The Swing Room Gazette

November/December 2023, Circulation 500

Official Publication of NALC Branch 442

Serving Spokane, Spokane Valley, Cheney, Colville

Fairchild Air Force Base, Ritzville, Coulee Dam, and Colfax



President's Report

Sharee Eschenbacher

I notice a few disturbing trends in our offices. First, the stewards in Spokane have had fairly good relationships with local supervisors and managers… until now. In the recent past, when we would ask for steward time and/or information, it was given without much hassle. Management knew (and admitted) they violated the contract and it was our job to right their wrongs, no hard feelings! Now, we had become pariah-like. Supervisors are questioning every ask. Clock rings have become "Area 51" top-secret and we have become "fish"ermen.

"A lack of planning on Managements behalf, does not constitute an emergency, on my behalf." - The Frenchman

I don't mind following the rules, in fact, I love rules, but don't hold us to the rules while you go about breaking them every day and then look down your nose at us and tell us we are "fishing" when we ask for the clock rings for the day. Here is my solution and it's an actual rule that we should be following: If you are mandated (on or off route), if you are forced to carry rural delivery, if you are a T-6 on the wrong route, if you were bumped from an opt, if you were denied a "no lunch", if you were instructed to move to 733 time, if you were harassed or intimidated ASK FOR TIME WITH YOUR STEWARD!! The days of pay adjustments magically appearing on your pay stubs are over. It's time to work together with your steward to make things right. You have to let them know there is a possible grievance and, at the same time, let management know there are extra time consequences involved after they violate the Contract.

Below is clarifying language from management on Article 17.3:

M-00458 USPS Letter (Charters), March 10, 1977

In most cases, the grievant and steward should be able to discuss the grievance without delay but 95 percent of the time with no more than a two-hour delay. While circumstances will sometimes necessitate a delay of more than two hours, normally the delay should not extend beyond the tour of duty in which the request is made. This determination will be based on the availability of the parties involved and service conditions.

I just alluded to a few other bad trends. We now have a signed agreement regarding T-6 carriers being moved off their assigned routes improperly. Not only does the T-6 get out of schedule pay but now, the Regular who didn't have their T-6 doing their route gets an additional 50%. Please, never clock to 733 time. If you are instructed to, do it and then ask for steward time. We will not be doing 733 time EVER. We have a few stations that are refusing a "no-lunch" while in overtime. I have a case up here from Hays Park and I will most likely make it a city-wide case. So many stations allow it. It should be the same throughout the city. I don't normally instruct Branch 442 members but the following two are exceptions. 1. Do not drive a vehicle you are not trained on. 2. If you get injured on the job, call me immediately. Do not think management will take care of you.

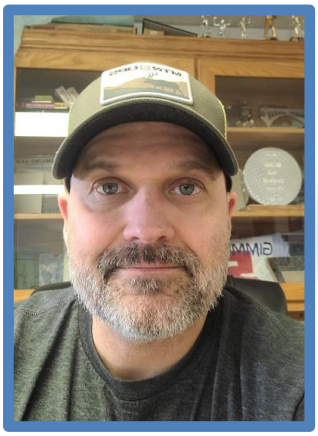
I attended the Committee of Presidents meeting in Las Vegas last month. It was very informative. Brian Renfroe gave us his National President update. We were eager to hear how contract negotiations were going. He couldn't say everything they were working on, but one definite detail he came back to was having only one pay chart. He also mentioned that having a joint route adjustment agreement written into the contract was something they were working on. There were a few Article 8 rules that have been discussed but nothing for sure, yet. The parties are also looking at changing the way our uniform program works. Brian addressed the increase in robberies and assaults on letter carriers. National is planning a Day of Action with the slogan, "Enough is Enough" to make the public aware. The Postal Service has been looking at options to de-value the Arrow keys. We also want earlier start times and NDCBU's to be placed in public areas. I also attended the Region 2 RAP in Coeur d'Alene. It was a great one, this year. The classes were relevant and educational. We were able to send 12 stewards.

During RAP, I found out that my cohort for the past 26 years was suddenly retired. Eric Pardick may be retired but he has not left the building!! He will finish out the cases he is currently working on and will be a much-needed resource for OWCP issues in the future. He will come and go as he pleases and we will all continue to benefit from his passion and experience.

With Union Strength,

Sharee

BULLDOG… HAS LEFT THE BUILDING!



Eric Pardick

I would like to thank the Branch for allowing me to represent them at the 2023 NALC Region 2 Assembly, October 30 – November 3, 2023. This year's Assembly was bittersweet for me as it was held at the Coeur D'Alene Resort (which is not far from my home) and it was my last one as an Active Letter Carrier/ Union Steward.

On November 1, 2023, I was contacted by the Postal Service HRSSC and informed that I was retired. I was shocked, obviously, but decided to continue with the training that I was attending. The training I was attending at the time, ironically enough, was retirement training.

I attended multiple training classes throughout the week and found the classes on medical restrictions/documentation and veteran's benefits the most informative, as well as the retirement training. The key points that I took away from all the training was that the Union stewards must stay vigilant in initiating grievances for management's violations of the jointly established rules that govern our daily duties. There should be very few, if any, instances where an employee is placed on a "deems desirable" status for missing a day or two of work due to injury or illness.

It seems that most supervisors abuse the system and place too many employees on "deems desirable" just because they can.

If you, or any of your fellow workers are required to provided documentation for an absence, or placed on "deems desirable", please let your steward know so they can initiate the grievance and correct the management violations.

The Veteran's Benefits class was quite informative. Besides the general knowledge information that most Vets know upon hiring on, the training focused on Wounded Warrior Leave and the purchasing of the military time for retirement purposes. If you are a Veteran with a 30%, or more, disability rating, you are entitled Wounded Warrior Leave. This is an additional leave (104 hours each year) provided for medical appointments and time off for recovery from any medical conditions that are rated as service connected. This is an amazing benefit, and it is yours to use if you are a Veteran with a 30% or more disability rating.

Another important item that came from the Veteran's Benefits training was the purchase of military service, for retirement purposes. If you are a Veteran, it behooves you to purchase your military time back so it can be applied towards your postal retirement. Many of us don't think about this until we have worked for a good number of years. Unfortunately, the longer we wait to purchase the time back, the more interest accrues, making the cost substantially more. The great things about buying back the time is that you can set up a schedule of payments that fits your budget, the time will be added to your total federal service years counted towards retirement, and you may be able to retire a bit earlier than you would expect.

For more information on the Veteran's Benefits, log onto the NALC.Org website and set up your profile in the Members Only page.

From there you will be able to sign up for the Veteran's group and receive the NALC guide to Veteran's Benefits. The retirement training provided a lot of basic information, that is general knowledge, but it was a great refresher course.

The biggest piece of information that I received from the class was that OWCP LWOP does not count negatively against your retirement. For years I've believed that employees that are out on LWOP due to an injury are being negatively impacted with regards to retirement. It was believed that for each 80 hours of LWOP incurred you would lose that time towards your retirement; I have been corrected. Lost time due to LWOP for an OWCP accepted injury does not count negatively towards your retirement. Another important thing regarding retirement is to do your homework. Make sure to research and understand all facets of the annuity payments and continuations of the FEDVIP and Health Care premiums, as well as the life insurance and other benefits you can maintain. Each of these has a significant deduction from your monthly annuity. It is important to be informed and educated. The NALC has a multitude of Retirement experts that can help the membership with procedural questions and processing retirement paperwork.

On the last day of the Assembly NALC President Brian Renfroe spoke to the delegates. President Renfroe spoke of the importance of becoming legislatively involved and of the current state of the postal service. A portion of this time was spent discussing the ongoing Contract Negotiations and honestly there wasn't much of an update.

President Renfroe did say that the NALC and Postal Service have been meeting, continuously, and have many items that they agree on, the only thing really slowing down progress is the financial part of the negotiations.
The Postal Service doesn't seem to want to increase the pay of its employees, but they are making concessions and there may be some positive movement soon.

President Renfroe also stated that they are working hard on making our pay scale as one scale, not multiple as there already are. This is significant in that it would make an all-career workforce again. This would mean that all new hires would come in on the A step of the scale, which is currently 21 dollars and some change. As with all contracts through the years, pay increases and benefits packages have been the sticking points and are usually what delays the negotiations. President Renfroe is thinking that this will go to Interest Arbitration soon and the membership will, more than likely, end up with a groundbreaking contract.

I can speak from experience, the most lucrative contracts we have been awarded over the years have come from the ones that took the longest to achieve. The Postal Service has been making crazy profits over the past few years, off the blood and sweat of its employees. Let's be patient and hopeful that the negotiations will result in an agreement that will be ratified quickly.

In closing, I want to thank the membership, again, for allowing me to represent you at the NALC Region 2 Assembly. I would also like to thank each of you for having respect and faith in me over the past 26 years, to represent you at all levels of this organization. While I am officially retired and looking forward to the future, I cannot forget how I got here.

I will miss each of you and will have a special place in my heart for you all. I have given 26 years of my life to you, my work family, but now it is time to give what's left of my time to my personal family.

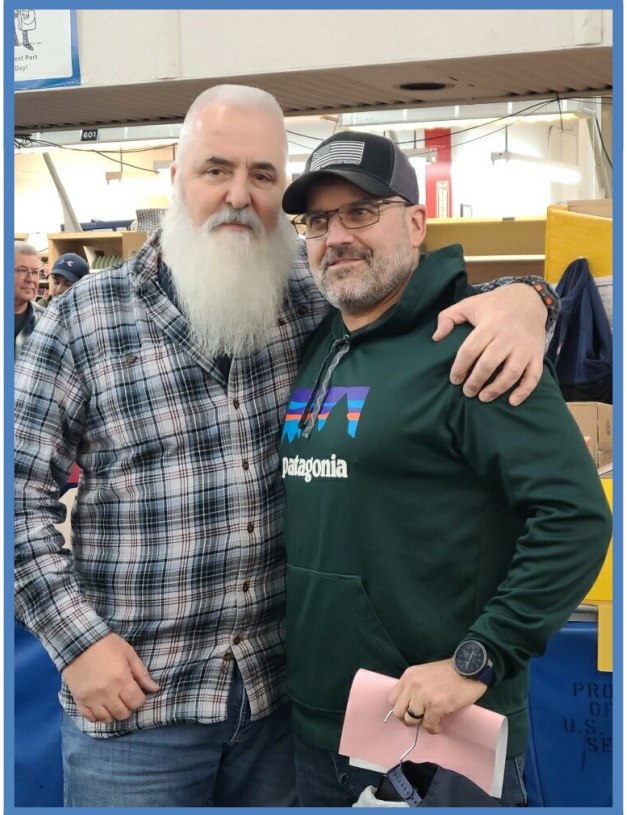
I intend on spending every possible minute growing more with my wife and kids and giving every bit of myself in watching my grandson's growth, fishing, hunting, and traveling.

There are no more meaningful words that I can express to each of you other than "Thank you." I will miss this life I've had for the past 26 years, and I will fondly remember it, and all of you. Take care of yourselves and help each other out. Please support your elected Branch Officers and step up and help. Sharee is an amazing person, and she has the strongest desire to make sure each of your rights aren't stepped on. Support her, she will help this Branch continue to be successful for the years to come.

Eric "Bulldog" Pardick











If I've had your attention before and didn't talk to you about opening an account at Progressions Credit Union, let me do it here, in their advertisement, in our Swingroom Gazette. I will get to the benefits of banking with Progressions in a minute, but I first want to tell you how special this Credit Union is to our Branch. Though their name has changed from Spokane Postal Credit Union, it's still the same banking institution founded in 1928 BY postal employees FOR postal employees. They have always been interested in supporting our growth and development through managing our money and by standing beside us during most of our yearly events. The staff at Progressions solicit donations and package up the baskets for our Bowlathon. They purchase the bags for our Food Drive and then they volunteer to pick up food. They attend and help with our Installation banquets. Any type of event our Branch hosts, Progressions Credit Union is right there beside us...supporting us. This is why I feel so strongly about encouraging everyone to bank with them. It's what we can do to show our appreciation.

I have trusted them with my money for 33 years. My husband started his account when he was 11, and that was 51 years ago. They have kept up with and embraced technology so it's easy to use their mobile banking capabilities. With our jobs, we seldom have the opportunity to bank within "banking hours" so mobile deposits are awesome. Usually, Credit Unions have a membership fee but this is waived for postal employees. They have Bill-Pay, loans of every type and just opened up a second location on Nevada. They also participate in shared banking. Loyalty is a big deal to me. Progressions has shown it and I profess it to them. Everyone in this Branch should do the same.

Sharee Eschenbacher
Branch 442 President

Progressions CREDIT UNION

Ready to join? Scan the QR code or call Lacey at 509.622.2010

2919 E Mission Ave., Spokane, Wa 99202 (Next door to the NALC!)

Coming soon: New branch at 9233 N Nevada St., Spokane, Wa, 99218

Federally Insured by the NCUA

Open Enrollment 2023

November 13th-December 11th, It's time to join YOUR Union plan.

Already a member of the NALC health benefit plan congratulations you've chosen the best plan for a letter carrier and their families. Haven't joined yet here are the reasons you should. The NALC health benefit plan is your plan, it's not run by a CEO paid millions of dollars it's over seen by a letter carrier. The benefits are designed with letter carriers in mind, and has the best customer service experience of any other plans in the area. If you need to call the health plan and they see you're a letter carrier, they'll move you to the top of the queue and make a provider wait so they can take your call first because they know you're busy and probably out working.

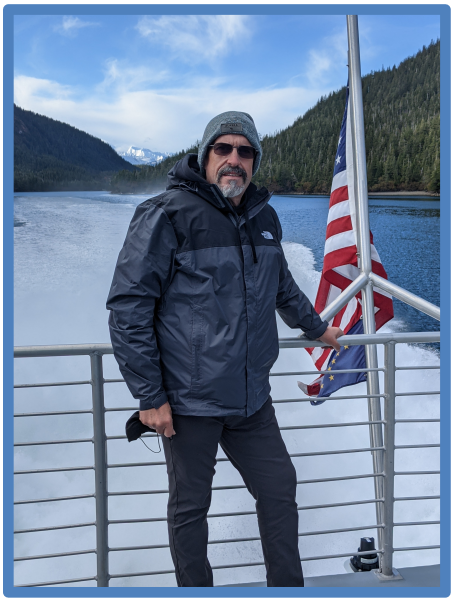
The NALC health benefit plan is a fee for service plan. Meaning you get to choose your doctors, even your specialists. NALC high option premiums are less expensive than other popular plans available in the area.

NALC health benefit plan is the only federal plan that will pay a denied OWCP claim. NALC high option provides for two pairs of custom orthotics a year. Routine labs are provided at no cost to you or your family if you use LabCorp. Copays for specialists are the same as general practitioners. Don't like going to doctors, the NALC's got you covered with Telehealth. Through Amwell you can get that urgent care appointment on your cell phone, they can send prescriptions and even provide you with a doctor's note for work. Optum provides you with telehealth for mental health therapy for you and your family from the comfort of your own home. Sore knee, shoulder, neck, arm, or, back, Hinge health is for you. Physical therapy at home on your time with licensed therapist using proven technology at no cost to you with the high option.

And finally starting open season 2024 everyone's going to have to enroll in a new plan in the postal only federal group so why not start enjoying a plan that is sure to be among them. You joined the union, so why not join the union health plan, it's made for you and yours.

Rick Enright

Director of Insurance



NALC Health Benefit Plan

NALC Health Benefit Plan

Customer Service

For eligibility, claim and benefit information

1-888-636-NALC (6252)

For additional information visit our website at:

www.nalc.org/depart/hbp

www.nalchbp.org

Executive Board Meeting

September 6th, 2023

Present: Sharee, Mike, Conner, Angie, and Miranda.

Excused: Steve and Bill

Sharee: We have all these pins to give out to people when they get 25, 30 etc. years of membership. Have some that just member, would like to hand out when we swear someone in at the general meeting. Have the current by-laws for all the executive board members. We thoroughly discussed the budget for RAP.

Angie: Nothing

Conner: OWCP training need more of it.

Mike: Nothing

Miranda: Nothing

Branch 442 General Meeting

September 19th, 2023

Call to Order: Sharee called the meeting to order at 7pm.

Pledge of Allegiance: All stood and recited the pledge of allegiance.

Roll Call of Officers: 13 present, 6 excused, and 4 absent.

Reading of Previous Minutes:

General Meeting: Conner made a motion to accept the minutes, 2nd by Rick and approved by the body.

Executive Meeting: Conner made a motion to accept the minutes, 2nd by Tracy and approved by the body.

Secretary/Treasurer's Report: Conner made a motion to accept the report, 2nd by Rick and approved by the body.

Reading of Communications: None

Applications for New Membership: Miranda Mullenix, Carol Fitzhugh, Kyle Brigman, Zachery Tumen, Kendrick Mayo, Margaret Tutt, Tyler VonDracek, James Boyd, Korie Sherman, Benjamin Sharpe, and Ben Davis.

Initiation of New Members: None

Reading of Report:

Director of Insurance: Going to the Health Benefits session in October will have information to follow.

Director of Safety: Air Quality Issue no set standard, individual safety per person based on symptoms much like heat safety. Joe Waits and Todd Soliday Spokane safety task force.

Retirees: Mailing sent to retiree's good turnout of retirees at recent events.

Trustees: Books are in order through June.

Spokane Labor Council: Labor Rally October 18th at the Fairgrounds, this will also be the steward meeting for October. Chris made a motion to buy 200 tickets and a $200 donation to the Labor Rally, 2nd by Rick then withdrawn. Rick made a motion to buy 50 tickets and a $450 donation to the labor rally, 2nd by Chris and approved by the body. If you would like to help with the upcoming election, contact the Spokane Labor Council. The Aerospace plant in Airway Heights has about 50 employees.

Swingroom Gazette: Articles are due at the October steward meeting.

Committee Reports:

Legislation: Social Security Fairness Actin the house has 282 cosponsors and the same bill in the Senate has 44.

Resolutions: Resolutions are first passed at the branch level then presented at the state level then presented at the national level. People want to know what the national officers are fighting for in the contract, national can only ask for the stuff that was passed at the national convention. If you want the National Officers to ask for something during neogations then write up a resolution and get it passed at a branch meeting.

By-Laws: The branch by-laws that were sent up to national have finally been approved.

Entertainment: What was the amount raised on the dunk tank?

Athletics: None

Employees Services: None

Hospital and Health: Joey Parker-baby, Bill Bauder, Craig Hasse-mom, Chase Ferrozo-baby, Sasha/ Andrew Walton-baby, Melissa Franklin-grand baby, VanGelder, M. Bennidetti, and Steve Thrift-dad

Condolences: Steve Jones- wife passed.

Labor/Management Agenda Items: The push to get out of the office in one hour. Medical Documentation does not go the postmaster/supervisor send directly to the district nurse.

Unfinished Business: None

New Business: Reread the charges against 2 officers and a member of the branch, a 3-person committee was picked to investigate the charges. Chris made a motion for the Sec/Treasure to place everyone that made 4 meetings between October 22 and September 23 on the ballot for the state convention, 2nd by Conner and approved. Mike Poff made a motion for the Sec/Treasure to place everyone who attended 4 meetings between October 22 and September 23 on the ballot for the National Convention in Boston, 2nd by Conner and approved. Conner made a motion to have the October steward meeting at the labor rally, 2nd by Rick and approved.

Good of the Association: People are complaining about what other unions are getting in the way of pay raises (UPS, UAW) but remember those places don't have a no layoff clause like we do, so be careful what you ask for.

Improvement of the Service: The list of nominees for both State and National were read off.

Meeting Drawings: Mike Meredith present and Todd Cogdill.

Adjournment: Rick made a motion to adjourn at 850pm, 2nd by Conner and approved

NOTE THESE MINUTES WERE DISAPPROVED AS PRINTED THEY WERE READ AND NO MOTION WAS MADE TO APPROVE THEM ONCE THEY WERE READ.

Executive Board Meeting

October 4th, 2023

Present: Sharee Eschenbacher, Steve Thrift, Angie Severin, Conner McKinnon, Miranda Riley.

Excused Mike Poff and Bill Bauder.

Sharee: Next Years calendars have been ordered. NALCREST is celebrating their 60th year and is putting out a commemorative booklet. They are selling ad space. The Board will bring up at October's general meeting, RAP is set to go. Parking is $20 per day, so we will be carpooling in two cars. Next month's meeting is budget-planning meeting for 2024. I'd like to look into hiring a travel agent. They are privy to some pretty good travel deals. I'm super disappointed in our security system's customer service. I'd like to look at local companies. Lawton printers gave us an estimate on a banner to put on Mission side of building identifying us as Branch 442 and who we represent. New PM is going after injured carriers and giving them ridiculous job offers. According to our by-laws, I am allowed to appoint a bookkeeper to help our Secretary/Treasurer. With permission and approval, I have appointed Miranda Riley.

Steve: I filed a TRIAREAP dispute after being instructed to drop Valley adjustments and move on to two other cities. This dispute was resolved with the instructions to move on to the other stations. I talked with Stacie K. about the CCA Liasson position and what the program might look like.

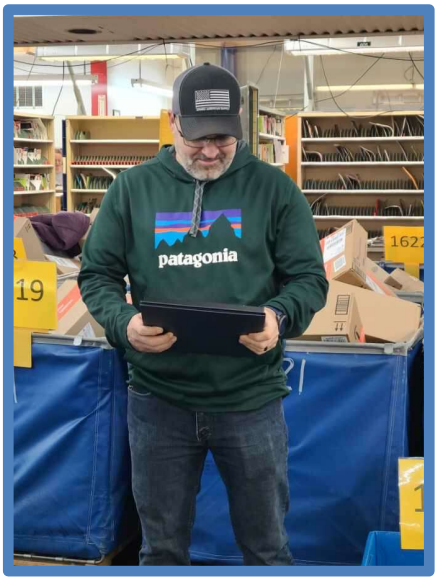
Miranda: I'd like to have a meeting to discuss the expected duties of the Bookkeeper. I'd also like to know what is happening with the resource flash drives the stewards were going to get. (Steve and Sharee answered that they will get them done soon)

Angie: I'm getting CCA feedback that the OJIs are not training properly. I have been approved to be an OJI, but my training has not been set up. Trustees would like to audit the books, but Bill's recent health issues have made it hard.

Conner: I would like to attend the OWCP class this month in Vancouver.

Group Discussion: Sharee mentioned that not a single steward built a case on the falsification of our training records regarding heat-related illnesses. We will devote an entire steward meeting to get these cases done.







Branch 442 General Meeting

October 17, 2023

Call to Order: Sharee called the meeting to order at 7pm.

Pledge of Allegiance: All stood and recited the pledge of allegiance.

Roll Call of Officers: 14 present, 2 excused, and 7 absent.

Reading of Previous Minutes:

General Meeting: Mike Rapp made a motion to accept the minutes as printed, 2nd by Steve and disapproved by the body. The minutes were read, and no motion was made to accept the minutes as read so for now the September General Minutes are not approved.

Executive Meeting: Tracy made a motion to accept the minutes as printed, 2nd Orville and approved by the body.

Secretary/Treasurer's Report: Mike Rapp made a motion to accept the report as printed, 2nd by Connie and approved by the body.

Reading of Communications: NALCREST Foundation, Inc. is asking for branches to take out an ad for the 60th Anniversary Commemorative Booklet.

Applications for New Membership: Carter Miethe, Matt Dunham, Jeffery Nickla, Danny Robinson, Samuel Smith, Shawn Gilden, Michael Sittner, Justice Grant, Chaz Grady, and Amanda Leighty.

Initiation of New Members: None

Reading of Report:

Director of Insurance: Rick is attending the Health Benefits seminar and will have a report when he gets back.

Director of Safety: Every station needs to have a dog policy that is followed. Parcels need to be worked in a safe environment before going to the street. Valley has a storage shed that is still in the box.

Retirees: If someone is retiring, please make sure that Steve S. and Sharee are both informed. The next retiree luncheon will be on November 11th at Golden Corral.

Trustees: Bill is working on getting the books done so the trustees can go over them.

Spokane Labor Council: Labor Rally is October 18th from 4-7 at the fairgrounds, you can't be in uniform.

Swingroom Gazette: Deadline is October 22, 2023, no exceptions.

Committee Reports:

Legislation: The Social Security Fairness Act in the house has over 290 co-sponsors but without a house speaker don't except any movement on this. The same version of the bill in the senate has 44.

Resolutions: None

By-Laws: None

Entertainment: None

Athletics: None

Employees Services: None

Hospital and Health: Kate Miller-dog bite.

Condolences: None

Labor/Management Agenda Items: Upside down DPS. No breaker cards. Management wants to bring carriers in when they are off on OWCP. At no time should 733 be used. Management changing clock rings.

Unfinished Business: Steve S. gave a report on the charges that were read in September, the committee has interviewed over half of the witnesses and hopes to have the rest done shortly. Will have a complete report once everyone has been interviewed.

New Business: DJ on his route-management is lying to leasing office.

Good of the Association: Fred Hollowa spoke about the new route adjustment process and how management is trying to make the routes much larger. Management is trying to force new businesses into getting mail delivered to a CBU. Mike Poff made a motion for the branch to take out a half page ad for the NALCREAST 60th Anniversary in the amount of $75, 2nd by Bill and approved by the body. Mike Poff made a motion for the branch to purchase a banner for the outside of the union hall from Lawton Printing for $261, 2nd by Bill an amendment was made to the motion to spend up to #400 for the banner by Sharee, 2nd by Jessica and approved by the body. Bill is checking on one of the members drawn last month's meeting drawings to make sure that member is a 50-year member. Sharee reported from what was discussed at COP, an arbitrator will be chosen next week, the goal of NALC is to get rid of the second pay table. The NALC wants absolutes in the contract for violating article 8. Want more options for the people on the ODL. NALC wants to have a route adjustment process in the contract. Looking into revamping the uniform vendor program. Steve T. made a motion send Tracy Pardick to Formal A and beyond, the motion was withdrawn.

Improvement of the Service: The union doesn't have a say in who does the shadow, but we do have a say in who the OJI's are, the OJI class does not teach how to carry the mail they teach different techniques to instruct the new members.

Meeting Drawings: Bill Wixom, and Richard Perry.

Adjournment: Motion made by Steve T. to adjourn the meeting at 840pm, 2nd by Jessica and approved by the body.









Director of Retirees

Steve Schultz

Greetings Brothers and Sisters of Branch #442. There hasn't been much to write about lately. Winter will be upon us before we know it. Speaking of that, make sure you are prepared. Now is the time to do all of those chores around the house, draining the sprinkler system, etc., while the weather is still somewhat decent. Don't forget to prep your car as well, making sure you have a blanket, small portable shovel, water, some snacks, just in case you would get stuck somewhere. There is an old saying by Benjamin Franklin that goes something like this, "An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure".

Last issue I wrote of HR-82 the Social Security Fairness Act. We now have the required number of co-sponsors, but with the house in turmoil without a Speaker, it's hard to tell if there will be any action done on it. As of this date, Maria Cantwell still has not signed onto the bill in the Senate side.

Our quarterly retiree's luncheon at the Golden Corral on North Division is coming up the second Saturday in November, which this year falls on the 11th, which is also Veteran's Day. I hope many of you will be able to make it and re-kindle old friendships with those you used to work with. Just a quick reminder, these luncheons take place in March, May, August, and November.

At the meeting in October, Sharee mentioned that she had been in contact with the State Director of Retirees, Brooks Bennett about putting together a presentation here in Spokane for retirees and potential retirees. I will post more information when it becomes available. That's about it for now. Until next time, take care…

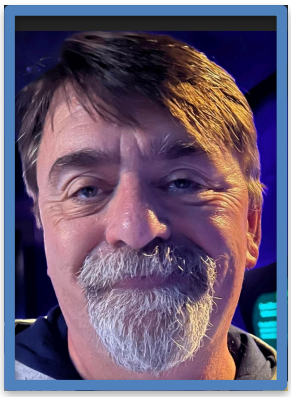




Shadle

Leslie Phelps

This will be my ninth month as the main steward at Shadle/Garland and my second article I have written. I am still learning a lot as a steward and trying my best to defend the contract when management violates it. Right now I am noticing that there are a lot of local intervention agreement violations going on. I am doing my best to try and find the time to do all my stewardship duties without falling too far behind. I am sure over time I will be able to find the balance that works for me. I hope to soon find an alternate steward to help me as I have over 30 carriers to watch out for and it is hard to do all alone with me being so new to this steward thing. Please do not give up on me as it is a learning process for us all.



Northpointe

Scott Thorland

Greetings from Northpointe,

Again, I am trying to write an article that will be pertinent by the time it is published. It's late October as I write this, so we will likely be into "peak season" by the time this is published, and you receive it. I haven't seen many if any changes since last year that could improve the situation, our station manager told me a couple of weeks ago that he doesn't believe it will be bad at all based on some delusion that Amazon is suddenly going to start delivering all of their own parcels in our zip codes. I hope he is right, but I don't believe he is. So, since management has done little if anything to improve our situation over last year, the only thing we can do is look out for ourselves. So here is a reminder of how many hours you are contractually allowed to work during the 4-week penalty time exclusionary period that runs from December 2nd through December 29th this year. ODL- you can work pretty much as long as you want, the 12 hour a day, 60 hour a week limit does not apply to you. You do, however, legally have to have 8 hours between shifts. CCA's you can work 12 hours a day (11 ½ hours plus a lunch) 7 days a week (No, you probably will not see a day off until Christmas.)

You are not required to work more than 12 hours per day. Full time regulars including work assignment- the 12 hour per day 60 hour per week limit still applies to you. You may work 12 ½ hours per day (12 hours of work plus a lunch).

When you reach 60 hours for the week, you can go home for the remainder of the week and be paid for the remainder of your scheduled hours for the week. We can each only do so much, it is up to management to provide enough of a workforce to get the job done. Please take care of yourselves first! Please focus on doing the job safely and let management worry about how it is all going to get done- that's what they get paid to do (regardless of how dismal a job they do at accomplishing that!). I hope everyone can take some time to enjoy the holidays at least a little.

-Scott Thorland

Sunset

Connie Guerrero

Hey everybody, I hope you are all doing well and staying healthy. I just want to touch base with everyone on estimates in the morning. Here at sunset we have had a temp manager who has been trying to pressure carriers into giving him time that people don't have. I just want to say not to let them talk you into giving them time that you don't have. It is an estimate and it takes you what it takes. You do not run and possibly hurt yourself or someone else because "they" are pressuring you. Besides that everything has been okay, steward should be going around seeing what is needed for winter season for the station like de-icer , hand warmers etc.. . One last thing open season is coming up as well as steward nomination so be on the look out for more information. Be safe and stay healthy everyone!



Spokane Valley/Metro

Angie Severin

Nothing much has changed at the Valley. If anything it will be getting worse before it gets better. I have successfully bid a route at Metro and will be leaving. A couple people bid different routes within the station, so we will have at least 4 vacant routes I can think of off there top of my head going into the holiday season. While I am thrilled to be getting out of the s**tshow that is the Valley, I feel bad for my fellow coworkers still there. I feel bad to leave Tracy as the sole steward there and he has made sure to tell me, I'm off his Christmas list! 😂

The topic I wanted to address on this issue is accuracy of delivery. Management often tells CCAs to not worry about the names, just get the mail delivered. STOP LISTENING TO THIS STUPID INSTRUCTION!!! This also applies to some of the regular carriers. If there are names in the boxes, deliver just those names in the boxes. If there are note cards indicating who to forward, read them and pick those names out. Customers don't like getting previous residents mail and some get downright angry about it. It is our job to deliver the mail accurately. Part of that accuracy is not only delivering to the right box, but delivering the correct names. Don't let management rush you. Take the time it takes to do your job properly.

Granted, if there are no names in the box, just deliver all the mail. It's up to the regular to maintain the names in the boxes and if they don't, how are you to know who lives there?

My biggest problem with the instruction to "Don't worry About the names" is that the CCA carriers who follow this instruction frequently never look at the names once they make regular either. Our job is customer service. Take pride in your job and do what you can to give great customer service!

Spokane Valley

Tracy Pardick



I have been sitting in the office most of the day working on grievances and came in on my day off yesterday. Just trying to catch up with all the issues going on at multiple stations. When I took this position 16 years ago, I was told it is a thankless job. Lately I have seen the crux of that saying. Not only have I been called worthless, piece of crap but also the reason that the station is failing. I have been pretty quiet about it all. I have taken the insults and brushed them off. But I will say this now. My job as a union steward is pretty clear, I am to ensure the contract is followed and then grieve if it isn't. I am also required to prevent a grievance if it is possible by informing management when they are wrong and give them the ability to fix it on the spot. I am not the person that determines if an individual can work or if they get a bid position. I simple ensure the contract is followed. I will not be bullied by anyone to violate the oath I took.

This station has turned on their own, and it is quit disgusting. We have injured carriers that are treated like leopards and scorned. I can care less what their issue is, management is required to follow the contract and law. I will defend everyone at this station and outside of it to my fullest ability, regardless of how an individual or a group of individuals feel. The union doesn't grieve feeling we grieve violations of the contract and manuals. The stewards in this station and within the city are also carriers, we do our jobs and then take our days off and extra time to defend all carriers regardless of if injured on the job, off the job, an active union member or not a union member. They all get the same treatment and protection. We give up time with our family and friends, take our own vacation to get training, for what reason? It definitely is not to be attacked by other members. My goal is always to make management follow the rules and then the pieces will fall into place. If we continue to allow the breaking of the rules nothing will ever get corrected, and we will continue on this downward spiral. I think that should cover that part of this article.

Now for the better parts or worse for some of use. Angie Severin has bid out of the station to Metro. Good for her, bad for me. This means more union time has to be covered by me. That is if I decide to continue on this path. Jeff Hall bid over to route 607 (lucky him), Erika VonScheele bid over to route 609, and Todd Peterson bid to the new route 650. Route 40 also bid out. That leaves us extremely understaffed going into November and the Holidays. Westmoreland will be going to Riverside and Tanner Thiel has gone to Metro. CCAs have continued to come in and out, I am starting to lose track of who is assigned here at this point.

Joey Parker had a baby, so congratulations to him and the wife (roommate). We have seen a new face in the office lately, Craig Haase, the rumors were not true he has not yet retired. I think he is trying to outlast Bill Bauder. We will miss him when he does finally figure out the retirement process.

Seems like the Amazon slavers have possibly finally flexed the station. Meaning they have started delivering the majority of their packages. I see this maybe as short term with the holidays coming up, we might still be getting a good amount of them during that time. But fingers crossed.

I have filed a grievance on the use of 733 time, please stop using it. If you are instructed by management, do it but inform the union so we can get it addressed immediately. The route adjustments for the 6 zone are done, they went a little better than the 16 zone, there might come an issue if packages drop significantly. We have yet to review the 16 zone again after the big screw up on the counts for it.

For some reason they cancelled the review of it; even though everyone knows a good amount of the routes are still way overburdened. Again, we will see how this pans out.

It is that time of year again. That's right time to plan your next years vacation time. A few weeks of salvation from this place of purgatory. Please have your dates ready when it is your turn. If you are going to be gone, please provide me with your choices before you leave. I am looking forward to hopefully getting it done before the new year rolls around this time.

As always if you need anything I am always available. Tracypardick@yahoo.com

208 651-3505

Tracy Pardick

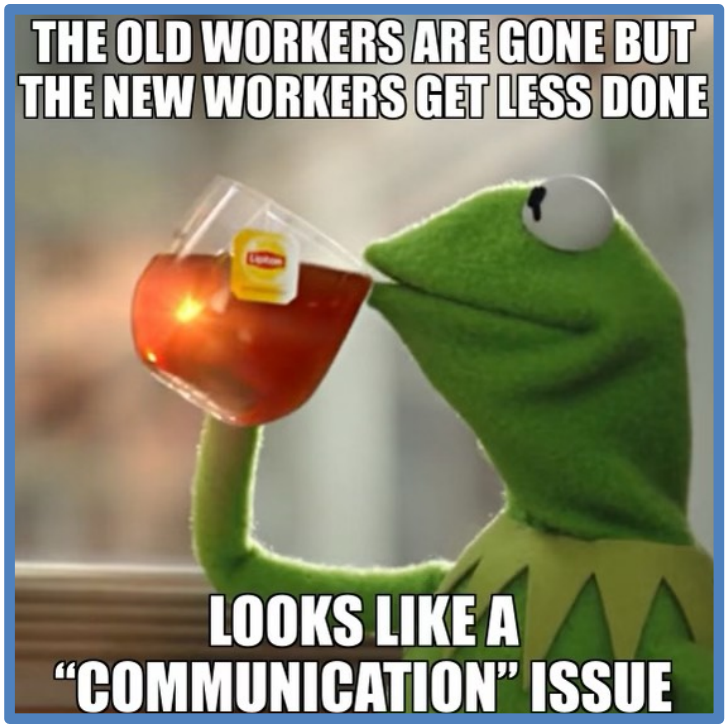


Collections

Cara Harrington

Michael Wagnon, our CCA, made regular and moved to a string at Hays Park. He knew all the routes in collections, and it was hard to say goodbye, but we wish him the best. For the part-time-regulars who have been getting mandated 6 days a week, they recently received grievance money for work outside regular workdays on a routine basis. There is likely a grievance in the near future as the practice by management continues in violation of our contract.

I attended the Regional Assembly in Coeur d' Alene, ID. There were some informative training opportunities. The classes were put on a flash drive that we got to keep. If any union member is interested in looking over the material from the different sessions at the Regional Assembly, I would be happy to loan you the flash drive or make you a copy.







Regal

Tracy Pardick

I have been grieving weekly for the station. A lot of Article 8 issues and CCAs carrying rural routes. I am just waiting on the pay adjustments to be put in. I need to be informed when management is carrying, casing, or bring mail out to carriers, I can not grieve something if I do not know about it. I have had multiple Investigative interviews up there lately, kind of tired of it. It seems management thinks they have the right to question you on the scanner data each night, I would suggest that if they are questioning you on backing alerts or other things then you need a steward. I had to sit in an investigative interview for a carrier to explain why their scanner had backing issues. This is proof enough that these questions can lead to discipline. Again, if you think that the questions that a manager/supervisor is asking can lead to discipline, then you have the right to have a steward present.

I have filed the grievance for a Hostile work Environment during the estimate process, it was denied at informal A and is now at Formal A. I have also filed a grievance for management instructing carriers on how to deliver the route during a 3999 (street count), again this was denied at the Informal A level and is now at the Formal A step. I have also filed on the opt sheet not being posted and filled out; this was settled. It will be posted over by the time clock and management will follow the local on the posting and pulling of it.

I know that there was a dog bite at the station. It is our responsibility to stay safe on our routes. We need to ensure that dog cards are cased daily (I have been up there multiple times, and multiple cases were pulled down, but the dog cards were left behind), these cards are for the carrier that might have to carry a swing off your route or the whole thing if something happens. DO NOT LEAVE DOG CARDS IN THE CASE, THERE ARE TO GO TO THE STREET WITH YOU. Another thing is the overloading of the hampers, if the top item cannot be stopped by the inside of the hamper, then it is overloaded. You should never have to look to the side of the hamper so see where you are pushing it. Seat belts are to be worn anytime the vehicle is in motion. The keys are to be removed from ignition and the emergency break on anytime out of the vehicle. We need to ensure we are following all safety rules.

Not sure how much more is going on at the station, since I am not stationed there. I can only rely on what is relayed to me by the carriers. So, please if any issues send me a text or call. Request a steward if needed.

As always if you need my help Tracypardick@yahoo.comn

208 651-3505





Riverside

A Letter to the Editor - Carrier Submission

From Riverside Station,

I heard Renfroe's leadership lauded recently, saying we were going to be focusing on maximizing the hours of the CCA, before mandating regulars. Isn't the CCA supposed to be a part time position? Leadership would be in my purview saying something like, "We are going to focus on making part time, part time, while ensuring we have enough career positions to handle the workload. Short staffing to the point you need 60 part time people working 60 hours a week, or 120 working 30 hours a week. Because you have seriously needed at least 30 full time positions in your city for years, but for some reason or another can't build and or fill them. We can't and have never been able to staff for a projected workload in the Area of Spokane. My start as a PTF (Part. Time. Flexible) there were 31, and a lot more routes 35 I know of. We were constantly mandating regulars to carry even then. So I hear that we can't discuss higher pay, better conditions, etc… because we can't be laid off. Is that why we have so MUCH mandated overtime, and an entirely unrealistic amount of manpower to workload? Our part timers should be able to count on a job thats part time, just like anywhere else in our corporate economy. It would allow them to continue college, or pursue other professions. Strangling them with this job, that turns into a basically subpar right now career, is the reason our turnover is so high. Most that stay do so to go into management which has ballooned over the last contract, and will continue to do so.

Yours truly,

"Not a steward" Wade W Outcalt

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"This is a war, we are soldiers" -Anonymous







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Important Dates:

- November 7th - Executive Board Meeting - 6:30pm - Union Office
- November 11th - Retiree's Luncheon - Golden Corral
- November 13th - Open Enrollment Begins (Closes December 11th)
- November 14th - Stewards Meeting - 6:30pm - Union Office
- November 21st - General Meeting - 6:30pm - Progressions Credit Union
- December 5th - Executive Board Meeting - 6:30pm - Union Office
- December 12th - Stewards Meeting - 6:30pm - Union Office
- December 19th - General Meeting - 6:30pm - Progressions Credit Union