

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

MAY 2024

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

Printed by Branch 704



COMMUNITY
FOOD BANK
OF SOUTHERN ARIZONA

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

Working Together to Stamp Out Hunger

It takes a community to collect more than 200,000 pounds of food in one day. And it doesn't happen without letter carriers providing an essential service on the second Saturday of May during the annual Stamp Out Hunger drive. This year the magic happens on **Saturday, May 11th**.

REGULATIONS REGARDING GERALD GASKIN SCHOLARSHIP

The State Association shall fund \$1,000.00 to the scholarship per year and there will be a minimum of 1 scholarship awarded on a yearly basis.

All funds shall be awarded after acceptance to the school of applicant's choice.

The funds shall be made payable to both the student and the school.

The Scholarship Committee shall review all applications to assure that all criteria have been followed and met. The decision of the scholarship committee shall be final.

In the event the student withdraws from school all monies shall be returned to the scholarship fund. Any exceptions must be reviewed and approved by the committee. Scholarships not used within one year of the drawing date shall be returned to the scholarship fund.

If the NALC member withdraws from the union, applies for or enters supervision, or terminates employment with the Postal Service then the scholarship will be cancelled. Children of 204-B's are excluded from making application for 2 years following his/her qualifying letter carrier's return to the craft.

Prior scholarship winners shall not be allowed to re-apply in future scholarship campaigns.

The Scholarship Committee shall award the scholarships by random drawing of all eligible applicants. The drawing shall be held at such a time as selected by the committee.

Two alternates shall be drawn in the event that the scholarship winner is later ruled ineligible. The alternate's names will not be disclosed.

**NEXT UNION MEETING FIRST THURSDAY OF THE MONTH: May 2, 2024
Meeting will begin promptly at 7:00PM**

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Save the date **Saturday May 11th.**

Letter Carriers across the country will collect any non-perishable food items that will benefit your local food bank. Since lunching in 1993, the NALC annual Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive has grown into the Nation's largest one-day food drive, helping food banks across the Country. By helping with the food drive you help your community. All Food Banks count on this one-day collection of food to get them through until fall. One in 8 Americans, including millions of children, senior citizens and veterans, are unsure where their next meal will come from. Most school meal programs are not available during the summer months, making the timing of the letter carrier food drive crucial.

Help by posting the date and event on social media, the more people know the more we can collect. If you believe, that you will need help to collect the non-perishable foods on Saturday May 11, 2024 on your route please get with your steward or call the branch office at 520-323-2117 and give us the route and station so we can get volunteers to help. Pass the word to your customers to leave the food they donate by the mailbox for pick-up on Saturday May, 11 for best service.

Protect Our Letter Carriers Act

On March 13, the Protect Our Letter Carriers Act (POLCA) (H.R. 7629) was introduced in the House by Reps. Brian Fitzpatrick (R-PA) and Greg Landsman (D-OH).

This bipartisan legislation would provide \$7 billion in funding for the Postal Service to secure its infrastruc-

ture, including the installation of high-security collection boxes and the replacement of items carried by letter carriers with more secure electronic versions. Additionally, the legislation would increase prosecution rates for these crimes by requiring the Attorney General to appoint an assistant U.S. attorney in each judicial district to prioritize any case involving an assault or crime against a letter carrier. Their principal responsibility in the district would be to coordinate and supervise the investigation and prosecution of these crimes.

Since 2020, there have been more than 2,000 crimes committed against letter carriers on the job. Many of these attacks involve a gun or another weapon. Letter carrier robberies climbed to 643 last year, an increase of nearly 30 percent, and the number of robberies resulting in injuries doubled, according to the United States Postal Inspection Service

Go to take action button, ask your member of Congress to cosponsor the Protect Our Letter Carriers Act.

The National Association of Letter Carriers and the U.S. Postal Service have selected Arbitrator Dennis R. Nolan to serve as the neutral chair of a three-person interest arbitration panel to set the terms of a new National Agreement between the NALC and the Postal Service. Under the law, each side will also appoint union and management representatives to serve on the panel and represent their respective positions.

Cont. On page 6

CATALINA SERENITY GROUP

DEPRESSED ANONYMOUS

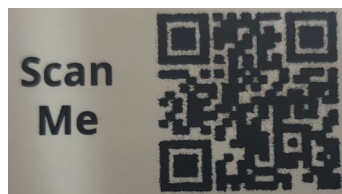
Twelve Step study and discussion group meeting each Monday

Time 10am-11am

Meeting location:

15930 N Oracle Rd, Suite#138

Catalina Az 85739



(strip mall across from the Golden Goose thrift store)

Contact info: More info on Website depressedanon.com

Janet M.

907-398-0925

CONVERSIONS

Raymond Morentin

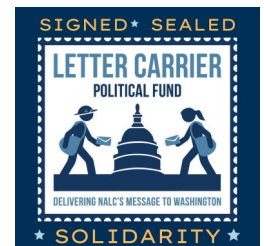
Anthony Cutrone

Hey now, you're an All Star

Get your game on, go play

Hey now, you're a Rock Star

Get the show on, get paid



From the desk of the Vice-President

For the past two years, management has arbitrarily attempted to implement blanket orders of 60 minutes in the office and 22-minute load time throughout the nation. This blanket order policy dismisses all fixed office times and doesn't take into consideration the other duties a carrier performs every day. Management is putting all routes, and all individuals equal each day, and we all know this is not true on any given day. We all know that each day is different.

The new "earned" leave time only takes into consideration the time needed for the carrier to case letters and flats into the case and pull the route down to determine the leaving time for the carrier. This improper unilateral policy has no time included for any fixed office time (43 minutes), parcels or SPRs, DPS check, vehicle check, AM break, personal time, or time needed for the other numerous office duties a letter carrier must perform each morning to properly service his/her bid assignment.

Projections are not the sole determinant of a carrier's leaving or return time, or daily workload. The use of any management created system or tool that calculates a workload projection this does not change the letter carriers reporting requirements outlined in Section 131.4 of Handbook M-41, the supervisor scheduling responsibilities outlined in section 122 of Handbook M-39, or the letter carriers and supervisors' responsibilities contained in Section 28 of the M-41 Handbook.

Section 131.4 of the M-41 Handbook states in part:

131.4 Reporting Requirements

131.41 *It is your responsibility to verbally inform management when you are of the opinion that you will be unable to case all mail distributed to the route, perform other required duties, and leave on schedule or when you will be unable to complete delivery of all mail.*

131.42 *Inform management of this well in advance of the scheduled leaving time and not later than immediately following the final receipt of mail. Management will instruct you what to do.*

131.43 *Complete applicable items on PS Form 3996, Carrier-Auxiliary Control, if overtime or auxiliary assistance is authorized in the office or on the street.*

131.44 *Report on PS Form 1571 all mail undelivered - including all mail distributed to the route but not cased and taken out for delivery. Estimate the number of pieces of mail.*

Section 122 of the M-39 Handbooks states in part:

122.21 Establishing Leaving Schedule

The leaving time for the carrier is determined by the following:

Workload. The normal workload for the route.

b. *Availability of Mail. The time all the mail for the same day's delivery is available.*

c. *Necessary Office Time. Time required to case this mail, withdraw, tray or strap out mail, obtain parcels, and complete other required office duties; and*

d. *Business Hours. Normal community business hours.*

Section 28 of the M-41 Handbook references the preparation of the PS Form 3996, *Carrier-Auxiliary Control*: back page provides the necessary instructions on filling it out properly.

Recent Step B decision, which challenged these arbitrarily instructions of implementing a 60-minute office time and 22-minute load time, came back in the union's favor. Management attempted to "instruct" or "order" the least amount of time they can persuade or cajole or harass the carrier in to using by instructing carriers on leaving time and loading times that is inaccurate, misleading, understated and in violation of postal manuals. Management was instructed to conduct a *joint* stand up rescinding their instructions of this "expectations/goal There is no issue with management setting "goals or expectations", the issue is how it's presented and how it's received. If you're able to obtain those goals while performing **all** your required duties that our outlined in the M-41 Handbook, well then great. But if you can't, don't worry about it, tomorrow is another day.

Management has been conducting one day mail counts (1838c) and ride along (3999s), which they are required to do at least twice a year. It's technically not a grievance that they conduct them, but it is a grievance if the manner that management conducts them is found to be inappropriate. There are several routes throughout the city that management is conducting one day counts every single day, which we are being told is an instruction from management at the district level. Which we are addressing through the grievance procedure. It's my opinion that these counts are being done in order to push their "60-minute office goal" on those specific routes that aren't meeting that "goal".

As professional Letter Carriers we need to understand that the purpose of a one-day counts is to determine the efficiency of a carrier in the office or in the street. If management conducts an office count or a ride along (3999) but then doesn't provide you with the result of the count, how are you supposed to know whether you are being efficient or not? The consultations are designed to inform the carrier about what they're doing well and also identify areas they can improve. If no consultations are being done, then what is really the purpose of them being conducted? Just an FYI that any observations that management conducted, whether that be 1838c, 3999, PS Form 4584 *Observation of Driving Practices*, PS Form 4588, *Observation of Work Practices — Delivery Services*, or PS Form 4589, *Observation of Work Practices — General*, management is required to immediately review and provide the results of the observation/ count with you. If this is not being done, please request union time in writing and let your shop steward know.

*"It's the **U** and **I** in **UNION** that makes us strong."*

With love and unity,
Vice President/Formal Step A Designee
Alexis Padilla

MBA/Health Representative Report

PART 1: YOUR ANNUAL PHYSICAL AND WELLNESS VISIT

It's important to complete your annual physical and wellness visit.

Living a healthy life starts with your preventive care. Many people think an annual wellness visit and a physical are one and the same. Although the two have some things in common, their overall purpose is different.

What's the difference between your annual physical and wellness visit?

An annual physical exam includes a: Head-to-toe exam, blood sugar test and cholesterol test. The visit is a good time to review your medications and/or health concerns. Your plan covers this visit once per calendar year.

A wellness visit includes a: Blood pressure check, height and weight measurement and body mass index (BMI) test. Your plan covers this once per calendar year. Take control by scheduling your annual physical and wellness visit early in the year to give you the most time to take action. You and your primary care provider (PCP) can work as a team to create a preventive care plan to help you stay as healthy as possible. You may also ask your PCP to combine your annual physical and wellness visits into 1 convenient annual care appointment.

How to prepare for your annual physical and wellness visit.

The doctor you see for your wellness visit will want to know who's part of your health care team. They may also want to work closely with other health care professionals involved in your care. Therefore, you should be ready to give the person conducting your visit a list of your current health care providers, including their contact information and their field of specialty.

Keeping track of all the vitamins, minerals, herbal supplements and prescription medications you take can be a daunting task, but your doctor will want to know about all of them. Getting a full list of all of your medications can help the doctor spot potential drug interactions that could be harmful to your health, and they will also want to ensure you have a complete understanding of each medication, what it's for and any potential side effects. Make a list, including how often you take each medication and the dosage.

When you are prepared, your annual wellness visit can be more than just a doctor's appointment. It is your opportunity to help take charge of your health and ensure you're on the right path to living the life you want.

SPECIAL ENROLLMENT PERIOD - If you were an annuitant entitled to Medicare Part A (typically at age 65) as of Jan. 1, 2024, and did not enroll in Medicare Part B, you and your covered eligible family members may be able to participate in the one-time PSHB-related Special Enrollment Period (SEP) for Medicare Part B from April 1 through Sept. 30, 2024.

Those who choose to enroll during the SEP will have the late enrollment penalty paid by the Postal Service. Eligibility letters were sent to annuitants and eligible family members in March.

If you have misplaced the notification letter mailed to you or believe that you are eligible to participate in the PSHB-related SEP and did not receive a notification letter, please call the **PSHB Navigator help line's toll-free number at 833-712- PSHB (7742) or email retirementbenefits@usps.gov.**

Be safe! Stay hydrated! Make your and your family's health a priority!

In Solidarity,

Mark Follet

MBA/Health Benefit Plan Representative

(520) 331-3316



Workers Memorial Day is held on April 28 in observance of the day that the Act took effect in 1971 and that the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), an agency established by the new law, opened its doors. The day is a time to mourn and reflect on those that have been hurt but also to renew our call for safety in the workplace. One way to ensure that letter carriers remain safe on the job is to uphold our right to be treated with dignity and respect. NALC works to highlight management's obligation and both parties' intent to ensure a working environment free from physical dangers, threats, intimidation, harassment and violence. The NALC Shop Steward's Guide to Preserving the Right of Letter Carriers to be Treated with Dignity and Respect brings together tools, documents and guidance on these matters. The booklet is available to all members at nalc.org through the Members Only portal. The guidebook contains the Joint Statement on Violence and Behavior in the Workplace (M-01242), with guidance on the pertinent sections to cite various violations. The guide addresses how to document significant events on the workroom floor that may later be used to support grievances. Management has always focused on letter carriers but the treatment of carriers by management has gotten more disrespectful, belittling, this makes it even more important that you know your rights and what you need to be successful when addressing management behavior. When you have any questions on safety or treatment call your steward or the branch office for help.

Stay safe from the heat and hydrate, getting any heat illness will impact your health as you will be more susceptible to repeat heat illness. Be proactive and make sure you take steps to stay healthy for the length of your career. In accordance with the Postal Service's requirements under Article 14 of the National Agreement, the USPS developed a Heat Illness Prevention Program (HIPP) which states city letter carriers must receive an annual training course on heat stress by April 1 each year. This course should discuss the effects of heat on the body, outline the risk factors for heat-related illness, and describe the associ-

ated treatments for each. This training should also explain several control measure techniques and safe work practices that can be used to prevent heat-related illness. Letter carriers can review their training records to ensure accuracy by logging into the HERO application via LiteBlue.usps.gov. If you have not received this training call your steward.

State President Tim Fisher has asked for carriers and retirees to contact their state representatives to support HR 82: 311 Co-sponsors and Counting! Since our last issue, the bill has gained additional co-sponsors and continues to gain momentum on Capitol Hill. On March 4th, Virginia Representative Abigail Spanberger and Louisiana Representative Garret Graves pushed for the U.S. House Ways and Means Committee to hold a markup on the important bipartisan legislation. HR 82, the Social Security Fairness Act, would reform the cruel provisions of the Windfall Elimination Provision and the Government Pension Offset, both of which reduce the pensions of retired NALC members by thousands of dollars each year. Please continue to contact representatives Schweikert, Crane, and Biggs, who are the only three members of the Arizona House delegation who have not signed on as co-sponsors. As we continue our push to bring this bill to a vote, please keep the pressure up! Retired members who suffer because of the cruel provisions of the WEP and the GPO deserve to have equality with their pensions and this legislation is the best way for us to make that happen. Do not wait.

In solidarity
Kathy Walter
President Branch 704

From the Desk Of the Sergeant at Arms

I would like to thank everyone that participates in my little contests. The correct answer for last month's contest was my birthday, April 11. Two people got it correct, they were **Tom Reis and Letty Ramos**. I'm going to do a photo contest this month. Send me your best picture of what May means to you. Either email it, just regular mail or text me at 520-891-0718. We're still in need of very **GENTLY USED** uniforms. Just drop them by the Union Office. The monthly meetings start at 7pm sharp, please be early. We are in the process of hiring an Electrician to fix our lighting issues around the outside of the building. Lastly, the temperature is starting to rise, so remember to hydrate. Also, remember to dress appropriately, which means you must wear clothes. In Solidary, Royce

CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

True Light

There are many different sources of light in this world. Some of these light sources are sunlight, starlight, moonlight, and even flashlights just to name a few. Most of the world even changes to daylight savings time to gain longer days with more sunlight. But there is only one source of light that truly saves. Jesus is the light of the world. The bible talks about this in **John 8:12**, When Jesus spoke again to the people, he said, ***"I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."***

Blessings to All,

Rick Evans 520-248-9643

Chaplain

Our sincerest Condolences

Sister Kathy Walter

For the Loss of her Sister

Brother Royce Kelly

For the loss of his Aunt

RETIREEE REPORT

The TSP is one of many great benefits to be able to take advantage of during retirement. However, some considerations should be taken before withdrawal commence. The amount you choose to withdraw will be evenly disbursed from all funds allocated in your account, you cannot specify which fund to withdraw more or less from or avoid altogether. If withdrawal is not a direct rollover, the funds will be subject to a minimum 20 percent federal tax withholding. TSP does not allow retirees to convert to a Roth TSP. Taxed contributions must be made into a Roth TSP while actively employed to take advantage of the tax free withdrawals. For those wanting to do a QCD (Qualified Charitable Distribution) from the TSP to satisfy your RMD (Required Minimum Distribution), the plan does not currently allow that. These are just a few things to think about in planning out your retirement. The TSP website tsp.gov has much more information worth checking out. Stay safe, be well.

In Solidarity,

Art Higven 520-304-4196

Important Dates

E-Board Meeting

April 25th 6pm

Branch Meeting

May 2nd 7pm

Food Drive

May 11th

Mother's Day

May 12th

Steward Meeting

May 16th 5:30pm

Memorial Day

May 27th

