

# Pavement Pounder

## BRANCH 111 N.A.L.C. "THE WASATCH BRANCH"

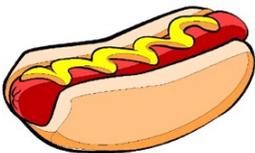
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May 2021



# Branch 111

## Summer Pool Party and BBQ



June 26th  
6:15 - 8:15 pm

Hot Dogs, Hamburgers, Brats, Chips, Drinks, Ice Cream  
Games, Events, Swimming! Lifeguards will be on duty  
Branch 111 Letter Carriers and their immediate families (significant others and children) are invited for a night of fun, food, and frolicking.

The event is located at the Murray Park Aquatic Center located at 5109 S Murray Park Ave  
Murray, UT 84107

For park services call 801-290-4190

# The President's Report

## Protecting Your Time Off Work

The days are getting warmer, school is almost out for the summer, and the CDC is relaxing the mask mandates (the mandates they have been advocating for the last 14 months or so). The [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov) website states (as of the writing of this article):

*If you are fully vaccinated, you can resume activities that you did prior to the pandemic.*

*\*Fully vaccinated people can resume activities without wearing a mask or physically distancing, except where required by federal, state, local, tribal, or territorial laws, rules, and regulations, including local business and workplace guidance.*

*\*If you haven't been vaccinated yet, find a vaccine. people are considered fully vaccinated:*

*\*2 weeks after their second dose in a 2-dose series, such as the Pfizer or Moderna vaccines, or*

*\*2 weeks after a single-dose vaccine, such as Johnson & Johnson's Janssen vaccine*

This change, as well as changes in the State of Utah guidelines allow us to start having meetings again (Our first in-person meeting will be June 10<sup>th</sup>...bring a mask!), though we will continue to have the meetings available on Zoom for those who are not able to attend.

Also, we will be able to have our Summer Picnic for Letter Carriers and their families (children are welcome, immediate family members only please), which will be June 26<sup>th</sup>, and the Steak Fry (Carriers and one adult guest) on August 28<sup>th</sup>. After nearly two years without events, and 16 months without meetings, it will be great to see everyone again in person!

Now on to the main topic of this article, Protecting You Time Off Work. Every year I get several phone calls from someone who has purchased "non-refundable plane tickets" for their upcoming long-weekend (or holiday/day off) who suddenly finds out that they are being mandated to work on one or more of the days they thought they had off. Oh, and since we now deliver parcels on Sunday, this scenario now applies to Sunday as well. At times this happens to an 8-hour only Carrier who has not been mandated to work on a day off in years. So every year I get several phone calls that go something like this:

"Hey, I'm being mandated to come in on Saturday, in the middle of my long weekend, and I bought non-refundable plane tickets to Cancun that weekend, can they do that?"

"Yes, they can do that, as long as they have followed the correct order of assigning overtime found in Article 8 [of the contract]"

"You mean they can force me to come into work in the middle of my vacation, I didn't even know that was a possibility."

"Yes, if they have maxed out the ODL to 12 hours, they can mandate you to come in [or in the case of the 10 days before the 10 federal holidays they can schedule you in without maxing out the ODL], and you are required to show up for work like on a normally scheduled work-day"

"So what can I do so that I can still go on my vacation?"



**I have had this conversation enough times that I felt it was time to tell everyone the secret to protecting your time off work. The secret is that if you schedule Annual Leave the day before or the day after your upcoming scheduled days off, you protect yourself from being mandated or scheduled in on those days off. Article 8 states:**

*Overtime and Annual Leave. Normally, employees, including employees on the Overtime Desired List, who have scheduled annual leave, including incidental annual leave, immediately preceding and/or following non-scheduled days will not be required to work overtime on the non-scheduled days. The intent of the parties is to allow employees to make advance plans for non-scheduled days.*

**So the next time you realize that you have the long weekend before labor day, and think to yourself... “I’m going to buy non-refundable plane tickets Hawaii”, remember that there is always the possibility that you will be mandated or scheduled in to work on any of those non-scheduled days unless you protect yourself by using Annual Leave (obtained via the LMOU process for Annual Leave) the day before or the day after your scheduled days off.**

**On another note, if anyone wants to attend the Grace Carroll Labor School (A one day Zoom training on July 9th, 2021), please let me know, we have scholarships available. And if anyone wants to be a delegate or guest for the AFL-CIO Zoom Convention on June 18<sup>th</sup>, 2021, also please let me know.**

**And lastly, I would like to welcome Jimmy Fleming into the fold of the officers of Branch 111. Jimmy will be serving as the Veterans Affairs Coordinator for Branch 111. We look forward to working with Jimmy in making sure our Veterans have access to the information and resources they need.**

**I look forward to seeing everyone at our upcoming events and meetings!**

**Michael Wahlquist – President  
Branch 111, NALC**

#### NALC HEALTH BENEFIT PLAN

Jimmy Kerekes

Under article 21 of the National Contractual Agreement between the U.S.P.S. and the NALC National Union, the article is titled Health Benefits. The cost percentages in Article 21 are controlled by OPM. It also maybe that the percentages are agreed to by the USPS and the Union. Referring to the Article of the 2019-2023 contract is the following information about those percentages.

- A. States OPM calculates the charges.
- B. States the bi-weekly Employer contribution for Self Only, Self Plus One, and Self and Family plans is adjusted to an amount equal to 73% in 2020 and 2021, and 72% in 2022 and 2023, of the weighted average biweekly premiums under FEHBP as determined by the Office of Personnel Management.
- C. States the weight (referring to the weighted average in section B) to be given a particular subscription charge for each FEHBP plan and option, will be based on the number of enrollees in each such plan and option for whom contributions have been received from employers.
- D. States after the employer pays its percentage or contribution, the employee pays the difference to make the total charge.

Now Here’s the Math for Self Only Plan:

The percentage for 2020 & 2021 is 73% for the employer USPS.

The government or USPS Share for 2021 is \$245.57. That is the 73% of the Total required by OPM which is \$337.04. After this employer contributions the employee pays 27 % which is the bi-weekly premium \$91.47. The percentages over the years have averaged in these 70% - 73% ranges.

The costs of premiums go up because of a lot of reasons. Here’s a couple: Not enough people enrolled in the plan; and the costs of Medical Services going up in cost, such as Prescriptions costs.

# The Struggle is Real

Most offices have faced new challenges through the Covid-19 pandemic. The most common problem is having enough Carriers to handle the workload on a daily basis. Offices are commonly down 6 or 7 routes everyday and that number climbs to as many as 10 or 12 routes on really bad days. It is an impossible task to try and cover that many routes. Mandating is at an all time high and offices have been doing whatever it takes to get the mail delivered. Offices have shared Carriers, supervisors have carried mail and overtime is higher than it has ever been. Late nights and long weeks have become the norm.

Hire, hire, hire seems to be the solution that most people suggest. Yes, it is true that many offices are understaffed and I agree hiring more CCAs is needed but the problem is more complicated than that. The pandemic skyrocketed sick leave in our Branch and for good reason. Many Carriers have contracted Covid-19 and many others have had to quarantine or care for their children. Carriers that have been lucky enough to avoid the virus are so burnt out that calling in sick is the only way to get any relief. As the number of vaccinated Carriers grows and we start to see a light at the end of the tunnel I believe that the amount of sick leave used will also begin to fall. Hiring new CCAs and less sick leave being used should restore the balance.

Simply hiring dozens of CCAs isn't the answer. The Sandy Installation where I work has a goal of 20 CCAs and even though I don't think management could pull that off I worry what life would be like a year from now if they did. There sure wouldn't be much overtime for those that want it.

Carriers have come so far and endured an unprecedented year. Hang in there, normalcy is on the horizon.

In Solidarity,  
Mike Hansen  
Executive Vice President  
NALC Branch 111

# UNION MEETING, Branch 111

## June 16th, 2021, 6:30 pm

**We are meeting at The HALL!**

**Carriers gathering in unity of our labors.**

**If you can't make it to The Hall or still have concerns**

**Related to Covid , the meeting will but on Zoom.**

Go to zoom.us on your computer or download the Zoom app on your phone

Click Join a meeting

Enter Meeting ID 989 001 1306

Change your screen name to your name

Click "Join"

Password: branch111

We have a real chance to reverse the burden of pre-funded retirement legislation. Five bucks a pay period can help lead to a life time of job security. The pre-funded retirement requirement has been used repletely to misrepresent our success.

#### LETTER CARRIER POLITICAL FUND

By making a contribution to the Letter Carrier Political Fund, you are donating so voluntarily with the understanding that your contribution is not a condition of membership in the National Association of Letter Carriers or of employment by the Postal Service, nor is it part of union dues. You have a right to refuse to contribute without any reprisal. The Letter 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 tot hat contributor. Federal law requires us to use out best efforts to collect and report he 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 no to contribute.



**NALC BRANCH 111**  
**Minutes of the Regular Union Meeting**  
**May 13, 2021**

**The meeting was conducted remotely using Zoom software.**

**Convened** at 6:30 pm

**Pledge of Allegiance** conducted by Jim Kerekes,

**Roll Call** by Steve McNees

**Minutes** of the April meeting were posted. Without objection, they will be filed for future reference.

**Reading of the Communications** by Steve McNees.

- A letter requesting information about our affiliation with 210 Workers was received. The request concerned an investigation of 210 Workers in 2018 that we were not involved in. A written response given in Sept. 2018 was provided explaining the Executive Board's response at the time, and that we had/have no affiliation with this company. •A letter from President Rolando updates the current conditions under which branch election may be postponed due to Covid-19 and storm damages in some places. •President Wahlquist notified Postmaster Canfield of his intentions, pursuant to Article 30 of the National Agreement, to begin local negotiations. He has requested a meeting to establish ground rules for negotiations, meeting dates, times, and places.

**Application for Membership** by Amie Gallo

Jacob Cook, George Babbel, Jose Andino, Logan Summers, Matt Jardine, Mark Castleton, Jacinta Smith, Raha Davis, Timothy Jones, Melissa Binns, Jordan Jones, Lynn Lopez, Lawrence Medley, Spencer Elwood, Troy Baker, Adam Brown, Jesus Izarraras, Connor Lawrence, J Rojas, Daniel Ray, Julie Baker, Brian Forman, Luis Febus Pagan, Marie Collins, Hector Alcalá.

**LCPF** by Josh Thibodeau – not present

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**MDA COORDINATOR** by Jeremy Bailey - not present

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**LEGISLATIVE** by Chad Mortensen – not present

•  
**TRUSTEES** by Chad Mortensen – not present

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**MBA, COMPENSATION** by Bob Jewell

- Bob will be out of town next week. Leave a message if you need help and he will get back as soon as possible.

**HEALTH BENEFITS** by Jim Kerekes

- Art. 21 of the contract has the percentages the USPS pays to OPM for the health plans. The number of members on a health plan is used to help determine the cost that OPM will charge each health plan. The union negotiates to determine what those percentages are. For our costs to go down, the post office has to pay OPM more. If we get more members, possibly the cost will go down.

**ORGANIZER** by Justin Lindquist

- Justin has been doing well getting CCA to join the union. A new class of six begins tomorrow. •When new members get to your office, you need to show them the ropes, show them where things are. Introduce yourselves, they need our help big time. They are trying to learn the job and start a career like we have. Help them when you can.

**SAFETY AND HEALTH** by Justin Lindquist

- The Health and Safety Committee only meets every three months. •Management training on safety is lacking, such as how to get out of a burning building (use the nearest exit). We definitely need to take care of ourselves. •Safety captains need to be active. • Make sure you are watching for dogs and kids. It is that time of year again.

**DIRECTOR OF RETIREES** by Jeff Asay – no report

- Jeff and President Wahlquist visited Glen McKell yesterday and presented him with his Gold card for 50 years of membership in the NALC.

**TREASURER** by Mike Madsen

- Mike finished the Form 990 (IRS return for organizations exempt from Income Tax) this week and submitted it (three days early). It had to be submitted electronically for the first time. It cost \$41 but it worked great.

**VICE PRESIDENT** by Amie Gallo – No report

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**EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT** by Mike Hansen -excused, still working.

**PRESIDENT** by Mike Wahlquist

- We have had 2 meetings now on the LMOU in the Salt Lake Installation. They are making progress. They are trying to get some things cleaned up and some resolved. There aren't a lot of things that need to be added to the LMOU this year.
- Mike and Jim Kerekes have been meeting with the first wave of CCAs that are being converted to PTF under the new contract. CCAs are now converted after two years of service. The pay scale for PTFs has had two new steps added (AA and P).
- The downtown office did not move last month. The downtown office is moving this weekend (Saturday after the carriers leave the office and Sunday). Postmaster Canfield feels the annex will be more usable than the downtown building. The only problem is that the annex is not downtown.
- Retail service downtown will continue through the end of May and maybe into June.
- Starting in June, it looks like we will have physical meetings for union meeting, Eboard, & steward training. Hopefully, Zoom will still be available to those who are unable to make the meetings.
- June 26<sup>th</sup> is the Summer Pool Party, probably starting at 6:00pm (actual time will be in the Pavement Pounder).
- The Steak Fry is August 28<sup>th</sup> (retirees will be paid from the retirees' funds).

**SPECIAL ORDERS:** none

- A motion approved by the Executive Board was presented to create a “Standing Order that any monies received by branch 111, in the form of grievance settlements from the USPS, be earmarked for training. Money is not to be retroactively applied before 2021.” Motion passed. 22 for, 0 against.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS:** none

**NEW BUSINESS:**

- Question: Can we put a Zoom link on Facebook each month? We will ask Mike Hansen to look into it.
- There is a Zoom Link on our website at branch111.com.

**GOOD OF THE ASSOCIATION:**

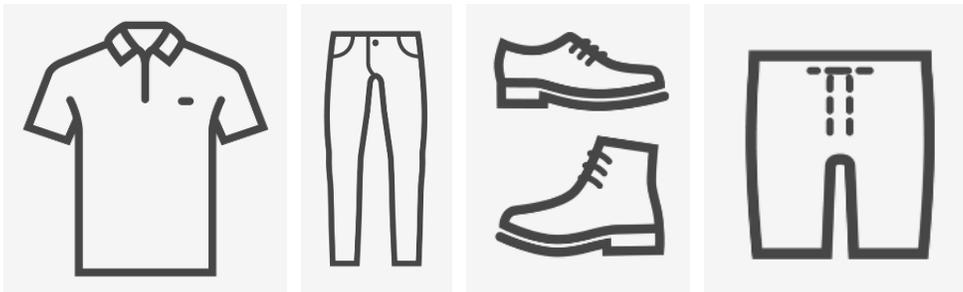
- James Fleming has accepted a new branch position as Director of Veterans Affairs.

**FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF THE SERVICE:** none

**DRAW AND ADJOURN** – 7: pm

- \$25 drawing winners: Sharla Groves and Brent Bray - checks to be mailed
- RETIREES – \$350 (Don Taylor was not present). Next month it will be \$375
- PROGRESSIVE A - \$450 (Lyle Larsen was not present). Next month it will be \$475.
- PROGRESSIVE B - \$100 (Rick Petersen was not present). Next month it will be \$125.

# UNIFORMS NEEDED



**Clean out your closets and help Branch 111 Carriers.**

**All sizes and items needed!**

Please drop off clean, good condition items to the Union Hall or with your Steward.

For retirees: if you are unable to make it to the Union Hall,

please call 801-973-6705 to make arrangements.

National Association of Letter Carriers  
2261 South Redwood Road, Suite 14  
Salt Lake City, Utah 84119

Non-Profit  
U.S. Postage Paid  
Salt Lake City, UT  
Permit No. 1981

Address Service Requested

**Keep on delivering!!!**

**The financial records of the Union are available to be looked at by any Branch 111 member, in the Union Office, by appointment.**

**PRESIDENT**  
Mike Wahlquist  
**EXC. VICE-  
PRESIDENT**  
Mike Hansen  
**VICE-PRESIDENT**  
Amie B. Gallo  
**TREASURER**  
Mike Madsen  
**SECRETARY**  
Steve McNees  
**SGT-AT-ARMS**  
Mike Simonsen  
**MBA & OWCP**  
Bob Jewell  
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**TRUSTEES**  
Chad Mortensen  
Kirk McLaughlin  
Destiney Carrillo

**The**  
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**the**  
***“Wasatch Branch”***

Mon— Fri. 8:00 AM—6:00 PM

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