

NALC

4317 NEWS

1770 E. LANCASTER AVE.

SUITE 9

PAOLI, PA 19301

* September - October 2022 *

The next two meetings of Branch 4317 will be on Wednesdays, November 2 and December 7 at the Downingtown VFW at 4601 W. Lincoln Highway. There are directions on page three of this newsletter. The meetings will begin at 7:30 P.M.

ZOOM Union Meeting Option - We will have an option for members to use ZOOM to attend regular monthly Union meetings. Send your EMAIL address to link through the Branch website at Nalbranch4317.org. Click on Tom's name to send email

BRANCH 4317 NEWSLETTER EDITORIAL POLICY - This newsletter is published by Branch 4317 for the members of this branch. This newsletter is written by Letter Carriers and for Letter Carriers. Sadly, over the years, some sensitive managers have gotten copies of our newsletter and become upset over its contents. In order to protect those managers, we request that all Branch members carefully safeguard their copies. If any manager should get a copy, we would suggest that they not read it. In this way, they will have no cause to be offended by anything in it.

BRANCH WEBSITE - This is a reminder that you have access to our website at WWW.NALC4317.org. Please feel free to check in and see the meeting minutes and other info.

Address changes - Whenever your address changes, please let us know. You can contact us at the Union office. The address is listed at the top of this newsletter.

SEPTEMBER UNION MEETING PRESENTATION - We would like to thank National Director of Health and Safety Manny Peralta for attending our September union meeting and presenting a memorial plaque to the family of Gary Drais. Gary was a Malvern Carrier who lost his life when he became ill and passed away while on his route. Gary's family was there to receive the plaque. Also, in attendance was Regional 12 National Business Agent Brian Thompson and his assistant Leo Z. All three guests and Branch President Joe Recchilongo went to Malvern the next morning for a commemoration with employees and former coworkers. Our sympathies go out to the family and friends of the Drais family.

RETIREE CELEBRATION: The November Union meeting will be the annual retiree meeting celebration. Hopefully, we can get a great turnout from our members, both active and retired.

FORMER PAOLI CARRIER PASSES AWAY - We send our condolences to the family of John Dougherty who passed away on September 25. John was a former Marine Corps helicopter guncrew chief and Vietnam combat veteran.



PAOLI CARRIER RETIREES: We would like to congratulate old buddy Mark Roberts on his retirement. We had a great send off for Mark at the October Union meeting. Mark did a great job for the Postal Service and was a terrific Union member. Have a wonderful retirement.

Branch Scholarships Awarded: We awarded our annual scholarships at the October union meeting. The following students of active Letter Carriers shared the \$2500 scholarship pool. Thanks to Joe Recchilongo for running the fund and contacting all the colleges. Also, thanks to Alec Hayes for running the fund since its' inception. The students and there colleges are listed below.

- Jordan Lasak West Virginia University
- Caroline Corr Stevens Institute of Technology
- Elizabeth Corr Fairfield University
- Oven Duffy Ursinus University
- Hannah Herman Towson University
- Matt Corr Penn State University
- Alana Kirkland Penn State University
- Thomas Hart Stevens College of Technology
- Nicholas Clark West Chester University
- Destiny Jackson University of Alabama - Birmingham
- Emma Herman University of Alabama

Postal Service Delivery Operations Plan - The Postal Service is moving ahead with plans to consolidate the delivery operations of more than 200 Post Offices and other facilities into large regional hubs. The plans will begin soon and extend through 2023. They will create 21 regional Sort and Delivery Centers (S&DC). The plans effect 17 states including Pennsylvania, but not nearby Delaware, New Jersey or Maryland.

Management says the consolidation will streamline operations by reducing the time and cost of transportation. It could increase the need for additional routes from 5% to 10%. It should allow the Postal Service to field more electric vehicles. The consolidations are part of a \$34 billion cost cutting plan the Postal Service hopes to realize over the next 10 years.

Postmaster Louis Dejoy told reporters that the S&DCs will be a mix of new construction and existing facilities. Ultimately, the Postal Srvice will try to consolidate 500 facilities to 65 to 75 regional hubs. The PMG says this should lead to 50,000 fewer employees. The reductions will come through retirements over the next 10 years. Rick Benner

OKAY Let's Get Ready for Christmas: The Postal Service is deploying 137 new package sorting machines. There is an active initiative to hire 28,000 seasonal employees.

In 2021 the USPS reported record-high mail volume between Thanksgiving and New Year's eve. It accepted more than 13.2 billion letters, cards, flats and packages for delivery. This exceeded the then-record 12.7 billion pieces in 2020. The average mail piece was delivered in 3 dys. This was roughly equal to 98% of holiday mail and packages.

Rick Benner

MEETING LOCATION:

Downingtown VFW
4601 W. Lincoln Highway (Business Route 30)
Downingtown, Pa. 19335

The Downingtown VFW is located on Business Route 30 (Lancaster Avenue) between Downingtown and Thorndale.

Directions from the east are as follows:

1. Take business 30 west. You can pick up the the westbound route 30 bypass in Frazer.
2. Exit at Route 322 east. Turn left off of the exit.
3. This will put you on rt 322 or Horseshoe Pike. Go .2 miles and turn right at the light onto Lloyd avenue.
4. Go .9 miles on Lloyd avenue until you come back to business route 30. Turn right onto business Route 30. (Or West Lancaster Ave.)
5. Go .2 miles and the VFW will be on your right.

Presidents Report: Brothers and Sisters, Just a few topics to discuss. Open Season is from November 14 to December 12. This gives you the opportunity to chose the insurance that best suits the needs of you and your family.

There have been more offices added to the list who can hire new employees as PTFs rather than CCAs. In this branch both Malvern and Downingtown are now PTF offices. The Tri-County office has already been a PTF only facility. This means that new Carriers will begin as career employees.

Before you know it the holiday season will be upon us. Remember that hte 12 hour rule will still apply for your daily work hours. However, you will not make penalty overtime during the four week period for hours worked over 10 or 8 on your non-scheduled day.

Ballots are out for the NALC election. Make sure that you complete the ballots and return them before October 21.

I will be attending a Labor-Management meeting at Tri-County. It hasn't been scheduled yet. If you have any items you wish to have discussed please let your steward or me know.

Finally, I would like to than Manny Peralta, Brian Thompson and Leo Z for attending our September Union meeting for the presentation of a plaque to the family of the late Gary Drais.

Respectfully Joseph Recchilongo

Hello Downingtown, I hope you guys are hanging in there with all the overtime we have been working. It's been a really tough summer trying to cover all the routes with people being off, and to top it, management decided to deny vacation leave requests citing the needs of this service? What about, let's say, management get serious in staffing their offices? Stop making it so difficult in the process of getting hired by the Postal Service. Some of the possible applicants just give up going through the lengthy process just to get hired. Postal management, get serious about really staffing your offices!

I would like to congratulate our two newest converted regular carriers. Cat Baird and Mark Castor both made regular within their 90 days or close to it. Word to the wise, keep working to learning your craft. I know you guys are up to the job, good luck!

Guys, I see Downingtown is one of the few offices with an 8:30 start time with most offices starting at 8:00. I've been working to have the start time changed back to 8 which would be a big help. A lot of us have been working in the dark already. Speaking of working in the dark, the National states that we can work in the dark just as long as you deem it safe. Now that doesn't mean just when it gets dark you say it's unsafe. Go out and make an attempt and if it becomes too unsafe call back to the office and let management know.

I wanted to give a shout out to C. W. He has defected and has took his talents down to be a CCA instructor down at the Academy. Good luck to you. I know management won't miss you don't worry there's still some of us left in the high rent district to keep hope alive. Until next time, take care of one another.

In Solidarity,
Herman S. Worthington III

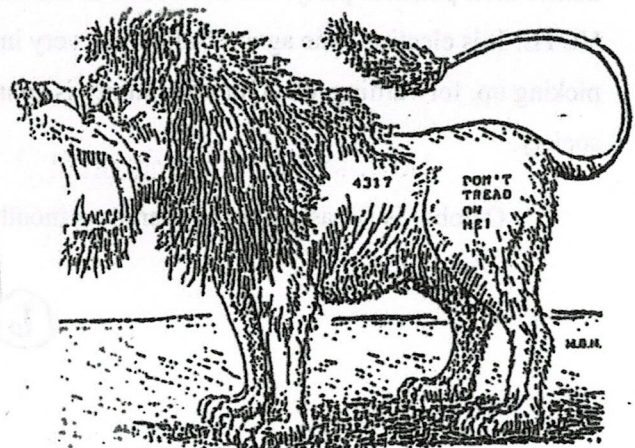
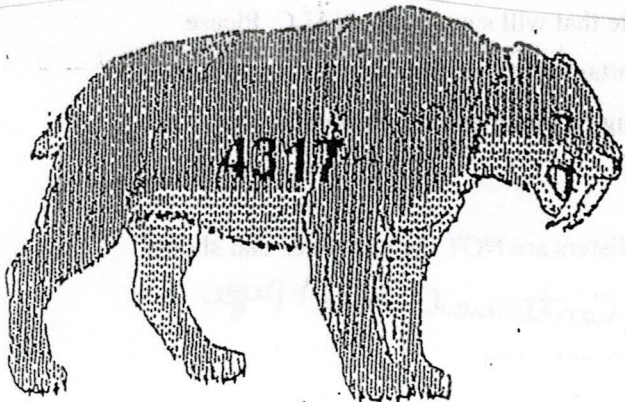
Paoli Report: Our biggest problem continue to be staffing. I keep seeing new people at the Carrier Academy. Every so often I see a new employee on the workroom floor. Unfortunately, Carriers keep leaving, so the complement doesn't appear to be increasing.

Months ago, we were designating individual routes that wouldn't be delivered on that day. The next day, we would deliver 2 days worth of mail and another route would sit. We were working 11 1/2 to 12 hours daily. Then with some hiring we were able to deliver all routes, but we were still working long days. Now, we are beginning to leave parts of routes again. With the holiday season around the corner we are looking a real disaster.

Sundays and holidays are a continuing problem. Management claims that they are rotating the schedule for Sundays, but in reality Paoli Carriers are scheduled at a greater rate than the other offices. This leaves us with a problem during the week. When you work Sundays, you get your non-scheduled day off. So, we lose the availability of these Carriers during the week. Paoli is the smallest office in the branch, but we provide more Sunday and holiday workers than any of the other offices.

I can't believe I miss FSS. On some days, when the flats are heavy, you can be stuck in the office for a while. If your case has been downsized to one case with double slots you probably won't be having a good day. The reason for having individual Carrier using less equipment is because FSS existed.

Rick Benner - Branch Secretary.



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Hello Exton,

SAFETY AGAIN!!!

As of mid-August, we have a new Post master, Myosha White, and Steve Hummel returns as supervisor. Management has been doing routine driver observations, have led to safety concerns. Make sure you are NOT driving with mail, parcels, etc. on the dashboard, driving with the door open and NO SEAT BELT ON, along with the back door not being secured. There were two carriers given a warning for these safety violations. A warning was given to these carriers, reason being: lack of staffing due to PRIME TIME, sick leave and daily call outs. I hope this stays at a WARNING because the discipline can be Emergency Placement.

There have also been customer complaints that carriers are running over objects in front of their mailbox along with damaging their mailbox. These incidents have been caught on the customers home security cameras. Emergency Placement discipline can also be issued for Failure to Report an Accident.

"Sometimes the trash takes itself out."

-Nicole Seddon

We are aware that our routes are being walked (3999). Issues that need to be corrected are making sure we are doing our moves on the scanner, such as moving to the street, back to the office and our pivot. DO NOT forget to take our two ten minute breaks and thirty minute lunches. We should also be aware of backtracking for any delivery and animal interference, which will deduct from our street time. Make any notes that you need to when you meet with examiners and make sure you have all the information needed. We are able to ask questions and make comments, so please do so as needed. We are entitled to a copy of our 3999.

"We got this."

-Kim Kumkle

The Power of Unity is a quality of our Brother's and Sister's of the NALC. We have done the impossible by increasing our voice by supporting the Letter Carrier Political Fund. If you are not currently contributing, please start because this is a GREAT investment for our future. We support political individuals that support the Labor Laws and the Postal Service no matter their political party. We need seats in the Senate that will support the NALC. Please VOTE! It is election time again. Ballots are very important! Let's do our part as far as delivering, picking up, forwarding, etc. Our community is counting on us for another important matter in our society.

October is Breast Cancer Awareness month. Sisters are NOT the only ones that should

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be concerned about Breast Cancer. Brothers, you need to get checked as well. We are all important to our family, friends and our community. F**K CANCER! The NALC also raises funds for the Muscular Dystrophy Association and its research, treatment and support programs.

“Everything we need is within us”

Johnita Crabb

Commentary » E.J. Dionne

Unions are on a roll these days

OK, it's not like labor's high tide in the 1940s or 1950s yet. But unions are staging a remarkable comeback in the United States that few anticipated even a decade ago.

Government policies are shifting in the direction of workers. Unions are winning workplace elections at a rapid clip. And just last week, Gallup reported that approval of unions hit its highest level in 57 years.

After a long stretch during which Labor Day became the occasion for trade unionism's obituaries, 2022 marks a resurgence in public appreciation for collective action, collective bargaining and the idea of solidarity.

Friends of labor might well react by saying: It's about time. In truth, the new appreciation for what unions can achieve, and what workers have a right to expect, has been building over a long period.

All the public discussions of rising inequalities in income and wealth turn out to have been far more than academic or ideological exercises. Workers felt inequality personally — and are responding to it.

The long-term impact of the 2008-2009 economic meltdown, followed by the pandemic's dislocations a decade later, tilted attitudes away from a celebration of pure market individualism and in favor of labor.

Gallup found that approval of unions hit low points of 48% in 2009 and 52% in 2010. They have risen ever since — to 61% in 2017, 68% last year and 71% last week, a peak not reached since 1965.

At a time when so many attitudes divide along racial



**EJ
Dionne**
Columnist

lines, Gallup found that Whites and non-Whites were equally pro-labor. Approval spanned generations — at 72 percent for those under 54, and 70 percent among those 55 and over. Support for organized labor, close to unanimous among Democrats, is in fact bipartisan: 89 percent of Democrats approved of unions, as did 68 percent of independents and 56 percent of Republicans.

Opinion is translating into action. Vox's Rani Molla documented how well-publicized union victories — at Amazon, Apple, Chipotle, REI, Starbucks and Trader Joe's — are just the most visible part of a larger trend.

Another factor working in favor of unions, as The Post's labor reporter Lauren Kaori Gurley noted, is a “red-hot labor market that has afforded workers more bargaining power.” Younger workers especially are unburdened by past labor failures and feel liberated by the availability of employment.

And “even a cooling-off economy,” Gurley wrote, “would not necessarily undo cultural shifts that have resulted in the rising popularity of unions, particularly among young, college-educated workers.”

All of this is happening against the backdrop of an administration trying to live up to President Joe Biden's pledge to be “the most pro-union president leading the most pro-union administration in American history.”

Jennifer Abruzzo, the general counsel at the National Labor Relations Board, has been pushing to overturn rulings and practices that hampered union organizing efforts in the

past. And Katherine Tai, the U.S. trade representative, has been pushing what she told the United Steelworkers Constitutional Convention last month was an agenda “that is crafted with workers, for workers.”

A spurt of new organizing will not undo years of union decline. Efforts to change labor laws to make unionization easier have failed even in Congresses controlled by Democrats. The new shape of the economy — with fewer of the sorts of manufacturing jobs on which labor built its power between the 1930s and the 1960s — creates challenges that the movement still needs to master.

But the new labor story, based on an embrace of the promise of triumph through shared struggle, runs crosswise to many of the trends in our politics, and usefully so. Unions have the capacity to bring Americans together across some very deep divides. Republicans have yet to alter their largely antilabor policy stances to accommodate a new constituency that includes large numbers of working-class voters. You'd never know from the party's hostility to unions how sympathetic the GOP rank and file is to what they do.

Labor Day is a celebration of workers and of their dignity. This makes it a good time to consider whether our country's discontents have to be channeled through culture wars and racial prejudice. The surge in support for unions points down a different path, a practical quest to ease day-to-day burdens by improving wages, benefits and working conditions. That beats empty, angry and divisive demagoguery any day.



Safety and darkness

An old friend of mine who is retired used to mutter, “Tempus fugit” (time flies), and does it ever! This will be my last article for *The Postal Record* as director of safety and health, as I have been elected the new director of health benefits. I would like to thank all of the letter carriers, those who I have met and those who I have yet to meet, for helping make carriers’ jobs and lives safer.

With shorter daylight hours, and later start times, carriers are once again dealing with delivering mail after dark. This means you may wind up working in the dark. This causes issues every year. So what is safe? “Safe” depends on you and your route. There is no blanket policy regarding delivery after dark, because the very core issue to contend with is whether a particular carrier on a particular route can *safely* make mail delivery. Bottom line: Each carrier must weigh individual cir-

“There is no blanket policy regarding delivery after dark, because the very core issue is whether a particular carrier on a particular route can safely make mail delivery.”

cumstances about the type of delivery to be carried (door-to-door walking, mounted, apartments, cluster boxes, etc.), surroundings (unfamiliar, high crime, many steps and hills, etc.) and past experiences with after-dark deliveries.

Arbitrators have ruled that darkness in and of itself is not unsafe. Darkness can contribute to an unsafe situation. For example: You are on a walking route, it is not well lighted, and you trip over a crack in the sidewalk and, a few feet later, you stumble over something else. You may want to declare that swing as unsafe and move to the next swing. As you deliver on the next swing, the same rule applies. If it is well lighted, then deliver the mail. If you stumble due to poor lighting, then stop. Move to the next swing.

There are several things you can do to keep safe while delivering when it is dark. If you are on a walking route

and it is not well lighted, then you don’t cut across lawns. You want to walk where it is safest. This is normally the driveway and sidewalk. If the area is not well lighted, then you probably can not finger the mail while walking since you may not be able to see the addresses well enough. Additionally, if it is not well lighted, you cannot see where you are walking with your peripheral vision, so you actually need to watch where you walk.

You can have problems delivering on cluster box routes and dismount and mounted delivery due to darkness as well. If you have to turn on the overhead light to sort the mail for delivery, you may need to let your eyes adjust to the dark again before driving to the next box (safety). For a cluster box, there may not be enough light to sort the mail at the box, and you may have to sort it at the truck and then head for the boxes to make the delivery (inefficient). Dismount delivery is very similar to a walking

route in the respect that you may not be able to sort the mail while you walk to the box (safety).

With management’s latest plan that everyone pivots, you may be delivering in the dark on a route you are not familiar with. Everyone needs to case in the dog warning cards. It becomes more difficult to tell where the barking dog is when

it is dark. You are the only one who can keep yourself safe.

If you choose to bring back the mail, let your manager know. You will need to be able to defend the decision with specific safety problems on the territory you brought back. This article is not to supersede any past practices in your city or any local agreements. Several of our cities have agreements regarding delivery cutoffs.

It is important to note it is not the intent of any carrier or of this office to endorse or encourage the unnecessary curtailment of any mail. It is about each carrier’s safety and the protection of the mail in our charge and management’s responsibility to manage. This is also not a blanket policy or approach. It very simply is the responsibility of each carrier to measure safety and report to supervisors any unsafe conditions encountered. It is management’s responsibility to provide a safe environment, *period*. ☒