

NALCASTER

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF LETTER CARRIERS

Pagoda Branch 258

READING, PA.

October 14, 2020



Happy Halloween



T HAPPY
H THANKSGIVING



N.A.L.C. PAGODA BRANCH 258 READING PA OFFICERS 2020

<u>Officer</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Telephone</u>
President	Fred Ranalli, Jr	610-678-2512
Vice President	Rich McDonough	484-955-4267
Treasurer	Jason Taylor	570-617-1124
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	Tammy Jones	610-960-7498
	Dominic Tumminello	610-775-4263
	Dave Dry	484-797-7906
HBR MBA OWCP	Bill Lodek	610-914-1253
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Sergeant at Arms	Ed Gensemer	484-638-3067
NALCaster Editor	Andy Gelsinger	610-378-0417
Director of Archives	Andy Gelsinger	610-378-0417



SHOP STEWARDS

<u>Zone</u>	<u>Steward</u>	<u>Telephone</u>
19601	Darryl Shaak	484-219-7034
19604-05	Juan Munoz	610-373-8201
19606-02	Jess Iezzi	610-914-4614
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	Rich McDonough	484-955-4267
19526	Judy Snitzer	570-573-2689
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: 1241 Front St. Reading, PA 19601
 Write us at: PO Box 12584 Reading, PA 19612
 View our website at www.nalc.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.	610-678-2512
	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

Letter From the Editor

As many of you know (and many do not), Brad Snyder has stepped down from his duties as Nalcaster editor, with his final issue having been completed in August. I want to thank Brad on behalf of the Officers and members of Branch 258 for his years of hard work in putting out a quality publication which we can be proud of. None of the editors of the Nalcaster have been considered, nor claim to be, professional level publishers, yet we have continued to build on the efforts of our predecessors to keep our members supplied with an informative, important, and occasionally entertaining publication. To that end, my goal as your new editor is to continue the important work of Nalcaster editor and preserve that tradition while staying up to date with the information that we all need. As someone with no more experience at the start than anyone before me, I will, of course, have some growing pains into this responsibility, but hope to become another quality editor of the Nalcaster as we move forward. Anyone can feel free to contact me with submissions or suggestions. Smaller messages are better texted at 610-413-8158, while larger submissions can be emailed to slice7102aol.com (please leave something in the subject line that will tell me that your email isn't one of the 200 unsolicited emails that I daily swipe away without opening). I hope to hear from many of you and wish everyone the best as we enter the autumn of this trying year.

P.S. VOTE!!

Fraternally
Andy Gelsing, Nalcaster Editor



Courtesy – breakthroughvisuals.com

Branch 258

will hold a regular meeting of the

members on Wednesday, October 14 at 7:30 PM. Here is what you need to know for this meeting:

- The location is at the pavilion behind The Victor Emmanuel Club, 311 Hazel St, West Reading
- Food will NOT be available, due to COVID restrictions – you are welcome to bring your own
- Masks are mandatory and social distancing will be observed
- In addition to our usual business, we will conduct nominations of officers for the next term

The officers will continue to evaluate our plans for holding a meeting on or around November 11, where election of officers will take place. Among the issues that will be considered are the status of COVID guidelines at that time, suitability/availability of an outdoor or indoor venue at that time of year, and the timing of a holiday on the calendar. Please be patient as we continue to navigate this difficult year, and look for updates from your stewards, bulletin boards, and website.



President Message

Hello Everyone, with kids going back to school in some districts and colleges, indoor dining and more business's opening up I have seen the Covid 19 numbers increase in Berks county. With all this happening along with allergies and the threat of the seasonal flu we must continue to be vigilant while completing our duties. Please continue to wear masks, clean your case and vehicles and wash your hands often throughout your day. 2020 has been very difficult for all of us. We have been able to keep safe this far and do not want to let our guard down as we get closer to a vaccine that will protect us all. Please stay safe.

In the last issue I wrote about the current administrations attack on the USPS and its workers. The new PMG backed by our President has drawn quite a bit of press with his new vision of the USPS. It is no secret former PMG Brennan was forced to retire so this administration could replace her with a handpicked replacement to destroy the American public's trust in our service. The intent of these attacks have been admitted to by our President on National TV. It's not fake news. He didn't mean something else. . This was a blatant attack on every one of us and the USPS. This attack cannot be forgotten when we vote this November. Every former, retired and present postal employee needs to think about what their life will look like if this administration is allowed to destroy the USPS. These ill-conceived changes will affect every one of you. Retirees please don't think you are untouchable. You have as much to lose as current employees. What effects would the elimination of the postal service have on your retirement? You better think about it. With Social Security in jeopardy with this administration, please take this attack seriously. **Please Vote to defend the USPS.**

Elections have consequences. Every political race is important. Local, State and National contests should be taken seriously. This has never been as evident as it has become in this last year. Congressmen and Congresswomen in the House and Senate have the power to make or break what happens when a country ends up as divided as we have become. There should always be a balance and these representatives must make decisions that best benefit each and every American. I certainly can say that is not what is going on right now. Please do your homework on the candidates before voting. It's hard to predict what hidden agendas these elected officials hold close. Your single vote is also a vote that will affect every retired and present coworker you have ever worked with. Our opinions and votes could have drastic consequences on all of them. Please take your right to vote seriously. Look at the changes that have been put into place these last few months. Slowing down the mail by scrapping machines, removing collection boxes and delaying all types of mail daily. These actions have caused our customers to experience delays in medicine, packages and all other forms of mail. Were these actions done to harm the USPS and our customers? I cannot think of any good reason for these action other than to discredit the USPS and its workers. Are the new PMG's policies the right track to keep your families security protected? I think not. **Each one of us and our families must vote to stop this President and his administration from destroying our great institution, the USPS.**

Elections will take place November 3. Polls open at 7am and close at 8pm. There are provisions in the ELM that secure government worker the right to be given the

opportunity to vote in National elections. If you will have trouble voting because of your work hours please talk to your steward far in advance so something can be worked out with your schedule so you can vote. I will be voting by mail and you can also choose to do that. Either way I cannot stress enough for you to get out and vote. **Vote like your present life depends on it, because it does.**

Sincerely,
Fred A. Ranalli

And More From The President

Election Information/ Volunteers Needed: Any member wishing to check their voter registration or volunteer with the current election can go on the NALC.org website and click on Vote. There is a section to input your information to check your voting registration status (registration, voting location etc.). Below that is a place to volunteer to phone bank on most Sunday evenings until the election. Just click on the date you wish to help and follow the prompts. You will receive an email with instructions before your chosen date.

"OuT tHeRe"



This cartoon was originally published August 2009

Financial Information

Anyone interested in reviewing NALC Branch 258 Financial Records may do so at any Branch Monthly Meeting. The NALC Branch 258 Executive Board reviews and discusses our finances regularly. The elected Trustees review our books according to our National and Local By-Laws. All branch taxes and other documents required by law are prepared by a hired accountant. Members are welcome to review any record at any of our monthly meetings. Treasurer Jason Taylor will be happy to provide any information for review.

Some Current Events on The Scene

Taken From NALC.org, our Union's National Website

Postal Service Elects Not To Implement Payroll Tax Deferral

The Postal Service has notified NALC that it will not implement the temporary employee payroll tax deferral established by a recent Presidential Executive Order. If implemented, the order would defer payroll taxes through December 31. The taxes would be owed at that time barring any further action. The Internal Revenue Service issued guidance (Notice 1010-65) making clear that employers are not required to implement the deferral. As a result, letter carriers will see no change in payroll taxes as a result of the executive order.

National Election Task Force Established

Over the past several months, there has been a concerted effort by some to cast doubt on the security of vote by mail and on the ability of the Postal Service to meet the expected surge in vote by mail this year. We have pushed back on this narrative and communicated that we are confident we will rise to the occasion. Toward that end, NALC and the other postal unions and management associations formed a task force with the Postal Service to prepare for the anticipated increase in election mail this fall. The National Election Task Force has engaged in several cooperative and productive meetings to discuss communication, operational needs and potential issue resolution. We have made progress in continuing past policies and efforts as well as developing additional protocols and commitments to ensure that election mail is handled appropriately.

In the initial meetings, the Task Force was fully briefed on the Postal Service's months-long preparation for the November election, which included dramatically increasing the number of personnel to serve as liaisons with local election boards in the Postal Service's district offices and steps taken to replace all the postmark printers across the country to ensure high-quality postmarks on ballot envelopes. Also covered was the Postal Service's external and internal communications plans.

The Task Force has agreed to develop local election mail task forces in each postal facility to ensure appropriate communication is accomplished with all employees and to quickly identify and resolve issues that may arise. The union and management representatives on these local task forces will be educated on the protocols that have been developed at headquarters. They will have constant communication locally throughout the election season.

Among the topics being discussed are ways to ensure every ballot is delivered on time even if they are mailed later than the recommended seven days before the election and how to ensure that every ballot handled by the Postal Service can be postmarked, even for types of mail that don't usually need a postmark. The latter is important because some states use postmarks to determine whether a ballot is cast on time.

The Task Force is also discussing contingency plans in the event of potential Covid-19 outbreaks this fall that could impact postal operations. Toward this end, the MOU negotiated in the spring to allow for increased staffing in facilities impacted by the coronavirus was extended through the end of the year.

We look forward to continuing our efforts and are confident the Postal Service is well positioned to handle and deliver whatever volume of election mail we are given this fall.



Voting rules for USPS employees

The Employee and Labor Relations Manual (ELM) provides for postal employees to be excused and paid administrative leave to vote or register to vote in elections when certain conditions are met. The relevant language from the ELM is reproduced below. For guidance or clarification, contact your shop steward, branch officer(s) or the appropriate national business agent's office.

519.32 Voting or Registering to Vote

519.321 Policy

Employees are encouraged to exercise their voting rights. So far as is practicable without seriously interfering with service, postal employees, excluding casual and temporary employees, who desire to vote or register in any election or in any referendum on a civic matter in their community are excused for a reasonable time for that purpose on a day they are scheduled to work. Casual and temporary workers are encouraged to vote but are not eligible for administrative leave for this purpose.

519.322 Administrative Determination

Postal officials in charge of installations obtain necessary information concerning the hours during which the polls are open in the political subdivisions in which their employees reside. They then make an administrative determination regarding the amount of excused absence necessary (and limits in accordance with 519.323). Employees are notified of this determination and of the procedures to be followed in obtaining advance approval for the absence.

519.323 Voting

The following provisions concern time allowed for voting:

- a. Three-Hour Rule. As a general rule, if the polls are not open at least 3 hours either before or after an employee's scheduled hours of work, the employees may be excused for the length of time that permits them to report for work 3 hours after the polls open or to leave work 3 hours before the polls close, whichever requires the lesser amount of time off.*
- b. Exception to Three-Hour Rule. Under exceptional circumstances, if the general rule in 519.323a does not permit sufficient time, an employee may be excused for the additional time needed to vote. However, time off must not exceed a full day.*
- c. Charge to Annual Leave or LWOP. If an employee's voting place is beyond normal commuting distance and if voting by absentee ballot is not permitted, employees may be granted sufficient time off to be able to make the trip to the voting place to cast their ballots. When more than 1 day is required to make the trip to the voting place, postal officials observe a liberal policy in granting necessary time off for this purpose. Time off in excess of 1 day is charged to annual leave or, if annual leave is exhausted or the employee so requests, it is charged to LWOP.*

519.324 Registration

If the employee votes in a jurisdiction that requires registration in person, time off to register is granted on substantially the same basis as for voting, except that no time is granted if registration can be accomplished on a nonworkday and the place of registration is within a (reasonable) 1 day, round trip travel distance of the employee's place of residence.

519.325 Restrictions

An employee is not allowed administrative leave for voting or registration during a period of absence on sick leave, annual leave, or LWOP pay.



Open Season Coming Soon

The time of year will soon be upon us when we will need to look at healthcare options

once again. The 2020 open season for health, dental, vision, and flexible spending accounts is scheduled from November 9 until December 14. During this time, members will be able to make changes to their health, dental, and vision plans, and will be able to designate an amount of money to set aside for their 2021 flexible spending account. Members are reminded that 1) If they do not want to make any changes to their health, dental, or vision elections in 2021, nothing needs to be done; 2) If they want to take advantage of the money saving aspects of an FSA, an election for 2021 MUST be made during this open season. There has been confirmation that open season has NOT been delayed or impacted by COVID at this time.

Colleen Gensemer, MA, LPC

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

TTY: 1-877-493-7341

www.EAP4YOU.com

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

It is likely that the OPM plan comparison tool will again be available to compare different health care options. If anyone does not yet have the NALC Health Benefit Plan, we invite you to compare plans and switch to the non-profit plan that was made by carriers, for carriers. Check it out at nalchbp.org



NALC
Health Benefit Plan



The NALC Member App

Available now in the Iphone App Store and the Google Play Store for Android



Installation instructions for Android and iPhone

Apple iPhone and iPad

1. On Apple iPhones, find the App Store (the letter A in a circle on a blue button) on your phone's home screen.
2. When it opens, go to the search button (with the magnifying glass) in the lower right and click it.



3. In the gray search bar at the top, enter "NALC Member App." Then hit the blue search button in the lower right.

4.  **NALC Member App**
National Association...

When you see the app, click the blue "Get" button at the right, and then it will turn to a green "Install" button. Click that. You will be asked for your password or touch ID, depending on how you've set up your phone. Once you authorize the installation, it will begin.

5. When completed, there will be a blue "Open" button, if you want to use it immediately. The NALC Member App also will appear on your home screen for whenever you want to use it.

While the app was built for phones, it can be used on iPads as well. Follow the instructions above, but your search will not find the NALC Member App. Simply go to the top left where it says in blue, "iPad Only" and change it to "iPhone Only." You should now be able to download the app with the instructions above. Once the iPhone app is installed, you'll notice that it will automatically scale up to display full-size on the iPad screen, causing the buttons, fonts and graphics to look proportionately larger than normal.

iPhone Only ▾

iPad Only

iPhone Only

Android and other devices

1. On Android phones, find Google Play (sometimes called Google Play Store or Play). It looks like three overlapping triangles pointed right.



2.

When it opens, go to the search bar at the top and enter "NALC Member App."

3.  **NALC Member App**
National Association of Letter Carriers
5.0 ★

Click on the entry with the red, white and blue NALC logo, and then click on the green "Install" button. If it asks if you'll give the app access to your location, click the "Accept" button (location is used only to personalize push notifications and to give you a precise congressional directory).

4. After it has been installed, there will be a green "Open" button, if you want to use it immediately. The NALC Member App may appear on your home screen. If it doesn't, go to your phone's Apps function to find it and drag it to the home screen.



While the app was not designed for Amazon or BlackBerry devices, some features do function on these and on other devices that can install an Android APK file. The NALC Member App APK file is available at www.nalc.org/member-benefits/nalc-member-app for those who know how to manually install the file onto their devices. NALC does not offer technical support for installing the app on these or other devices.

At this time, NALC does not have an app for the Windows Phone.

About Our Members

Branch 258 is proud to congratulate Kaila Wolfe, daughter of Darryl Shaak, and Jaden Greco, son of Dan Greco, who were honored as the



winners of the \$500 Beck and Bare scholarships at the September Branch meeting.



Good luck to

both of you in your continued educational pursuits. These scholarships are awarded every year to the family members of Branch 258 members, and funded through fundraising efforts conducted throughout the year.



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

Leanne Brigle – 26 years Ed Gensemer – 26 years Tammy Parker – 26 years
Mark Swarmer – 26 years Charlotte Lydikson – 22 years Anna Perez – 20 years
Andy Gelsinger – 19 years Mike Mengel – 15 years Dean Mathias – 15 years Marc
Dries – 15 years Jason Taylor – 15 years Dan Greco – 14 years Ken Kessock – 14
years Larry Grove – 12 years Brad Adams – 10 years Erick DeLarosa – 7 years Linda
Webber – 6 years Chris Stone – 5 years Jeff Young – 5 years Stephanie Horrigan – 4
years Steph Piccone – 3 years Matt Caro – 3 years Juan Filpo – 2 years Jess Iezzi –
2 years Oscar Torres – 1 year

*list is taken directly from the Reading installation seniority report, and reflects time since entering into full time carrier appointment in the Reading area, it does not reflect time before transferring or before career carrier appointment; carriers at AO's can be included on this list by forwarding a seniority list for that office to the editor

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

VISIONS
FEDERAL CREDIT UNION



Serving US Postal Service
Over 55 Years!

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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