity to work with him.

The Rap Session will be held August 9-11, I will be attending and bring back news of what President Fred Rolando will be imparting back to the next branch meeting.

The Penalty Overtime Exclusion period for 2019 will begin on November 30, 2019 through December 27, 2019. The notice is scheduled to be published in the October 10th Postal Bulletin.

Our NBA Officers have sent a sincere thanks for our dedication and hard work in organizing the CCAs for our Region. We are now 4th out of 15 regions in the country. The three regions in front of us are huge union strong locations (Chicago, Boston & California). Good job everyone; let's make sure we keep it up.

The Gerald Gaskin Scholarship had three winners this year. 1st drawing **Mia Coca**, Branch 1902, 2nd drawing **Morgan Decker** Branch 1902, and 3rd drawing **Brandon Willmon** Branch 704. Congratulations to all three winners of this year's \$1000.00 Gerald Gaskin Scholarship Awards.

I also want to thank CCA **Karen Harrington**, who took time on her n/s day to straighten out our uniforms. You are appreciated!

With the heat in full swing, please make sure you are hydrating and taking care of your health. Stay Safe!

In Solidarity
Kathy Walter

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

Vice President Article

No matter who you are, no matter what office you work in and no matter how long you have performed the duties of a letter carrier, we all want to avoid accidents, and injury. For those that have had the misfortune of being involved in a motor vehicle accident or have sustained an injury while in the performance of their duties, can attest to the life altering position they find themselves in, when these instances occur. And while all the issues that I speak to in this article are obvious, it becomes an entirely different circumstance when you must live through these events. A shift in the Postal Service's culture of making safety as important as the mail we deliver, and the paychecks we earn must take place in order for safety to truly take root.

The demands on letter carriers these days, for all intents and purposes, are of a time sensitive nature. You are required to perform countless duties efficiently and effectively, to the best of your ability. But as we know, the demands of this job can put some in situations where they are faced with making up time. Rushing the work while scanning, and delivering packages, climbing stairs, driving a vehicle, walking, and for some running routes, and skipping your lunch and breaks, create a heightened environment for accidents and injury to happen. When management messages safety, they use many different platforms to promote safety. They include office safety meetings, service talks, office and street observations, utilizing peer observations, videos, posters, and data. It is my belief that management wants a safe work environment, but somewhere along the way they shot that message in the foot.

For a multitude of reasons, we have problems retaining new hires, but clearly one of them is the pressures of getting mail delivered in a stressful, time sensitive environment. And for the rest of the letter carriers, in the offices, or in the streets, the operation takes precedence over safety more times than not.

As our union has tried to relate this concept for years, at all levels, it seems mostly to fall on deaf ears. But at some point, you must practice what you preach if you are truly committed to safe working conditions. We are all aware that accidents and injuries come at a great cost to the employer, but from our perspective the

losses are even greater: injury, pain, suffering, loss of wages and the uncertainty that comes with all of it. A hard look has to take place, and a balance struck between paying wages, and paying workmen's compensation, between setting new employees up for success, or failure.

Preaching safety or practicing it? Management cannot have it both ways. But with all that said, we as letter carriers cannot accept, or expect for safety to just happen. We can lead by example in what we do in our own offices, and in the way we safely perform our duties. By guiding our CCAs to work responsibly and stressing the importance of safety on the job, even at home, should be a priority. It is our responsibility to question management's policies when they talk out of both sides of their mouth. The more we do as letter carriers to promote safety with our peers, the more important it will become. Talk is cheap, but it can be quite costly for all employees when we have an accident, or injury. Let's make every effort to show management that a real commitment to safety matters to all of us.

In Union Solidarity,
Claudio Retes
Vice President

Meeting Dates

**Branch Meeting-Thursday,
Aug 1, 2019 @ 7:00 pm**

**Stewards Meeting-Thursday,
Aug 15, 2019 @ 5:30 pm**

**Exec Board Meeting-Thursday,
Aug 29, 2019 @ 6:00 pm**

Formal Step-A Report

During the month of June, 25 grievances were resolved at the Formal Step-A level. A summary of the settled grievances is listed below:

FORMAL STEP-A:

- Settled 5 Letters of Warning by getting 4 reduced to an Official Discussion and 1 reduced to a 3-month L.O.W.
- Settled 2 7-Day Suspensions by getting 1 Seven Day Suspension reduced to an official discussion and 1 reduced to a 1-year Letter of Warning.
- Settled 2 14-Day Suspensions by getting both reduced to a 1-year Letter of Warning.
- Settled 4 16.7 emergency placements by getting the emergency placements rescinded and the carriers paid for work hours missed (**Total: \$5504.18**)
- Settled 6 grievances for management performing bargaining unit work by getting carriers who should have done the work paid. (**Total: \$1209.65**).
- Settled 4 grievances where management improperly forced non-ODL carriers to work overtime by getting those carriers paid the appropriate premium payment and ODL carriers paid for the missed opportunities (**Total: \$6384.75**).
- Settled 2 grievances where management failed to allow a carrier to work the schedule and hours of the opt by getting that carrier paid (**Total: \$374.92**).
- Settled 1 grievance where management failed to post vacant bid assignments in a timely manner by getting the successful bidder paid. (**Total: \$250.00**)

Management's failure to follow the contract cost the USPS **\$13,723.50** this month.

In Solidarity,
Stuart Love
Formal Step-A Representative

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5280 E Grant Rd.

Mon, Tues, Thurs. 730 am to 4 pm

Wed 9 am to 4 pm, Fri 730 am to 5 pm

*APR= Annual Percentage Rate. Rate current as of 8/1/2017.
Subject to change. Based on credit history.



Guest speaker, Regina Romero spoke at the June Branch Meeting. Regina is a candidate for Tucson Mayor.

Contract Talk

Greetings Brothers and Sisters,

Q: I was a Casual and then a TE for eight years; does this time count towards retirement?

A: No, your time as a Casual, TE and CCA does not count towards retirement. However, there is a Bill that was introduced by Rep. Derek Kilmer (D-WA) and Tom Cole (R-OK) called the Federal Retirement Fairness Act of 2019 (H.R. 2478) that would provide certain federal employees the opportunity to make catchup retirement contributions for time spent as temporary employees after December 31, 1988, making such time-creditable service under the Federal Employees Retirement System and for other purposes. I would like to recommend that you contact your representative in Congress to get on board on H.R. 2478. Also, this could possibly be an issue that could come up in our bargaining talks for a new contract.

Q: When do I start getting overtime as a CCA?

A: CCAs are paid time and one-half for all work over 8 hours in a service day or over 40 hours in a service week. CCAs are paid overtime for all work over 10 hours in a service day or over 56 hours in a service week. Penalty overtime will not be paid for any hours worked in the month of December.

For example, you work the following hours:

		Straight Time	Over Time	Penalty Overtime
Sat	11.5	8.00	2.00	1.50
Sun	8.00	8.00		
Mon	11.5	8.00	2.00	1.50
Tue	11.5	8.00	2.00	1.50
Wed	11.5	8.00	2.00	1.50

So far for the week you have earned the following totals: 40 hours of straight time, 8 hours of overtime and 6 hours penalty overtime for a total of 54 hours. Initially, you earned 8 hours of straight time, 2 hours of overtime and 1.50 hours of penalty overtime for each of the days Saturday, Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday. On Thursday you work an additional 11.5 hours.

You reach 56 hours in the service week on Thursday; now only the hours worked beyond 56 are paid at the penalty overtime rate per Article 8.4.E. The 6.00 hours of daily penalty overtime that you have already earned Saturday through Wednesday is offset in the total amount of penalty overtime you earn for the service week.

Now you have reached 56 hours; your week looks like this:

		Straight Time	Over Time	Penalty Overtime
Sat	11.5	8.00	2.00	
Sun	8.00	8.00		
Mon	11.5	8.00	2.00	
Tue	11.5	8.00	2.00	
Wed	11.5	8.00	2.00	
Thu	11.5		8.00	

Q: I signed the Overtime Desired List; am I obligated to work overtime when told to?

A: Yes, a letter carrier who signs the regular Overtime Desired List has an obligation to work overtime when requested or told to.

Q: Can I be excused from working overtime?

A: Yes, a letter carrier can be excused from working overtime in exceptional cases. Article 8.5.E states that the exceptions are for anniversaries, birthdays, illness, and death and are based on

equity. This means the carrier may be redlined for not working requested overtime.

Consequently, the four examples listed are illustrative of the cases to which management should give full consideration in excusing employee from overtime.

However, as Arbitrator Sylvester Garrett held in NC-C-7933, January 8, 1979 (C-03226), that Article 8.5.E "reflects an intent to confer relatively broad discretion on local management to excuse employees from overtime work for any one of a number of legitimate reasons 'based on equity'."

Q: When I submitted my prime time leave, I made a note that my leave includes nonscheduled days (days off) and holidays. Can management make me work overtime?

A: No, management cannot force you to work overtime when you indicated that your leave includes your day off (non-scheduled days) and holidays since they approved the leave.

Q: I was on military leave during the signup period. Can I still sign the Overtime Desired List?

A: Yes, an exception exists for letter carriers on military leave during the signup period.

Contract Talk (cont. on pg. 6)

Contract Talk (cont. from pg. 5)

They are permitted to sign the OTDL upon return to work.

Q: I am on my station's OTDL, but I bid/transferring to another station. Can I sign that station OTDL?

A: Yes, when a carrier bids or is transferring between units or stations during a calendar quarter, he/she may sign the OTDL in the gaining unit, if he/she was on the OTDL in the losing unit. A CCA can sign either list (Work assignment, 8-hour only, Overtime Desired List) once they are promoted to full time.

Q: I am on limited duty; can I sign either the Overtime Desired List or the Work Assignment List?

A: Full-time regular letter carriers, including those on limited or light duty, may sign up for either the Overtime Desired List or the Work Assignment List, but not both. Whether or not an employee on limited or light duty is actually entitled to overtime depends upon his/her physical and/or mental limitations.

Q: I decided that I do not wish to be on the Overtime Desired List. Can I get off?

A: Yes, a letter carrier may request that his/her name be removed from an Overtime Desired List at any time during the quarter. However, management does

not have to immediately honor the request if the employee is needed for overtime on the day the request is made.

Q: Can management remove my name from the Overtime Desired List?

A: Management may not unilaterally remove your name from the Overtime Desired List. However, employees on the Overtime Desired List are required to work overtime except as provided in Article 8.5.E.

In Solidarity,
Mark Follet
Coronado Station Steward

Chaplain's Corner Discouragement

Most of us are realistic enough to know that life will never be free from problems. Accidents happen, sickness comes, mistakes are made, things break down. We all know that.

But at times it seems as if almost everything goes wrong. Nothing at all seems to go right. We simply do not know how we will ever get on top of things again. And we become thoroughly discouraged.

God understands our discouragement. He knows why you feel the way you do. And He promises to be there when you turn to Him for help. Others may turn away from you when things go wrong - but God will never leave you when you're down.

"Lord, you lift me out of my troubles... so I will praise you. Lord my God, I prayed to you, and you healed me."
Psalm 30: 1-2

This month's article and last month's article

are taken from the Bible League International pamphlets. "Someone Cares" pamphlet was last month's article, and this month's article is from "Who Cares When I Hurt" pamphlet.

Chaplain
Rick Evans
520-248-9643
Rick7evans@gmail.com

CONDOLENCES

Theresa Novak on the loss of your Father.
Family of John Ovind.

Oscar Saenz on the loss of your Father.

Health Benefit Report

Men Miss Bone-Health Checks

One in 4 men dies within a year after a hip fracture caused by osteoporosis. But in a study of 13,704 older adults, just 12 percent of men got a bone density scan, compared with 63 percent of women. Some medical groups recommend checks for men 70 and older (earlier for those at higher osteoporosis risk) Researchers say that older men should discuss bone risks, tests, and treatments with their doctors.

Source: *Journal of Investigative Medicine*, Feb. 5, 2019.

Fast Food: Worse Than Ever

Despite the salads and veggie burgers dotting more menus, fast food overall is even less healthy now than 30 years ago. Researchers recently analyzed offerings from 10 popular American fast-food chains from 1986, 1991, and 2016 and found that calories, sodium, and portions had increased over time. Desserts went from 392 calories in 1986 to 572 calories in 2016, entrees (such as burgers and tacos) went from 430 to 480 calories, and sides grew from 238 to 287 calories. How many calories are you likely to get at these eateries? In 2016 an average entree and a side had 767 calories before drinks and dessert.

Source: *Journal of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics*, Feb 27. 2019.

The Heart-Mind Connection

Though being diagnosed with heart disease or having a heart attack is known for raising the risk of depression, the reverse may also be true. "People with depression are more likely to have poor eating and exercise habits, as well as to drink or smoke." says Donald M. Lloyd-Jones, M.D. "But it does seem to go deeper than that." A study published earlier this year suggests that a missing link may be inflammation, which is a key risk factor for both conditions.

If you have symptoms of depression—especially if you are already at risk for heart disease—talk to your primary care provider about a treatment plan.

There's also a condition called takotsubo cardiomyopathy (TC) or broken heart syndrome, that can mimic signs of a heart attack. In one study, about 1 to 2 percent of people with a suspected heart attack in the hospital actually had TC instead. This temporary disruption of your heart's pumping function is brought on by a stressful situation, such as a death. "The outpouring of stress hormones actively shocks the heart, Lloyd-Jones says.

Treatment is usually hospitalization, along with medications to help your heart bounce back. Most patients make a full recovery after a couple of weeks.

The best of health to you and yours,
Ray Root 885-4983
Health Benefits Representative

Attention Postmaster, 1 Monthly issue consisting of at least 25% non-advertising matter in each issue of the
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