

The Monthly Report

118 Years of Representing Letter Carriers



Snohomish County Branch 791
National Association of Letter Carriers
2812 Lombard Ave
Suite 209
Everett, WA 98201-5821
(425) 252-0184
(425) 609-4544 - fax
January 2020 92% Organized



Vol. 119 Issue 1

Chartered April 6, 1901

Calendar of Events

Next Branch Meeting

Thurs Jan. 2nd
Labor Hall
2812 Lombard AVE
Everett WA

Combined Federal Campaign

Sept 9th thru January 12th

Happy New Year!

Washington State Convention

May 15th thru 17th
Bellingham, WA

Br. 791 Annual Summer Picnic

Sunday July 26th 2020

National Convention

August 17th thru 21st
Honolulu, HI

Look for other Branch Events
on our website:

www.nalcbranch791.com



President's Page

President
Michelle Decker

Some offices have been introduced once again to filling out the Form 3996 when management asks for our return times. Some offices do this on a daily basis, some do not. Here is some information to help with this process. This information comes from the Letter Carrier Guide produced by our National.

1. Verbally inform your manager. Sections 131.41 and 131.42 of *Handbook M-41* require you to verbally inform your manager when you believe you cannot carry all the mail distributed to your route in eight hours or within your normal schedule.

2. Request PS Form 3996. Section 122.33 of *Handbook M-39* requires the manager to provide you with a PS Form 3996 when you request it. When you request a 3996, no matter what your manager says to you, say, "I am requesting a 3996" and explain the reasons for your request. If you are denied the form, immediately request to see your shop steward.

3. Fill out the form completely. It is important that you fill out the form completely. In the reason for the request box, write down why you believe you cannot complete your assignment in eight hours. Fully explain the reasons for your request. General comments such as "heavy volume" or "route overburdened" are not enough in this section.

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Officers **Contact Information**

President:
Michelle Decker 425-387-3369
e-mail licoriceforest@yahoo.com

Vice President:
De Franklin 425-489-8985
email Deantha@gmail.com

Secretary:
Tina Myers 425-299-7170
e-mail Totallyt59@hotmail.com

Treasurer:
Annette Buechler 425-322-3257
e-mail MABuechler@comcast.net

Sgt-at-Arms:
Brad Webb 425-367-8731

Health Benefits/MBA:
Frank Costa 360-568-4375

Trustees:
2017 Dan Newman 425-263-1249
2018 Brad Webb 425-367-8731
2019 Monte Waite 425-785-0822

Dir. of Retired Members:
Jim Reid 425-337-4665
email jimreid100@gmail.com

Stewards:

Lynnwood:
Chris Kelly 425-775-2694
e-mail chrisd.kelly@frontier.com
De Franklin 425-489-8985
email Deantha@gmail.com
Chris Carlson 206-890-9946
Email ccarlson7310@gmail.com

Snohomish:
David Casper 360-631-0348
email davidcasper@gmail.com

Monroe:
Michelle Decker 425-387-3369

Marysville:
Randall Wirtz 425-422-3440
email randallwirtz@gmail.com

Everett HUB:
DeeAnn Johnstone 425-232-7547
Mary Bowler 425-381-5021
email loygreat.mb@gmail.com

Everett Main:
Brad Webb 425-367-8731
email bandswebb97@yahoo.com
Eric Cavcey 206-235-1179
Email eric.cavcey@outlook.com

Edmonds:
Angelo Gardon 253-347-1432
email angelo.gardon@yhoo.com
Jenny Wilson 425-691-0037

Arlington:
Michelle Decker 425-387-3369

Editor:
Dan Newman 425-263-1249
e-mail newm394@gmail.com

Visit our website: www.nalcbranch791.com

December Meeting Minutes

Meeting called to order 7:04 PM. Flag salute was done.

18 members present

Roll Call, all officers were present except for Brad Webb

New members- none

Guest-none

Committee Reports:

Legislative – Bob James report-Senate introduced HR 2382 fairness act, S2965 Cantwell and Murray haven't signed

Health Benefits - Frank Costa –Open season closed Monday the 9th.

Financial Report – Annette Buechler- Total deposits-12,274.71 Total withdrawals-15,983.14 Balance- 12,110.99 Building fund-462,036.55

Food Drive - Cannot register until December 16th.

District Safety Task Force-Dee Ann Johnstone-absent

2021 State Convention committee-Next meeting January 17th.

MDA-Possible bowling in March Glacier or Evergreen lanes.

Planned Events-none this month

Correspondence in-

Withholding notice's 3 positions

Email from Brian Wiggins-Informing us he is sending a updated printed copy of the bylaws

Puget sound labor agency's annual children's holiday party on December 7th 11:00AM-3:00PM

SCLC-Solidarity night at the Everett Silvertips Hockey Game-February 14th

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Franklin1st
De Franklin
Vice President
Shop Steward Lynnwood

Managements Right to Mismanage (Article 3)

I was recently told that the problems that exist in the Lynnwood office are 50% due to management and 50% due to the Stewards. I did ask why the Stewards would be held responsible for management’s inability and their lack of needed skills to properly manage, and the answer was “because the Stewards have failed to keep management managing correctly”.

We the Stewards have no control over how management handles their responsibilities and obligations. If we file too many grievances, the carriers complain that the Stewards are using too much Steward time. If we don’t file the grievances the carriers complain that the Stewards aren’t filing enough grievances. It’s a no win situation for the Stewards.

The fact is: Article 3 of the National Agreement (Management Rights) gives management the right to manage, but it doesn’t say that they have to do a good job, so they don’t. We (the Stewards) should in no way be held accountable for management’s screw-ups. They choose to do the wrong thing, they choose to violate the contract, they choose to ignore common sense, they choose to antagonize carriers and fail at every opportunity to avoid intense situations that fester into bigger avoidable problems.

Just some of the things that management chooses to do (and these things are not specific to the Lynnwood office, but other offices as well).

The National Agreement states that *AFTER 3 absences* management may require medical documentation. So then why are carriers being disciplined after just one absence? The National Agreement guarantees 8 hours pay if you’re called in on your day off. So why are carriers being sent home early and not paid the 8 hour guarantee? The National Agreement states that an OPT is valid until the OPT is rightfully broken. So why is management removing carries from an OPT to fill a vacancy when the regular hasn’t returned, (the OPT has not been broken). The National Agreement states that discipline must be progressive. So why is management skipping the process and going straight for the throat?

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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 May 2006 newsletter.

As a Postal employee, we are (were) covered by the basic life coverage from the Federal Employees’ Group Life Insurance (FEGLI) program. In addition to the basic coverage, options are available (options A, B &C) at a charge which is deducted from your paycheck. Basic life insurance and the options can be carried over into retirement, but you must have one or more of the options as an active employee in order to carry that option or options into retirement. I will not go into detail here because it can be somewhat confusing, except to say that it is something that anyone close to retirement will want to look into and think about thoroughly.

The insurance cost depends on the coverage for the options and the age of the annuitant and generally goes up as you get older. In addition, if you choose to carry over the basic insurance (You can’t carry over any of the options without carrying over the basic) you will have the option of having it reduced in value as you get older until it is reduced by 75%, 50% or even not reduced at all. Each of these options costs different amounts, and it may be a hard decision as to what, if any, insurance you want to extend into retirement.

Last month, I discussed carrying over health benefits and basically encouraged all retirees to do so. I can’t say the same for life insurance, the options, options on the basic and costs of all of this would be strictly an individual matter and would depend on each individual situation which is why it should be checked closely before a decision is made.

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"minutes" continued from page 2

Letter from President Rolando-50 year anniversary of the Great Postal Strike of 1970-Chris Kelly made a motion to send Frank, second by Diana-passed. Frank declined to go.

WSLC would like us to support the HealthCare Unions-Chris Kelly made a motion to add our name and Branch in support, Dan second-motion passed.

WSLC-sent a save the date for the legislative reception and lobbying conference Penalty exclusion period November 30th through December 27th

Update on Contract negotiations-will be going to arbitration.

NBA-called to say they are getting the old 1187's from us. They sent some of the new forms from 2016.

NBA-wants to know if all offices have had the mandatory ECOMP standup?

(OWCP's web based portal for filing claims)

Correspondence out-

Ordered new 1187's and 1187's specifically for CCA's, folders, the new letter carrier guides

Sent National our proposed bylaw change

Old Business-

2020 proposed budget-motion made by Chris Kelly to accept the proposed budget, second by Jim-motion passed.

Announcements-

January audit by trustees...need to schedule

Branch Picnic -Reserved for July 26th 2020

Open season for Health insurance ends Monday December 9th

Open season for CFC closes January

12th 2020.

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

Open Floor-

Round Robin of offices- Lynnwood grieved one day late on implementing route adjustments, \$10 for each of the 24 effected Carriers. Filing grievance for denied transfer request.

Everett-Discipline for unauthorized over-time.

Snohomish-Grievance for minor route adjustments, not supplying information.

New virtual timecard on liteblue shows your hours daily and leave usage-offers ability to see daily work hours and leave usage.

2020 Training-

Basic-March 1st-5th

Regional Second year steward college-September 13th-17th

SWT-March 20th-22nd

RAP 2020-Anchorage Alaska Oct 4th-9th

2021-Somewhere in Utah

Arbitrations-None

Step B Decisions- None

Grievance numbers-call Michelle

Death and Condolences- none

NEXT MEETING - Thursday January 2nd, 2019 @ 7 PM

Pot Drawing-MDA-half/half\$\$-Chris Kelly-donate

Christmas mug-Chris Kelly

Christmas salt/pepper shakers-Jenny

Candle-Eric

Soap-Frank

Soap-Michelle

Soap-Diana

Adjourned 8:01



Health Benefit Report/ MBA

Frank Costa

GET UNWANTED MEDS OUT...of your homes, your water, and the reach of a child or pet.

Keeping unused, unwanted and expired prescription drugs in your home poses a risk to you, your family and your community. Disposed of improperly, these drugs can still be obtained for illegal use and some will contaminate our waters. To provide you with an easy, secure and responsible way to properly and securely dispose of these drugs, law enforcement agencies and other partners have established free prescription drug drop off locations throughout Snohomish County.

WHY? Prescription drug abuse is a serious and growing problem in our communities. Abuse of medicines--especially opiate pain relievers like OxyContin, codeine, and Vicodin--is increasing rapidly. The consequences are serious. Drug overdoses have surpassed car accidents as the leading cause of accidental deaths in Washington. The majority of overdoses involve prescription opiates. Youth admissions to state funded treatment for prescription opiates are now 19 times higher than in 2001. Our kids and teens are at risk. Misused prescription drugs are the illicit drugs of choice among 12- and 13-year olds. For the first time among teens, there are as many new abusers of prescription drugs as marijuana abusers.

Our medicine cabinets are taking the place of drug dealers. Three in five teens say prescription pain relievers are easy to get from parents' medicine cabinets. Over half of prescription drug abusers get the medicines from a friend or relative. More than half of teens say pain relievers are "available everywhere".

WHAT AND WHERE? All prescription drugs including narcotic pain killers and prescribed "controlled substances", Take to 27 law enforcement locations in Snohomish County. All medications, EXCEPT narcotic pain killers and prescribed "controlled substances" Take to 13 pharmacy-based drop-off locations in Snohomish County, (Bartell Drugs & Group Health Cooperative/Kaiser Permanente).

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Shop Steward - Marysville

Randall Wirtz

We survived another one!!! Another Christmas season has passed and we made it through. Pat yourselves on the back, you deserve it. The lifeblood of the post office - and made a lot of happy people with their super heavy and awkward shaped presents...

I am from the Marysville Post Office and we have some absolute Superheroes there. Matthew Goldman and his humongous route routinely leading the office in DPS and parcel hampers and somehow getting it all done. I applaud you. Julianne Stevens, dominating routes, helping others find addresses on their cases, and still completing a complicated route in a timely manner. All while 6+ months pregnant! Mystery solved, you are Wonder Woman. No wonder it takes 5 carriers and 23 combined hours to cover your route when you aren't there.

At the time of this writing, not a single sick call for the Marysville Post Office. Even while short staffed and getting very little support. The city carriers have rallied and got it all done. Even had carriers like Alexandria Hamilton and Veronika Mallen volunteer to come in on their scheduled days off to allow a CCA to help the office with a parcel run instead of covering their routes. Such selfless carriers who deserve a round of applause and everyone's thanks.

Guys like Kevin Hobson, who had eye surgery and only missed one day. You're a warrior.

Even had Chan Kitburi, with scheduled annual leave, give back hours and case his route before he had to leave to dazzle the world with his impressive ice sculptures.

Shout out to Ken Umetsu, who made it through his final Christmas before retirement. We will miss you.

Whether it was your first Christmas season at the post office or your last, your efforts were noticed and valued. What a wonderful workforce moving mountains on a daily basis and making daily Christmas miracles happen to complete these routes each day. I am in awe.

I am sure your office has similar stories and rock star carriers who gave it their all and got through the Christmas season parcel overload. I salute all the carriers in Arlington, Edmonds, Everett HUB, Everett Main, Lynnwood (Don't worry I see you as well "Mayor of Terrace"), and Snohomish.

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“franklin 1st” continued from page 3

How many times has your T-6 said they have under time and management sends them home in 8hr and leaves you hanging, not to return until after 10 ½ hours. Then all of a sudden no member of management knew the T-6 had under time and could have helped you. To make matters worse, its only Monday and your T-6 is on the ODL.

These are just a few examples of poor management skills and no communication between them. We as Stewards can talk to them till we're blue in the face and that doesn't do a thing, except cause more frustration for us. It's exasperating to keep trying and making the effort to have a decent working relationship between us, the Union and management, but no one in management cares. Or better yet, they actually tell us they “don't care”; caring is not on their agenda.

Our job as Stewards is to enforce the contract as best as we can. To attempt to force management to comply with the agreements that have been negotiated between NALC and USPS. The Stewards can't make management smarter, that's on them, just as doing the right thing is on them. Maybe you can make a difference by helping us, help them. If you want to know how, come to a Union meeting and we can discuss it there.

Meetings are held every first Thursday of the month, with the exception of No July or August meeting.

Let's talk about it

De'Anthia

“health benefits” continued from page 5

ITEMS ACCEPTED: Narcotics (OxyContin, Vicodin, etc.) accepted ONLY at Law enforcement sites, Prescribed medications, Over-the-counter medication, Medication samples, Medication for pets, Medicated ointments / lotions (prescription over-the-counter) Vitamins, Inhalers, Epipens (unopened).

ITEMS NOT ACCEPTED: Needles/syringes, Thermometers, IV bags or bloody/infectious waste, Personal care products, Hydrogen peroxide/other chemicals, Aerosol cans, Epipens (used), Mercury products (Mercurochrome, thimerosal, etc.), Iodine solutions (Betadine, etc.), Radio actives, Business waste, Empty containers. For disposal of used syringes, needles and lancets, thermometers containing mercury, aerosol cans and other chemicals, visit www.snoco.org (search "solid waste").

“we survived another” continued from page 5

Job well done! Thank you and I appreciate you all and all the good work you guys did this year. Rest up these next 11 months before we have to do it all over again. Branch 791 has amazing people in it. Let them know it. Rise with Us!

“retiree's corner” continued from page 3

When you get close to retirement and request information from personnel, information will be sent to you concerning life insurance and the proper forms to fill out after you have made your decision. As usual, questions can be directed to personnel services, or you can contact me for more information.

Presidents Annual Report for 2019

In accordance with the Branch Bylaws, this is my annual report. The Branch is in compliance with all laws and regulations that govern a USPS labor organization. We are current with all fees and dues required by the IRS, Department of Labor and the National Association of Letter Carriers. The Branch uses a professional service to help us with the reports that we must make as a Labor organization.

Our finances are in good order and audited on a regular basis by our Trustees.

We have approximately 326 active members. We continue to recruit new CCA's into membership. We are currently at about 92 percent organized. Our Branch has members that train in the Carrier Academy at the Everett HUB and Organizers.

Officers and Stewards are fulfilling their fiduciary responsibilities to our members. We are working to improve the atmospheres on the workroom floors. The Branch continues to spend your money on training of stewards.

Dan Newman, our Branch Editor, publishes the newsletter with quality information in it and on a consistent, timely basis.

We currently have filed around 600 grievances for this year.

Photos this issue courtesy of Jim Reid

“president’s page” continued from page 1

Sometimes managers will tell you that you don’t need the requested overtime or auxiliary assistance because of what DOIS projects for your route. Multiple national-level settlements (e.g., M-01664 and M-01769) have held that these time projections are not the sole determinant of your daily workload. Nothing can replace the opinion of the professional letter carrier. Simply provide your best estimate and the reasons why and move on to Step 4.

4. Keep your cool. Don’t lose your cool. While this process can be frustrating, you will do nothing to help yourself by becoming angry. If your manager denies your request for overtime or assistance, tell him or her that you will do your best. Politely ask what you should do if you are not able to deliver all the mail and return to the office when they want you back.

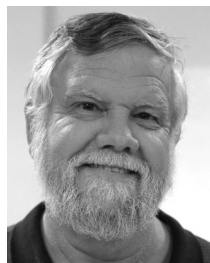
5. Don’t argue. There is no reason to argue with your manager at this point. The best thing you can do is tell your manager that you will do your best and ask for a copy of your 3996. Section 122.33 of *Handbook M-39* requires managers to provide you with a copy if you request it. Finish your office work and go to the street. All you have to do is your best. Work professionally. Never compromise your safety or skip breaks or lunches to make it back to the office by a certain time.

6. Don’t make decisions. Letter carriers get paid to deliver mail. Managers get paid to make decisions. If you realize that you will not be able to deliver all the mail and make it back to the office by the time the manager approved, you should do everything you can to put any further decisions in the manager’s hands. The best way to handle this situation is to call your supervisor per local instructions. If you have no local instructions, try calling around two hours before the time you are scheduled (approved on PS Form 3996) to be back. Let your supervisor know where you are and how long you think it will take you to finish. Ask whether they want you to bring the mail back or finish the route. Follow whatever instructions your supervisor or manager gives you. If the supervisor or manager refuses to tell you what to do with the rest of the mail or if you can’t finish your assigned duties in the amount of time initially specified by your supervisor, you should return to the office in the allotted time and ask for further instructions. Again, you should follow whatever instructions your supervisor or manager gives you.

I have had carriers start their conversations with me

"sorry to bug you, or I know you are busy". I want to let all members know you are not bugging me even though I may be busy, I am here to help with whatever questions or issues you may be dealing with and need help. Please don't hesitate to call.

A big thank you to all letter carriers for their hard work during the holiday season. Happy New Year!



Legislative Info

Bob James

Branch Legislative Director
Second District L C,

Republican Senator Steve Daines from Montana has introduced S. 2965. This is a companion bill to H.R. 2382, which repeals the pre-funding requirement on postal retiree health benefits. As I write this article, the bill in the Senate has only one cosponsor. Please contact Senator Cantwell (202) 224-3441 and ask that she sign onto S. 2965. Please call Senator Murray’s office at (202) 224-2621 and ask that she sign on to S. 2965.

H.R. 2382 is up to 292 cosponsors in the House. So hopefully, we shall see action in the U S House on this top legislative priority of the NALC’s. For more information, you can go to NALC.org and look in the drop down menu under Government Affairs.

The House Oversight and Reform Committee that has oversight of the USPS has elected as Chair Carolyn Maloney from New York. This committee has the responsibility of moving H R 2382 that is mentioned previously.

Sorry to say that a good friend of Letter Carriers, Denny Heck (WA-10) has decided to retire. Congressman Heck has always listened to our issues and concerns and supported the USPS and the NALC.

Trustee’s Annual Report for 2019

Two audits of the Branches finances were conducted in 2019. The “Books” were well organized and accurate. They were kept current and all necessary filing were conducted in a timely manner.

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Everett WA 98201
www.NALCBRANCH791.com**

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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*Maximum term for holiday loan is 12 months. Rate is lower than published signature loan. Rates based on your credit history and subject to approval. Cannot be combined with existing holiday loan. Offer ends 12/31/2019