

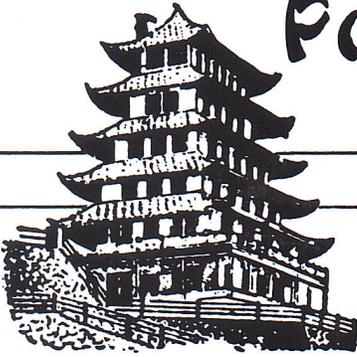
NALCASTER

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF LETTER CARRIERS

Pagoda Branch 258

READING, PA.

JUNE 8th, 2016



N.A.L.C. PAGODA BRANCH 258
READING PA OFFICERS 2015

Officers	Name	Telephone
President	Fred Ranalli, Jr	610-678-2512
Vice President	Rich McDonough	484-955-4267
Treasurer	Michele Schaeffer	610-916-1324
Secretary	Paul Purcell	610-451-0244
Trustees:	Jason Taylor	570-617-1124
	Dominic Tumminello	610-775-4263
	Dave Dry	484-797-7906
Health Plan Rep.	Bill Lodek	610-678-9031
AFL-CIO	Sharon Unger	610-921-0394
Sergeant at Arms	Ed Gensemer	484-638-3067
NALCaster editors	Bradley Snyder	717-405-0124
Director of Archives	Andy Gelsing	610-378-0417

Shop Stewards

Stations	Steward	Telephone
19601-11	Jason Taylor	570-617-1124
19602-06	Aaron O'Brien	484-955-0917
19604-05	Juan Munoz	610-373-8201
19607	Mark Swarmer	610-856-1662
19608-09	Paul Purcell	610-451-0244
19610	Dave Dry	484-797-7906
19508	Rich McDonough	484-955-4267
19518	Harry Enright	610-385-9078
19526	Judy Snitzer	570-573-2689
19522	Steve Fenstermacher	484-201-0193
19530	Tim Fisher	610-207-0204
19540	Rich McDonough	484-955-0917
19551	Rich McDounough	484-955-0917
19555	Robert Oswald	610-451-5114
19560	Bea Shurr	610-926-3279
19565	Rich McDonough	484-955-0917
19567	Robert Clark	610-589-1469

Committees

Step A designee	Rich McDonough	484 955 4267
Associate Off. Grievance Chmn	Rich McDonough	
Labor Management Team		
	Fred Ranalli Jr.	610-678-2512
	Rich McDonough	484-955-4267
Food Drive	Paul Purcell	610-451-0244
Legislative	Ed Gensemer	484 638-3067
Workman's Comp Rep	Bill Lodek	610-678-9031
MDA	Jason Taylor	570-617-1124
CCA Rep	Rich Miller	610-568-8902
Director of Retirees	Dale Conrad	610-944-9072

UNION OFFICE 1251 N. Front St.
Reading, Pa 19601

"Alone we can do so little;
together we can do so
much."

-Helen Keller

MOVING?

Let us know... before you go!

name _____

Old address _____

New address _____

telephone # _____

or email us at
nalc258@yahoo.com

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. you may use any items in this newsletter, just inform your readers of the source.
Thank You

N.A.L.C

HEALTH BENEFIT PLAN

SERVICE LINES

General Claims Inquiries 1888 636 6252
Hospital Pre-certification (required) 1800 622 6252
Prerecorded Benefits Information 1888 636 6252
Prescription Customer Service Line 1800 933 6252

Who Do You Trust?

Consider the differences and similarities between your Union's job and that of management...

Management: to direct employees of the employer in the performance of official duties.

Union: to advise, educate, organize and bargain collectively for city letter carrier employees.

Management: to hire, promote, transfer, assign and retain employees in positions within the Postal Service and to suspend, demote, discharge, or take other disciplinary action against such employees.

Union: To represent, assist and defend employees' rights and keep them employed when management suspends, demotes or attempts to discharge you "just cuz".

Management: to maintain the efficiency of the operations entrusted to it.

Union: To ensure compliance with Article 41 regarding seniority in bidding and work on bid assignments is respected.

Management: to prescribe a uniform dress to be worn by letter carriers and other designated employees.

Union: to ensure you receive your contractual uniform allowance timely and correctly.

Management: to take whatever actions may be necessary to carry out its mission in emergency situations, i.e. and unforeseen circumstance or a combination of circumstances which calls for immediate action in a situation which is not expected to be of a recurring nature.

Union: to take whatever action may be necessary to preserve the Postal Service (our jobs) and to "stabilize the Postal Service for years to come - which will allow the Service to adapt to meet the evolving needs of the nation" (F. Rolando)

Of course by management and union working together towards these lofty goals, while complying with the contract, the postal service would indeed benefit and secure this future as well as earn the employee's trust.

Let Them Be Intimidated!



**KEEP
CALM
AND
YOU'RE
INVITED**

*Regular Monthly
Meeting*

*NALC BRANCH 258
ON WEDNESDAY*

June 8th

*At our new location!
1251 North Front St.
Reading, Pa 19601*

President's Message,

I would like to thank every letter carrier for collecting the food for our recent food drive. Delivering mail in this environment is tough enough without the added burden of collecting food along the way. The needy of Berks County will be ever grateful for your hard work. All of you will be blessed for sure. The numbers were down this year but that was not due to the lack of our effort to make it a success. We will look at ways to increase the donations next year. Thank You.

We recently attended the PA. State Congressional Breakfast in Washington DC. We met with Congressman Ryan Costello and his aides about issues concerning the USPS and Letter Carriers. He has signed on as a cosponsor of all the bills we have asked him to support and he spoke favorably about the USPS at the breakfast.

We all should call or email his office to thank him for his support. We look forward to working with him and his staff on future postal issues. While we were there our National President Fred Rolando was called to testify before a sub-committee meeting on postal reform. For several years we were forced to play defense and try to hold back any harmful legislation. That has changed and we now are part of a coalition with the other postal unions, mailers, and the Postmaster General Megan Brennan. The coalition has lobbied together for meaningful and beneficial legislation that will benefit the majority of the stake holders. They have purposely put together a reduced issues agenda that might be easier to get passed. This agenda includes Medicare integration, a plan to better invest the money in our funds, pricing and new product plans that will erase the future retirement funding that has crippled the USPS. Instead of fighting congress on ways to eliminate the prefunding they have suggested easier ways to fund the funds. In the past all the players had different agenda's. That sent the wrong message to congress and confused our representatives. We all need to be ready if this bill comes to fruition.

Locally, we continue to be on the wrong path that management chooses to follow. I have had several conversations and meetings with the District Manager and our NBA, but somehow management has ignored our concerns and suggestions. They have promised programs and suggestions to work on issues together but nothing has changed and they continue to proceed by themselves to correct what they feel is the problem.



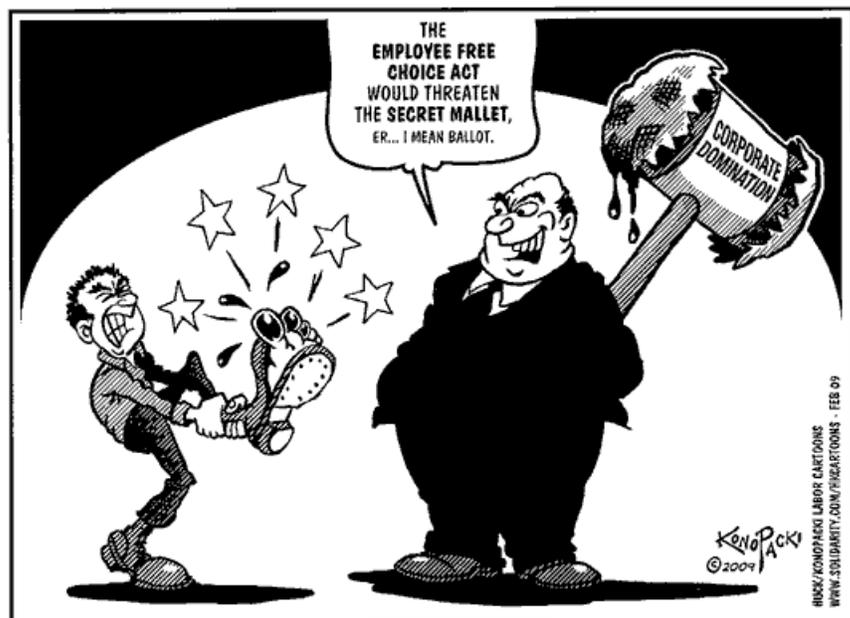
That being the letter carriers and the union. Recently, our steward have received time to file grievances on the many violations. Jason Taylor met with a labor specialist from Area and settled 170 issues. Thank You Jason! Most of the unwarranted discipline has been expunged and many of you will receive monetary settlements for contract violations. Hundreds of additional grievances still need to be filed and I am sure more settlement will be realized by carriers. The grievance procedure is set up to educate the parties so violation do not continue to happen. Past experience has taught me that management continues until someone realizes how much money it costs them to continue the violations. It is very frustrating dealing with these same issues over and over again. How does the saying go "You can lead a horse to water but you can't make him drink"? I apologize for everything you and your families have endured during this process and I promise all of us will continue to try to fight for what's right for the majority of the Reading carriers. Stay united, educate yourself and try to always do the right thing and we shall not fail.

In Solidarity,

Fred Ranalli

RETIREE'S CORNER

retirees breakfast will be held at the breakfast hut on perkiomen ave for June and July.



Safety Issues

In recent weeks a couple of questions have come up regarding safety. Hopefully I can answer a couple of these questions, and clear up some possible safety issues.

1- Is mail or packages allowed to be stored on the front seats of the vans?

EL-814 Section X Motor Vehicles

Loading: make sure that any mail you load into a vehicle will pose no hazard to the operator when the vehicle is started, stopped, turned or otherwise operated on a mail delivery route.

What does this mean? There is always a potential hazard when mail or parcels are placed on a seat of a van. If the parcel or mail slides off that seat it may cause you reach for that mail and take your eye off the road.

In short, everything goes into the back of the van.

We recently had a couple of accidents where packages slid off the seat and the person went to grab them and hit a stationary object (a guard rail) due to their eyes were off the road.

2- Dog issues and delivery of mail ?

It's that time of year where our encounters with dogs will go on the rise, we need to more aware of signs that dogs could be present.

Carriers have been asking if mail delivery can be suspended after a dog incident. If you encounter a dog while delivering a house please don't take any chances just bring the mail back and notify management.

A dog warning card should be filled out and cased everyday to give notice to whomever is delivering that house everyday.

If there are encounters with a dog, management should be sending a letter to the homeowner to fix the issue, mail delivery can be curtailed if the homeowner does not correct the situation.

Do not take it upon yourself to curtail delivery without talking to management and not allowing them contacting the home owner.

You should also let your shop steward know of the situation so they can follow up with management on the situation.

Also, remember if you are bitten and the skin brings you MUST seek medical treatment also it is suggested to let the union know if you are bitten, management is supposed to inform us but there are times when we are not notified.

We have had situations where carriers told management they didn't want treatment and a few days later have had medical issues from the bite.

Seeking medical treatment protects you in case the dog is not up to date on shots, again we had carriers in the past couple of months who had to go through rabies shots. There is a procedure in place that management must follow, and if the union does not know of the dog bites we can not make sure management is following these procedures.

Be safe out there!

Paul Purcell

Seat Belts Do Work

In the past month we had a carrier involved in a serious head on collision, the carrier was injured but the result could have been a lot worse if Jim was not aware of what was happening or he was not wearing his seat belt. Below is a picture of the LLV after the the head on collision. Jim saw the pov crossing the center yellow line and moved to the right of the road to avoid taking the impact directly head on. We always breach about being aware of your surroundings and paying attention,we can drive our vehicles safe all day but we can not control how the other people are driving.

The impact was hard it resulted in the the LLV being pushed back 20-30 feet and caused the door to be forced off its frame, if Jim had not had his seat belt on he may have been thrown from his vehicle. Jim did suffer some injuries from the collision, but luckily again he had his seat belt on and could have suffered worse injuries.

You always hear that seat belts save lives and from serious injuries and I am sure if you ask Jim he will tell you this is a very true statement.

Remember it is not only a postal policy but also state law that we must wear our seat belts while driving. We must wear out lap and shoulder belts unless the shoulder belt interferes with deliver to a curblineline delivery, it then maybe taken off to make that delivery but the shoulder belt should be put back on after that delivery takes place.

Be safe out there, and drive defensively!



THE FERS SPECIAL SUPPLEMENT

FERS employees have a lot of moving parts they have to keep up with when it comes to benefits and retirement. It's not enough to know what your pension check is going to be. One of the most important aspects of your FERS retirement is the FERS Special Supplement.

A lot of people have never heard of the Supplement and others have heard of it but don't know how it works. The supplement is a substantial benefit that every FERS employee needs to understand in order to evaluate early outs or normal retirements.

What is the FERS Special Supplement and why does it exist?

The supplement exists because Social Security is a significant part of a FERS retirement but a benefit you cannot claim until you are 62. Most employees will see their minimum retirement age in their mid 50's. The supplement is a payment from the Office of Personnel Management that is in addition to your pension and is meant to be a "substitute" for your Social Security until you are 62. Once you qualify for Social Security at 62 the supplement is turned off and you will draw your normal social security.

Does Everyone get the Supplement?

No. There are three categories of employees who will receive the Supplement. Employees who have served 30 years and have reached their Minimum Retirement Age will qualify for the Supplement.

Employees who have reached at least age 60 with 20 years of service will qualify for the Supplement.

Lastly, employees who have been offered the Early Out will be offered the supplement BUT CANNOT DRAW THE SUPPLEMENT UNTIL THEY REACH MINIMUM RETIREMENT AGE.

How much is the Supplement?

EXAMPLE: Joe is retiring at his Minimum Retirement Age of 56. He has 30 years of service and can't afford to retire on his pension alone. Joe finds out he will qualify for the Supplement because he has attained Minimum Retirement Age and has served 30 years. Joe's Social Security statement shows he will receive \$1,200 at age 62. The formula to calculate his Supplement is as follows:

Joe now applies the above percentage (75%) to his Social Security at age 62 and will receive a Supplement of \$900 a month from his Minimum Retirement Age (56) until age 62. Once he turns 62 he will draw his normal social security check of \$1,200.

Years of Service:	30
Divided by	40 Total years possible
Equals	75%

Things to consider

One thing employees have to be careful about is if they are planning on retiring and getting another job. The government treats the Supplement just like Social Security. If an employee makes more than \$14,160 in another job, for every \$2 they make above the limit their Supplement will be reduced by \$1 in the following year. To put it in plain English – if you make roughly \$28,000 while you are on the Supplement you will not get the Supplement the next year because of the Social Security Earnings test. They look at this income on an individual basis so your spouse's income will not affect you. We cover this specific issue because many employees who are considering Early out think they can go get another job. They can, but they have to be aware of the Social Security Earnings Test.

Another quick note you should know. You don't have to apply for the Supplement. It happens automatically when you retire if you are eligible. It's also important to note that drawing the Supplement does not impact any future Social Security checks. In other words, you are not penalized for drawing it like you see drawing your Social Security between age 62 and 66.

The FERS Special Supplement is a good example of a great benefit very few people understand. It's one of those things buried in your Employee Almanac and written in such a way it might as well be written in Japanese. At Postal Benefits Group, we like to talk in plain English and help you come up with the numbers you need to know before you retire. We believe in Straight talk with straight answers. If you have questions about your decision to retire, the Supplement or any other issue, please give us a call. We want you to be confident and comfortable about your decision to retire.

Congress Senators

Robert P Casey, Jr. (D-PA)

393 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510
Phone: (202) 224-6324
Toll Free: (866) 802-2833
22 S Third Street, Suite 6A
Harrisburg, PA 17101
Phone: (717) 231-7540
Toll Free: (866) 461-9159

Patrick J. Toomey (R-PA)

502 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510
Phone: (202) 224-4254
Toll Free: (202) 228-0284
United States Federal Building
228 Walnut St. Suite 1104
Harrisburg, PA 17101

Representatives

Ryan Costello (R-PA6)

427 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515
Phone: (202) 225-4315
840 N Park Rd.
Wyomissing, PA 19610
Phone: (610) 376-7630

Patrick Meehan(R-PA7)

204 Cannon HO Building
Washington, D.C. 20515
Phone: (202) 225-2011
2004 Weavertown Rd.
Douglassville, Pa 19518
Phone: (610) 690-7323

Charlie Dent (R-PA15)

2455 Rayburn HO Building
Washington, D.C. 20515
Phone: (202) 225-6411
61 N 3Rd. Street
Hamburg, Pa 19526

Joe Pitts (R-PA16)

420 Cannon HO Building
Washington, D.C. 20515
Phone: (202) 225-2411
Reading City Hall
815 Washington Street
Reading, PA 19601
Phone: (610) 374-3637

Who Do You Trust?

Consider the differences and similarities between your Union's job and that of management...

Management: to direct employees of the employer in the performance of official duties.

Union: to advise, educate, organize and bargain collectively for city letter carrier employees.

Management: to hire, promote, transfer, assign and retain employees in positions within the Postal Service and to suspend, demote, discharge, or take other disciplinary action against such employees.

Union: To represent, assist and defend employees' rights and keep them employed when management suspends, demotes or attempts to discharge you "just cuz".

Management: to maintain the efficiency of the operations entrusted to it.

Union: To ensure compliance with Article 41 regarding seniority in bidding and work on bid assignments is respected.

Management: to prescribe a uniform dress to be worn by letter carriers and other designated employees.

Union: to ensure you receive your contractual uniform allowance timely and correctly.

Management: to take whatever actions may be necessary to carry out its mission in emergency situations, i.e. and unforeseen circumstance or a combination of circumstances which calls for immediate action in a situation which is not expected to be of a recurring nature.

Union: to take whatever action may be necessary to preserve the Postal Service (our jobs) and to "stabilize the Postal Service for years to come - which will allow the Service to adapt to meet the evolving needs of the nation" (F. Rolando)

Of course by management and union working together towards these lofty goals, while complying with the contract, the postal service would indeed benefit and secure this future as well as earn the employee's trust.

Let Them Be Intimidated!

Verizon Strike FAQ

After ten months trying to reach a fair contract, nearly 40,000 men and women who work at Verizon went on strike on April 13 to protect good jobs and to ensure quality service. It is the largest national strike in recent years.

Despite making record profits — \$39 billion in profits over the last three years — Verizon executives have been pushing to offshore jobs to the Philippines, Mexico and other locations, outsource work to low-wage contractors and transfer workers away from their families for months at a time.

Verizon workers, who are ready to help install promised FiOS lines, the high-speed broadband service, are also frustrated with the company's delay in providing the much needed service to customers. For years, Verizon has been cutting vital staff — it has nearly 40 percent fewer workers now than a decade ago — and has failed to hire the personnel necessary to properly roll out the service.

In New York City and Philadelphia, Verizon has failed to meet the build-out obligations under their citywide cable franchise agreements. And Verizon has failed to build-out FiOS in Baltimore, western Massachusetts, virtually all upstate New York cities and many towns in Pennsylvania.

Verizon workers, represented by the Communications Workers of America (CWA) and the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW), have been working without a contract since August 1, 2015 while Verizon executives, who have brought home hundreds of millions dollars in the last few years, have been insisting on:

- **Offshoring Good Jobs** – Verizon has already contracted out work to more than 5,000 employees in the Philippines, Mexico, the Dominican Republic and other overseas locations. These offshore workers handle customer service calls originating in the Mid-Atlantic and Northeastern states. Verizon wants to increase the number of calls — and jobs — that are transferred overseas.
- **Outsourcing Work to Low-Wage Contractors** –

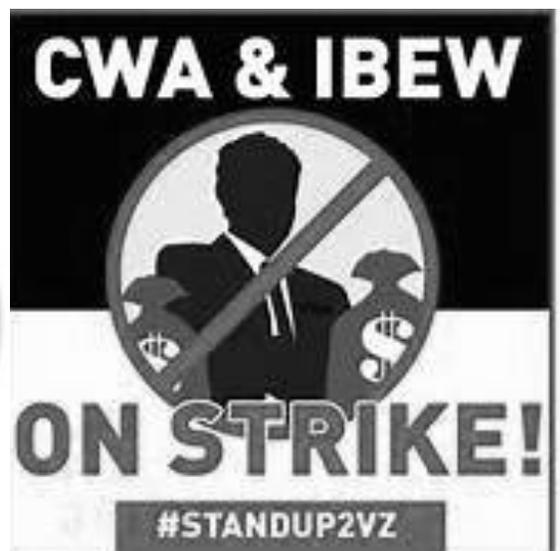
Verizon is pushing to dramatically expand its outsourcing of work to low-wage non-union contractors. The company wants to sharply expand the amount of contracting out of outside line work, particularly vital work installing and maintaining telephone poles.



- **Hanging Up on Wireless Workers** – Verizon is also refusing to negotiate a fair first contract for Verizon Wireless retail workers who formed a union in 2014. Verizon says Wireless workers make the company huge profits, but it's refusing to give them any improvements — even though they're some of the lowest paid people at Verizon. Also, Verizon is failing to negotiate a fair contract for the 100 wireless technicians who maintain the network in downstate New York.
- **Call-Center Closings** – Despite the high-demand for customer service, hundreds of Verizon workers are at risk of losing their jobs or being forced to commute as much as three hours more each day because of the company's plan to close and consolidate call centers. Working moms like Betsy Derr, a customer service representative in Bloomsburg, Pa., worry that their families and communities would be devastated by the move.

As the workers have intensified their campaign to protect good jobs in America, public support for a fair contract has grown. Last month, 20 U.S. Senators sent a letter to Verizon CEO Lowell McAdam calling on him to “act as a responsible corporate citizen and negotiate a fair contract with the employees who make your company's success possible.”

Verizon's corporate greed isn't just harming workers' families, it's hurting customers as well. Service quality has deteriorated to the point that New York State's Public Service Commission has convened a formal hearing to investigate problems across the Empire State. In the last few weeks, regulators in Pennsylvania and New Jersey have launched similar inquiries into Verizon's operations.



NALC-BRANCH 258

NALCASTER

PO BOX 12584

READING, PA 19612-2584

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

TIME VALUE-PLEASE DO NOT DELAY

Make the Call!

Virginia Cormier, LSW, CEAP
EAP CONSULTANT

1800-EAP-4YOU
1800-327-4968
www.EAP4YOU.COM

Greater Berks Food Bank

117 Morgan Drive
Reading, PA 19608
Phone : 610-926-5802

100% Union made Roy Tailor Uniforms

SERVING THE POSTAL SERVICE MORE
THAN 50 YEARS

OUR MOTTO: PROMPT CUSTOMER
SERVICE AND ALL DELIVERIES USPS
PRIORITY MAIL.

OWNERS OF FECHHEIMER RETAIL
FOR THE BEST PRICES OF TOP-QUALITY
UNION MADE UNIFORMS.
A MEMBER OF A FAMILY EMPLOYED BY
THE POSTAL SERVICE FOR OVER 60
YEARS.

**JANICE RANALLI READING,
PA 610-678-2512
LONG DISTANCE
1-800-298-1119 EXT. 11**

BONUSES FOR FULL ALLOWANCE ORDERS
MONTHLY SALES