



CARL J. KENNEDY BRANCH 704
THE LETTER CARRIER REPORTER

PROUDLY SERVING

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September 2020

Email Address: nalcbranch704@outlook.com

Printed by Branch 704

Congratulations...

On your Retirement!

Diana Madril

From San Xavier Station

Yann Hitchings

From Fort Lowell Station



WEBSITE: www.nalcbranch704.org

**Branch Meeting Thursday September 3, 2020
is to begin promptly at 7:00 p.m. Please call
Office to make your reservations to attend in
person or call the Branch Office, give us your
email address if you plan on attending
remotely via Web-X.**

President's Report

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

The August Branch meeting was attended by members in person at the branch office and by members attending virtually. National Business Agent, Dan Versluis, hosted the virtual portion and spoke about some of the issues high on the list for National.

This was the first meeting we had that was both virtual and in person, we haven't had a union meeting since April and I felt we had to have a way to keep everyone involved and informed of events. The first hour went well with in person and virtual members receiving the same information, then we had a bandwidth issue with the computer that cut the virtual members out of branch business discussed.

We have corrected this issue by increasing our bandwidth with the hopes that the September meeting will go without any problems. I encourage you to call the branch office to reserve a seat to attend in person or call the branch office with your email for an invitation to the virtual meeting. The phone number for the Branch Office is (520) 323-2117, we need your participation to conduct branch business, and have a quorum. I look forward to seeing you in person or in the virtual meeting. We will continue to conduct branch meetings regularly each month. As a Reminder, Branch 704 Elections for Union Officers will be held during the October Branch Meeting.

We have all been hearing a lot of news concerning the Postal Service and how USPS is delaying mail and keeping the overtime hours down. Locally management at stand-ups have informed carriers that they want to have carriers out by 9:00am loading their LLVs. A letter carrier has a job to deliver the mail, should management tell you to curtail mail, you must fill out a PS Form 1571 and leave on the curtailed mail.

Management can ask you to case the mail that after-noon, or the next day in the morning. Carriers still need to follow their flow charts to insure they

are carrying their routes according to Handbooks and Manuals M-41 *City Delivery Carriers Duties and Responsibilities*. If management is asking you to change your job duties, you work each day talk with the shop steward and let us make sure it is within the guidelines of M-41.

We also want to make sure all political mail is being handled appropriately. If you are curtailing any political mail do as your told by management but please inform the Shop Steward. We are currently gathering information on delayed mail and are asking for your assistance. Please note that we do not need reports of the minor routine delays that have occurred for many years. We are looking for significant or new delays which may be caused by USPS action, COVID absences, etc. What we are looking for are things such as: entire routes or large portions of them not being delivered; DPS or FSS not being delivered; any new delay that is different from what we are accustomed to.

USPS is also looking to reduce letter carriers' casing equipment. A 124 is the main letter carrier case with the shelf where we place our mail as we sort it. Each shelf holds 40 one-inch separations. Shelves can be in 4, 5, or 6 rows in each 124 case. Each separation should contain not more than two numbers of deliveries, particularly on motorized routes, so mail can be distributed in the order of delivery. If one 124-case has 6 rows of shelves and each shelf contains 40 one-inch separations that can contain two numbers of deliveries at most the number of deliveries for each 124-case equipment is 420 deliveries per 124-case equipment.

As letter carriers your Edit book will tell you how many deliveries you have on your route, to determine how many 124-case equipment shelves you will need. It is also essential that management seek the valuable input from the regular letter carrier, to finalize the cell size changes. *If managers do not consult with you, obtain your input prior to implementation or they ignore the valuable input you*

President Article (Cont. on pg. 3)

President Article (Cont. from pg. 2)
provide, you should immediately inform your NALC Steward.

Every Election is always important, voting is a way to have your voice heard and to implement change in our government officials.

The Presidential Election in November is just around the corner, if you have not registered to vote, I urge you to do this now. Voting is a constitutional right you have as a United States Citizen and we should all make sure to do our civic duty by voting. This administration has made legislative recommendations from the White House Postal Task Force report that called for the revocation of collective bargaining rights by America's postal unions, massive cuts to services, and the potential privatization of the agency. We see the attacks to the Postal Service happening in the news, and the changes that are implemented without any input for the Unions.

We cannot afford to continue with the belief that the Postal Service will be ok with the attacks being levied by outside interest and this administration without each one of us doing our part in protecting the Postal Service, our customers, and our jobs by being active in insuring we have an administration that supports the Postal Service and all they stand for in our Nation. This election you must ask yourself if you will vote for an issue or for your job and having a future at the Post Office.

The COVID-19 pandemic has altered everyone's plans for 2020, including those involved with the Muscular Dystrophy Association (MDA), NALC's official charity. But letter carriers, families and friends have never given up on their support for MDA, and now they are doing what they have done from the very beginning to help deliver the cure—they are adapting.

Do you like to play poker, or do you just collect poker chips? The NALC has created a NALC/MDA memorabilia poker chip. MDA is fighting to free individuals — and the families who love them — from the harmful effects of these diseases.

Funds are needed more than ever during these times. Every amount donated helps MDA get closer to Deliver the Cure. The poker chips are \$2 each. 100% of the proceeds donated go to the Muscular Dystrophy Association and your purchase will be credited to your branches' yearly numbers. You can pay online or send your payment to the address below.

Online: <https://mda.donordrive.com/campaign/NALC-MDA-Poker-Chip-Sale>.

You can send a check (made out to MDA), to: NALC, Attn: MDA, 100 Indiana Ave NW, Washington, DC 20001

In Solidarity
Kathy Walter

Thank You, to all the employees in the Tucson and Associate Offices who participated in the Food Donor Drive. Our Grand Total is: \$2,268.00

Cherrybell	\$550	Mtn View	\$120	Silverbell	\$145
Coronado	\$357	San Manuel	\$80	Sun	\$306
Douglas	\$300	San Xavier	\$163	Willcox	\$118
Ft Lowell	\$124			Retiree	\$5

Great Job! As usual, Post Office employees always help when needed.

Vice President Article

Nominations for Branch Officers will be taken at the regular October Branch Meeting.

In case you haven't heard, the new Postmaster General Louis DeJoy has laid out his plans for the Postal Service. Not only will his plan affect us personally, our jobs, benefits and our future, but it affects the core of what our institution has been for countless years. We continue to provide essential services to the American public 6 days a week. In times like these we have to make sure that we voice our beliefs to our elected representatives to ensure that the Post Office is not successful in completing a knee jerk reaction. We can idly sit by and do nothing, or we can join together and forge through this very difficult time in our history.

One of these changes occurred the morning of August 6th when the Postal Service sent NALC headquarters a copy of a stand-up talk for city letter carriers intended to explain the goals of its latest unilateral delivery initiative. It is called Post Office Sortation Equipment Reconciliation (SER).

In the stand-up talk, the USPS states, *"From a city delivery perspective, our goal is to convert as many city routes as possible to one, six-shelf, evenly spaced 124 and provide efficient and effective customer service."* A 124 is the main letter carrier case with the shelf where we place our mail as we sort it. The USPS also states, *"In order to do so, it is essential that we seek your valuable input as carriers, to finalize the cell size changes. This is vital because, as the expert on the route, you can readily identify addresses that may require additional or less sortation space."*

In order to complete this as planned, we will be starting carrier consultations soon regarding these changes to our carrier sortation equipment by obtaining your input." At the end of the stand-up talk, we are reminded of the importance of *"vigorously focusing on the efficiency of our operations"*.

If supervisors or managers do not consult with and obtain your input prior to implementing this initiative, or if they ignore the valuable input you provide, you should call the Branch office.

The M-39, *Management of Delivery Services* and the M-41, *City Delivery Carriers Duties and Responsibilities* both contain provisions regarding case cells or separations, as well as casing equipment.

If changes to case configurations are implemented that violate those handbooks, then a grievance should be filed citing a violation of the appropriate provisions. If needed, Shop Stewards should contact the office for guidance.

In my opinion local management's mandate from the USPS Headquarters is to do more with less. This does not mean that carriers must work faster, work in an unsafe manner or give up their breaks, lunch periods or comfort stops. The workforces in most stations are improperly staffed to meet management's self-imposed goals.

Management deliberately goes into each workday with open routes and those daily vacancies are to be pivoted among carriers in dictated under time. What carriers need to remember is your supervisor does not determine the existence of under time nor does the DOIS report. It is the assigned carrier who determines whether they have 8 hours of work, under time hours, or any overtime needed for their assignment after accessing all the duties assigned on a given day.

Unfortunately, arguments on the workroom floor continue over workload expectations. Some carriers attempt to perform to under time expectations and when they fail, they are subject to harassment, disciplinary actions such as Failure to Follow Instructions, or Unsatisfactory Work Performance. Simply following the rules in place can steer you away from unwanted attention and supervisor confrontation.

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Failure to follow instructions is a shallow threat, unfounded if you did as you were instructed; unsatisfactory performance won't fly if you were performing your duties in a safe and conscientious manner. The Union stewards and officers of this Branch, are very experienced in dismissing frivolous discipline and will continue to fight the improper intimidation tactics that continue in the stations.

It's very important that we understand the seriousness of these times and how they can affect us. Whether we are defending our health and pension benefits from budget cut proposals that are sure to come as we confront the staggering deficits caused

by the COVID 19 pandemic, wars and financial meltdowns of the past fourteen years.

The only concern of your supervisor is to ultimately get as much mail out the door using the least amount of work hours. Carriers should perform their assigned duties within the rules and regulations set forth in the handbooks and manuals. When management decisions violate your rights under the contract, a grievance should be filed with your shop steward.

Until next month be safe.

Fraternally,
Stuart Love
Vice President

**Men's Uniforms
Size 38 and up
(Pants, Shorts
and Shirts)
needed. Please
make sure you
donate good,
clean, & usable
uniforms.**

Meeting Dates

**Branch Meeting - Thursday,
September 3, 2020
@ 7:00 pm**

**Stewards Meeting - Thursday,
September 17, 2020
@ 5:30 pm**

**E-Board Meeting - Thursday,
September 24, 2020
@ 6:00 pm**

Chaplain's Corner

The other day I was doing some volunteering outside, I had to wear a mask, and of course it was harder to breathe and so much hotter. I just want to say to all of you carriers that you all are so appreciated.

This is such a difficult time and a hotter than normal summer. You are having to wear masks and to take extra precautions as you perform your job. All of your work is so hard at serving the public. You all are essential workers doing a tough job during these challenging times. I for one, am very thankful for your efforts. I hope your customers and others recognize what you all are doing for them and how dedicated you are to serving the public.

My prayers are with you. God Bless.

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

Get Well - Gene Kelley

Condolences

**Lillian Valdez on the loss
of your Mother.**

**CC Carbajal on the loss
of your Brother.**

**Vince Trujillo on the loss
of your Father-In-Law.**

**Robert Stewart on the loss
of your Grandmother.**

Family of Earl Brown.

**Amber Underwood on
the loss of your Father.**

Health Benefit Report

Disinfectant, Masks and Other Must-Have Home Supplies

- 1. Face masks.** "If you use reusable face coverings, it is smart to have at least two, so you do not get stuck if one is in the wash," says Kenneth Koncija, M.D.A. Geriatrician at the Cleveland Clinic.
- 2. Hand sanitizer.** Scrubbing your hands for at least 20 seconds with soap and water is best, but if that is not possible, use hand sanitizer that is at least 60 percent alcohol. If you want to stash a container of sanitizer in your car for convenience when you are on the go, you can, experts say.
- 3. Disposable rubber gloves.** The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends donning a pair of disposable rubber gloves if you are interacting with a family member who has COVID-19. Be sure to change gloves after every interaction.
- 4. Disinfectants.** Not all household cleaning products can kill the coronavirus. The Environmental Protection Agency has a full list of products that do; Go to epa.gov and search for "List N." You will see some familiar names, such as Clorox and Lysol, on the list, as well as advice about how to use disinfectants most effectively.

You can also search for products by name at <https://cfpub.epa.gov/giwiz/disinfectants/index.cfm>. If you're unable to find disinfecting products, you can make your own by mixing one third cup of bleach with a gallon of room-temperature water.

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

Contract Talk

Lately there has been a rise in the discipline management has been issuing. Although the basic principle in the administration of Article 16 is that discipline should be corrective in nature, rather than punitive, this fact is lost, not understood, or just ignored by management. There are basic considerations that management must use before initiating any disciplinary action: **(1).** Is there a rule? If so, was the employee aware of the rule? Was the employee forewarned of the disciplinary consequences for failure to follow the rule? **(2.)** Is the rule a reasonable rule? Management must make sure rules are reasonable based on the overall objective of safe and efficient work performance. Management's rules should be reasonably related to business efficiency, safe operation of our business and the performance we might expect of the employee. **(3).** Is the rule consistently and equitably enforced? This means that everyone should be treated the same, fairly and without discrimination. Consistent and equitable enforcement is a must. **(4).** Was a thorough investigation completed? Before administering the discipline, management must make an investigation to determine whether the employee committed the offense. Management must ensure that the investigation is thorough and objective. However, this is not always the case. We are aware that management asks questions that are leading and designed to fit their narrative. **(5).** Was the severity of the discipline reasonably related to the infraction itself and in line with that usually administered, as well as to the seriousness of the employee's past record? This means discipline should be consistent to what has been previously issued

for that particular offense. An employee's record of previous offenses may never be used to establish guilt in a case you presently have under consideration but may be used to determine the appropriate disciplinary penalty. **(6).** Was the disciplinary action taken in a timely manner? Disciplinary actions should be taken as promptly as possible after the offense has been committed.

We must always perform our job the way we have been trained. Letter Carriers are the face of the United States Postal Service. We are who the public identifies with and who they trust. Yes, we are held to a higher standard than our management counterparts, but it is something that will be corrected in the future.

In Solidarity,
Stuart Love

**Attention Postmaster,
1 Monthly issue
consisting of at least
25% non-advertising
matter in each issue of the
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National Association of Letter
Carriers,
2950 N. Country Club Road,
Tucson, AZ 85716-1912**

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 September 2020 Newsletter**

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