



# The Pavement Pounder

## Branch 111 NALC

### “The Wasatch Branch”

Publication  
2025.3  
March  
edition

## The President's Report

### DOGE

So much has happened, so many attacks on workers, that it is hard to know where to start. Yesterday, Louis DeJoy signed an agreement with Department of Government Efficiency and the General Services Administration to work with the US Postal Service to “assist us in identifying and achieving further efficiencies,” DeJoy further stated, “It has long been known that the Postal Service has a broken business model that was not financially sustainable without critically necessary and fundamental core change.”

Rep. Gerry Connolly (D-Va.), the ranking member of the Oversight and Government Reform Committee, replied to DeJoy’s letter: “The only thing worse for the Postal Service than DeJoy’s ‘Delivering for America’ plan is turning the service over to Elon Musk and DOGE so they can undermine it, privatize it, and then profit off Americans’ loss... This capitulation will have catastrophic consequences for all Americans – especially those in rural and hard to reach areas – who rely on the Postal Service every day to deliver mail, medications, ballots, and more.”

In my opinion, this is a kick in the teeth to the USPS from DeJoy, enacted while he is quitting his post, or possibly because he is quitting his post. Giving the DOGE the power to make drastic changes to the Post Office will, without a doubt, cause changes to our work environment, and will without a doubt, lead towards privatization. If you have never called, texted, emailed, or written to your House Representative or Senator in Congress, now would be a good time to start. Tell them that we support House Resolution 70 to protect the Post Office from privatization. We are having a rally (to save the Post Office from privatization) on Sunday, March 23, at 1:00PM, at the Union building. We desperately need everyone to attend this rally, as it will send yet another message to Congress that we will not sit idle while our government slowly dismantles and privatizes the Post Office. Bring your spouses, your kids, your parents, your neighbors, even your customers. You can tell your

customers that the DOGE is looking to privatize the Post Office, but you cannot mention any political party when you do so, as that would violate the Hatch Act. Please come and rally with us. Let’s shout so loudly that our voices will be heard in Washington D.C.!

On another note, the Teachers, Firefighters, and Po-

**“If you have never called, texted, emailed, or written to your House Representative or Senator in Congress, now would be a good time to start.”**

lice Officers are still in desperate need of our help to gather 142,000 signatures for the referendum on HB267, which would stop HB267 (the law that destroys their collective bargaining) from taking effect. The Utah Legislature, led by Representative Teuscher, Senator Cullimore, and Governor Cox, have effectively destroyed unions in the public sector in Utah. This is another fight that we need to make. Please sign the referendum, and if you have any free time, please sign up to be a signature taker. If you don’t have time to help get signatures, please consider donating to their cause, as they need millions of dollars in the next 30 days to get the signatures. I will be going to the kick-off event tomorrow, but this article will get out too late for many who would have gone. Please go to [protectutahworkers.com](https://www.protectutahworkers.com) (<https://www.protectutahworkers.com>) to volunteer or to donate. If they can destroy public sector unions, they can destroy our union. This is a fight that is vital, and we will regret that we did not fight harder if the overlords win. Please, we need your help now. Come to the rally on March 23<sup>rd</sup> at the Union Building, please contact congress about not privatizing the post office (and tell them to support House Resolution 70), and help the Teachers, Firefighters, and Police Officers by volunteering and/or donating.

Thank you for your support during this fight!  
Michael Wahlquist – President  
Branch 111, NALC

Vice President's Report

Dear Branch 111 Members,

I want to personally thank everyone who attended last week's meeting. It was encouraging to see so many new faces, and I urge those who missed it to join us in April. We need your participation now more than ever.

The challenges facing the Postal Service are significant, and the meeting's gravity reflected that. As we discussed, our immediate focus must be on delivering exceptional service to our customers. This is our foundation.

Simultaneously, we must actively engage our representatives to oppose privatization. Urge them to support House Resolution 70 (HR 70) and emphasize to them the devastating impact privatization would have on our communities and our livelihoods.

**“Crucially, we need your presence at the rally on Sunday, March 23rd. This is a critical moment. We must demonstrate our unwavering commitment to protecting the Postal Service”**

**Crucially, we need your presence at the rally on Sunday, March 23rd.** This is a critical moment. We must demonstrate our unwavering commitment to protecting the Postal Service. Bring your families, friends, and neighbors. The media will be present, and a strong turnout from Branch 111, alongside our fellow unions, will send a powerful message nationwide.

I am immensely proud to be a letter carrier and to represent the members of Branch 111.

I will not stand idly by while our jobs and the vital service we provide are threatened. We must fight for our collective future. I want to be able to say- years from now when this story is told- that I stood shoulder to shoulder with you and said, "HELL NO!"

**STAND WITH ME!!!!**

In Solidarity,  
Mike Hansen  
Executive Vice President

<b>Mark Your Calendars!</b>		<b><u>June</u></b>	
<b><u>March</u></b>		Thursday, 5th	E-Board
Sunday, 23rd	Rally	Thursday, 12th	Branch Meeting
		Wednesday, 18th	Steward Training
		Saturday, 21st	Summer Party (tentative)
<b><u>April</u></b>		<b><u>July</u></b>	
3rd - 6th	State Convention	Thursday, 3	E-Board
Thursday, 10th	Branch Meeting	Thursday, 10	Branch Meeting
Thursday, 16th	Steward Training	Wednesday, 16	Steward Training
<b><u>May</u></b>		<b><u>August</u></b>	
Thursday, 1st	E-Board	Thursday, 7	E-Board
Thursday, 8th	Branch Meeting	Thursday, 14	Branch Meeting
11th - 15th	Year 1 Steward College	Wednesday, 20	Steward Training
Wednesday, 21st	Steward Training		

**HELL  
NO!**

***TO DISMANTLING THE POSTAL SERVICE***

STAND WITH LETTER CARRIERS

***RALLY TO SAVE USPS***

**NALC BRANCH 111 | SALT LAKE CITY, UT**

***SUNDAY, MARCH 23 • 1 P.M.***

2261 S. REDWOOD RD.  
WEST VALLEY CITY, UT 84119



# Mental Health and Wounded Warrior Leave

By: Jimmy Fleming,  
Director of Veteran's Affairs

Let's all face the truth that we live in stressful times. It is a difficult reality to know that the number of veteran suicides are 18 a day\* (down from 22 a day in previous years). That's 18 veterans who are brothers, sisters, sons, daughters, moms and dads dying daily. Among all U.S. adults in 2022, there were on average 131 suicides per day\*. It is a scary thought of the enormous number of people who felt there was no other option. Some people can often be stubborn or conflicted with the idea of mental health treatment due to their nature of "someone else needs the help more than me". Too often service members in particular try to put others first rather than realizing they are just as important. I heard one person say to me, "why would I waste someone's time when they can be more effective helping someone else worse than me?" My answer was "What if you are that person who IS worse and needing treatment?"

Wounded Warrior Leave is 104 hours a year (as required by law) for veteran service members who have a single or combined service-connected disability rating of 30% or higher. These hours are used for attending medical appointments and/or undergoing medical treatment. WWL can also be used for unforeseeable treatment as well. Keep in mind the hours do not carry over into the next year. They are reset back to 104 at the beginning of each year.

As I previously mentioned, to be eligible for WWL, you must have a combined disability rating of at least 30 percent or more AND have submitted the required documentation to HR Shared Service Center. If you want to qualify for WWL, you need to send a copy of your VA disability rating letter AND your DD Form 214 to HR so they can verify your percentage from the VA.

Once you are certified to use Wounded Warrior Leave, you *"are required to request this leave in advance when possible by completing and submitting a PS Form 3971 to your supervisor. You should designate the reason as "Other" on the 3971 and in the space provided write in Wounded Warrior Leave"*.

It is very important to note, when receiving treatment using WWL, **you have to provide proof that the treatment (and the leave) was used for the service-connected disability!** The Post Office uses PS Form 5980 "Treatment Verification for Wounded Warrior Leave" to simplify the documentation. Print this form and take it with you every time you use Wounded Warrior Leave. It is your proof of treatment and the only way to have our leave approved under the Wounded Warrior Leave category. So, if your treatment is unforeseen and you must call off, the leave request system will notify you

this form is required.

To submit your documentation to HR Shared Service Center, use the information below or you can email the documents (VA rating letter and DD Form 214) to [thz1g0@usps.gov](mailto:thz1g0@usps.gov).

## Career Employees

By Mail:  
USPS/HRSCC  
Attn: RTR Team  
PO Box 970100  
Greensboro, NC 27497-0100  
By Fax:  
(650) 577-4324

## Non-Career Employees

By Mail:  
USPS/HRSCC  
Attn: Form 50 Team  
PO Box 970400  
Greensboro, NC 27497-0400  
By Fax:  
(336) 662-4070 or (336) 662-4073

**Let me finish this article where I started. Mental health effects everyone differently. Some people might be embarrassed with the stigma of getting treatment for mental health or a variety of issues. If you or someone you know is suffering with mental health, substance abuse, family and relationship issues, legal or financial concerns, grief, work-related stress, or chronic illness; help is available to you regardless of being a veteran or not.**

Please don't wait until it is too late to seek help. It is never too late. There are many resources available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Many of these services can be confidential. So, there is no reason not to speak with someone if you are in crisis.

**Suicide Prevention Hotline 1-800-273-8255**

**Veterans Crisis Hotline 202-737-0522**

**Employee Assistance Program (EAP) 800-327-4968  
(800-EAP-4-YOU)**

Very Respectfully,

Jimmy Fleming

\*news.va.gov "2024 National Veteran Suicide Prevention Annual Report"

## NALC Form 3 Certification of Qualifying Exigency for Military Family Leave

Recently a carrier asked me about what leave he could take leave to help his son when he went into the military. I did some research and found that there is FMLA leave for the qualifying exigency for Military Family Leave.

When a family member is on or called to covered active duty status, an employee may require leave for qualifying exigencies. These exigencies include:

- Short-notice deployment (seven or less calendar days' notice) for seven days from the date of notification.
- Military events and related activities.
- Childcare and school activities.
- Financial and legal arrangements.
- Counseling.
- Rest and recuperation (up to 15 calendar days).
- Post-deployment activities.
- Additional activities agreed upon by the employer and employee.

To support a request for leave due to a qualifying exigency, the employee must provide a certification, which includes:

- A statement or description of the appropriate facts regarding the qualifying exigency.
- The approximate date on which the qualifying exigency commenced or will commence.
- If the request is for a single, continuous period of time, the beginning and end dates for the absence.
- If the request is for intermittent or reduced schedule leave, an estimate of the frequency and duration of the qualifying exigency.
- If the qualifying exigency involves a third party, the contact information for the individual or entity and a brief description of the purpose of the meeting.

Please remember that employees are eligible for leave if they have worked for the USPS for at least 12 months and have at least 1,250 hours over the past 12 months. The NALC Form 3 can be found on the nalc.org website : <https://www.nalc.org/workplace-issues/contract-administration-unit/fmla>

In Solidarity,

Destiney Carrillo

Vice President, Branch 111

## “Action Is The Antidote To Anxiety”

### Ways to Act!

- 1-Attend the “Hell NO” Rally on Sunday, March 23<sup>rd</sup>
- 2-Give to LCPF (letter carrier’s political fund)
- 3-Convince ALL letter carriers to join NALC
- 4-Call or write your Senators, ask them to

### **Protect the USPS**

#### Mike Lee

363 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

**Phone:** (202) 224-5444

#### John Curtis

B11 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC  
20510-4402

**Phone:** (202) 224-5251

Call or write your **Representative**

#### Blake Moore (District 1)

1131 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

**Phone:** (202) 225-0453

#### Celeste Maloy (District 2)

249 Cannon House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

**Phone:** (202) 225-9730

#### Mike Kennedy (District 3)

1626 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

**Phone:** (202) 225-7751

#### Burgess Owens (District 4)

309 Cannon House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

**Phone:** (202) 225-3011

5-Sign the AFL-CIO petition to repeal  
HB267

6-Volunteer to collect signatures or donate to  
**Protectworkers.com**

7-Invite others to join our efforts

**NALC BRANCH 111**  
**Minutes of the Regular Union Meeting**  
**March 13, 2025**

**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 Phil Rodriguez

**Moment of Silence** for Maxim Khlebnikov who passed away.

**Roll Call** by Steve McNees

**Minutes** of the February 2025 union meeting were posted. A motion was made to correct the minutes. Jimmy Kerekes' report was changed to read that you send in a copy of your Medicare "Notice of Cost-of-Living Adjustment (COLA)" with your claim to receive the \$600 yearly Medicare/Silver Script reimbursement. The motion passed; the minutes will be filed for future reference.

**Reading of the Communications** by Steve McNees

- A letter of condolence was sent to the family of Maxim Khlebnikov who passed away.
- We received notice that Mike Caref will be running for NALC National President next year.
- We received notice of the Protect Utah Workers referendum on March 15<sup>th</sup> at the Union Labor Center. There will be training this week for volunteers gathering signatures. They are taking donations to help in gathering 142,000 certified signatures, within 30 days, to get this on the ballot to overturn HB367.

**Application for Membership** by Mike Hansen

- William Downs, Jacob King, Joseph Chrisco, Tanisha Robinson, Cort Helm, Kara Boyce, Melvin Yetter, Paul Larsen, Sin-Man Yeung, Bradford Hunt, Daniel Lemus, Mark Hatzenbuehler, Melissa McDonnell, Dustin Kuddes, William Weyher, Derek Tollestrup, Carson Zimmerman, Andrew Herrera, Eduardo Alcantara.

**Phil Rodriguez, NALC, Utah State President**, reported on his trip to D.C.

- In November he was told by a Utah leader (later corroborated) they are going to try and integrate the postal service into the private sector (distribution and delivery networks). He recognized that rural areas in Utah would be especially negatively impacted so he wasn't sure he would support it.
- Later, DOGE made the announcement they would privatize the post office. President Renfro called all NALC legislative leaders on Friday and let them know it was supposed to happen. There were so many calls to the House Speaker that they closed down his phone system.
- Last week Renfro said that they were going to try and take the USPS apart piece by piece.
- The USPS has agreed to let DOGE come in and use AI to determine where to take cost cutting measures.
- Not one of the Republicans will stand up to the DOGE committee.
- Our District Manager has already left and they want to get rid of a thousand non-bargaining employees in our district.
- Currently, we are planning on the USPS being privatized. But we believe it would be in violation of the 1970 Reorganization Act and we are ready to file lawsuits. We have been told that DOGE has been in the P.O. and has compromised our personal data (medical and others). Why privatize us because we are so far in debt? We have lots of money in retirement accounts (almost \$200 Billion that is overfunded). We have almost \$1T in real estate.
- Congress isn't even functioning. We will be put under the Commerce Dept where the leader is afraid to say anything.
- Every one of us are in this fight. We rely on our political fund (LCPF). That is where we get the money to go to DC, hire lobbyists, and to fight for our rights. We must take this seriously!
- Just today DOGE signed an agreement with the P.O. Phil was told Doge says we have 58 days until we go private.
- We are stronger when we are unified (active and retired). Call your representatives.
- Never forget, our collective bargaining agreement can be nullified in a minute (Article 43.1 says our contract is active unless legislatively modified). It is important that we all sign up to voluntarily donate to LCPF.
- Every day that we don't deliver mail, all mail, or make miss-deliveries, our image is hurt and gives them reason to privatize us. If (when) you call a representative, you should also tell them to vote against HB367 (state bargaining rights).
- Call your representative they are listed on nalc.org (click on "call your representative" and put in your address). Their names and numbers will be listed. All you need to do is say "DON'T PRIVATIZE THE POST OFFICE." That's it. Have your family and friends call. HR70 is to privatize the USPS.

**LETTER CARRIER POLITICAL FUND (LCPF)** by Josh Thibodeau, excused

**MDA COORDINATOR** by Nathan Chester, excused

**DIRECTOR OF VETERAN AFFAIRS** by Jimmy Fleming -

- He will have an article in the Pavement Pounder regarding Wounded Warrior Leave and how to qualify.

**LEGISLATIVE** by Chad Mortensen

• We have a rally coming up on March 23<sup>rd</sup> at the union hall, about privatizing the USPS. How many businesses, veterans, etc will be affected? Let them know we need their help contacting representatives. • The Hatch Act doesn't prohibit us from telling customers what will happen if we are privatized. • Fill out a post card and send it to your representative and/or make a call. • Reminder, you need to opt in to vote by mail. Tell your friends and family not to forget. • Saturday is the start of the referendum to sign up to allow a vote on HB367, to allow state employees to have unions. Make sure you sign the list (they will be at all large gatherings in the state). Make your own signs to support these issues. Headquarters is sending us 150 signs to carrier during our rallies.

**TRUSTEES** by Chad Mortensen

• They met on Tuesday. They finally found some issues. An Amazon card was used but don't know by who/how/why. A couple of paid warrants had amounts that didn't add up correctly (assumed missing taxes). All are being investigated.

**MBA / COMPENSATION** by Bob Jewell

• Cobby Jones our National OWCP rep. says that we may be losing the people that help us get our medical procedures approved. This would mean it would take longer to get cases processed. • Have members call Bob when they get inured to make sure they are getting the proper forms (CA-16, CA-20) from management. His number is 801-244-0929 (leave a message or text if necessary).

**HEALTH BENEFITS** by Jim Kerekes

• Changes are coming to health benefits this year. When children turn 26 years old, you won't be notified that they are no longer covered. • If you have changes of address you need to call human resources and OPM to update your address.

**ORGANIZER** by Justin Lindquist

• He has only had one not sign up during training in the last month.

**SAFETY AND HEALTH** by Justin Lindquist –

• They are working on getting Justin out to the offices. He will be auditing the office and seeing what management is doing. He needs to hear from us about what is happening in each office.

**DIRECTOR OF RETIREES** by Jeff Asay - excused

**TREASURER** by Mike Madsen

• The new budget has been implemented. He will see that all of the problems found by the trustees last week are corrected.

**VICE PRESIDENT** by Destiney Carrillo – not present

**EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT** by Mike Hansen

• Tomorrow when members report what was said tonight, there will be push back on some of the issue by some. Some will think it is just fear mongering among many different things. • We are no longer the most trusted government agency anymore; it is now the Forest Service. Some carriers are choosing to go fast rather than deliver all of the mail (skipping deliveries, bringing mail back, not talking to customers, not checking alert cards, etc.). We have to get the message out that we are not just the people delivering the mail, but we are out there taking care of our community. • To get the most current information about what is happening, join the branch Facebook page (NALC Branch 111) for all the latest updates. • We must attend the rally at the union hall on March 23<sup>rd</sup> at noon to protect the USPS. We have to stay actively involved. • We start National arbitration Monday.

**PRESIDENT** by Mike Wahlquist

• Postmaster DeJoy, who just quit, signed an agreement with DOGE as he was walking out the door. The only thing worse than DeJoy is turning over the future of the USPS to DOGE. • If they take away collective bargaining (our contract), we won't lose the union. It will still be there to represent our rights but not the contract. Our rally on the 23<sup>rd</sup> is super important. We should be bringing all of our families and friends to the rally so that everyone sees what is happening. • The Hatch Act - We can't talk about political parties but we can talk about what privatization will do. There is a lot of money to be made by business if they get their hands of the USPS. • There will be post cards at the rally to mail to our representatives. We must write, call, and text our law makers now. State HB267 took away state (public sector) employees' right to bargain collectively. Their unions have now been silenced. They need us to sign their referendum to get collective bargaining on the ballot. RALLY ON THE 23<sup>RD</sup>. There is a request that retirees call 5 other retirees and let them know about the rally and what is going on.

**SPECIAL ORDERS:** none

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS:** none

**NEW BUSINESS:** none

**GOOD OF THE ASSOCIATION:** Motion to call our senators while we are still in meeting (for 5 minutes). Motion passed. The meeting stood at ease for 5 minutes.

**IMPROVEMENT OF THE ASSOCIATION:** none:

**DRAW AND ADJOURN** – 8:12pm

\$50 DRAWING WINNERS: Garreth Davies and Ron Hermansen

RETIREES – \$675 (Melvin Evensen- was not present). Next month it will be \$700.

PROGRESSIVE A - \$1,075 (Daniel Platt - was not present). Next Meeting it will be \$1,100.

PROGRESSIVE B - \$50 (Candice Dennison- was not present). Next Meeting it will be \$75

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

## Branch 111 Officers

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### L.C.P.F. Coordinator

Josh Thibodeau

### MDA

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801-450-0617

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veteransaffairs@branch111.com

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Kirk McLaughlin  
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The Pavement Pounder is the official publication of NALC Branch 111  
**www.Branch111.com**    **Phone 801-973-6705**    **Fax 801-973-6723**

For up-to-date information on events, meetings and branch news,

Follow Branch 111 on Facebook @NALCbranch111

The financial records of Branch 111 are available to anyone by appointment. A monthly record is always available at every Branch 111 monthly meeting.

The Pavement Pounder would like to hear from you! If you would like to submit an article, write it and send to **Natechester8@gmail.com**. It will be reviewed and edited for publication if accepted.