



The Award-Winning Newspaper
of Joseph P. Considine
Branch 34 NALC, AFL-CIO

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National Association of Letter Carriers
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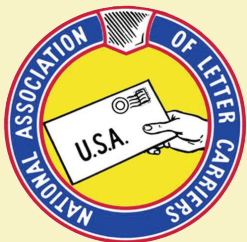
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF LETTER CARRIERS

BRANCH 34's CLAN

CELEBRATING 127 YEARS OF UNION PARTICIPATION AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS ★ 1890-2017

Inside Branch 34's CLAN Upcoming Meetings

Please check out
the dates, times
and locations
for all upcoming
Membership
Meetings on the
new-and-improved
**BRANCH 34
WEBSITE** at
nalcbranch34.com



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President's Report

The Choice is **YOURS!**

At the start of this article, I am going reference the qualification required by the Federal Election Commission (FEC), specifically that making a contribution to the Letter Carrier Political Fund is strictly voluntarily with the unfettered understanding that your contribution is not a condition of membership in the NALC nor is it part of your union dues. You have a right to refuse to contribute without any reprisal. You, alone make this decision.

So why should you contribute to the Letter Carrier Political Fund? At the outset, contributing to LCPF is the easiest step you can take to participate in NALC's political efforts to influence members of Congress to protect *our jobs*.

Each year, NALC fights to fend off attacks in Congress that threaten yours and other Letter Carriers' collective-bargaining rights, retirement benefits and livelihood. We've been successful so far, and we want to continue helping to elect House and Senate candidates who will protect us, promote our issues and deliver our message to Washington.

LCPF supports pro-labor, pro-letter carrier congressional candidates, regardless of political party, with the hope that they will support and protect Letter Carrier interests as members of the House of Representatives and the Senate.

In recent years, our allies in the House and Senate have helped us beat back more than a dozen attempts to end Saturday delivery and to deregulate mail delivery. They have helped us defeat bills aimed at ending door-to-door delivery, something that would have severely damaged our ability to capture the growing e-commerce delivery market. They helped us stop several federal budget measures that would have drastically cut our pension and health care benefits.

Unfortunately, those triumphs do not seem to resonate with most of our Members when it comes to kicking in a couple of bucks a pay period to support these efforts through LCPF.

Why? Well, perhaps you believe that Congress and the United

States Postal Service are a generous bunch who will richly compensate your labor and you feel no need to retain the right to collectively bargain for your services. You know, kind of a retro, pre-strike 1970 days often referred to as the time of 'collective begging'. Remember, the adage, those who forget the past are destined to repeat it. (All Members would be well-served to google the history of the Postal Strike of 1970).

Maybe the urgency to protect our interests hasn't resonated because the few changes that have been made to our retirement system didn't have any impact on workers who were already on the job and the majority of Members under FERS still contribute only 0.5 percent toward their retirement. (Members who were hired after 2013 have FERS contributions ranging from 3.1 percent to 4.4 percent.)

But all that can change with the whim of Congress and the stroke of a pen!

One provision of our recently ratified National Agreement which I believe in many respects may be the home run of the deal is the preservation of our uncapped Cost of Living Adjustment

Following the March 1970 strike by postal employees, negotiations in 1971 resulted in a contract that continued postal work rules and working conditions achieved under the Postal Reorganization Act; provided for salary increases,

(continued on page 5)



MICHAEL YERKES
President

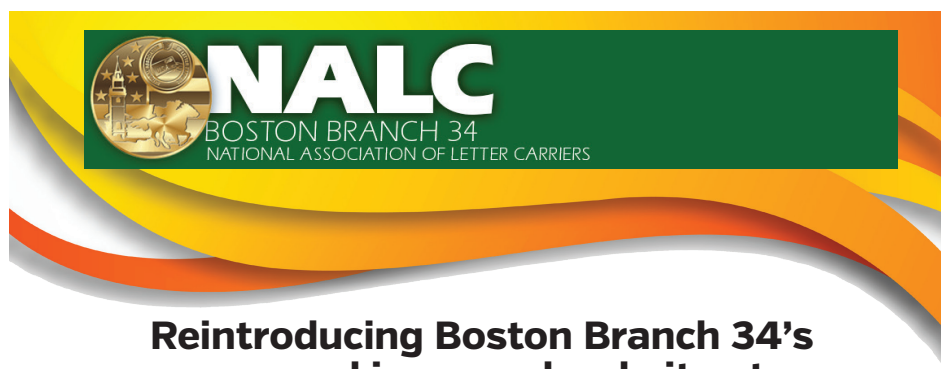


ELECTION NOTICE FOR BRANCH 34 DELEGATES TO THE 2018 NALC BIENNIAL NATIONAL CONVENTION IN DETROIT

The election of delegates to the NALC Biennial National Convention will be held at the December Branch #34 meeting. Nominations will be taken from the floor during the November monthly meeting. There will be no nomination papers necessary to run in this election. Any potential nominees who cannot be in attendance must submit a letter of acceptance at the time of nominations. The names of all nominees will be read off by the close of the meeting.

If necessary, the election of delegates will take place at the December meeting. All delegates must be elected by a plurality vote. Any vote shall be counted and tabulated during the December meeting.

Delegates to the NALC National Convention will not receive any Branch financial assistance unless they have attended sixteen (16) to twenty-four (24) meetings in the past two (2) years. Alternates will not be entitled to financial assistance unless they become delegates. Proof of attendance will be validated by the Regular Monthly Meeting signature book with the Sergeant-at-Arms.



Reintroducing Boston Branch 34's
new and improved website at
nalcbranch34.com

- Breaking News Regarding Branch, National and Other Issues of Vital Interest To Our Members
- Carrier Bids/Results
- Upcoming Event/Meeting Dates and Locations
- Up-to-Date CCA Relative Standing Lists
- Essential Retirement Information
- USPS Liteblue, eOPF, TSP, Retirement and Other Useful Links & Forms
- New Sections Being Added Continually



BRANCH 34 STATION STEWARDS

Allston.....	Jack Gomes
Arlington	Gerald McCarthy Sean Mullet
Auburndale	Vacant
Back Bay	Lucy Warren Mike McCormack
Belmont	Salvatore Celeste David D'Agostino
Braintree DMU	Richard Fraser Robert O'Donnell
Brighton.....	Roshon Butts
Brookline	Maria Constantino Joseph DeMambro
Cambridge - Central Sq.	William Wilkins Christopher Nolett
Cambridge - Porter Sq.	William Criscitelli
Cohasset.....	Judi Aronson
Chestnut Hill	Thomas Conville
Dorchester	Vacant
East Weymouth.....	Artie Matthews
Fenway.....	Tony Cinelli
Fields Corner.....	James Hudson
Fort Point.....	Benny Faetra Thor Hellestedt
Hingham/Hull.....	Michael Bertrand
Hyde Park	Joseph DeBerardinis
IMC - Chelsea.....	William Lang
IMC - East Boston.....	Emelio Leone
IMC - Winthrop.....	John Fanning
IMC - Everett.....	Tom Ciulla
IMC - Charlestown..	Steve Mahoney
IMC - Somerville.....	John Fucile
Jamaica Plain ..	Bernadette Romans Robert Damatin
J.F.K. Station.....	Robert Amirault Millie Brooks
Kenmore.....	Dan Abellard
Lexington.....	Tony Scrivano John Lucey
Malden.....	Laura Fahey Chet Macaskil
Mattapan	Vacant
Medfield.....	Christopher Pacitti
Medford	John Holmberg Stephen White
Milton	Robert Leighton
Needham.....	Vacant
Newton Centre.....	David Ward
Newton Highlands.....	Rich Shelley
Newtonville	Thomas Duff
North Quincy.....	Vacant
North Weymouth.....	Anthony Davis
Quincy	John Ainsley Michael O'Connor
Revere DMU.....	David O'Connor
Melrose.....	Vacant
Roslindale.....	Adam Difazio
Roxbury	John Galvin Keith Meredith Samie Smith
Scituate.....	Phyllis Monahan
South Boston	Mike Kidd
So. Weymouth..	Lawrence Ahlstedt
Stoneham.....	Joseph Mangano
Waban	Rich Farrell
Waltham	Edward Walsh Colive Heavens
Watertown.....	William Huber
Wellesley	Tom Ryan
Wellesley Hills	Jack Eppenstein
Weston	David Demarco
West Newton	Salvatore Ledda
West Roxbury	Michael Walter Stephen Tinglof
Weymouth Landing..	Mario Venturelli
Woburn.....	Vigo Conte Fred Casey
Wollaston.....	Thomas Rooney, Jr.

Fall of 2017 Will Be Busy for Branch 34

The summer of 2017 is drawing to a close and I trust everyone had some fun in the sun or at least enjoyed some time off with family friends. As one season ends another begins and the fall of 2017 will be very busy for Branch 34.

As all of you know our National Agreement has been ratified by our members by a sixteen to one ratio. The new pay scales have already been implemented. However the retroactive paychecks will take some time to calculate. Carriers will see the retro check incorporating all hours worked at different pay rates for carriers with two cost of living adjustment at different times. It disturbs me however, that across the nation approximately 82,000 ballots were cast while almost 190,000 were mailed. In Branch 34 1,239 carriers voted of almost 2500 eligible to vote. We are talking about our pay and benefits and carriers choose not to vote. I just don't get it!

With the new contract in place it is time to start planning for local negotiations. Article 30 of the National Agreement enables the local parties to negotiate over certain work rules and other terms and conditions of employment. Each installation within Branch 34 has a Local Memorandum of Understanding (LMOU). There will be a thirty day period commencing on October 16, 2017 for negotiations. Branch 34 officers along with some local stewards will be conducting these negotiations. If you have any items in your current LMOU that you would like to change or add please talk to your steward soon.

On September 20, 2017 Branch 34 conducted another steward training class. One of the items of interest was TACS reports. TACS, or Time and Attendance Collection System, are reports that show

what hours an employee work on a given day. The most common report is the Employee Everything Report that print out actual clock hits such as begin time, move to street and return to office. The report shows if there is overtime or leave on a particular day.

Branch 34 has come across significant clock hit manipulations by management in the IMC in Chelsea and beyond. The training showed our stewards how to read the reports as well as specific reports to request when investigating grievances. Branch 34 is committed to protecting carriers from any loss of wages due to clock hit manipulations in all our stations.

Another topic of the training was Article 12 Withholding. We have been notified the Postal Service will be cutting clerk jobs. Why local management would even consider this is beyond me. Carriers are waiting for the mail to be distributed as it is, though, no fault of clerks. So management chooses to cut more jobs. Go figure! As a result carrier positions will be withheld for possible clerk excessing. As usual we will file grievances on any withheld carrier positions.

Branch 34 is also hosting our second annual Night at Fenway on Wednesday, September 27, 2017. The game is against the Toronto Blue Jays and could have possible playoff implications. It is sure to be a fun night out with friends, family, and co-workers. We have 125 tickets and are on a first come-first serve basis. Don't get shut out from this fun evening at Fenway Park.

On Sunday, October 22, Branch 34 will be conducting another Retirement Seminar in conjunction with NBA Casciano and NALC. It will be held at the John McKeon Post in Dorchester. Anyone contemplating retiring in the future should

attend. NALC experts will share some key information on OPM retirement and may help you eliminate some potential life altering mistakes. There will be time for questions and answers at the end. All those who attended our last retirement seminar were very pleased with the presentation. No matter where you fall in your postal career it is an informative session.

On September 13, Branch 34 resumed our regular monthly meeting schedule at our new location. The new location is at the John McKeon Post on Hilltop Street in Dorchester. We will be having several of our functions at this new location. Hopefully a central location for meetings will help eliminate some of the confusion on meeting location and increase attendance at the meetings. Our Branch meetings are held on the second Tuesday of each month starting at 7:00 pm.

The conclusion of summer brings about the ritual of route inspections which is as common as the leaves falling from trees. Management in the Boston Installation will attempt to capture more time from letter carriers and eliminate routes. We will be conducting classes for these inspections and will work to protect our routes. The first line of protection is you the carrier. Every day must be treated as an inspection.

Branch 34 is committed to educating our steward and members. We are committed to providing the best tools necessary to protecting out carriers and jobs. We hope you participate in as many of these events as possible.



KEVIN FLAHERTY
Executive Vice President

In Memoriam: KEVIN FORD

The name **Kevin Ford** may not be a household name in Branch 34, but trust me, behind the scenes Kevin did as much as anyone to help the letter carriers of Branch 34. Kevin began his career in 1970 right before the great Postal Strike. One of his first acts of Unionism was to walk off the job with his brothers and sisters, even though it meant he could've been fired. It's because of people like him that we now have collective bargaining, which is how we have the pay, benefits, and work rights we enjoy today. But what good are work rights if there's no one there to enforce them? Kevin was a contract enforcer.

Kevin became steward of the Medford station in the early 90's along with former Branch 34 President **Bob Lind**. He quickly showed Bob, the members in Medford, and the entire branch leadership his work ethic and relentless pursuit to advocate for his fellow carriers. Bob told me that it wasn't uncommon to walk into work early, and find Kevin on Management's computer working on grievances on his own time. Think about that, he cared so much about his fellow carriers that he was willing to spend his own time to help them. It was that kind of dedication that got Kevin picked to represent letter carriers at the B-Team, which is the third step of our grievance process. The B-Team, or Dispute Resolution Team, (DRT), is one person from the Union, and one from the Postal Service, who try to resolve grievances before they go to arbitration. This is a difficult job that makes it almost impossible to make everyone happy, but Kevin did it. I never heard anyone bad mouth a decision he made.

It was in this role that I first met **Kevin Ford**. I was a fairly new steward, and Branch officer in the early to mid-2000's, and needed all the help and advice I could get. Well, there was no one better, or more willing to give encouragement, and advice than **Kevin Ford**. He would always take the time to explain something to you. He could articulate any argument no matter how complex, and make it so even a novice could



Kevin Ford

understand it. As an arbitration advocate, I could simply read his impasse statement to an arbitrator to paint the picture we wanted the arbitrator to see.

In 2010, Kevin retired from the Postal Service after 40 years of faithful service. It was hoped that Kevin would enjoy a long retirement with his wife Gloria, three children, and eight grandchildren, as no one deserved it more than him. Unfortunately, on July 1st of this year, Kevin passed away from pancreatic cancer. I'm sorry I didn't write an article singing Kevin's praises when he retired, as he certainly deserved it. The Branch has missed Kevin since he retired, but that must pale in comparison to how much his family and friends miss him now. I remember how excited Kevin used to be on Friday's to meet his wife after work for a date night in Boston. And how he used to talk about watching one of his grandkids, and you could tell how proud he was.

Kevin Ford may not be a household name in Branch 34, but he should be!

—Michael Murray, Branch 34 Secretary-Treasurer

White House's 2018 Budget

On May 23rd, the White House released their budget for fiscal year 2018 and if implemented it would have a significant impact on the Postal Service and us. Luckily it's the Congress that controls the budget process, not the White House. Nevertheless their message is clear, cuts to the Postal Service and the pay of its workers. It appears that the budget is dead on arrival in the Congress, which is good. But there are many things in it that should be of a concern to active and retired carriers since any one of them could be adopted into Congress's budget.

For those of us covered by the Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS) the budget increases our and the Postal Services contributions to our pension benefits. It would raise our contributions by one percent of pay per year for up to six years which could cost active carriers up to \$3,600 a year after the six years. Who amongst us could afford that?

It would also eliminate cost of living adjustments (COLA's) for current and future retirees. Meaning your pension would stay the same from the day you retired to the day you died. A grade 1 basic annuity in 2007 was \$1,192 a month with 30 years of service, today it's \$1,988 a month with 30 years of service. Over the course of your retirement your pension could be reduced to little more than pocket change without COLA's to help keep up with the cost of living. For those retirees covered by the Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS) the budget would reduce your COLA's by one half of one percent.

The budget also brings back the prospect of reducing the frequency of delivery, which probably means Saturday delivery. This is something we haven't heard about in a few years and I'd hoped we'd never hear about it again but this budget puts it back out there. There's also \$46 billion in vaguely defined cuts and revenue changes

over the next 10 years which would no doubt harm the Postal Service and us.

These attacks seem to come at us all the time from budget proposals, like this one, but also from members of Congress. Legislation gets introduced in every Congress that could reduce or eliminate our pensions and strip us of our collective bargaining rights. We need to be vigilant and ready to fight any changes that would hurt us or the Postal Service. Don't leave it to someone else to protect your rights and money. We all have skin in this game and we all need to protect ourselves and each other. Become an e-activist and donate to the Letter Carrier Political Fund (formerly COLCPE). Thinking "someone else will take care of this" or "the Union will take care of that" is a fool's errand because you are that someone else and **you are the Union. Get involved Brothers and Sisters!**

SEC Warns of TSP Scam

The Security Exchange Commission (SEC) issued a warning to TSP participants of a scam targeting their hard earned money. Brokers from a consulting group called Federal Employee Benefits Counselors misled FERS annuitants into thinking they were affiliated with or approved by the federal government, they weren't. These brokers convinced our retired Brothers and Sisters to roll over their TSP accounts into high fee variable annuity products. According to the SEC they sold about 200 variable annuities valued at approximately \$40 million and made 1.7 million in commission. Fortunately, the SEC has filed fraud charges against four of these brokers and hopefully they get their comeuppance in jail.

This isn't the first scam targeting our retired Brothers and Sisters this year. The Office of Personal Management (OPM) has issued two warnings this year to fed-

eral retirees.

One involved companies offering cash in exchange for all or part of a retired workers annuity. The other was one in which the scam artist threatened to end the retirees annuity unless they immediately sent a payment. In both cases the scam artists use high pressure tactics to scam the annuitant. Be careful and suspect of anyone trying to get their hands on your money.

Surprise! Scabs Pocket Wage Increase

I know. It's shocking that these "principled individuals" would accept even more from the Union that they don't want to be a part of. But it's true. As of this writing I have received no money back from any of these deadbeats for the wage increases and COLA's we just negotiated with the Postal Service. These takers probably think the benevolent Postal Service "gives" them their pay and benefits. But nothing could be further from the truth.

The Postal Service doesn't "give" you anything. The Union, through collective bargaining, gets us everything we have. Prior to the Great Postal Strike of 1970, when we won the right to collectively bargain, we had to lobby Congress for anything and everything we got. Times were tough but those Brothers and Sisters didn't give up like our scabs have. They fought to make it better, imagine that. They were tough people and they were determined to get workplace justice and that's just what they did. If our Brothers and Sisters who came before us had the makeup of a scab we'd still have collective begging, welfare and food stamps.



MICHAEL MURRAY
Secretary-Treasurer

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Founded May 1971

AWARDS
International Labor Communications Association
GENERAL EXCELLENCE - LOCAL UNION PUBLICATIONS - CIRCULATIONS of 2,500 to 9,999

First Place, 2003

National Association of Letter Carriers
GENERAL EXCELLENCE - LARGE BRANCH PUBLICATIONS - MORE THAN 1,500 MEMBERS

First Place, 2016

First Place, 2014

First Place, 2012

First Place, 2010

First Place, 2008

First Place, 2002

First Place, 1996

First Place, 1994

Second Place, 2006

Second Place, 1992

Third Place, 2004

Honorable Mention, 1982

Judges' Commendation, 1988

BEST EDITORIAL OR COLUMN

Honorable Mention, 2016

BEST STORY

First Place, 1996

Third Place, 1990

2 Honorable Mentions, 1992

Honorable Mention, 1990

BEST CARTOON OR PHOTO

First Place, 2006

PROMOTING UNIONISM

Third Place, 1992

Judges' Commendation, 1988

BRANCH 34's CLAN is the Official Publication of Branch 34 of the National Association of Letter Carriers, AFL-CIO. The Boston Branch was Chartered by the NALC on June 18, 1890.

BRANCH 34's CLAN is published six times each year. It presents the various issues of the day that are of concern to the membership. The views and opinions expressed in the articles and columns do not necessarily reflect the official position of the NALC Branch 34 or its officers, but rather those of the author.

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Robert Damatin, Editor
Michael Yerkes, Associate Editor
Kevin Flaherty, Associate Editor

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They Inspect, So We Must Protect!

‘Tis the season for route inspections, and whether you’ve had the pleasure of participating in this do more with less, route shedding process or not, you have to understand this is very serious business for letter carriers. It is humorous to think how much money, and time management will expend to produce numbers that are essentially used to show you don’t have an eight hour day. And that premise can be completely supported by the district-wide directive being floated about and has been mentioned to me management and carriers alike: eliminate two routes from every office.

Now, how on earth can any organization make such a prediction without crunching those numbers, gathering that data, and finalizing their figures? OK, your inner light bulb should have just turned on.

Now, with that “A-ha” moment in the rear view mirror, presently Management’s strong suit is not numbers, just ask the letter carriers at the IMC in Chelsea. They are definitely crunching numbers, but it seems they’ve added a lot of fudge to their formulas. And as a letter carrier with many moons in his rearview mirror, this comes as no surprise. Look, this isn’t the first time this has happened, offices in the Richmond, Virginia area had clock ring operations manipulated. But I digress, this article is about route inspections, right? **R-i-g-h-t!**

Your inspection starts months before they follow you in the street. They will use the numbers they gather during that time to form the worth of your route. So, in the immortal words of Bill Belichick, “Do Your Job!” We have to do the right things when it comes to the position of Letter

Carrier. Be where you’re supposed to be, and do what you’re supposed to do. This is our area of expertise, not Management’s. We must perform these duties to the best of our abilities, and not what Management believes those abilities to be. Every letter carrier is different, and brings their individual skill set to this job.

Some supervisors and managers will lead you to believe that they can compare you to another letter carrier, but don’t be fooled. You tell them you’re doing the job to the best of “your” ability, as all brothers and sisters do on a daily basis. We are not here to run, jump, or leap into action. We will perform this job as best we can, in the safest way possible, and as always, it takes what it takes, and it is what it is!

There are many interested parties in the delivery of mail, the most important being those who pay to mail something, and those who receive that mail. We are obligated to place every single piece of mail in a mailbox. You must realize that management is watching everything you do, every single day. If you show them you need additional time, they will gladly provide it.

Be where you’re supposed to be, and do what you’re supposed to do: **Your Job!**



BOBBY DAMATIN
"Branch 34's CLAN" Editor

★ **To Our Troops!** ★
Thank You For Your Service and Your Sacrifice!
NALC BRANCH 34 SUPPORTS YOU!

Don't Be A **SCAB!**

Urge them to pay their fair share and join Branch 34!

Back Bay

THOMAS N. CONCANNON
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CHRISTOPHER A. DOUGLAS
OLIVIA NGUYEN..... CCA
ROBERT A. ROMIKITIS
DAVID P. WIDROW

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CHRISTINE M. BAILEY
LINDA M. HAZELL

Cambridge - Central Square

TOUFIK BOURKICHE

Cambridge - Porter Square

BLANCA I. TEEBAGY

Chelsea Carrier Annex (IMC)

SANDRA GIORDANO

Dorchester Center

JAMES B. KERR

Fields Corner

MOLLY LONG

Fenway

BEVERLY A. SCANLON

Fort Point

WAYNE J. CHIN

Hingham-Hull

MARK J. DION

Kenmore

KHEIM DIEUJUSTE

Malden

EILEEN M. FINN

Medford

GERALD M. LYLES

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Waban

ROBIN I. DEVITTO

Waltham

DAVID BAHM
KELLY M. GREEN-GALLO
JOSEPH REGNA..... CCA

We apologize in advance if your name appears on this scab list in error. This information is forwarded to us from our National Headquarters and we do our best to ensure its accuracy. If you are still not in the Union, it's time to step up and pay your fair share. No excuses. Contact your Station Steward to join NOW!

Helping Out This Hurricane Season

By Bobby Damatin, "Branch 34's CLAN" Editor

We are fortunate enough not to be in the direct path of two massive disasters in Hurricane Harvey, and Irma, Millions of people will lose everything, and the need is soaring in all categories from Accommodations to Ziplock bags. Hundreds, if not thousands of brother and sister letter carriers in the affected areas will be saddled with tremendous burden in the upcoming months and years as they work towards recovering from these tragic events. Paying it forward in the possibility of our homes, and our lives being impacted someday is good karma, and helping others has always been in the DNA of our NALC family! Whether it's MDA, our annual Food Drive, or helping our customers; emergency or not, we answer the call!

The need could not be greater, and every donation will make the difference in getting people the assistance they need. If you haven't already reached out with a donation, the time to do that is now, and here are some ways to do so! The Red Cross has simple ways to give by texting, calling, or mailing donations. You can donate to the Direct Impact Fund, a 501(c) (3) non-profit that has partnered with GoFundMe.com. Your tax-deductible donation will go directly to support individuals with verified campaigns on GoFundMe.com.

There are a number of ways to help our fellow postal workers more directly. The Postal Employees' Relief

Fund, (PERF), is a 501(c) (3) charitable organization operated by the various union and management organizations of the U.S. Postal Service to solely benefit postal employees. PERF, (Combined Federal Campaign #10268), provides relief grants to help qualifying individuals get re-established after a loss, based on an application process. Tax-deductible donations can be made in a variety of ways. Visit postalrelief.com to make an immediate donation with your credit card. You can also mail a donation check to: **Postal Employees' Relief Fund, P.O. Box 7630, Woodbridge, VA 22195**

You can send slightly used or new postal uniforms, footwear and/or rain gear to the following branches that can act as hubs for uniforms for the surrounding branches/letter carriers:

- **Houston Branch 283, c/o Harvey Help, 2414 Broadway Blvd., Houston, TX 77012**
- **Corpus Christi Branch 1259, c/o Harvey Help, 1220 S. Alameda, Corpus Christi, TX 78404**

And as category 5 Hurricane, Irma has reared its ugly head on U.S Territories, Puerto Rico, and continues on to the Southeast portion of the United States, we will post further information on Branch 34's website, nalcbranch34.com.

Please be as generous as possible in this immediate time of need. God Bless everyone who needs this help!

CCAs Open Season for Health Benefits Ends October 19, 2017

CCAs can enroll for Health Benefits during the Special Enrollment Period that ends October 19th, 2017 at 11:59 P.M., Eastern Time. Your coverage will be effective on October 28th, 2017. If you do not enroll during this Special Enrollment Period, your next opportunity is Open Season, which is November 13th, 2017 – December 11th, 2017. Elections made

during Open Season, take effect January 6th, 2018.

How to Enroll During the Special Enrollment Period

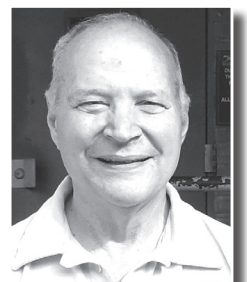
You may use Postal Ease via the web at: <https://liteblue.USPS.gov>, or by calling the Employee Service Line at 1-877-477-3273, option 1; or TTY 1-866-260-7507. Use your Employee ID number (EIN), found at the top of your earnings statement, and your USPS self-service password to access Lite Blue and Postal Ease via the web.

Use your USPS EIN and current 4-digit USPS pin to conduct self-service telephone transactions on the telephone using IVR. If you do not know your USPS self-service password, you can reset your USPS Self-Service Password, (and

USPS pin) using the self-service profile SSP Application at: www.ssp.usps.gov, or via links that are provided on Lite Blue, and Blue logon pages.

Plan information for USPS Health Benefit Plans is available on Lite Blue at: <https://liteblue.usps.gov/uspshbp>. This will give you the summary of benefits and coverage, which provides a helpful overview of what the USPS Health Benefits Plan covers, and your share of health care costs.

One final thought; former President Barack Obama said, "I wish everyone could have access to the Federal Employee's Health Benefit Plans because it is one of the best plans in the country."



JOSEPH DeMAMBRO
Health Benefit Officer


Congratulations Retirees

On behalf of President Yerkes, the Board of Officers and the Brothers and Sisters of Branch 34, we extend our wishes for a long, happy, healthy and well deserved retirement to the following recently retired members:

Frederick J. Almeida...IMC-East Boston
Robert A. Alexanian Waltham
Steven P. Bouley Malden
Scott M. Bradley Woburn
Dennis F. Broderick, Jr. ..Wellesley Hills
William T. Clay Watertown
Joseph E. Cochran, Jr. Malden
Michael J. ConnollyHingham
Stephen W. Dwyer..... Arlington
James W. Eckland..... Weston
Joseph A. Elliott..... Weymouth Landing
William R. Goodwin ..North Weymouth
Timothy J. HobanNewtonville
Paul Kelley Malden
John F. LehanMilton
George M. McCarthy Arlington
Timothy J. McEachern...IMC-Winthrop
Richard R. Palladino..... Watertown
Steven J. Pierce Needham
Alfred Proia.....IMC-East Boston
Timothy M. Ryan.....Fort Point
Charles J. Skeris..... Stoneham
Michael J. StarckHingham
John A. Strelis Arlington
Patrick H. Troville Fields Corner

ATTENTION RETIRED LETTER CARRIERS:

Anyone who meets the 50 year requirement to receive a GOLD CARD, please contact the Union Office at 781-281-1133 to provide and receive more information.



Reintroducing Boston Branch 34's new and improved website at nalcbranch34.com

- Breaking News Regarding Branch, National and Other Issues of Vital Interest To Our Members
- Carrier Bids/Results
- Upcoming Event/Meeting Dates and Locations
- Up-to-Date CCA Relative Standing Lists
- Essential Retirement Information
- USPS Liteblue, eOPF, TSP, Retirement and Other Useful Links & Forms
- New Sections Being Added Continually

In Memoriam

William J. Burke*
Retired Member -Arlington

Roy J. Farrow
Retired Member - Woburn

Joseph J. Golden
Retired Member - South Boston

Stephen W. Merrill
Retired Member - Malden

James Dowley
Active Member - Roslindale

Kevin W. Ford
Retired Member - Medford

Francis M. Maguire*
Retired Member - Fort Point

Joseph H. Murray, Jr. *
Retired Member - Brookline

* Denotes Gold Card Member

Rest in Peace

President's Report

(continued from page 1)

and included a "capped" cost-of-living adjustment. In 1973, the parties agreed to "uncap" the COLA and it has either been negotiated or fought for and awarded in arbitration ever since.

Pure and simple, the purpose of the COLA is to ensure that the purchasing power of your take-home pay or retirement benefits are not eroded by inflation.

While it probably shouldn't be a surprise that the issue of COLA may not seem of great importance to our newer Members; given the relative minimal growth of inflation (1.1% over the last eight-years), percentages in the 1990's and 2000's averaged more than 3% per year evaporating any wage gains. Many of our long-serving Members can recall the double digit inflation percentages, ask them how they feel about the importance of uncapped COLA.

Yet it is those cost-of-living features of our CSRS and FERS retirement programs that now appear up for grabs by the legislature. Few of the remaining private-sector pension plans ever make any adjustment for inflation. Someone who retired on \$1,000 per month in 2000 still gets the same amount today, even though just about everything – from cars and homes, to food and medicine – has gone up.

Members who retire under the old Civil Service Retirement System get regular cost-of-living adjustments based on inflation as measured by the Bureau

of Labor Statistics. Those COLAs begin as soon as they retire, regardless of age.

Those who retire under the newer Federal Employees Retirement System are not eligible for any COLAs until age 62. Then they are under a so-called Diet COLA system, which reduces their annual annuity increases by one percentage point less than the actual rise in inflation.

Under a White House plan, CSRS retirees in the future would get Diet COLAs that would be 0.5 percent less than the actual rise in inflation as measured by the Consumer Price Index-W.

FERS retirees would fare even worse. The White House plan – if it became law – would freeze pensions at their current level. There would be no more COLAs.

There are also legislative proposals to base the annuities of future retirees on their highest five-year average. Currently, the starting annuity is based on Members highest three-year salary.

Many of our retirement-eligible Members should be watching this one because it is one of the few they could actually "beat" by retiring before the date of enactment.

Another proposal would eliminate the gap payment that FERS retirees get if they retire before age 62, when they become eligible for COLAs. In some cases, that gap payment can be worth thousands of dollars per year.

As noted in the FEC qualification above, NALC dues cannot be used to pro-

tect us legislatively. Enrolling in the LCPF is strictly your choice. Preserving our collectively bargained right to protection against inflation with the uncapped COLA is simply one reason. A quote attributed to the White House claims "The administration sees these changes as a way to realize new cost savings ...and bring the generous

federal retirement package in line with the private sector."

Are you ready to give up your "generous federal retirement package" or are you ready to fight to keep what we have. You get in the fight by contributing to LCPF. You, alone make this decision.

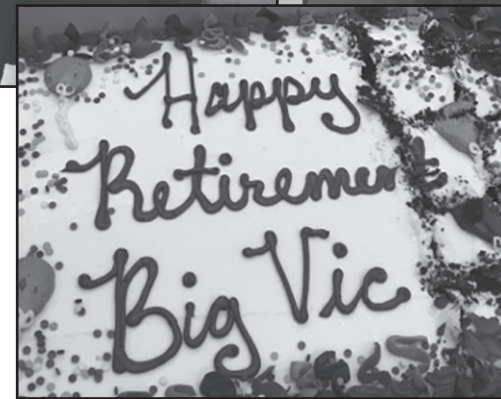
Branch 34 Honors Its Retirees

Dorchester Center's Vic Dapsys



Dorchester Center's Vic Dapsys (center) receives retirement congratulations from co-workers.

Dorchester Center's Vic Dapsys receives his retirement jacket from Branch 34's Secretary-Treasurer Michael Murray!



Big Vic's big cake!



The Dorchester Center Crew.

Letter Carrier Political Fund Disclaimer

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 force 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 contributor. 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 per calendar year. Any guideline amount is merely a suggestion, and an individual is free to contribute more or less than the guideline suggests and the Union will not favor or disadvantage anyone by reason of the amount of their contribution or their decision not to contribute.

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Complimentary light supper

Please RSVP by November 9th – Space is limited

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Branch 34 Golf Tournament A Huge Success



Branch 34 Honors Its Retirees

North Weymouth's William Goodwin



North Weymouth's Bill Goodwin punches for the last time! Good luck in your retirement Bill!

West Newton's Sal Ledda



Branch 34's President Mike Yerkes (left) and Branch 34 Executive Vice President Kevin Flaherty congratulate West Newton Shop Steward Sal Ledda on his well-deserved retirement.

Hingham/Hull's Michael Connolly



Hingham/Hull's Michael Connolly receives his retirement jacket from Branch 34 President Mike Yerkes and Shop Steward Michael Bertrand.



Hingham/Hull Shop Steward supervises Michael Connolly as he cuts his retirement cake.



Sal's retirement cake.

Arlington's George McCarthy



Arlington's George McCarthy receives retirement gifts from Branch 34 President Michael Yerkes.

Arlington's John Strelis



Arlington's John Strelis (second from left) receives retirement congratulations from Shop Stewards Jerry McCarthy and Sean Mullett and Branch 34 Secretary-Treasurer Michael Murray.



Two cakes commemorating Steve Burke's image as a "superhero!"



Jamaica Plain's Steve Burke goes for Superman first!

Jamaica Plain's Steve Burke



Branch 34 President Michael Yerkes presents Jamaica Plain's Steve Burke his retirement jacket.



Massachusetts Congressional Delegation

U.S. SENATE

The Honorable Elizabeth Warren
Hart Senate Office Bldg., Rm. 317
Washington, D.C. 20510
202-224-4543 Fax: 202-224-2417
www.warren.senate.gov

The Honorable Edward J. Markey
Russell Senate Office Bldg., Rm. 218
Washington, D.C. 20510
202-224-2742 Fax: 202-224-8525
www.markey.senate.gov

U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

First Congressional District
The Honorable Richard E. Neal
Cannon House Office Bldg., Rm. 341
Washington, D.C. 20515
202-225-5601 Fax: 202-225-8112
neal.house.gov

Second Congressional District
The Honorable James P. McGovern
Cannon House Office Bldg., Rm. 438
Washington, D.C. 20515
202-225-6101 Fax: 202-225-5759
mcgovern.house.gov

Third Congressional District
The Honorable Niki Tsongas
Longworth House Office Bldg., Rm. 1714
Washington, D.C. 20515
202-225-3411 Fax: 202-226-0771
tsongas.house.gov

Fourth Congressional District
The Honorable Joseph P. Kennedy III
Cannon House Office Bldg., Rm. 306
Washington, D.C. 20515
202-225-5931 Fax: 202-225-0182
kennedy.house.gov
Represented Communities: Brookline, Newton, Needham, Wellesley, Dover, Medfield, Millis, Medway, Milford, Hopkinton, Hopedale, Bellingham, Franklin, Norfolk, Wrentham, Plainville, Foxboro, Sharon, Attleboro, North Attleborough, Mansfield, Norton, Easton, Seekonk, Rehoboth, Taunton, Raynham, Dighton, Berkley, Lakeville, Freetown, Somerset, Swansea

Fifth Congressional District
The Honorable Katherine Clark
Longworth House Office Bldg., Rm. 1721
Washington, D.C. 20515
202-225-2836 Fax: 202-226-0092
katherineclark.house.gov
Represented Communities: Arlington, Belmont, Framingham, Lexington, Lincoln, Malden, Medford, Natick, Revere, Stoneham, Waltham, Watertown, Wayland, Weston, Winchester, Winthrop, Woburn

Sixth Congressional District
The Honorable Seth Moulton
Longworth House Office Bldg., Rm. 1408
Washington, D.C. 20515
202-225-8020 Fax: 202-225-5915
moulton.house.gov

Seventh Congressional District
The Honorable Michael E. Capuano
Longworth House Office Bldg., Rm. 1414
Washington, D.C. 20515
202-225-5111 Fax: 202-225-9322
capuano.house.gov
Represented Communities: Boston, Cambridge, Chelsea, Everett, Milton, Randolph, Somerville

Eighth Congressional District
The Honorable Stephen F. Lynch
Rayburn House Office Bldg., Rm. 2369
Washington, D.C. 20515
202-225-8273 Fax: 202-225-3984
lynch.house.gov
Represented Communities: Abington, Avon, Boston, Braintree, Bridgewater, Brockton, Canton, Cohasset, Dedham, East Bridgewater, Hingham, Holbrook, Hull, Milton, Norwood, Quincy, Raynham, Scituate, Stoughton, Walpole, Weymouth, West Bridgewater, Westwood, Whitman

Ninth Congressional District
The Honorable William Keating
Cannon House Office Bldg., Rm. 315
Washington, D.C. 20515
202-225-3111 Fax: 202-225-5658
keating.house.gov
Represented Communities: Norwell, Rockland, Hanover, Hanson, Pembroke, Duxbury, Halifax, Plympton, Kingston, Middleborough, Carver, Plymouth, Fall River, Westport, Dartmouth, New Bedford, Acushnet, Fairhaven, Rochester, Mattapoisett, Marion, Wareham, Bourne, Sandwich, Falmouth, Sandwich, Mashpee, Barnstable, Hyannis, Yarmouth, Dennis, Brewster, Harwich, Orleans, Chatham, Eastham, Wellfleet, Truro, Provincetown, Aquinnah, Goswold, Chilmark, West Tisbury, Tisbury, Oak Bluffs, Edgartown, Nantucket

Take This Test

Well it's 'Back to School' time again. With that in mind, now is as good as time as any to test your skills with some work related questions. The answers are found at the end of the article.

- Am I required to work my Holidays if I don't wish too?
- How many weeks vacation can I enjoy?
- Do I get Annual Leave ahead of everyone else with less seniority?
- Who is buried in Grant's tomb?
- What happens if I am called for Jury Duty?
- I am a CCA. Can I take Annual Leave?
- When can I bid on a vacant route?
- How is my Overtime tracked?
- My route got abolished. What other routes can I bid on?

Well, how did you do? I think you'll agree the answers to these questions are pretty important to you. Now the answers to all of the above, with one exception, can be found in your local branch's Local Memorandum of Understanding or LMOU.

As you can see, you are directly impacted by the terms of your branch LMOU. While a few concerns are listed above, actually there are 22 items that are negotiated at the local level.

LMOU negotiating periods, when either the union or management can "open" negotiations, only come along after a new National Agreement is reached. The last period of LMOU negotiations was in 2013. So you can see that the opportunity to improve upon our local working conditions is not a frequent occurrence.

"Courage is what it takes to stand up and speak; Courage is also what it takes to sit down and listen."

- Winston Churchill



JOHN J. CASCIANO
National Business Agent

Now that the rank & file have ratified a new National Agreement, LMOU negotiations will take place. Local negotiations will commence October 16, 2017 and end on November 14, 2017.

The Business Agent's office will once again be conducting LMOU Training to assist branches with their preparations to negotiate the branch LMOU. All branch presidents have been notified of those dates and locations.

The branches with the best LMOU's are the branches that were best prepared to negotiate with postal management.

Article 8 Overtime

The newly negotiated MOU on Overtime, which addresses how quarterly is tracked, is effective October 1, 2017. The MOU is effective in all delivery units unless the local parties have already mutually agreed to a locally developed methodology.

Clock Ring Manipulations

Urge all letter carriers to carefully track and monitor their clock rings. This may require in some instances the assistance of your shop steward. Managements intentional improper editing of your clock rings can result in not being paid for work performed, and inaccurate recording of data of you assignment, which would result in an improper route adjustment. Branch Presidents requiring assistance with grievance filing should contact the NBA office.

Undoing the power of habits

We all harbor bad habits. From binge-watching too much TV to gorging on junk food to feeding an addiction to drinking, smoking or Facebook—there are plenty of minor vices you might use to alleviate stress and boredom. With some awareness and effort, however, you can beat bad habits.

Your program offers tips and tools for overcoming the hold that bad habits may have on you—so you can adopt a healthier path.

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Magellan HEALTHCARE

Branch 34 Holds Second Stewards Training Meeting on September 20th



Branch 34 Holds Their First Membership Meeting



Go to nalcbranch34.com to find out the location and times for upcoming membership meetings!

Members Gather Off-Site Regarding IMC Chelsea Concerns

