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January 2018



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2019

— *Happy New Year* —

Congratulations to the new officers who
were sworn in on January 11, 2018



President

Mike Wahlquist

Happy New Year!

The first thing I need to say is a hearty thank you to the members of Branch 111 for re-electing me to the office of President for another term of service. This will be my third term in office, as I previously served as President from 2009 through most of 2011, and from 2015 through 2017. The members of Branch 111 have now given me the chance to serve for three more years, and I will do so to the best of my ability! During the swearing in ceremony, all the Branch 111 officers promised to do everything in their power to promote the welfare of the National Association of Letter Carriers and its members. Those are pretty strong words, but they are words that I completely believe in, and words that I will live by.

So what is in store for us during the next three years? I am sure that we will be facing numerous contractual violations from management in most of our work locations. How do I know this? Because even though the faces may change, even though mail volumes fluctuate with from year to year, and even though technology continues to change our jobs, one thing stays the same, and that is human nature. There will always be some managers who abuse the power of their positions. Just as there will always be some managers who have integrity and provide good support for Letter Carriers. Knowing this, the job of every Branch Officer has always been to make sure that the contract is enforced despite the excuses from management, despite managers' rationalizations, and to do so without fear and with fairness. I will be doing all that I can to help Stewards enforce the contract so that we all have the things that we bargained for, and that we settle for nothing less than contract language we worked so hard to negotiate.

I will also be striving to bring Branch 111 into the digital age by working towards scanning, digitally storing, and making grievance settlements available to Shop Stewards through the internet. This will be no small task, as we have grievance settlements going back to 1994. During the last two years alone, we have added 2,200 grievance settlements to our ever-increasing storehouse. Of course, management could simply stop breaking the contract, which would decrease our grievances theoretically down to nothing. And occasionally, management may honor the contract for a period of time, but in my experience even the best Supervisor will not be around forever, and eventually we will be dealing with someone who thinks that the contract is an impediment that gets in the way of single-handedly saving the Post Office. So, we will stay hard-working and prepared, and we will take our wins in writing (grievance settlements), and work every day towards incentivizing management to honor the contract by getting better and better grievance settlements. Of course, just as managers come and go, no Union Steward or Branch Officer will be around forever, which brings me to my next point.

Branch 111 has historically been very good at providing education for our Shop Stewards and for our members, both at Stewards Training and at our regular Union meetings respectively. I will continue to do all that I can to ensure that this trend continues, and I will be encouraging and supporting additional training. It is my firm belief that knowledge truly does equate to power. Someone who knows their rights feels empowered to stand up for those rights. Someone who knows the contract may feel empowered to stand up for the rights of others. Knowledge of the contract changed the job for me, and I have watched the same thing happen for others. Branch 111 will continue to have the best education and will continue to disburse knowledge to everyone as fast and as well as we can, so that Letter Carriers can be as satisfied as possible with their chosen careers.

During the installation of our Branch Officers, Regional Administrative Assistant Debbie Dixon, of the National Business Agent's office, informed us that our organizing, which is the ratio of members to non-members (or as I like to call them: future members) was up over 84 percent. This is great news considering that we were under 82 percent in 2014, but we can do better. With Jay Reupena as the Branch Organizer, and with the help of our Officers, our Stewards, and all of our Branch Members, we can get an additional 30 people signed up and get up over 88 percent. I will continue to encourage every branch member to find a non-member in their office and get them signed up. And what should you do if your office is 100 percent organized? Help your fellow members in other offices to get there as well! We are all one Union after all. This is something that I absolutely commit to strive towards during this term of office.

So in addition to making sure that the contract is enforced, both consistently and effectively, I will be doing my best to get our settlements digitally accessible to all our Officers and Stewards, to improve the disbursement of knowledge to our members, and to increase our organizing to thicken the ranks of NALC members, so that we will be that much stronger both in negotiating our wages, benefits, and working conditions, and that much stronger standing shoulder to shoulder with each other on the workroom floor.

I wish the very best to all my fellow Letter Carriers in 2018! And as always, please feel free to call me with any issue.

Michael Wahlquist
– President
Branch 111, NALC

NOTIFICATIONS:

⇒ MARCH 2018– STEWARD
ELECTIONS

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Vice President

Lance Henrie

Thank you. We had a little election a couple days ago and I would like to thank my campaign manager Amie Gallo, the good union members who ran for office, and all who voted in the election for their participation in the process.

Now for your entertainment the postal reality show known as:
The greatest little talent show in the West(ern Area.)

When children show off, it's a talent show.
If you have no choice, you might as well go.
Mrs. Mops will say "the children are smart,
and they tried being nice" then she will depart.
One by one the rascals cross the stage
to perform vile stunts and not act their age.
Manipulating numbers is the most repeated act.
Mathematics are fun if you leave out the facts.
A boy called Max knows injury's effect on our capacity.
We shake our heads at Dr. Max's audacity.
Scooter Schmitz and his rats, they do tricks.
Dramatic poses by Miss Carla Hicks.
Now she has left, did she take her ghost?
Tommy Two Tone is now playing the host.

Banty Rooster puffs up his chest
shouting "I will now read from the book I like best.
It's about when Deric, the tallest in the class.
He was mean to me and I took a pass.
I am head Dickie and I run this show,
Deric looks down at me. One of us has to go.
He asked could I manage a route to adjust,
a case with no address, a dream turned to dust?
I said I can manage and do when I must.
He asked could I manage at 7 or 9,
I said I can manage anytime.
He asked could I manage over here or over there?
I said I could manage anywhere.
He stated that without my badge I could not.
Bert, the puff man, as my witness I didn't get hot.
I just replied I can manage at 7, 8, or 9,
I can manage, you name the time.
I can manage on the floor,

I can manage at my door
watch me manage over there,
I can manage **anytime anywhere.**"

Banty Rooster stopped, and the DJ started,
out walks Antionette looking like she farted.
Ch, ch, ch chicken, ch, ch, ch chicken the newest dance move.
Ch, ch, ch, chicken and she found her groove.
The back up singers now chant *itch, itch, iiiitch*.
The DJ keeps it moving without a *hiitch*
Ch, ch, ch chicken, ch, ch, chicken, *itch*
Sh, sh, sh, chicken itch chicken sh chicken-shed-*iiitch*,
put your elbows in the air, *itch*, point them back there *itch*
now do the ch, ch, ch, chicken-shed scratch, *itch*
Now if you know chickens, you've seen em *scraaatch*,
If you've been in the chicken shed, you know that *iiiitch*
the chick, chick, chicken shed scratch, that *itch*.
the chick, chick chick, chicken-shed *itch*.
the chicken-shed chicken-shed chicken-shed *itch*
chicken-shed chicken-shed chicken-shed *itch*.
The Chicken-shed Scratch *iiitch*.
come on out now join in the groove
The ch, ch, ch, chicken-sh chicken-sh chicken-sh
The chicken-shed, chicken-shed, chicken-shed itch

The Show is over we walk away
no hope of ever forgetting this day.
I look around and see covered faces.
It's best you're not seen when leaving such places.

Lance Henrie



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2750-Porcelain/High Noble Metal Crown	\$920	\$462
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*Source: 2014 Fair Health Data. Subject to the limitations of your plan. Other exclusions may include and are not limited to implants, implant crowns, crowns with gold, specialty services and crowns/onlays/inlays that are all porcelain. This is a voluntary option and is not an insurance plan. There are no restrictions, no sign-ups and no fees. You save whether you have dental benefits or not! Take a look at some examples above of your savings if you choose to go to a Bright Now! Dental office.

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MBA and OWCP

Terry Ehlers

Understanding the Medical Doctors in the OWCP Realm

I understand that there can be some confusion in understanding the Medical Doctors that are associated with in a claim that is filed with OWCP. So below I am going to give a short description of each Medical Doctor.

Attending Physician

This should be the doctor that is treating the injured worker for the injury that has a claim filed.

Second Opinion Physician

This is a doctor that has been contracted out by OWCP to review all medical records associated with a claim.

The Second Opinion Physician has been given the set of records and a Statement of Accepted Facts (SOAF) by OWCP. They have also been given a set of questions that OWCP would like to have answered.

If you are going to a Second Opinion Physician, it would be in your best interest to write OWCP to obtain a copy of the SOAF and questions they want answered.

Referee Physician

This is a doctor that is given the entire file for your claim, including what the Second Opinion Physician has stated.

The Referee Physician will review the case to determine whether the Attending Physician or the Second Opinion Physician has the most probative medical evidence to support their medical assessment of your claim.

Sometimes they insert their own opinion that could be entirely different. They are used for the final say to break a disagreement between the other doctors.

District Medical Advisor

The District Medical Advisor's (DMA) primary medical functions are evaluating medical evidence and interpreting physician reports. The claims examiner for OWCP seeks evaluation from the DMA to proceed with developing and weighing the medical evidence. The claims examiner seeks interpretation from the DMA only where the medical evidence is complete and sufficient prior to such review. In either case, the comments or opinions of the DMA should be explained or rationalized.

My advice to any injured worker is to always get a copy of each medical report done by any of the above physicians for you, your physician and your representative to review for errors or omissions.

If I can be of further assistance or answer any questions please feel free to call me, 801-694-0558.

In Solidarity;
Terry C. Ehlers



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Health Benefits

Jimmy Kerekes

Congratulations to all of those who ran for offices of the union and won and want to serve. Moreover, I am grateful for those who served in multiple terms and have given us much great service.

I keep hearing on the news lately, that this is a bad flu season. It has many different strains again. Some people who have gotten a flu shot are still getting the flu but a different strain. The latest news I heard reported over half of the states in the U.S. having the flu. Utah included.

If you have the NALC health plan here are a couple NOTES:

Note 1: The shingles vaccine is available at local NALC CARESELECT NETWORK pharmacies. Call at 703-729-4677 or 888-636-6252 prior to purchasing this vaccine at your local pharmacy.

Note 2: When NALC Health Plan is the primary payer for medical expenses, the shingles vaccine, the seasonal flu vaccine and adult pneumococcal vaccine will be paid in full when administered by a pharmacy that participates in the NALC Flu and Pneumococcal Vaccine Administration Network. A full list of participating pharmacies is available at www.nalchbp.org or call CVS Caremark Customer Service at 800-933-6252 to locate a local participating pharmacy.

Also take time each day even if it is 15 minutes to de-stress yourself. Do something you like that relaxes you. (Ex.- Reading, music, looking at scenic photos, meditation, self-evaluation or goals review.)

Jimmy Kerekes

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Carrier Political Fund will use the money it receives to contribute to candidates for federal office and undertake other political spending as permitted by law. Your selection shall remain in full force and effect until cancelled. Contributions to the Letter Carrier Political Fund are not deductible for federal income tax purposes. Federal law prohibits the Letter Carrier Political Fund from soliciting contributions from individuals who are not NALC members, executive and administrative staff or their families. Any contribution received from such an individual will be refunded to that contributor. Federal law requires us to use our best efforts to collect and report the name, mailing address, occupation and name of employer of individuals whose contributions exceed \$200 per calendar year. Any guideline amount is merely a suggestion, and an individual is free to contribute more or less than the guideline suggests and the Union will not favor or disadvantage anyone by reason of the amount of their contribution or their decision not to contribute.

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THE WORKER'S COMPENSATION EXPERTS

Editor Amie B. Gallo

As everyone knows, we recently had our branch election. First and foremost, I would like to thank everyone who ran for a position and thank those who voted and made their voices known. Second, I would like to congratulate Lance on his second term as Vice President. Last, I would like to thank all the members who were present at the installation dinner for the new officers, including RAA Debbie Dixon who was representing the NBA's Office.

This leads me to the subject of this article: the membership. No, I am not lecturing on getting more members to join, as that is Jay Reupena's territory, however I do want to talk about those of you who are already members. As I watched and listened to everything leading up to the elections, I noticed there were a lot of members who were using their voices and talking about what they hoped the outcome would be. Then, as I was present for the counting of the ballots, and hearing the totals afterward, I was in shock because there really weren't a lot of members who put their voice into action. I can't help feeling a little confused at the fact that we have well over one thousand members, but roughly four hundred of those voted. I have to wonder why is our membership so unengaged?

During the January meeting, former regional and national officer Jim Edgemon was a guest speaker. As part of his speech, he spoke about how the members of Branch 111 were a huge part of getting him elected as the National Business Agent for our region in 1974. That fact is something I have been pondering since the speech was given. How is it that our members were so active then, and now, barely 1/4 vote and an even smaller number use their voices in an effective way? Though I am using the recent elections as an example, this isn't the only place that I have noticed a difference.

When I first became a steward, eight years ago, the union meetings were packed. I mean, there were people from nearly every station showing up, asking questions, letting their voices be heard and most importantly educating themselves. Now, there are many stations from Branch 111 that are not represented in the union meetings. Why? What changed? Is it because the membership doesn't know when the union meetings are? If so, they are always the second Thursday of every month, begin at 6:30pm, and usually go until about 8 or 8:30pm. That is a small amount of time spent in order to be involved, allow your voices to be heard and understand what is going on in the Branch. Not only will you be updated on NALC business, but more importantly you will be updated on what is going on in the stations. Now, I know a lot of you will be asking, "why do I care what's going on in any other station than my own". The answer is simple. What happens in one station affects us all. See the thing about management is that one person, in one station, gets a "bright idea"- something they want to try and do. If the management in that station is successful at their attempt, then word

spreads and pretty soon it is affecting the rest of the stations. So my question to you is, why wouldn't you care about what is going on in a station aside from your own? Why wouldn't you want to be kept up to date on things that are starting to happen at the National level, that will eventually trickle down and affect us locally? Why wouldn't you want to have a say in how things are handled?

There is strength in numbers, strength in knowledge and strength in letting your voice, your opinions, your input be heard. If you are solely relying upon your union steward to handle all of your business for you in your station, then you are weakening yourself and your voice. We all have voices, and when there are enough individual voices coming together to right wrongs, pretty soon what started as a small sound is now a roar. Once a roar, there is no option other than to acknowledge the sound and let me tell you something, the difference between crossing a path with a cat who meows and a lion who roars, is huge. We, as a union, we as members, need to stop being so complacent and stop meowing! Gather yourselves together, become educated, become updated, become active and start roaring! We need to be working together to make the union stronger as a whole. This task

does not fall solely on the elected leaders, but on each and every one of us.

As stewards, we should be actively inviting members to our branch meetings and trainings. Sometimes, all it takes is a simple invite. Some of our members may not know that our meetings and trainings are open to all of the members, not just stewards or Branch officers. I challenge each steward to invite ten carriers in your unit to each of the monthly meetings

and trainings.

In close, I will leave you, members, with an old Chinese proverb:

"Give a man a fish, and you feed him for a day. Teach a man to fish, and you feed him for a lifetime."

With this, I challenge each and every one of you to come to branch meetings and trainings, let yourself be educated, let yourself be more aware of what's going on and lend strength to your own office and stewards. "It takes a village to raise a child"...all of us are members of the NALC village, and together we can raise our child (management), or at least hold them more accountable. A wrong to one of us, is a wrong to all of us; united we stand, divided we fall.

My hope for Branch 111 in 2018, and the years to come, is that we become more united and work together, stewards, officers and members alike, that more members learn how to fish and feed themselves and that our village grows in strength to the point that our walls cannot be breached. Please join me in accomplishing this!

With Unity,

Amie B. Gallo

"Give a man a fish and you feed him for a day. Teach a man to fish and you feed him for a lifetime."
- Chinese Proverb

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