



CARL J. KENNEDY BRANCH 704

THE LETTER CARRIER REPORTER

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October 2018

Email Address: nalcbranch704@outlook.com

Printed by Branch 704

Congratulations John Ovind on Your 70th Year as a NALC Member!



Congratulations On Your Retirement!



← **Charlie Bear**
From Sierra Vista Post Office

(Not Pictured)

Madeline Pallanes
From Casa Grande Post Office

WEBSITE: www.nalcbranch704.org

**Next Union Meeting Thursday October 4, 2018,
to begin promptly at 7:00 pm.**

President's Report

Congratulations Brother John Ovind - 70 years of membership in the NALC

It was an absolute honor to be the person to present Brother John Ovind his 70-year membership pin, plaque, and congratulations letter from NALC President Rolando. Brother Ovind was born in 1919 and served in the Army during WWII from 1941-1945 in a tank division. In 1947 he was hired by the Post Office Department as a clerk-carrier in Duluth, MN and transferred to Tucson in 1952 as a city letter carrier. Brother Ovind worked out of the University station serving our customers until he retired in 1974. Brother Ovind loved carrying the mail and serving our customers and missed them the most upon retiring. Thank you, Brother Ovind, for your dedication and perseverance to the NALC and what we stand for.

Congratulations Brother Ray Root – Outstanding member

Congratulations goes out to Brother Ray Root who was unanimously endorsed for Outstanding Member of Branch 704. Brother Root has served as Health Benefits Representative of our branch for over 44 years. Ray has helped countless members with any issues involving the NALC Health Benefit Plan and continues to do so to this day. Ray's guidance and wisdom on the executive board and his help and assistance to the branch has benefited every member whether they know it or not. Brother Root has been an inspiration to me and many others. Thank you Ray!

NALC National Elections

By the time you receive this newsletter our national elections will be close to being over. Ballots were sent out September 11-14 and are due back at 9 AM on October 4, 2018. If you haven't voted yet please take the time to vote and make your voice heard.

Workplace Environment

While I try to stay as positive as possible I am absolutely **disgusted** and **repulsed** by a recent decision made by management regarding a not-at-fault accident. The accident happened at Fort Lowell station involving one of our active 40-year veteran letter carriers. In a nutshell, the carrier was leaving the station and in the only lane to exit the station, a postal customer was dropping off mail in the blue collection boxes and drove over the curb to enter the lane exiting the station to try to get in front of the

LLV that was already stopped in the lane. In doing this the customer hit their back bumper on the completely stopped LLV's front end causing the customer's plastic bumper to be pulled off. What did management do to reward the carrier for doing everything safe you ask? Well of course this senior carrier was issued an emergency suspension and placed in an off-duty status with no pay and subsequently issued a 7-day suspension. I have to ask how any carrier can have any respect for this type of decision maker in the USPS. **Shame! Shame! Shame!**

MDA Muscle Walk – September 29th, 2018 at Reid Park (NW corner)

We are getting ready for our first MDA branch event for 2018. We will be participating in the MDA Muscle Walk of Tucson scheduled for September 29, 2018 starting at 9 AM. Our **National Business Agent, Roger Bledsoe**, has joined our team and will be walking with us to help make our event a success. Please help us in making our first event a big success by going to musclewalkmda.org/Tucson and sign up as a member of **NALC704** team. If you can't participate by joining our team, please make a small tax-deductible donation and sponsor one of the members of our team.

US Mail is not for Sale Rally – October 8th

The NALC, APWU, NRLCA and NPMHU will be having a Rally at the corner of Broadway and Columbus (4400 E Broadway) at 10 a.m. on Oct 8th to tell Congress that the US mail is not for sale.

Please join us for this extremely important event to emphasize to Congress the U S Postal Service should not be privatized.

Together We Stand – Divided we Beg
In Solidarity,
Dan Versluis

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 2018-10

Issue #10; Organization:

National Association of Letter Carriers,

2950 N. Country Club Road,

Tucson, AZ 85716-1912

Vice President Article

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

I want to thank everyone that participated in the Labor Day Picnic at Reid Park. It was impressive how many unions were represented and participated. Everyone seemed enthusiastic about the November mid-term elections in Arizona. There was a sense of momentum that we can and will make a difference with our votes for the betterment of workers if everyone votes and a comradeship being around union members of all different crafts and trades. If you have not had the opportunity to go to a Labor picnic I hope you try to come to the next one.

Everyone should have gotten a NALC election ballot in the mail and sent them back by the time you read this newsletter. We should have the results sometime in October.

Have you noticed your paystub and seen the \$645.00 per year COLA raise? Thankfully, our union has fought hard to keep COLAs in our contract. On November 24th, 2018 we will also see an increase to grade 2 for all career carriers and a 3.1% increase for all CCAs. I am so glad we have a strong union that looks after us to make sure we get a fair day's wage for a fair day's work otherwise if it was up to management we would still be waiting.

I want to remind everyone of our first branch event for Muscular Dystrophy, the Muscle Walk is on September 29, 2018 at Reid Park. Our National Business Agent for Region 4, Roger Bledsoe, will be in Tucson to participate with us and help kick it off. Branch 704 MDA Coordinator, Israel Silva, put this in motion and is his first event. I encourage everyone to participate in the walk by joining our NALC704 team or by sponsoring someone on the team by going to musclewalkmda.org/tucson and help make this a success. Your donation is tax deductible and goes to such a great cause.

I know we are getting into our busiest time for the post office and we will be getting a lot of mail and parcels not only for the elections but also the holidays coming up. The post office has done some hiring of new CCAs but whether there will be enough CCAs to go around Tucson is still a wait and see situation. Let's make sure

if management continues to force 8-hour employees and work assignment employees off their assignments that you are informing your shop steward, so they can make sure management is following the contract. Even though we go through this issue every year your shop steward does not know everything that happens in your station, they need your help keeping them informed of what is going on. Don't just assume someone else has already told your steward what is happening; let them know and help them to enforce your rights under the National Contract.

The position of Tucson Postmaster had not been filled because Bill Schwartz has been on a detail, and John LaFreniere had been Acting Postmaster during his absence. This month John LaFreniere was named as Tucson Postmaster, so when you see him tell him congratulations.

Stay safe at work, let's make sure we go home healthy to our families and loved ones.

In solidarity
Kathy Walter

Last Chance to buy a Raffle Ticket to support Dan Versluis for NBA Region 4

Drawing will be held on Thursday, October 4, 2018.

For tickets you can call Gene Kelley (520) 403-3025

or Kathy Walter (501) 802-4310.

Tickets are only \$10.00, and you could win:

1st Prize SAMSUNG 55: UHD TV 4K HDR PRO

2ND Prize HANDMADE NALC QUILT

3RD Prize ORTHOCERAS STANDING FOSSIL CENTERPIECE

Paid for by the Committee to Elect Dan Versluis, NBA

Formal Step-A Report

During the month of August, 56 grievances were resolved at the Formal Step-A level.

A summary of the settled grievances is listed below:

FORMAL STEP-A:

- Settled 1 Letter of Warning by getting it reduced to Time served.
- Settled 1 7-Day Suspension by getting the 7-Day Suspension reduced to an 8-month L.O.W.
- Settled 1 14-Day Suspension by getting the 14-Day Suspension reduced to a 15-month 14-day suspension.
- Settled 1 grievance where management moved a T-6 off their assignment for the day without bringing in the regular carrier by getting that T-6 paid (**Total \$140.33**).
- Settled 3 grievances where management failed to allow carriers to work the Schedule and hours of the opt by getting those carriers paid (**Total \$412.93**).
- Settled 49 grievances where management improperly forced non-ODL carriers to work overtime by getting those carriers paid the appropriate premium payment and the ODL carriers paid for the missed opportunities (**Total: \$8,239.01**).

We received 2 Step B decisions back this month: The grievances were sustained in the union's favor for management not posting vacant routes within 14 days. The B team awarded a monetary remedy of \$150.00 and \$200.00 dollars.

Management's failure to follow the contract at the Formal A cost the USPS \$9,142.27 this month.

Management's failure to follow the contract at the Informal A cost the USPS \$20,912.41 this month.

Total \$ 30,054.68

There are 38 grievances outstanding at Formal Step-A.

In Solidarity,
Stuart Love
Formal Step-A Representative

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7740 E Speedway Blvd.

Mon-Thurs. 9 am to 5 pm

Friday 9 am to 6 pm

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.

Contract Talk

A Letter to all City Carrier Assistants;

If you are a long-term employee or new to the Post Office, we want you to know that you are the face of the future at the United States Postal Service. We want to ensure that you feel welcome and valued by our union as you are an integral part of the NALC. There will be a generation of tenured carriers retiring and it is important that you carry on their legacy. With your help, we will continue to push forward into the future by being involved and carrying the voice of the union with you in your role.

The NALC can provide many opportunities for you to learn and be a part of important decision making. We appreciate you all as members and understand your workload and commitments. We would like to invite you to have your voice heard at our monthly meetings. The monthly meetings are a great time to get to know more about your branch as well as current news and happenings in Tucson and surrounding areas. The meetings take place the first Thursday of each month at 7pm at 2950 N. Country Club Road, Tucson, AZ 85716. We invite you to take the first step toward getting involved.

We want to come together, and we need you! Feel free to bring a fellow letter carrier with you; we want you to join us and encourage your peers to do the same. To keep updated on important NALC information, you can download the mobile app, NALC Member App and stay connected on your mobile device. We encourage you to read this monthly newsletter and share the information with your fellow letter carriers. You can also access document M-01833 on the NALC website which provides joint questions and answers for City Carrier Assistants. Knowledge is power!

We have all been letter carriers and understand the tireless hours that can be demanded as part of your position. Working long days and weekends can be exhausting paired with the constant demands from management. Being a part of the union means that your opinions matter and we want to hear your voice and continue to make progress.

Understanding your rights and our contract regulations is beneficial to you and your relationship with management. Educate yourself! We have employees and representatives that want to help you. Your station has a union steward who you can go to with questions or issues. We also have employees at the union office that can be contacted for information, their phone number is 520-323-2117.

If you are a tenured letter carrier, please help your fellow City Carrier Assistants and ensure that they have all the information that they need. We want every single one of our members to take pride in the NALC and want to ensure that anybody who does not have years under their belt, feels comfortable. Be a mentor and share your knowledge so that we can all come together as one. We will stand united and find strength in our union. By working together, we can help one another and have power in our commitment. The time is now, you are our future! We look forward to seeing you at our next meeting.

Regards,
Dimas Gonzalez
City Letter Carrier; Union Steward at Coronado Station

**Congratulations on Your Conversion to
Career City Carrier!**

Tiffany Eggert

Bogar Vasquez

Health Benefit Report

How to Reduce Arthritis Pain

Only 41 percent of men and women age 65 or older who are overweight or obese and have arthritis are getting an important piece of advice from their doctor: Drop some pounds. That's the conclusion of a recent study of 1,802 adults in the U.S. Weight loss reduces the pain and mobility problems related to arthritis, and its effects can be significant; every pound you lose takes 4 pounds of pressure off your knees. Source: CDC Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Reports, May 4, 2018

Do Brain-Training Games Really Help?

You may have heard that computerized “brain training” games can help to stave off cognitive decline. But a number of studies haven’t found them to be very useful. “Brain training can be beneficial, but really only for the task you’re specifically being trained for—for example, if you train a group of seniors on how to better memorize a supermarket list, they will generally improve, but they won’t be able to remember faces any better,” says UCLA's Zaldy Tan, M.D. Instead, participate in intellectually challenging

and interesting activities that are new to you, such as learning to paint. “Whenever we learn something that’s completely novel to us, we form new brain connections,” Tan says. Even inconsequential activities can bring real benefits. A large Chinese study of people 65 and older, published in JAMA Psychiatry this past May, found that those who regularly participated in intellectual activities such as reading books or newspapers, and playing board games, card games or mahjong, had a significantly lower risk of dementia over seven years of follow-up. Keep up social activities too,

“Social isolation is another risk factor for dementia,” Tan says. Volunteering is a good option. Older adults who do so have a lower risk of dementia, according to a study published last year in PLOS One.

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

Chaplain’s Corner Spending Time With God

“We are like a jar of river water, all shaken up. We need time to set still long enough that the sediment can settle and the water to become clear.” This is a quote from the book, Invitation To Solitude and Silence by Ruth Haley Barton.

I enjoyed reading this book, it made me reevaluate the time I spend with God. We are so busy with all the things of life, work, responsibilities, computers, cell phones, TV, family, etc. This can cause us to not take the time to spend with God. Psalm 45:10 NIV says, “Be still and know that I am God;” I encourage you to take that special time and relax in solitude with God.

Henri Nouwen says, “Without solitude it’s virtually impossible to live a spiritual life. We do not take the spiritual life seriously, if we do not set aside time to be with God and listen to him.”

Many Blessings,
Chaplin Rick Evans
with Martha Evans
Rick7evans@gmail.com
520-248-9643

Retiree Luncheon

Greetings Retirees,

The annual **Retiree Luncheon** is scheduled for **Sunday, December 9, 2018**, at the **Desert Diamond Hotel & 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**
- ❖ **Old Pueblo 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.

All orders must be placed by Monday, December 3, 2018.

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

Condolences

Patti King on the loss of your Sister.

Ken Bertschy on the loss of your Father.

Jug Harvey...

Would like to thank every one that sent him a card, for the visits he received from his fellow carriers, but most of all for Caring!

God Bless everyone!

Get Well

John Mora

Congratulations

Gene Kelley on your new Great Granddaughter.

Meeting Dates

**Branch Meeting-Thursday,
October 4, 2018 @ 7:00 pm**

**Stewards Meeting-Thursday,
October 18, 2018 @ 5:30 pm**

**Executive Board Meeting-Thursday,
October 25, 2018 @ 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**

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RAY ROOT	HBA REPRESENTATIVE
GENE KELLEY	RETIREE REPRESENTATIVE
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FORMAL A REPRESENTATIVE

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