

# The Monthly Report

## 118 Years of Representing Letter Carriers



Snohomish County Branch 791  
National Association of Letter Carriers  
2812 Lombard Ave  
Suite 209  
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October 2019 92% Organized



Vol. 118 Issue 10

Chartered April 6, 1901

### Calendar of Events

#### Next Branch Meeting

Wed October 9th  
Labor Hall  
2812 Lombard AVE  
Everett WA

#### 2019 RAP

Sept 29th thru Oct 4th  
Missoula, MT

#### Next Branch Event

Sat Oct 19th @ 7:00pm  
\*Activity to be announced

#### Washington State Convention

May 15th thru 17th  
Bellingham, WA

#### National Convention

August 17th thru 21st  
Honolulu, HI

Visit our website:

[www.nalcbranch791.com](http://www.nalcbranch791.com)



### President's Page

President  
Michelle Decker

Management has instructed carriers to provide medical documentation when they call in requesting unscheduled leave. This has been an ongoing issue with Management. ELM section 513.361.c states in part "For absences of three days or less a supervisor may require an employee to submit medical documentation of the employee's illness when the supervisor deems documentation desirable for the protection of the interests of the Postal Service." The day after a holiday or after a scheduled day off and heavy mail volumes are not reasons to require medical documentation. If an employee is placed on restricted sick leave, then they could request the documentation, but the Carrier has to be notified in writing that they have been placed on restricted sick leave prior to the request. They have what is called the "deems desirable list" which if you called the automated system requesting unscheduled leave, it would notify you medical documentation is required. If this happens, you have been notified you will need to bring documentation when you return to work, if it is for 3 days or less, make sure you let your Steward know so a grievance can be filed. If you do not bring the documentation, Management sometimes has placed the Carriers in an AWOL (absent without leave) status for the days unscheduled and this is usually followed up with some sort of discipline.

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**"Union gives strength."**

**Aesop**

(620 - 564 BC)

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## September Branch Meeting Minutes

Meeting called to order 7:14PM. Flag salute was done. 15 members present

Roll Call, all officers were present except for Trustee chair Dan Newman, HBR Frank Costa, Dir. of Retired members Jim Reid.

**New members-** none

**Guest-**Kevin Ernest-WA. State Executive board member,

Goals to streamline the State Audit to make it more transparent.

**Committee Reports:**

Legislative – Bob James report-absent-

Health Benefits - Frank Costa – absent

Financial Report – Annette Buechler- Total deposits- \$12,593.48-Total withdrawals- \$8,021.05 -Balance- \$34,123.15-Building fund-\$445,667.05

Food Drive - Branch Coordinator Chris Kelly-*resigned-looking for a branch food drive coordinator.* Everett has increased in numbers.

District Safety Task Force-Dee Ann Johnstone- Larger offices will be doing a Side Swipe exercise

**Correspondence in-**

Letter from DOL-closed our audit-Needed higher Bonding coverage, new expense sheet asking for more information. NBA Nick sent email-Kevin Card will be a RAP, has offered to help on OWCP cases.

Puget Sound labor council having a Hawaiian luau fundraiser for their relocation. \$50 per person or \$500 per table (10 people) September 27th 4-8PM Machinists hall Seattle.

Certified letters received, Snohomish, Marysville, Edmonds and Lynnwood will be having Route count and inspections

Received a WA. State labor council directory, copies are \$5.00

Letter from National-would like us to support team Rolando in the Topgolf MDA fundraiser-Randal motioned to donate \$350.00, Monty seconded, motion passed.

**Correspondence out-** Edmonds trying to revert a T-6 position-sent letter to PM Todd-Jenny a copy of the letter.

*continued on page 4*



**Franklin1st**  
De Franklin  
Vice President  
Shop Steward Lynnwood

Someone in the Lynnwood office recently asked why the carriers are no longer being compensated for bidding on routes.

There are few reasons why. *First off* after management having had to pay roughly 16-20 carriers for the delayed postings and/or announcements, totaling somewhere in the amount of \$50,000.00 or more they managed to somewhat get their crap together. *Secondly*, the routes are being posted in a timely manner, so there is no compensation to be given when there has been no violation, hence the paper bidding. *And thirdly*, after all the continued complaints about the money per route should not be going to the individual carriers but to the entire office, and several long discussions with the NBA's office, it was decided that any monetary penalty's issued on behalf of the untimely route postings and/or untimely announcements of winning bids, would be issued to the Branch.

But before calling the NBA's office the Union did settle two prior grievances. The settlements called for monies to be put into the Social Welfare fund and management fully agreed. But due to the tax constraints and restrictions there was no way to add money to the Social Welfare Fund. I remember it having something to do with an earned income/salary and taxes that needed to be paid. It was out of our reach so it was decided that we call the NBA's office for a solution.

We (the Stewards) were instructed to continue to grieve the violation with the remedy of payment to the Branch and upon winning the grievance the Branch could decide how to use the money. Be it by a Branch function or training more/new Stewards, all Branch members would benefit (even those outside of Lynnwood office). This settlement would help discourage people from bidding on a route just for money and directly bidding back off, further delaying CCA promotions.

The Branch President at the time (Bob James) was also included in the conversations and further agreed that the monies could go towards Branch picnics, and any and all other things that would benefit the members of Branch 791 as a whole.

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**Retiree's Corner**  
Jim Reid  
Director of Retired Members

I have gone through the NALC retirement manual and written articles on each chapter, but even though I have covered some subjects numerous times, I still get the same questions, so I have come to the conclusion that many carriers who are still years away from retirement probably skip my articles. Since I believe this is the case, and that knowing about retirement is important, I have decided to repeat those articles. This month's article originally appeared in the February 2006 newsletter.

The topic this month is the NALC Mutual Benefit Association. The MBA has various life insurance plans, retirement and health plans. I will describe them briefly which is all the information I have at this time. The retirement manual says for more information contact your local branch office or call 1-800-424-5184 Tuesday and Thursday 8:00 AM to 3:30 PM Eastern Time.

If you are really reading this, you noticed that I wrote "for more information, contact your local branch office", but I had written I have no further information. I will call the above number ASAP and request that more information be sent to me at the branch office so we will have it available.

**Life Insurance foundation 2:** This is a whole life insurance plan that lets you chose from 10, 15, 25 or \$50,000 in coverage. It is payable for active members annually, eleven times per year or biweekly through payroll deduction. Retired members pay premiums monthly or annually and are not eligible for payroll deduction. As with other whole life plans, the cost depends on the amount of coverage and age at which taken out. It also builds a cash value.

**Life Insurance Single-Payment Plan:** This plan allows you to get coverage for a single once-in-a-lifetime **payment**. This also has cash value as well as death benefits.

**Life Insurance Prime Protection:** This is a 5 year renewable and convertible policy. You can renew it every 5 years at an increased price because of age, or convert it to a whole life policy.

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*"minutes" continued from page 2*

Letter to Everett Management Eric Cavcey will replace Abdala as full time steward at the Everett Main.

**Announcements-** Website now Nalc-branch791.com

Sunday September 22nd Family fun night out at High Trek Mini Golf in Everett 2:00pm, more events to come in the future...

Emails requesting money/money transfers or gift cards- are not from Michelle, Scammers using Michelle's name and fake email to send to trustees and treasurer... De'Antha put a disclaimer on the officer's page of website stating no officer associated with this branch will contact you via email requesting/regarding funds by wire transfer/money order/etc.

**Old Business –**

Chris Kelly motioned to reimburse De'Antha for web hosting and domain name cost, motion seconded by Jacob, motion passed.

October meeting will be Wednesday the 9th, Nominations are now in order for position of trustee 3 year term-2020, 2021, 2022 to replace Dan.

-Randall nominated.

Open nominations for State Convention- Motion by Chris Kelly, all that qualify be accepted, seconded by David, motion passed. 12 qualified.

Open nominations for National convention- Brad Webb, Monte Waite, Randall Wirtz, Annette Buechler, David Shields, Jenny Wilson, Bob James, Frank Costa, Mary Bowler, Jim Reid, Dianna Engeseth

**New Business-**

Route counts-Edmonds has not had a dry run yet.

Need to set a date for next year branch picnic. Sea fair is July 31st-August 2nd 2020. July 26th or August 9<sup>th</sup>

July COLA increase effective 8/31-\$624 a year. .30 cents an hour

Present collective bargaining agreement set to expire on Sept. 20th, NALC and USPS formally opened negotiations for new collective bargaining agreement on June 26th. Full opening state-

ment on NALC website

Case consolidation test-On August 2nd USPS notified President Rolando the third phase went from 240 station to 58 stations-Everett is not on their list. YEAH!

National filed a lawsuit against the USPS-asking for the Postal Service to stop its consolidated casing Initiative until NALC's pending national level grievance is resolved-set for December New letter carrier resource guide available on the NALC website

Connecticut carrier Dan Nacin killed in a car accident on his route-

Odessa TX carrier Mary Granados shot and killed and her postal vehicle hijacked-

NBA sent notifications, some management started arguing it is against the law National labor relations act-to grant monetary remedies to Branches/Letter Carriers. NBA sent information to help with arguing the grievances.

Convention committee- no report

Still in need of a Golf tournament chair

Letter Carrier Political fund-Go to NALC.org to sign up

**Office Visits-None-**

Working on an office visit to Snohomish and Edmonds, sent Monroe route count grievance to Step B

New nonmembers list from the NBA office.

**Open Floor-**

Check local LMOU's for route count change information

**2019 Training-**

Frank to attend HBR seminar in October

De'Antha and Michelle to attend Branch officer training Sept. 16th

Regional Second year steward college- September 8 to 12

Randall Wirtz, Dee Ann Johnstone, Chris Carlson, Mary Bowler, Jacob Bak

2019 RAP- Missoula, Montana, Sep 29 to Oct 4 Classes begin at 9AM Monday morning and end Thursday at 3PM. Followed by the banquet at 6:30PM.

2020-Anchorage Alaska Oct 4th-9th

2021-Somewhere in Utah

De'Antha and Randall to attend OWCP advanced November 7th-10th

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**Health Benefit Report/  
MBA**  
Frank Costa

*"minutes" continued from page 4*

**Arbitrations-None**

**Step B Decisions-**

19-001-EMM-Monroe-no route adjustments within 52 days - All regular carriers received \$10 a day= \$470 each

19-077-LYF-Filed for delay in conversion which resulted in the grievant not getting medical insurance-Grievance failed to prove a violation.

17-317-LYK-filed for converting auxiliary route (s) to full time assignment(s)-Resolved-

19-078-LYF-Did management have just cause to place carrier on 16.7 on May 29th?-Resolved-emergency placement was not for one of the reasons listed in Article 16.7 and was improper, the carrier shall be returned to work and made whole.

18-485-EVJ-Everett Hub start time change from 7 to 8am-Resolved, back to 7am with monetary awards for regular carriers of \$500 each.

**Pre-Arb**-18-568-LYF- NOR reduced to 7 day -2 year.

**Branch Impasse items- none**

Grievance numbers-call Michelle

**Death and Condolences**-none reported

**NEXT MEETING** - Wednesday, October 9th, 2019 @ 7 PM

**Good of the Order-**

Pot Drawing-MDA-\$20.00

Mary donated \$10.00, Candy Bar 1-Brad, Candy Bar 2 & 3 Jenny-

**Adjourn 8:41**

**Branch Events.**  
**Coordinators: De'Antha Franklin (Lynnwood) and Randall Wirtz (Marysville)**  
July 11<sup>th</sup>, indoor Paintball game at Doodlebug Sportz in Everett was the first gathering of many fun, exciting, as well as challenging Branch events to come. On August 24<sup>th</sup>,  
*continued on page 7*



**Shop Steward -  
Marysville**  
Randall Wirtz

**UNDERSTANDING YOUR COLA.** The seven COLAs (Cost of Living Adjustment) that have been calculated under the 2016-2019 National Agreement, totaling \$1.16 cents per hour, are as follows: 1st COLA, 1 cent per hour (\$21 annually), 2nd COLA, 16 cents per hour (\$333 annually), 3rd COLA, 13 cents per hour (\$270 annually), 4th COLA, 25 cents per hour (\$520 annually), 5th COLA, 31 cents per hour (\$645 annually), 6th COLA, 0 cents per hour (\$0 annually), and the 7th COLA, 30 cents per hour (\$624 annually). New pay scale link can be found at <https://www.nalcbranch791.com/misc-forms>.

Not everyone receives the full COLA though. If your career appointment was after January 12<sup>th</sup>, 2013 you fall into table 2 on the pay scale chart. You will want to pay attention to the PERCENT TO STEP O section. That is the percent of the COLA you receive.

**Step A** receives 61.5% of the COLA. That means Step A employees went from \$19.05 an hour to \$19.23 which is from \$39,615 annually to \$39,999. Step A carrier technicians went from \$19.45 to \$19.63 an hour which is from \$40,447 annually to \$40,839. This is a 18 cent an hour raise that ranges from \$384 to \$392 increase in salary.

**Step B** receives 64.25% of the COLA. That means Step B employees went from \$19.90 an hour to \$20.09 which is from \$41,384 annually to \$41,785. Step B carrier technicians went from \$20.31 to \$20.51 an hour which is from \$42,253 annually to \$42,662. This is a 19 cent an hour raise (20 cents for carrier technicians) that ranges from \$401 to \$409 in salary.

**Step C** receives 67% of the COLA. That means Step C employees went from \$20.75 an hour to \$20.95 which is from \$43,157 annually to \$43,575. Step C carrier technicians went from \$21.18 to \$21.39 an hour which is from \$44,063 annually to \$44,490. This is a 20 cent an hour raise (21 cents for carrier technicians) that ranges from \$418 to \$427 increase in salary.

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*“cola” continued from page 5*

**Step D** receives 69.75% of the COLA. That means Step D employees went from \$21.60 an hour to \$21.81 which is from \$44,928 annually to \$45,363. Step D carrier technicians went from \$22.05 to \$22.27 an hour which is from \$45,871 annually to \$46,316. This is a 21 cent an hour raise (22 cents for carrier technicians) that ranges from \$435 to \$445 increase in salary.

**Step E** receives 72.5% of the COLA. That means Step E employees went from \$22.45 an hour to \$22.67 which is from \$46,700 annually to \$47,152. Step E carrier technicians went from \$22.92 to \$23.15 an hour which is from \$47,681 annually to \$48,142. This is a 22 cent an hour raise (23 cents for carrier technicians) that ranges from \$452 to \$461 increase in salary. **Step F** receives 75.25% of the COLA. That means Step F employees went from \$23.30 an hour to \$23.53 which is from \$48,470 annually to \$48,940. Step F carrier technicians went from \$23.79 to \$24.02 an hour which is from \$49,488 annually to \$49,968. This is a 23 cent an hour raise that ranges from \$470 to \$480 increase in salary.

**Step G** receives 78% of the COLA. That means Step G employees went from \$ 24.16 an hour to \$24.39 which is from \$50,243 annually to \$50,730. Step G carrier technicians went from \$24.66 to \$24.90 an hour which is from \$51,298 annually to \$51,795. This is a 23 cent an hour raise (24 cents for carrier technicians) that ranges from \$487 to \$497 increase in salary.

**Step H** receives 80.75% of the COLA. That means Step H employees went from \$25.01 an hour to \$25.25 which is from \$52,014 annually to \$52,518. Step H carrier technicians went from \$25.53 to \$25.78 an hour which is from \$53,106 annually to \$53,621. This is a 24 cent an hour raise (25 cents for carrier technicians) that ranges from \$504 to \$515 increase in salary.

**Step I** receives 83.5% of the COLA. That means Step I employees went from \$25.86 an hour to \$26.11 which is from \$53,786 annually to \$54,307. Step I carrier technicians went from \$26.40 to \$26.66 an hour which is from \$54,916 annually to \$55,447. This is a 25 cent an hour raise (26 cents for carrier technicians) that ranges from \$521 to \$531 increase in salary.

**Step J** receives 86.25% of the COLA. That means Step J employees went from \$26.71 an hour to

\$26.97 which is from \$55,557 annually to \$56,095. Step J carrier technicians went from \$27.27 to \$27.54 an hour which is from \$56,724 annually to \$57,273. This is a 26 cent an hour raise (27 cents for carrier technicians) that ranges from \$538 to \$549 increase in salary.

**Step K** receives 89% of the COLA. That means Step K employees went from \$27.56 an hour to \$27.83 which is from \$57,329 annually to \$57,884. Step K carrier technicians went from \$28.14 to \$28.41 an hour which is from \$58,533 annually to \$59,100. This is a 27 cent an hour raise that ranges from \$555 to \$567 increase in salary.

**Step L** receives 91.75% of the COLA. That means Step L employees went from \$28.41 an hour to \$28.69 which is from \$59,099 annually to \$59,672. Step L carrier technicians went from \$29.01 to \$29.29 an hour which is from \$60,340 annually to \$60,925. This is a 28 cent an hour raise that ranges from \$573 to \$585 increase in salary.

**Step M** receives 94.5% of the COLA. That means Step M employees went from \$29.26 an hour to \$29.55 which is from \$60,871 annually to \$61,461. Step M carrier technicians went from \$29.88 to \$30.17 an hour which is from \$62,149 annually to \$62,752. This is a 29 cent an hour raise that ranges from \$590 to \$603 increase in salary.

**Step N** receives 97.25% of the COLA. That means Step N employees went from \$30.12 an hour to \$30.41 which is from \$62,641 annually to \$63,248. Step N carrier technicians went from \$30.75 to \$31.05 an hour which is from \$63,956 annually to \$64,576. This is a 29 cent an hour raise (30 cents for carrier technicians) that ranges from \$607 to \$620 increase in salary.

**Step O** receives 100% of the COLA. That means Step O employees went from \$30.97 an hour to \$31.27 which is from \$64,413 annually to \$65,037. Step O carrier technicians went from \$31.62 to \$31.92 an hour which is from \$65,766 annually to \$66,403. This is a 30 cent an hour raise that ranges from \$624 to \$637 increase in salary.

Photos this issue courtesy of Jim Reid

*“president’s page” continued from page 1*

When the supervisor has required an employee to submit medical certification, the burden is upon the NALC to show that the Postal Service arbitrarily, capriciously or unreasonably required the employee to obtain medical documentation. Most remedies consist of reimbursement of co-pay and mileage to and from the doctor’s office.

Investigative interviews

If management wants to speak with you and you believe the conversation could lead to discipline, make sure you request a Steward. If they say you don't need one but still believe the conversation could lead to discipline, I always suggest saying "I would like to answer your questions as soon as my Shop Steward gets here" or have them put it in writing you will not be disciplined for the answers to the questions asked. In some investigative interviews Management likes to ask leading questions where it doesn't matter what you answer, it will not be good for you. Make sure you listen for these questions so you can ask them to reword the question so you have a chance to answer without harming yourself with an answer. Other questions to look for is when the question already blames you for what it is they are conducting the interview on. Examples: "Tell me how you failed to be regular in attendance", "Why you did fail to follow safety rules". These questions are the ones you see written in the discipline that they use against you. Be aware in these investigative interviews, take your time to listen to the questions so you can answer them appropriately or ask for the question to be re worded.

*“franklin first” continued from page 3*

So if you think that you aren’t getting your fair share of bid money, come to a Union meeting and you can discuss it there. Meetings are held every first Thursday of the month, with the exception of No July or August meeting and this Octobers (2019) meeting is on Wednesday the 9<sup>th</sup>.

Let’s talk about it  
De’ Antha

*“retiree’s corner” continued from page 3*

**Life Insurance Premium choice:** This is a Universal policy with cash value and low cost premiums.

**Life Insurance Start:** This is a limited payment policy for Letter Carriers who want to insure their young children.

**Retirement plan Maturity income:** This is a plan that you can pay into that will supplement your pension.

**Accident and health plans Hospital plus:** This is a plan which will make daily payment for hospitalization in addition to any other health coverage you may have.



## Legislative Info

Bob James

Branch Legislative Director  
Second District L C,

As you may know, the NALC is working to pass the USPS Fairness Act, H.R. 2382. This bill seeks to right the wrong that the 2006 legislation required that the USPS pre-fund the future retiree health benefits. President Rolando wrote about this effort by the NALC in his August 2019 column in The Postal Record.

As I write this article, Congress has just returned from its August recess. H. R. 2382 has 237 cosponsors. Our goal is to get this legislation to 290 cosponsors, then the bill would automatically be added to the U S House calendar for a floor vote.

*“branch events” continued from page 5*

we played another round of paintball at the outdoor Doodlebug Sportz course in Snohomish. Masks, paintball guns and ammo were included in the package. The branch will definitely be playing paintball on a regular basis, rain or shine. Groups of 10+ are only \$38 a person. A big thanks to everyone who came out. September’s event was a lot less physical and had a much slower pace, as we played 18 holes of miniature golf at High Trek Mini-Golf in Everett, fun for the whole family at a very affordable price. 6 and under was free. 7-10 years old was only \$5 and 11+ just \$8. Stay tuned and join us Saturday October 19th at 7pm for our next branch event. Event is being decided between an Escape Room and a Corn Maze. October’s event should be spooky, in true Halloween time spirit. We do plan on having a branch activity every 4-6 weeks. If there is an event/activity that you would like to do your suggestions are welcome.

Keep checking the event page on the branch website@ [nalc-branch791.com/events](http://nalc-branch791.com/events). We hope that you will come join us for lots of fun, relaxation, and commiserating with your fellow carriers.

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**ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED**

## **Attention Retirees**

**Don't forget the  
retirees' breakfast  
Thursdays  
10:00 AM at  
Evergreen Lanes  
in Everett.**

*The Monthly Report* is published monthly by National Association of Letter Carriers, Branch 791. Letters or articles published are not necessarily the views of Branch 791 or its officers and must be signed by the writer. Co-written letters or articles must be signed by all writers. Deadline for the next issue is the tenth of the month or receipt by the Editor on that date. Editor's address: 2812 Lombard Ave Suite 209, Everett, Wa. 98201-5821

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