

NALCASTER

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF LETTER CARRIERS

Pagoda Branch 258

READING, PA.

October 12, 2022



N.A.L.C. PAGODA BRANCH 258 READING PA OFFICERS 2021

<u>Officer</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Telephone</u>
President	Fred Ranalli, Jr	610-406-1131
Vice President	Rich McDonough	484-955-4267
Treasurer	Jason Taylor	570-617-1124
Secretary	Paul Purcell	610-451-0244
Trustees:		
	Tammy Jones	610-960-7498
	Dominic Tumminello	610-775-4263
	Dave Dry	484-797-7906
HBR MBA OWCP	Bill Lodek	610-914-1253
AFL-CIO	Sharon Unger	484-797-2220
Sergeant at Arms	Ed Gensemer	484-638-3067
NALCaster Editor	Andy Gelsinger	610-413-8158
Director of Archives	Andy Gelsinger	610-413-8158



SHOP STEWARDS

<u>Zone</u>	<u>Steward</u>	<u>Telephone</u>
19601	Brunilda Cheverez	347-247-0277
19604-05	Juan Munoz	610-373-8201
19606-02	Dave Dry	484-797-7906
19607	Mark Swarmer	610-856-1662
19608-09	Paul Purcell	610-451-0244
19610-11	Dave Dry	484-797-7906
19508	Rich McDonough	484-955-4267
19518	Russell Jackson	484-995-5874
19526	Chelsee Berger	570-516-0588
19522	Steve Fenstermacher	484-201-0193
19530	Tim Fisher	610-207-0204
19540	Jessica Mountz	610-914-9843
19551	Rich McDonough	484-955-4267
19555	Robert Oswald	610-451-5114
19560	Terry Stefansky	610-781-3221
19565	Kim Brunner	610-763-1674
19567	Robert Clark	610-589-1469

CONTACTING US

Visit us at: 1251 Front St. Reading, PA 19601
 Write us at: PO Box 12584 Reading, PA 19612
 View our website at www.nalc258.com
 Join our NALC Branch 258 Facebook page

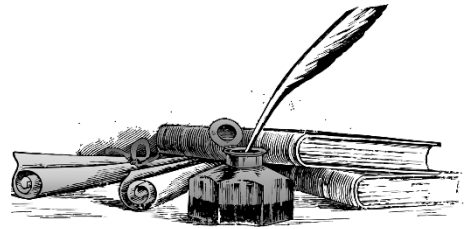
COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Step A designee	Jason Taylor	570-617-1124
Assoc. Off. Grievances		
	Rich McDonough	484-955-4267
Labor Management Team		
	Fred Ranalli Jr.	610-406-1131
	Rich McDonough	484-955-4267
Food Drive	Tammy Jones	610-960-7498
Legislative	Ed Gensemer	484 638-3067
HBR-MBA-OWCP		
	Bill Lodek	610-914-1253
MDA	Jason Taylor	570-617-1124
CCA Rep	Juan Munoz	610-373-8201
Dir. of Retirees	Jerome Kern	484-256-4906

Many thanks to Jerome Kern and, as always, Branch President Fred Ranalli for contributing material for this issue. Please remember that this newsletter is for the Branch and by the Branch, and contributions can be submitted to the editor at any time.

Letter from the Editor

In this issue, I want to address something which we would all like to hear about, but perhaps not in a way that we all want to hear about it. I want to write about getting paid – getting paid our money, that is, all the money that we have coming to us. Great reading for all, right? Well, maybe not. You see, I want to talk about getting paid what we have coming to us because of working only during the time which we are paid for. Most of us have felt pressured to skip breaks, shorten lunch, work at unsafe speeds and work off the clock for different reasons, and have been given mixed messages that, on the one hand, we should never do this, but, on the other hand... Well, this is where all of the alternative narratives come in, isn't it? "But I have to because I won't get done," "I don't mind, I can handle it," "I'm a dedicated worker," "I want to get home and have a life," "I'll get a more favorable assignment," "What can I do (while throwing up one's hands)," "I don't care if I donate a couple bucks here and there," "but the supervisor will get mad," "but I don't handle conflict well," "if I have grievances filed they will retaliate." I have heard all of these narratives (and more), and, sadly, I've heard them all (again) within the past one to two years.



Please understand that you are being swindled when doing these things. Casing, meeting with the supervisor to determine an OT assignment, picking up your things from the accountables cart, moving your work vehicle – these are just some obvious examples of working off the clock. Working at one's case and doing other tasks during the plan 5 talks are things you might not do if management instead just left out a basket for you to throw money into, because the effect is the same.

The insidious part of the issue is that union intervention, while appropriate, is seen negatively by the people we are supposed to help because, in essence, in order for the union to stop this, they have to grieve that management is allowing the employee to do the wrong thing. How does management rectify that? Well, they could simply tell and/or order people to work the right way (even while behaving in a tacit manner that encourages the opposite), or they could make trouble for the employee. This of course, brings us full circle, and comes back negatively on the union, who "stirred the pot" to begin with.

So, I'm left with the best course of action, which is to continue my direct pleas to the membership. You are not showing dedication by skipping break time and working off the clock – you are instead showing your willingness to be manipulated. Examples of dedication would be doing things like showing up whenever you're not sick, circling back in your duties to help an inexperienced carrier become better, conscientious servicing of your route, or volunteering for a holiday schedule. Instead, caving to pressure does things like making routes look shorter than they are (which comes home to roost at route adjustment time), sets a bad example for others who are still learning the rights and wrongs of the job, and takes time (and money) from people who want more paid time (less of an issue in the current work climate, but these things always come full circle). These are just a few effects in addition to the obvious throwing away of money.

If we are feeling generous, I would think that a much better target for the donations of our time and money would be a favorite charity, the church, a service organization, our families, etc – not the people who are supposed to be paying us for our hard work to begin with.

Finally, I wanted to point out that I did not choose this subject for my letter myself – it was suggested by a coworker. I point this out for two reasons – early into my tenure as Nalcaster editor, I wrote that in this newsletter, contributions from any member are welcome – that goes for ideas as well as content. Secondly, I want subjects to be covered that people are noticing, care about, and can be discussed for the betterment of all. I have tried to write about this subject in such a manner

where people will hopefully be encouraged to work in a way that makes things better for themselves and all of those around them, and I hope that it is received in that way. I also hope that anyone who wants guidance on this issue, or help in resisting management pressure to do otherwise, can call on their representatives for help.

A fair days wage for a fair days work.

Andy Gelsinger, Nalcaster Editor

Upcoming Events

October 12 – Regular branch meeting
October 20 – Retiree breakfast
October 27-29 – PA State Association NALC convention
November 1 – Bidding begins for full AL non-prime weeks (Jan-May 2023)
November 2 – Executive board meeting
November 8 – Election day
November 9 - Regular branch meeting
November 11 – Veteran's Day holiday
November 15 – Bidding begins for individual AL non-prime days (Jan-May 2023)
November 17 – Retiree breakfast
November 24 – Thanksgiving Day Holiday
December 7 – Executive board meeting



reminder

Our 2022 Branch 258 calendars incorrectly identify our fourth quarter paydays. The correct paydays in October are the 14th and 28th, in November are the 11th and 25th, and in December are the 9th and the 23rd.

Our project to compile, and keep up to date, a master email and best phone list of the membership is ongoing. To add your information, please contact Andy Gelsinger at 610-413-8158 (text) or slice710@aol.com (email), Ed Gensemer at caddy1217@aol.com (email)), or pass the info through any shop steward or board member. You can also use the sample form in this issue to mail your information

Simple Form Which Can Be Used to Send in Your
Contact Information

Name _____

Email _____

Best Phone# _____

President's Message

Hello everyone. In August, 11 branch members and I attended our National Convention in Chicago. I will use part of my message to relay a few highlights of the Chicago convention. I also urge all of you to read the latest Postal Record for a more detailed synopsis of the convention. With everything going on, I will need to write about several other issues to keep all of you up to date.

First, I would like to update all of you on the settlement situation. We have been awarded several settlements dealing with all the violations most of you have dealt with during the past two years. When these settlements came about, we were faced with the task of working with management to fashion an award that would be fair to the members who were violated the most. The parties decided to divide our workforce into several categories. Carriers who haven't been affected because they have not been at work, carriers with restriction, non-OTDL carriers and OTDL carriers are a few of those groups. Some carriers were on and off the overtime list during this period. The joint settlement also needed to follow the guidelines in Article 8 of the national agreement. When the current language of Article 8 was written into our agreement the provisions mostly helped people on the OTDL who wanted to work overtime. The provisions had little protection for non OTDL. Forced overtime was not as prevalent as today. At arbitration, arbitrators mostly awarded the OTDL carriers. Decisions very rarely compensated non OTDL carriers who were forced improperly. So unfortunately, even though we might all agree who has been violated the most, they often do not always get compensated properly. From the start I knew we could never compensate any of you for the time you have missed with your families. Because of that fact, we wanted to include as many members as justified by the chosen categories that we could. I want to thank all our stewards that were involved with filing grievances, supplying information and helping decide how to distribute these settlements. I hope all of you understand how hard it was to administer who will receive payments and who was not harmed as much as the majority of members. The settlement in no way repays every violation, but somehow, I hope it discourages management from continuing to violate all of you. They still have a lot of work to do, but I feel they are trying to hire more employees and adhere to the national agreement. If they do not, your steward and our board will continue to file grievances and do everything within our power to make them follow our agreements.

I will now go back to the convention. This was my 13th National convention. I wish everyone of you could experience at least one National Convention. I asked every delegate to describe what they felt while attending the convention. They said excitement, energy, unity, brotherhood, fellowship and power. All these descriptions are fitting. From the moment a fellow letter carrier stands up

daily in front of 4200 carriers and belts out the National Anthem, followed by an invocation from a local clergy, to the very close of the convention, the experience leaves everyone in complete awe of our great union. Delegates from all walks of life, ethnic backgrounds, religious affiliations and every state are in attendance. Please get more involved with our branch, attend meetings and maybe become a delegate to the next National Convention. I know you won't regret it.

Now to the highlights. Regrettably, I need to report after 13 ½ years as our NALC president, Fred Rolando will not seek reelection. He has led our union through very difficult times and his work to get postal reform passed is monumental. Thank you, Fred! Executive VP Brian Renfro will compete with David Noble to be our next president. Seven other national offices will be disputed. Ballots for this election will be mailed to every member. If you do not receive a ballot by Oct 7th, please contact your steward or a board member. I cannot urge you enough to vote for the most qualified candidate to represent all of us. If you have questions talk to your steward. Pa. State President Paul Rozzi was elected as a national delegate to the AFL-CIO. Many speakers including President Biden, Congressional Representatives, Union Presidents and a current Postal Board of Governors member, were present or gave a video presentation. Classes on City Delivery, Contract Administration, Retirement, OWCP and all other carrier related issues were given.

President Rolando estimates the COLA from the current contract will be more than \$5000 added to carrier's base salary. Carrier's total salary will raise over 10% through the current contract. Fred also spoke on the NALC preparation for our upcoming negotiations that will begin next February. As always, he assured us that the NALC will be prepared to negotiate the best contract that represents all carriers.

The new postal vehicle was on display for delegates to sit in. Most reviews have been positive about the vehicle. A member of the UAW spoke and asked all of us to contact Oshkosh and your Representatives and tell them to make these vehicles using union workers in the Oshkosh plant in Wisconsin. Oshkosh was awarded the contract and then decided to build a plant in the Carolina's so they could build these vehicles using cheaper non-union workers. We need to support the union workers who were harmed by this decision.

This was the first convention I attended that a current Postal Board of Governors member spoke to the delegation. Member Donald Moak thanked every carrier for the job we all did handling and delivering election ballots for the 2020 election. He reported that 99.7% of those ballots arrived early or on time thanks to the USPS employees. He told the group this fact and stressed to all of us not to believe any reports to the contrary. He said they are just not true. He also spoke about the high amount of yearly employee turnover that the USPS faces. The USPS needs to replace hundreds of thousands of employees that leave every year. He hopes to change that fact and work to

help the postal service retain current employees. He promised that letter carriers will have a seat at all discussions involving the USPS as long as he is on the board.

As I stated earlier, please read your last Postal Record or check out the convention chronicles in the NALC app or website. Several speeches are also on YouTube for you to watch. May I suggest checking out Cecil Roberts, United Mine workers President for starters.

In the past few months, I have attended two job fairs at the GMF. At these events, I would estimate that less than 30 applicants applied to be potential letter carriers. I am dumbfounded. Thousands of people took a test over several days when I was hired. I cannot explain the lack of interest in a career of being a letter carrier. If any of you know of anyone looking for a career, tell them to check the USPS website or give us a call and we will try to help them. I ask all of you to help any new employee you see. We need to guide these new employees to mold them into good carriers. A kind word or gesture goes along way and will be remembered. Thank you for the little things all of you do! Finally, I need to encourage everyone of you to make sure you get out and vote for USPS friendly candidates in the November national, state and local elections. We have fought hard and long to get postal reform passed. We would not want to have the next congress come in and reverse all our gains. Very easily laws could be passed to reverse what has been successfully fought for by all of you. Every office is important. Try to do some research on your own on every candidate. Don't rely on TV ads and mailings to make your choice. I am sorry to say most of them twist the facts to distort the truth. We must vote to keep the USPS and our jobs secure. I hope we will never face the attacks to privatize our jobs again. Our strength lies in our unity.

In Solidarity,
Fred Ranalli



Informational Tidbits Which Take Up Just A Little Space

Retiring NALC President Frederic Rolando is only the 4th to serve in the 52+years since the postal strike and reformation of the Postal Service

The 2024 NALC National Convention will be held on August 5-9 in Boston, MA

Branch 258 also brought home awards for high per capita contributions to the LCPF. LCPF coordinator Dave Dry has vowed to help us regain the top spot by the next convention

Branch 258 was given awards as being first in the nation, for a branch of our size, in percentage of members who contribute to the LCPF in the period ending with the Honolulu convention, and second place for the Chicago convention.

2023 Branch calendars are in production and should be distributed around the time that this issue of the Nalcaster is published

Recent fundraisers have helped the branch raise \$1350 for MDA, our national union's official charity. Thank you to all participants!

Workhour/workload reports should be posted daily at every office

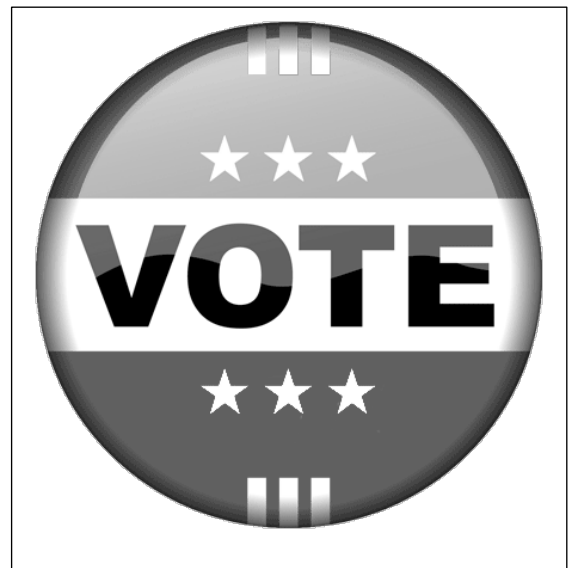


Open Season for Health Care

Open season for making changes or enrolling in health care, dental, vision, or flexible spending accounts begins on November 14 and concludes on December 12. During this time, carriers can make changes in their coverages, and will be able to designate an amount of pre-tax money to set aside for their 2023 Flexible Spending Account

(FSA). Members are reminded that (a) if they do not want to make any changes in their health, dental, or vision coverages, nothing needs to be done; (b) if they want to take advantage of the money saving aspects of an FSA, an election for 2023 must be made during open season.

Members are reminded that nominations for branch officers will be held at the October meeting, followed by elections in November. Also, midterm elections will be held on November 7 for Local, State, and National offices. Members who are interested in becoming involved with the work of the branch, whether through elected or appointed positions, committees, or through an interest in helping with a specific task, are always encouraged to contact us and share your interests.



The Retiree Route

Hello Branch 258 retirees,

We've been having nice turnouts for our monthly breakfasts. Come out and join us on the third Thursday of every month @9:00 AM. On October 20th, we will be going to the Route 61 Diner, 3455 Centre Ave., Reading, 19605. On November 17th, we will be going to the Red Plate Diner, 440 E. Penn Ave., Wernersville, 19565.

In other news, with new security measures, OPM and TSP have redesigned the way you log into your account. If anyone has trouble with this and would like our assistance, give me or Fred a call.

I send out monthly emails to those who have given me their email address. It consists of the breakfast location and important news and events. If you would like to receive these emails, please contact me and I will add you to the list.

Jerome Kern
Director of Retirees

Nalcaster Now Available Via Email

In order to compensate for service delays which have occasionally caused late delivery of your Nalcaster, I am making PDF copies available via email to anyone that requests it. Simply let me know your desire for me to email it to you, and the email address where you wish to receive it. Your paper copy will continue to be mailed as always. In addition, Nalcasters will be posted on the Branch website, www.nalc258.com.

Pamela Heyman, MS, LPC

EAP District Consultant

Tel (610) 688-2180

pheyman@ndbh.com

1-800-EAP4YOU (1-800-327-4968)

TTY: 1-877-492-7341

www.EAP4YOU.com

You can call the EAP or go to the website 24 hours a day for information and help.

About Our Members

Congratulations to...

Branch 258 would like to congratulate Owen Steiger, son of Jon Steiger, and Caleb O'Brien, son of Aaron O'Brien, who are the winners of the Beck and Bear scholarships. Their names were drawn from the pool of eligible applicants at the September Branch meeting. Good luck as you take the next step in developing your knowledge and skills in your future professions!



The following carriers have completed years on the seniority list* since the publication date of our last newsletter:

Elizabeth Beebe – 31 years; Leanne Brigle – 28 years; Ed Gensemer – 28 years; Tamatha Parker – 28 years; Mark Swarmer – 28 years; Steve Fenstermacher – 26 years; Charlotte Lydixsen – 24 years; Anna Perez – 22 years; Andy Gelsinger – 21 years; Michael Mengel – 17 years; Dean Mathias – 17 years; Marc Dries – 17 years; Jason Taylor – 17 years; Daniel Greco – 16 years; Kenneth Kessock – 16 years; Lawrence Grove – 14 years; Bradley Adams – 12 years; Erick DeLaRosa – 9 years; Bradley Riegel – 9 years; Linda Webber – 8 years; Lisa Haas – 8 years; Jeffrey Young – 7 years; Stephanie Horrigan – 6 years; Juan Filpo – 4 years; Oscar Torres – 3 years; Phillip Himmelsberger – 2 years; Paul Davis, Jr. – 1 year; Bobby Marshall – 1 year

*list is taken directly from the Reading installation seniority report, and reflects time since entered into full time carrier appointment in the Reading area, and from lists supplied to me of carrier seniority in Branch 258 AO's; it does not reflect time before transferring or before career carrier appointment; any errors that of inclusion or omission can be given to the editor at any time and will gladly be corrected

NALC-BRANCH 258
NALCASTER
PO BOX 12584
READING, PA 19612-2584
TIME VALUE-PLEASE DO NOT DELAY



The NALCASTER is a publication of, by, and for the members of Pagoda Branch #258, NALC, Reading, PA. The opinions expressed herein, may but do not necessarily reflect those of the editor or Branch #258. All contributions are welcome. Members of NALC may use any items in this newsletter, just inform your readers of the source.



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Janice Ranalli
610-678-2512 Home/Fax
610-914-8436