

BRANCH 111 N.A.L.C. “THE WASATCH BRANCH”

www.branch111.com

Pavement Pounder



Publication 2023.09

September 2023

Midvale - Millcreek - Murray - Northwest - Orem - Sandy - South Salt Lake - Sugarhouse - Tooele - West Jordan - West Valley

Retirees and 1 guest are cordially invited to the Branch 111, N.A.L.C. RETIREES DINNER.

Wednesday, October 25, 2023

From 3:30 to 5:30 P.M. at Chuck-A-Rama :

12344 Minuteman Drive, Draper

Nominations for Branch Officers will be at the October Branch Meeting

October

Thursday 5th E-Board

Thursday 12th Branch Meeting

National Convention delegate elections and Branch Officer Nominations will be at the October Branch meeting.

Wednesday 18th Steward Training

Wednesday 25th Retirees Dinner (3:30-5:30)

Oct 30th - Nov 2 RAP Session

November

Oct 30th - Nov 2 RAP Session

Thursday 2nd E-Board

Thursday 9th Branch Meeting

Wednesday 15th Steward Training

December

Thursday 7th E-Board

Thursday 14th Branch Meeting

Wednesday 20th Steward Training

Follow Branch111 on Facebook and Instagram for the most up-to-date information on events, meetings and branch news.

The President's Report

Estimates vs. DOIS

One of the things that makes Letter Carriers the most miserable is the ongoing battle of the morning estimate. The Supervisor comes to their case carrying their sheet of DOIS numbers, which in their opinion, is incontrovertible proof that the route will be completed with undertime to spare. The Carrier, burdened with the knowledge of 20 years experience, knows good and well that the route will take at least 8 hours, probably closer to 9 if management wants the full coverage to go. The Supervisor starts in defending the DOIS numbers, and the Carrier, faced with this seemingly incontrovertible evidence may feel terrible, and perhaps they will start skipping their morning break, or maybe running like Forest Gump. The sad part about this is that there are some Carriers who actually believe in DOIS, and they often start going at an unsafe pace in order to meet the unrealistic or impossible number that management has fabricated with the flawed computer program known as "DOIS".

Some of you might think that DOIS stands for "Database Of Inaccurate Statistics", or "Deleting Overtime Is Simple", but DOIS actually stands for "Delivery Operations Information System", even though it is often used for the first two definitions. First of all, why is management even trying to force-feed us DOIS, when they know good and well that it is inaccurate? The reason is simple: they are forced to. Many years ago I was shocked to find in the DOIS Quality Assessment (a management guide to implementing DOIS) the following instructions:

"The supervisor is using the Route Carrier Daily Performance Report to review previous day activities to determine which carriers did/did not meet the projections in DOIS. The supervisor is having conversations with carriers who did not meet DOIS projections...The supervisor is working with carriers who do not meet their projections so that their performance matches or exceeds their percent to standard"

What did that say? Did that really say that supervisors are supposed to work with carriers until their performance matches or exceeds their DOIS projections, and ultimately match or exceed their percent to standard? How exactly is that supposed to happen when "standard" is an obsolete measurement that is only used to evaluate a route? The parties have agreed that DOIS cannot be used to determine whether a carrier is achieving "standards". Why is this? Because, first of all, it states in M-01664:

"DOIS projections are not the sole determinant of a carriers leaving or return time, or daily workload. As such, the projections cannot be used as the sole basis for corrective action."

Additionally, when management does want to determine the office efficiency of a Letter Carrier, the M-39, Section 141.2 mandates:

"When management desires to determine the efficiency of a carrier in the office, a count of mail may be made."

Thus, the only way that management can determine how well a Carrier is doing in the office is to physically count all of the mail he or she is processing. The reason that a physical count is necessary is because DOIS is a linear count that becomes an estimated piece count. As such, there is no way to determine how many letters or flats a Carrier is actually processing. But, even if DOIS were accurate (and it most assuredly is not), the 18 and 8 standard is obsolete. In fact, it has been obsolete since 1975. In NB-NAT-3233, Arbitrator Garrett stated:

“The facts that the 18-and-8 standard initially was developed in 1922 without benefit of a precise definition of ‘letter-size’ mail...Even if, for convenience, the old 18-and-8 standards were to be used as a rough guide for casing of mail during route inspections, nonetheless these out-moded standards cannot provide any proper basis for changing an existing route or for imposition of discipline because of alleged inadequate performance. The Award herein thus will prohibit any such applications of the old ‘18-and-8’ standards.”

This settlement eventually became memorialized in section 242.332 of the M-39 which states:

“No carrier shall be disciplined for failure to meet standards, except in cases of unsatisfactory effort which must be based on documented, unacceptable conduct that led to the carrier’s failure to meet office standards.”

In a nutshell, this means that management cannot simply say that you are not making your office time or “standard”. What management must do is identify something that you are doing wrong (a time-wasting practice in the opinion of management) in order to help you work better. So, unless a Supervisor can identify something that you are doing wrong, then they shouldn’t say anything about your office time! If they are harassing you about your office time, please report it to your Shop Steward. We will file a grievance under the “Joint Statement on Violence and Behavior in the Workplace” which states:

“We also affirm that every employee at every level of the Postal Service should be treated at all times with dignity, respect and fairness. The need for the USPS to serve the public efficiently and productively and the need for all employees to be committed to giving a fair day's work for a fair day's pay, does not justify actions that are abusive or intolerant. "Making the numbers" is not an excuse for the abuse of anyone. Those who do not treat others with dignity and respect will not be rewarded or promoted. Those whose unacceptable behavior continues will be removed from their positions.”

The only standard that the NALC recognizes is a fair day’s work for a fair day’s pay. Finally, in M-01664, the parties at the highest level have agreed to the following precedent setting decision (part of which I have cited above, but it is so important that it bears repeating):

The use of DOIS does not change the letter carrier’s reporting requirements outlined in section 131.4 of Handbook M-41, the supervisor’s scheduling responsibilities outlined in section 122 of Handbook M-39, or the letter carrier’s and supervisor’s responsibilities contained in Section 28 of Handbook M-41. DOIS projections are not the sole determinant of a carrier’s leaving or return time, or daily workload. As such, the projections cannot be used as the sole basis for corrective action.”

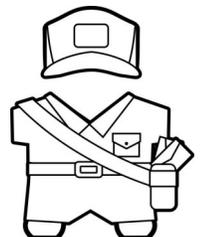
So, what does this mean to Letter Carriers? This agreement means that DOIS cannot control our leave times, our return times, or our workload, end of story. We estimate how much time our route will take, not DOIS. We decide what to write on our 3996 (Carrier – Auxiliary Control), not DOIS. And finally, we carry our mail and demonstrate that our estimates were reasonable, not DOIS. So, in the battle between our estimates vs. DOIS, there is only one winner, and that is the Letter Carrier who makes and lives by their estimate.

Michael Wahlquist – President
Branch 111, NALC

Uniforms Needed!

Please bring any uniforms you may have that you’d be willing to donate.

We accept any uniforms in new or used condition, but please none in bad condition.



September is National Suicide Prevention Awareness Month

It is important to know that suicide is preventable. With commitment and engagement in our workplace, communities and at home, we can help reduce the number of suicides. What are the warning signs that someone is at risk for suicide?

Feeling extreme depression, guilt, or shame

Feeling hopeless

Talking about, or preoccupation with death.

Preparing for death

Exhibiting a dramatic change in behavior, including withdrawal from friends or usual activities, increased alcohol or drug use, difficulty sleeping or eating, decreased self care. What should I do if I suspect someone is experiencing a crisis or is hurting? There is a suicide prevention model called ACE that is easy to remember steps.

1. Ask- Although it may feel awkward, research shows that people that are having thoughts of suicide feel relief when someone asks them in a caring way.
2. Care- Show you care. By actively listening and engaging without judgment you are showing you care. This might just be enough to help the person feel relief and that they are not alone.
3. Escort- When someone acknowledges that they are feeling suicidal or hopeless , care enough to connect them to the nearest helping resource. Do not leave them alone and separate them from methods of harm.

What resources are available for someone who is suicidal or in need of help?

1. Take the person to the emergency room where they will receive a full suicide assessment and receive needed care. If the person is hesitant to receive emergency care, call 911.
2. Call 988 to connect to the Suicide and Crisis Hotline, 24 hours a day 7 days a week and follow their guidance.
3. The Postal Service offers an Employee Assistance Program (EAP) that provides a variety of useful, free, and confidential services for Postal Employees. CALL 1-800-EAP4YOU or directly call local EAP representative Jack Kettering @ 801-908-0542 for any issues you are struggling with.

Please if you suspect someone or you yourself are struggling don't wait to reach out for help. Look out for each other and if there are workroom floor issues that are affecting your mental health, reach out to your Steward or to myself or other branch officer. Sometimes a 20 minute phone call can change your outlook for the day in this roller coaster of a place that we all work.

CDC.gov, 988lifeline.org, helpguide.org

In Solidarity

Mike Hansen

Executive Vice President

Branch 111, NALC

SAVE THE DATE!

Retirees and 1 guest are cordially invited to the Branch 111,
N.A.L.C. RETIREES DINNER Wednesday, October 25, 2023

From 3:30 to 5:30 P.M. at Chuck-A-Rama 12344 Minuteman Drive .Draper

EAP- Employee Assistance Program

There is so much going on nowadays and we are bound to get stressed out. So sometimes we need to talk to someone to help us cope with the things life throws at us. The EAP program is a free program provided by the USPS in accordance with Article 35.

Article 35 Section 1. Programs

“The Employer and the Union express strong support for programs of self-help. The Employer shall provide and maintain a program which shall encompass the education, identification, referral, guidance and follow-up of those employees afflicted by the disease of alcoholism and/or drug abuse. When an employee is referred to the EAP by the Employer, the EAP staff will have a reasonable period of time to evaluate the employee’s progress in the program. This program of labor-management cooperation shall support the continuation of the EAP for alcohol, drug abuse, and other family and/or personal problems at the current level. An employee’s voluntary participation in the EAP for assistance with alcohol and/or drug abuse will be considered favorably in disciplinary action proceedings.”

EAP is totally voluntary and it is confidential. The program offers assessment, referral, short-term counseling, and work/life consultation to postal employees, their families, or anyone living in their household. Your reason for using EAP does not need to be work related. It is designed to help with various issues such as stress management, grief counseling, marital/relationship issues, substance abuse, and more. More information can be found on the website www.eap4you.com. You can also call 1-800-EAP-4YOU (800-327-4968).

In Solidarity,
Destiney Carrillo
Vice President

Health Benefits Jim Kerekes

Open season dates for the 2024 health coverage year are: November 13 to December 11, 2023. This open season will be like all others that we’ve always had every year. Probably for the last 40 plus years.

I know currently our health plan has been organizing what will be in our 2024 coverage. They are also working on what will be offered for our 2025 coverage. That will then be PSHB (Postal Service Health Benefit).

I don’t expect drastic procedural changes for 2025 coverage. OPM does and has always controlled the coverage and the costs. The letter carrier contract also has an effect on the amount of the share you pay for coverage.

Every open season is a good time to review your health coverage of the plan of which you are a member. There are times that people say why are my costs so high. When a person or a family wants to change plans , there are many important things to verify. I’ll mention one. Make sure your doctors are in the network of the plan you change to sign up.

Hope to have more information in the next two issues (October and November) before open season starts.

Thank You.

NALC BRANCH 111
Minutes of the Regular Union Meeting
September 14, 2023

Convened at 6:32 pm

The meeting was also broadcast over Zoom for those unable to attend in person.

Conducting: Mike Wahlquist, President

Pledge of Allegiance conducted by Mike Simonsen

Roll Call by Steve McNeas

Minutes of the August 2023 union meeting were posted. Without objection, they will be filed for future reference.

Reading of the Communications by Steve McNeas

- Advertisement for FED-HURT indicating that they are providing medical treatment and claims management for all injured Federal Employees. They will be meeting with branch leaders. They have a letter from an NALC Regional Workers Compensation Assistant commending their work in Florida.[Note, they have no doctors in Utah]

Application for Membership by Mike Hansen

Patrick David, Shade Harvey, Herschel Salt, Raelin Archuleta, Dylan Taft, Juan Mardoniz, Cade Tyrell, Kristie Eacott, Elaine Brimhall, Vanessa Cervantes-Moreno, Amalie Gould, Michael Kent, Emilio Figueroa, Ashley Wall, Ralph Fastje, Jason Lammers, Elly Crittenden, Nicholus Hubble

SPECIAL GUESTS:

Marnie LaFevre – Running for State Congressional District 1, in West Valley. She is a member of AFCME?

Eva Chavez – Running for State Congressional District 4, in Downtown SLC. She has already received endorsement from the Central Federation of Labor.

Joey Wiscomb – MDA Liaison. Thanked those who attended the Labor Day picnic and supported the MDA.

LETTER CARRIER POLITICAL FUND (LCPF) by Josh Thibodeau

- Josh has signed up 10 of our newest members. Check your paystubs to make sure your donations to LCPF are still being taken out. There have been some problems with allotments being dropped.

MDA COORDINATOR by Jeremy Bailey

He is grateful for a really good turnout to the Labor Day picnic. \$1,400 was raised for MDA. He will be at the Region Rap Session to raise more money for MDA.

DIRECTOR OF VETERAN AFFAIRS by Jimmy Fleming – no report

LEGISLATIVE by Chad Mortensen

- If you live in Congressional District 2, get out and vote. You are needed and you need to get heard. Roy city had a good supportive candidate that lost by 15 votes. Union members need to get out and vote so this doesn't happen again. If you have any questions about who is supporting us, call Chad. The two who spoke tonight will help us. Vote, Vote! Get your family to vote. Every vote counts. There are Democrats and Republicans running for office that will support our issues. Find out who they are.

TRUSTEES by Chad Mortensen

- They didn't meet this week.

MBA / COMPENSATION, by Bob Jewell

- FED-HURT has no offices in our area. We don't recommend contacting them at this time. • An injured carrier was required to fill out a CA-2 and immediately turn it in. This isn't required or best practice. Instead, you should take the CA-2 home, check with Bob about what is needed, and then go to your doctor. Then have Bob help complete your forms. You are not required to turn in a CA-2 on the day of an injury. • If needed, Bob has direct contact with a national officer who can help with proper medical documentation. • OWCP will give extensions if your doctor can't see you within 30 days (you have to request the extensions in advance).

HEALTH BENEFITS by Jim Kerekes

- Open season is Nov 13 – Dec 11th. • NALC will have health plans for the USPS and other federal agencies. • There have been 9 other postal service plans over the years. Many only cover issues within the area you live (HMO plans). • Call or text Jim if you have questions about the current plan or the 2025 plans. 2025 will have all new programs. • You can write to OPM or other plans to get more information. Most of the info you will need will be in the new handbooks. • Different plans are offering different free help or devices (blood pressure machines and more) to their plan members. Read the conditions before ordering free devices.

ORGANIZER by Justin Lindquist – not present

SAFETY AND HEALTH by Justin Lindquist – not present

DIRECTOR OF RETIREES by Jeff Asay

- October 25th, 3:30-5:30pm, is the Retiree Dinner at Chuck-a-Rama in Draper. Bring 1 guest.
- OPM gets backed up in the fall. Don't wait if you have to do business with them.
- Reminder – visit your OPM account often to make sure you can still login.

TREASURER by Mike Madsen

- Stormy Blood and others continue to do well with progressive/permissive grievance remedies (that are paid to the branch). \$25,000 of training expenses has been paid by the post office through permissive remedies. Recent awards of \$9,300 have been received.
- Branch income for last month was \$27,000. We received \$900 more than we spent.

VICE PRESIDENT by Destiney Carrillo

- Destiney, Stormy Blood, and Jay Reupena are going to Advanced Formal A and Beyond Training program next week in Washington, DC.

EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT by Mike Hansen

- Sept 20th is the Steward Dinner. The game starts at 6:30pm, you can get there at 5:30pm and you can get food anytime before or during the ball game.

PRESIDENT by Mike Wahlquist

- Took care of a couple problems in Magna today.
- Mike is now on our building's HOA executive board. They were able to get most of the former officers back and make changes in the bylaws to make things run more smoothly.
- Rooms for the Rap Session were booked today.

Next month there are nominations for branch officers.

NEW BUSINESS:

- **Nomination of delegates to the 2024 National Convention:** Kim Mortensen, Amie Gallo, Phil Rodriguez, Josh Thibodeau, Jim Kerekes, Jeff Asay, Bob Jewell, Kortnie Chatterton, Daniel Langton, Keith Warner, Chad Mortensen, Alan Nagata, Kirk McLaughlin, Joe Horsley, Mike Simonsen, Blake Mellor, Mike Madsen, Asaias Ahumada, Trey Terry, Jay Reupena, Brent Console, Connor Lawrence, Spencer Heinz, April Pettley, Tracy Uresk, Stormy Blood, Destiney Carrillo, Alisha Satini, Mike Hansen, Aaron Johnson, Brock Lister, Quincy Mason, Fernando Palafox, Nathan Chester, Robert Cottrell, Joby Clark (need confirmation), Kelly Grater.
- Motion to endorse Marnie LaFevre in District 1 and Eva Chavez in District 4 to the Salt Lake City Council. The motion passed.

SPECIAL ORDERS: none

FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF THE SERVICE:

GOOD OF THE ASSOCIATION:

- At the steak fry we had people show up with extra people. If this happens again, they won't be turned away but their tickets won't be placed in the drawings. Some of the streets downtown will be made into walking streets only. President Wahlquist will follow-up with the Postmaster to see what changes will need to be made.
- Canfield is no longer the postmaster.

DRAW AND ADJOURN – 8:05 pm

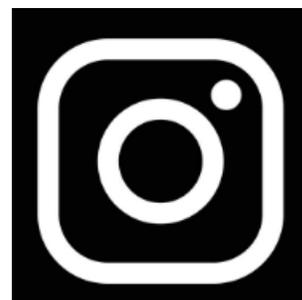
- \$25 drawing winners: Josh Thibodeau and Stormy Blood
- RETIREES – \$225 (Sterling Parker was not present). Next month it will be \$250
- PROGRESSIVE A - \$625 (Kathy Taylor was not present). Next Meeting it will be \$650.
- PROGRESSIVE B - \$525 (Greg Walborn was not present). Next Meeting it will be \$550.

@NALCbranch111



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@nalc111

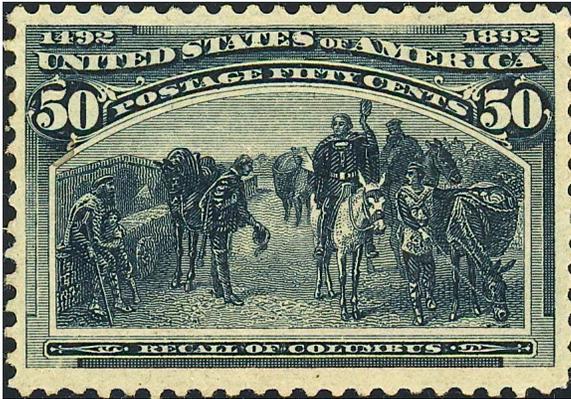


National Association of Letter Carriers
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The financial records of Branch 111 are available to anyone by appointment and a monthly record is always available at Branch 111 monthly meeting.

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Executive Vice-President
Mike Hansen
Vice-President
Destiney Carrillo
Treasurer
Mike Madsen
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