



CARL J. KENNEDY BRANCH 704

# THE LETTER CARRIER REPORTER

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December 2019

*Email Address: [nalcbranch704@outlook.com](mailto:nalcbranch704@outlook.com)*

Printed by Branch 704

## Congratulations...

**On Your Retirement**

**Fritz Neuhauser-Rincon Station**



**On Your Conversion to Full  
Time City Carrier.**

**Nahi Atalla**

**Moira McLaughlin**

**Eduardo Gavino**

**Ramon Cota**

**Daniel Leyvas**

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## Retirement Seminar



WEBSITE: [www.nalcbranch704.org](http://www.nalcbranch704.org)

**Branch Meeting Thursday December 5, 2019 is to  
begin promptly at 7:00 pm.**

# President's Report

Dear Brothers and Sisters,  
I would like to wish everyone a Happy Thanksgiving Day, and hope you spend quality time with your families and friends. I'm thankful for every lesson and learning experience that let me grow being your president, so many people in our branch have made an impact on my life, which helps me be a better person.

At the November 7<sup>th</sup> branch meeting, we presented the Branch 704 proposed budget for 2020; as a reminder we will vote on the proposed budget at the December 5, 2019 branch meeting.

We had a very successful retirement seminar on Sunday October 27<sup>th</sup>; 88 people made reservations for the seminar and we had 66 show up which was a great turnout. We received compliments on having the seminar in Tucson as it is hard for some carriers to make it to the Phoenix semi-nar because of the distance. Dan Versluis was the Officer who presented the seminar, he had slides and handouts that made it easier for everyone to follow along. Gene Kelly, our Retiree Rep has been sending letters to national over the years to have a retirement seminar in Tucson and this is the first time we received a favorable response to our request; I know it helps that the Business Agent is from our branch. I want to thank Dan, Gene, Stuart and our volunteers Letty Ramos, Ross Phillips, Lillian Valdez and all the other people that helped to make this a successful seminar.

**Letter Carrier Political Fund:** We have around 790 members in our branch and out of those we have 79 individuals both active and retired participating in the Letter Carrier Political Fund. I challenged the stewards to inform carriers about LCPF on their own time to see if we can increase members who participate by the end of December. The station that gets the most signups will get food of their choice brought to their station.

I know we talk about this so often but it's important to be able to give our National Officers the ammunition they need to be able to have the ears of Congress who control our pay and benefits, or whether we have a post office or not. Congress, with a stroke of the pen can eliminate what we have right now. Are you willing to sit

back and hope Congress does the right thing, or are you willing to help stand up and fight for your future? I don't know if you know, but we do not use DUES money to finance Political Activities. With the contributions we have currently, the NALC has fought to have a stronger middle-class job, Leave (annual and sick), Overtime, Affordable Health Care, TSP, Workers Compensation, Dependent Care (FMLA) and Collective Bargaining just to name a few. This was done through our Unions PAC, Letter Carrier Political Fund, I encourage you to ask your steward questions **off** the clock or come into the branch office and get information and have your questions answered. Just think if our National Officers can accomplish all this with just 10% of people contributing, what can they do if they have more?

National has received answers to one national grievance and one civil action suit. The civil action suit the NALC took to court against the USPS, was settled. The NALC asked the courts to block this new workplace initiative as it is currently injuring its members' physical health, damages that arbitration cannot remedy. The courts ruled they lack the jurisdiction to grant an injunction and will deny a NALC motion and dismiss the case. The arbitration was scheduled for December 18 and was moved up to November 22.

NALC posed that the arbitrator could not fashion a remedy that would compensate the letter carriers for physical health and hardships. Management offered two contradictory responses: that the arbitrator COULD remedy these noneconomic harms and that an injunction was thus unnecessary. Then the USPS did an about face and conceded that an arbitrator cannot remedy these noneconomic harms. If you want to read the whole suit, it's on the NALC web page, it makes for interesting reading but not surprising that management, even at a court hearing can't speak the truth and double speaks.

National Arbitrator, Shyam Das has issued his award in a national interpretive dispute involving the memorandum of understanding regarding the consolidation of NALC pay levels. The memorandum went into effect on November 24, 2018; which elevated all Grade 1 letter carriers to the former Grade 2. Arbitrator Das recognized that the

*President's Article (Continued on page 3)*

*President's Article (Continued from page 2)*  
memorandum "provided Carriers with the increased compensation they would have received if granted an upgrade." Nonetheless, the arbitrator rejected NALC's position that this change meant that employees from other crafts in grades equivalent to the former City Carrier Grade 1 could no longer be excessed into the letter carrier craft under Article 12 of the National Agreement. While the arbitration was not in our favor, NALC doesn't expect this to impact the letter carrier craft at this time, but I wonder if we will hear from USPS starting to do more withholding in the future with management doing so many cuts and new ways of eliminating work hours. Will this hit the clerks and trickle down to carriers?

Open Season starts November 11, through December 09, 2019. Changes on your health care will be effective January 1, 2020. There will be a HEALTH FAIR at the MAIN POST OFFICE in the North Break Room November 21, from 6:00am-10am and again from 2:00pm-6:00pm. You can visit the fair in an off-the-clock status before or after your tour, at lunch or during normal break times. If you did not get health insurance, this is the time to get signed up. You can go on [liteblue.gov](http://liteblue.gov) to compare the plans available before you pick the one that best suits your family. I encourage everyone to go to the Health Fair if you want to compare plans or talk with representatives.

In Solidarity,  
Kathy Walter  
President

## Vice President Article

Why do we do what we do? Is it that many of us enjoy coming in to work and being treated like second-class citizens? Is it that we like to give up our family or personal time so we can cover the mismanagement? Or maybe it's that we are gluttons for punishment and that we can't get enough abusive treatment. I tend to think it's that we work for the Postal Service to earn a living wage so we can provide for our families and ourselves. Secondly, I feel that most Letter Carriers have a commitment to serving our customers. It's nice to know that the American public still trusts us and counts on our service. With all the changes that have happened in the last few years, it's a wonder that we still have a good reputation with our customers.

We can all sit back and blame Management at all levels and become part of the problem or we can choose to be part of the solution. What will it take to be part of the solution? First of all, signing up as an e-Activist is essential. That means at the legislative level our voices will be heard. Please join me and many other letter carriers who have already signed up. It's easy, just go online to [www.nalc.org](http://www.nalc.org) and sign up online.

Second of all, it's going to require a little insurance in the form of a donation for the Letter Carrier Political Fund. Even if you can only afford as little as one dollar a month, that donation to the Letter Carrier Political

Fund will help support the elected representatives or candidates who support us.

Third, at the local level, we have to stand up for our own rights. Your Station Steward cannot do this alone. He/She will require your assistance whether it is just keeping your eyes and ears open for what may be possible violations of the Contract or writing a statement when a violation has occurred. Many times, a Steward or the Union Office will receive a complaint that appears to be a clear violation of the Contract. When asked to provide a statement, that person does not want to get involved. Well, I cannot tell you how difficult it is to file a grievance, but not have anything to back up our argument.

Always try to work in a professional manner and never compromise your safety. Hopefully our solidarity will overcome what management should be ashamed of and we can continue to serve our customers with pride.

In Union Solidarity,  
Stuart Love  
Vice President

# Formal Step-A Report

During the month of October, 14 grievances were resolved at the Formal Step-A level.

A summary of the settled grievances is listed below:

## **FORMAL STEP-A:**

- Settled 7 Letters of Warning (LOW) by getting 1 rescinded, 1 reduced to time served, 3 reduced to a 3-month Letters of Warning, 1 reduced to a 4-month Letter of Warning, and 1 reduced to a 6-month Letter of Warning.
- Settled 1 7-Day Suspension by getting that 7-day suspension rescinded.
- Settled 1 14-Day Suspension by getting the 14 – day suspension reduced to a 7- month 14-day suspension.
- Settled 1 grievance where management failed to comply to a grievance settlement by getting that carrier paid an additional **(Total \$250.00)**.
- Settled 3 grievances where management failed to post vacant bid assignments in a timely manner by getting the successful bidders paid. **(Total \$2,750.00)**
- Settled 1 grievance where management failed to pay carriers their 8-hour call in guarantee by getting those carriers paid up to 8 hours **(Total \$72.42)**.

During the month of October, 3 grievances were appealed to Step B. We received 1 Step B decision back this month.

That grievance was sustained in the union's favor stating management failed to make a bona fide effort in finding a carrier light duty work within the carrier's medical limitations and awarded the carrier **\$1,273.46**.

We received 2 Arbitration decisions. Those Arbitrations were sustained in the union's favor for a lost registered stating the letter of demands issued to the grievants in the amount of \$13,500.00 apiece were to be rescinded. Total cost to the Postal Service **\$27,000.00**.

Management's failure to follow the contract cost the USPS **\$31,345.88** this month.

In Solidarity,  
Stuart Love  
Formal Step-A Representative

Attention Postmaster, 1 Monthly issue consisting of at least 25% non-advertising matter in each issue of the Carl J. Kennedy Branch 704, The Letter Carrier Reporter Volume 2019-12 Issue #12 Organization:  
National Association of Letter Carriers,  
2950 N. Country Club Road, Tucson, AZ 85716-1912

# Retiree Seminar

Wow, who would have thought that our union hall would have been filled to capacity for the 1st retirement seminar? What a huge success it was. Our Local Business Agent, Dan Versluis flew in from Denver to give the presentation. The branch members provided bagels and donuts along with coffee and soft drinks for this event, much thanks to them.

I have to say thank you to our President Kathy Walter and Vice President Stuart Love for being on hand to help out with the class. A special thanks goes to everyone that volunteered to help organize and clean up after this event, it was a success because of you.

Many of those in attendance were very pleased with the presentation and the materials provided to them. Even though it was a rather lengthy presentation a lot of infor-

mation was made available. Dan stayed and answered every question that was asked by members after the class was over. The seminar was about 5 hours long, but worth every minute.

If you are thinking of retiring within the next 5 years you probably should attend one of these seminars. The Arizona State Association provides a presentation in Phoenix every year in January. More information will be provided in the newsletter when the dates are set.

If you have any requirement questions give us a call at the union office. Phone number is (520) 323-2117, and remember we are stronger together!

In Solidarity,  
Gene Kelley  
Retiree Representative

# Contract Talk

**Q:** I am a new CCA (still in probationary status); when am I allowed to opt on a route?

**A:** 60 Calendar days from the date of appointment as a CCA.

**Q:** Can a CCA be taken off an opt in order to provide a part time flexible employee assigned to the same work location with 40 hours of straight time work over the course of a service week?

**A:** Yes, a CCA may be bumped from an “Opt” if necessary, to provide 40 hours of straight time work over the course of a service week to part time flexible letter carriers assigned to the same work location. In this situation, the opt is not terminated. Rather, the CCA is temporarily taken off assignment as necessary on a day to day basis.

**Q:** Can CCAs be required to “standby” or remain at home for a call in on days they are not scheduled to work?

**A:** No.

**Q:** How does the holiday schedule work?

**A:** Overtime worked by full-time employees on their holidays or designated holidays is technically not overtime. Rather it is “Holiday Worked. The only work that is contractually considered to be overtime for full-time employees working on their holiday or designated holiday is work beyond eight hours in a day. The first eight hours of holiday work performed by full-time ODL letter carriers properly scheduled for holiday work on their non-scheduled day is technically overtime,” it is also excluded from consideration. This is because it was not assigned under the overtime provisions of Article 8, but rather under the holiday scheduling provisions of Article 11. The only holiday overtime that is considered or counted in determining equitability at the end of

the quarter is overtime for work beyond eight hours in a day.

In Solidarity,  
Alexis Padilla  
San Xavier Station Steward

*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 the employer of individuals whose contributions exceed \$200 in a calendar year.*

## Condolences

**Cruz Garcia on the loss  
of your Brother.**

**Family of ‘Woody’ Don  
Litmer.**

## Belated Condolences

**Ete ‘Summer’ Parker on the  
loss of your Mother.**

**Speedy Recovery  
Wishes to Lonnie Pate.**

**Get Well  
Gil Casiraghi.**

# Retiree Luncheon

Greetings Retirees,

The annual **Retiree Luncheon** is scheduled for **Sunday, December 8, 2019**, at the **Desert Diamond Hotel and Casino on Old Nogales Highway**.

The luncheon **begins at 11:30 a.m.** with lunch being served at approximately 12:00. All Retired Union Members are welcome to attend along with one guest without charge. If you wish to invite other guests to celebrate your retirement, the cost will be \$25.00 per guest.

I am looking forward to seeing all the past Retirees and to meet all of you that retired this year, come join us for a great luncheon and bring some extra cash, who knows you might leave as a winner.

**Menu choices are as follows:**

- ❖ **Slow-Roasted Pot Roast**
- ❖ **Grilled Skuna Bay Salmon**
- ❖ **Proscuitto Wrapped Stuffed Chicken**

**Each meal will be accompanied with a Salad, Turtle Cheesecake and Carrot Cake Squares.**

Please call the Union Office at 323-2117 and let us know if you plan to attend along with the choice of meal you wish to order. The **deadline** for all orders to be placed has changed to **Wednesday, November 27, 2019**.

When you call in to make your reservation, please let us know if you are due a membership pin and how many years you've been a member so that we can order it from National in time to be able to present to you at the luncheon.

In Solidarity,  
Gene Kelley  
Retiree Representative

## Chaplain's Corner

The Bible repeatedly tells us who we are in Christ. Below are a few short verses you can memorize or pray through as you meditate on what it means to be loved by your heavenly father.

With these verses you can build a relationship on. These are verses that can become personal prayers. If you don't know God in this way, He longs to reveal Himself to you for who He really is. Bring these truths close to your heart. Speak them aloud before you go to bed and when you wake up. Write them on your heart. God loves you.

Romans 8:1 There is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.

1 John 3:1 See what great love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God.

Lamentations 3:22 Because of the Lord's great love we are not consumed, for his compassions never fail.

Psalms 63:3 Your love is better than life.

2 Chronicles 16:9 The eyes of the Lord search the whole earth in order to strengthen those whose hearts are fully committed to him.

The Struggle is Real  
By Nicole Unice

Chaplain Rick Evans with Martha Evans  
[Rick7evans@gmail.com](mailto:Rick7evans@gmail.com)  
520-248-9643

# Health Benefit Report

## Risky Antibiotic Use

Up to 66 percent of adults in the U.S. take antibiotics without a prescription, and as many as 48 percent store leftover antibiotics for later, according to an analysis of 31 studies. That can be ineffective and even dangerous, the researchers say. Antibiotics might be inappropriate for your infection, and such misuse might spur the growth of antibiotic-resistant strains of bacteria.

*Source: Annals of internal medicine, July 23, 2019*

## Eat to Cut Colon-Cancer Risk

In a recent study, people who ate the lowest amounts of fruits, veggies, and whole grains—foods that fight inflammation and contain antioxidants—had a 48 percent higher risk of colon cancer than healthier eaters. Chronic inflammation and low antioxidant levels promote DNA damage and may lead to cancer.

*Source: Nutrients, June 21, 2019*

## Apple Shaped? News You Need

Carrying too much belly fat may increase insulin resistance, inflammation, and cholesterol levels, even for those who aren't over-weight. Normal-weight women with waistlines of 34 and a half inches or more were 31 percent more likely to die than those with slimmer middles, according to a recent large study of women done over 24 years. Overweight and obese women also faced a higher risk if they had wide waistlines. "Central obesity" raised the risk for fatal heart disease by 28 to 53 percent and fatal cancer by 19 to 26 percent. Another study of both genders found that obesity and wide waists may lead to reduced gray matter.

*Source: JAMA Network Open, July 24, 2019; Neurology, July 24, 2019*

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

**\*DONATIONS DESPARATELY  
NEEDED\***

**We are in need of slightly  
used, serviceable Men's  
Postal Shirts, Shorts and  
Pants size 36 and up.**

*--For our new NALC Members—*

## Meeting Dates

**Branch Meeting-Thursday,  
Dec 5, 2019 @ 7:00 pm**

**Stewards Meeting-Thursday,  
Dec 19, 2019 @ 5:30 pm**

**Exec Board Meeting-Tuesday,  
Dec 26, 2019 @ 6:00 pm**

National Association of Letter Carriers  
 Carl J. Kennedy Branch 704  
 2950 N. Country Club Road  
 Tucson, AZ 85716-1912  
 Telephone: 520-323-2117  
 December 2019 Newsletter

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RAY ROOT	HBA REPRESENTATIVE
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VACANT	BRUCE JENKINS
CATHY POULIN	VACANT

**CHAPLAIN**  
 RICK EVANS

**FORMAL A REPRESENTATIVE**

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