

Pavement Pounder



April 2023

Publication 2023.04

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

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

Retiree's Dinner.

Branch 111 N.A.L.C. Annual

Join us at Chuck-A-Rama

12344 So. Minuteman Dr., Draper

On Wednesday, April 26. 2023

from 3:30 until 5:30 p.m.

SEE YOU THERE!!!

**Retiree and 1 guest
only, please.**

Mark Your Calendar

April

Wednesday 26th Retirees Dinner

May

Thursday 4th E-Board

Thursday 11th Branch Meeting

Saturday 13th Food Drive

Wednesday 17th Steward Training

June

Thursday 1st E-Board

Thursday 8th Branch Meeting

Wednesday 21th Steward Training

Saturday 24th Summer Party

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



President's Report

Guns and the USPS

Several weeks ago, a Branch 111 Letter Carrier was put on Emergency Placement for having a gun on postal service property. He had shown up to work (just as he had done for many years), parked his vehicle in the employee parking lot, clocked in, and started working. Several hours into his shift, OIG (Office of the Inspector General) agents showed up and informed him that his vehicle would be searched. The search was ostensibly for “stolen mail”. The OIG agents asked the employee if there was anything they needed to know before they searched his vehicle. The employee remembered that he had a handgun (locked inside a compartment) inside his locked vehicle. The OIG proceeded to search the vehicle and retrieved the unloaded gun, along with a loaded magazine. The employee did not know that having an unloaded gun and a loaded magazine on postal property was against the rules, so I’m writing this article with the intent to familiarize Letter Carriers with the rules so that this hopefully never happens again.

First let’s talk about vehicle searches. The OIG and the Postal Inspection Service have the right to search any vehicle parked in any employee parking lot owned or leased by the USPS that is “non-public”. There are signs stating such at the opening of any such parking lot. The two signs I have seen state:

“U.S. Property, No Trespassing, Vehicles and their contents in non-public areas on postal property are subject to inspection 39 CFR Part 232.1 (b)(2)”

“United States Postal Service Property, Notice: Vehicles and their contents brought into, while on, or being removed from restricted non-public areas are subject to inspection”

In a nutshell, if the employee parking lot at your office is non-public, and if such a sign is posted, then when you drive into that parking lot, your car may be searched. Once you pass the gate, you are literally giving the OIG and the Postal Inspection Service that authority. So, if you don’t want your vehicle searched, then don’t park in the employee parking lot. You are free to park on the street, or in some other parking area not owned or leased by the USPS (and walk the rest of the way to work).

Ok, now that we have covered the rules about vehicle searches, let’s talk about the rules for firearms. The CFR (Code of Federal Regulations) 232.1 states:

“(l) Weapons and explosives. Notwithstanding the provisions of any other law, rule or regulation, no person while on postal property may carry firearms, other dangerous or deadly weapons, or explosives, either openly or concealed, or store the same on postal property, except for official purposes.”

And USPS Poster 158 (which is supposed to be posted in all workplaces in the USPS) states:

“Possession of Firearms and Other Dangerous Weapons on Postal Service Property Is Prohibited by Law

Possessing a firearm or other dangerous weapon in a federal facility for other than official purposes, causing such a weapon to be present, or attempting to do so are punishable by a fine, imprisonment for up to 1 year, or both.

If the prohibited weapon is intended to be used to commit a crime, the penalty is an increased fine, imprisonment for up to 5 years, or both.

Title 18, United States Code, Section 930

No person on U.S. Postal Service property may carry or store firearms, explosives, or other dangerous or deadly weapons, either openly or concealed, except for official purposes.

Title 39, Code of Federal Regulations, Section 232.1

Report all firearms violations immediately to the U.S. Postal Inspection Service.”

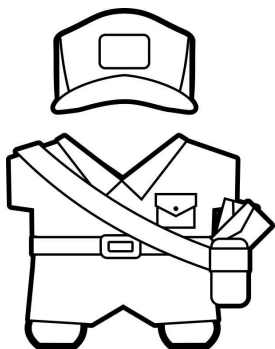
The law states that you cannot carry or store firearms on postal property. Having a firearm in your vehicle while on postal property may be considered storing it on postal property. I know there are some gun enthusiasts and some “legal experts” out there who would like to debate this. What I often say in these types of situations is: Do you really want to be the test case for this rule or law? If not, then don’t have a firearm at work, which means not on your person, not in your satchel, not in your locker, and not in your vehicle if it is parked on postal property. Of course, if your vehicle is not parked on postal property, and you have a gun in it, then all of the above would not apply, just as it would not apply to a gun safe in your home. I hope this is clear for everyone, but if you have any questions, please feel free to call me.

On a different subject, I know that staffing continues to be an issue in nearly every office represented by Branch 111. As I have stated before, my hope is that most of the staffing issues will be resolved in the next contract, so have faith and hang in there!

Michael J. Wahlquist

-President, NALC Branch 111

There was not a March edition of the Pavement Pounder.



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.

Members of Branch 111-

It has been my honor and pleasure to be a member of Branch 111 for the last 17 years. It has been an even greater honor and pleasure to have served the members of Branch 111 for the last 15 years. Some of my fondest memories and life lessons have been alongside many of you.

Finding the right words to thank everyone is impossible, but I will try. Thank you to the many leaders whose footsteps I have followed- for guiding me, teaching me, advising me, counseling me, mentoring me, giving me opportunities, supporting me, correcting me, and mostly for being hard on me and pushing me- many times beyond my comfort level. Thank you to the members for having trust and faith in me to represent you. Thank you to my fellow stewards for allowing me the grace to make mistakes, learn from them, and to grow both personally and professionally. I owe so many of you a truckload of thanks because each of you has impacted me in some way. And every professional accomplishment I have made is owed, in part, to those who have been with me on this ride. And man, has it been wild at times, but I wouldn't have wanted it any other way.

In closing, I will be resigning as Vice President of Branch 111 effective March 31, 2023. While I will miss my work in Branch 111, I leave with a wealth of knowledge and experiences to carry into my new position. I am excited to announce I have been offered, and have accepted, a full-time NALC position. Effective April 3, 2023, I will have the pleasure of joining Region 2 as their new RGA. I look forward to continuing to serve the members of the NALC on a larger scale, and to seeing many you at future NALC events!

In Solidarity,
Amie B. Gallo

Amie Gallo Appointed to RGA

I want to personally congratulate Amie Gallo on her new adventure. President Renfro appointed Amie into the position of Regional Grievance Assistant (RGA) for Region 2 effective April 3rd. Amie has been a vital part of Branch 111 from the beginning of her Union career. She became a steward in Murray in 2008. She served as Pavement Pounder Editor, arbitration advocate and state trustee. In 2019 she became Vice President of Branch 111 and was re-elected in 2020. Amie and I worked side-by-side as Vice Presidents until she stepped down in March. I want Amie to know how much I appreciate her hard work, her advice, and her friendship. I truly am a better steward/officer because of Amie. I wish her and her family the best of luck in Washington. I expect we will work together on projects in the future.

The Vice President/Director of Education position is currently vacant but will be filled by Mike Wahlquist by the end of April. I look forward to working closely with whomever Mike appoints into the position. They certainly have big shoes to fill.

Mike Hansen , Executive Vice President

HEALTH BENEFITS

Jim Kerekes

For the new Postal Service Health Plan, I want to share some general information. For the last 60 plus years NALC has participated in the FEHBP. The law and rules of operation of FEHBP are under Chapter 89 of title 5 United States Code. The new PSHBP will be under the same chapter 89 of title 5. It will be inserted after sec 8903b and will be called sec.8903c. OPM is the main entity that will get this up and running and control it as they have the FEHBP. That program will still be available for non-postal federal employees and their retirees.

There are four main agencies involved: 1. OPM, 2. Social Security Administration, 3. Centers for Medicare and Medicaid, 4. Health and Human Services. I might be wrong but I think they should be sending out information to all of us at the beginning of October this year. So, I would advise everyone Postal employees and annuitants alike to check and be sure OPM and HR has your mailing address. If you move or change your address, let them know right away.

Will share more information the best way I can to keep all up to date. I've been getting a lot calls lately, but don't know whom they are. When you call leave a voice mail message and or text a message so I can call you back. This information is just a little much more to this new health plan to come.

NALC BRANCH 111
Minutes of the Regular Union Meeting
March 9, 2023

Convened at 6:36 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

Moment of Silence for Dale Bennett who passed away.

Roll Call by Steve McNees

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

Reading of the Communications – Steve McNees

- Received an extension of the National dispensation for branches and state meetings and elections through June 30, 2023. • Three carriers in the Down-town Station received notice that changes to their bid string assignments were being made. They had previously agreed to the changes. • Jay Reupena and Stormy Blood have received tentative acceptance to NALC Advanced Formal A and Beyond Training to be held in Maryland.

Application for Membership by Mike Hansen

- Bella Tartaro

Special Announcement:

- The reading of Proposed Bylaws Changes (from the bylaws committee) is being done tonight. Because there are 28 pages of changes they won't actually be read. Printed copies of the changes were available to review during the meeting.

LETTER CARRIER POLITICAL FUND (LCPF) by Josh Thibodeau – not present

MDA COORDINATOR by Jeremy Bailey No report

DIRECTOR OF VETERAN AFFAIRS - Jimmy Fleming

- Jimmy is preparing a card for new hires so that they will have the info to easily get a V.A. Booklet sent to them. It will also have his information if they needed help or information about Veteran's rights.

LEGISLATIVE by Chad Mortensen

- For retirees: Senate bill S-597 was just introduced. It is a bipartisan bill to fix the Windfall Elimination Bill. Everyone should call senators Romney and Lee and ask them to vote for the bill.

Mayor Mendenhall will try to be at our May union meeting. March 28th Phil Rodriquez, Josh Thibodeau, Amy Ellis and Chad will be in D.C. to lobby for the Federal Retirees Fairness Act and the Windfall Elimination. We beat the States Union Dues bill. It didn't get out of committee.

TRUSTEES by Chad Mortensen

- The committee didn't meet this month, but will meet next month.

MBA, COMPENSATION by Bob Jewell

- The American Rescue Plan Act -2021 (for the Covid pandemic), expired January 27th. Covid-19 cases will now be handled through OWCP like all other compensation claims. Claims are generally on CA-2 because there is no documentation from where and when the disease came from. A CA-1 can be filed but you have to have specific evidence of the source and time of getting Covid. You must write a narrative of how you got Covid (with reasonable medical certainty), then your doctor also must write a narrative. • You cannot use the self-test unless a doctor verifies it. Tests taken at pharmacies will work. • FECA bulletin 23-02 reports on how to file Covid claims.
- Call Bob if you need help with filing a claim.

HEALTH BENEFITS by Jim Kerekes

- Some are having trouble getting on PostalEase to access their postal accounts and LiteBlue. There is a problem with using Google. It has been misdirecting to other websites. If you have problems call Human Resources.
- CCAs going to regular need to make sure they quickly select a health plan within 60 days to avoid possibly losing coverage.

ORGANIZER by Justin Lindquist – not present

SAFETY AND HEALTH by Justin Lindquist – not present

DIRECTOR OF RETIREES by Jeff Asay

- The Retiree Dinner is April 26th from 3:30 to 5:30pm at the Chuck-A-Rama in Draper. Retirees can bring one guest. Cost is free.

TREASURER by Mike Madsen

- no report

VICE PRESIDENT by Amie Gallo

- Amy read a statement she wrote, thanking members for their support and help over the last 15 years. She announced that she will be resigning from her position as V.P. effective March 31, 2023. • She also announced that she has accepted a full-time NALC position, as the Region 2 RGA effective April 3rd. • She was given a Letter Carrier Cheer.

EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT by Mike Hansen

- 598 grievances filed so far this year.
- The Sandy office has converted to hiring all PTFs. All CCAs were converted to PTF at the same time.
- Next week's steward training (Wednesday at 6:30pm) is about the new route inspection process. Phil Rodriquez and Eric Grotepas will be teaching the class. Those not stewards who want to attend are welcome.
- Social Media: follow us on Facebook and Instagram. This is a way for us to get information out.
- The Pavement Pounder now has a 3-month calendar on the 1st page.

PRESIDENT by Mike Wahlquist

- As of last Saturday, we had 22 CCAs in the SLC Installation. We need 140, so we are 118 carriers short. Hopefully the new contract will help solve some of the staffing problems. • One carrier exceeded 100 hours in a week in Sandy.
- The Summer Party is June 24th at the Murray Park, 6:15pm.
- The Steak Fry is August 26th, 6-9pm, at Pavilion 5 in Murray Park.
- Amie Gallo Has Done An Amazing Job !
- We will be sending 27 to steward college this year. That is the most ever.

SPECIAL ORDERS:

Bylaws Committee Chairman (Jeff Asay): Bylaws Changes to be discussed next week. Most of the changes are simple (like pronoun changes). There are a couple of considerable changes. One was to combine descriptions of the president's duties from several places into one section of the bylaws. The meeting requirements for determining qualifications for finances to meetings was consolidated and made the same for all conventions and training (attending 67% of union meetings).

- Copies of the Proposed Bylaws Changes were available to read. Those on Zoom (or not) can request a copy emailed to them by emailing or texting Mike Wahlquist.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

NEW BUSINESS: 21 members have been registered for the State Convention. **GOOD OF THE ASSOCIATION: FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF THE SERVICE: DRAW AND ADJOURN** – 7:46 pm ; • \$25 drawing winners Kim Mortensen and Chad Mortensen

- RETIREES – \$75 (Jesse Lozano was not present). Next month it will be \$100 • PROGRESSIVE A - \$475 (Jolene Madrid was not present). Next Meeting it will be \$500 • PROGRESSIVE B - \$375 (Kent Olsen was not present). Next Meeting it will be \$400

NALC BRANCH 111
Minutes of the Regular Union Meeting
April 13, 2023

Convened at 6:30 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

Moment of Silence for John Zambos who passed away.

Roll Call by Steve McNees

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

Reading of the Communications – Steve McNees

- The Utah Labor Community Services is sponsoring a Golf Tournament on June 9, 2023 at The Ridge Golf Club in West Valley. There will be lunch, awards, and raffle drawings.
- We received the Union Labor Center Owners Association Balance sheet.
- We received the Agenda and Minutes of the Union Labor Center homeowners Assoc. meeting held in April.
- Jay Reupena, Stormy Blood, Kim Mortensen, and Destiney Carrillo received confirmation to attend the NALC Advanced Formal A and Beyond Training in Maryland in September.

Application for Membership by Mike Hansen

- Jessica Luna, Jacob Morrison, Shawna Butts, Mariah Kraft, David Reyna Rodriguez, Olivia Young, Tristan Rodriguez, Jose Sandoval-Sanchez, Anthony Gomes, Logen Garner, Joshua Lozano, Jeremiah Garner, Kylie Ardelean, Scott Newman, Alexander Christensen, Scott Evans

LETTER CARRIER POLITICAL FUND (LCPF) by Josh Thibodeau – not present

MDA COORDINATOR by Jeremy Bailey – not present

DIRECTOR OF VETERAN AFFAIRS - Jimmy Fleming – not present

LEGISLATIVE by Chad Mortensen

- Chad and two others were in DC for 2 days meeting with our legislators or their aides. They were able to educate the new aides. Senate bill S957 (windfall elimination) was one of the bills discussed. Our representatives need to hear from the retired carriers to know we are all concerned. The buyback of time worked as TE's and casuals for retirement was discussed, but hasn't been a bill presented this year.
- Almost election time in Utah. Everyone should get involved in your party's meetings.
- The AFL-CIO elections are coming up soon.

TRUSTEES by Chad Mortensen

- The trustees met Tuesday and reviewed 2 months of books. Chad requested that members and officers deposit their checks in a timely manner.

MBA, COMPENSATION by Bob Jewell

- There are big changes coming to OWCP. They are hiring more employees to handle disability, claim loss, medical bills, health insurance payments, and overpayment. There is now an Escalation Bar on the OWCP website that you can request a claims examiners help. You leave a message requesting help. They have 2 days to respond. If they don't respond in two days you can submit your request again and it goes to the supervisor who has two days to respond. If they don't respond in two days you can appeal even higher.
- When you first fill out a CA-1 you have had 30 days to get your medical documentation in. It is now 60 days. Call your claims examiner and let them know you have submitted your documentation so it doesn't just sit for 60 days.

Mike Wahlquist turned the gavel over to Mike Hansen so he could attend a family activity.

HEALTH BENEFITS by Jim Kerekes

- It appears that OPM will be responsible for active and retired employee claims in the future. If you don't sign up timely in the new system you will be assigned to a plan similar to your last plan.
- HR isn't going to be able to handle all of the new plans. Make sure they have your current address.
- The money put in the retiree's future benefits fund will be put into the new plan to help fund the new program.

ORGANIZER by Justin Lindquist – not present

SAFETY AND HEALTH by Justin Lindquist – not present

DIRECTOR OF RETIREES by Jeff Asay

- April 26th is the Retiree Dinner at the Draper Chuck-A-Rama. Each retiree and one guest at free. Contact Jeff if you need a ride.
- Do not try to call OPM. It takes many hours to get someone to talk to. Learn how to login to OPM on your computer/phone and learn how to use it. Keep you login information and passwords in a safe place where you can find them. As soon as you get your CSA number and temporary password – login in and set up your complete OPM account.

TREASURER by Mike Madsen

- Checks have gone out to those attending state convention.
- There was \$28,000 income last month which was \$2,000 more than we spent.

VICE PRESIDENT (vacant)

- Amie Gallo was appointed as a Regional Grievance Assistant. She will work in the NBA's office in Washington state.

EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT by Mike Hansen

- 869 grievances filed so far this year.
- The branch has Branch Hoodies for sale. They are \$25 each. Call or text Mike Hansen if you order one to give him your size. They can be paid for on the branch website (branch111.com) under "Donations, Purchases, and Payments."
- Food drive – everything is going great. It is May 13th this year. The steward will meet on April 27th to prepare the bags and cards to be distributed to the offices.
- We are sending 27 stewards to steward college this year. This is the best we have ever done.
- If anything abnormal happens to a letter carrier, call Mike Hansen and he will help you through the issue. Same goes if you are being called into a management investigation alone.
- Get everything out of your vehicle that may be banned from postal property (if you park on postal property). This includes guns, other weapons, drugs, etc. They have been requesting employee's keys and inspecting their cars.
- Advos are going away. They have already stopped sending them in several communities.
- If you are having trouble logging in to LiteBlue, don't let it wait too long to get help. If you don't have a pin number, immediately ask for a temporary one from your manager.

PRESIDENT by Mike Wahlquist

- They had an owners meeting where they talked about the property behind our building that was sold. They also discussed the heating/cooling system which needs to be replaced. There is a \$600,000 bid currently for just the heating boilers.
- New hires will likely make regular within 6 months in Salt Lake. Now is a good time to let friends know the USPS is hiring. People who take the postal exam need to be made aware that if they fail to complete even one question on the exam, they will automatically fail. Make sure to answer every question.

SPECIAL ORDERS:

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

- **Bylaws Amendment:** Jeff Asay discussed the proposed changes to the bylaws. They mostly just updated the old language by changing pronouns. There were consolidations in places such as the presidential duties that were scattered throughout the bylaws. They are now combined into one article for clarity. The president is a letter carrier and the branch pays him the same benefits as an active carrier. The language wasn't clearly stated in one place, it now is. Copies of the new bylaws were available to everyone on the back table and by email last week. There was a Motion to adopt these changes to the bylaws. All changes will have to go to National for their approval. The motion passed unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS:

- **Nominations of Delegates to the AFL-CIO Convention June 23rd.** Nominations were opened. Nominations will remain open until next month's meeting. Nominees: Kirk McLaughlin, Chad Mortensen, Jim Kerekes, Kim Mortensen, Mike Simonsen, Mike Hansen, Keith Warner, Trey Terry
- **Motion to combine/move the money allotted to Steward College** to the State Convention fund. This will fully fund the State Convention. The Steward College expenses would then be paid using \$8,341 money set aside from the branch Training Fund along with \$1,271 from the general fund (part of this motion) . The total is not to exceed \$15,211.71. The motion as presented, not to exceed \$15,211, passed without amendment.

GOOD OF THE ASSOCIATION:

- The NALC Step B team will be at the Stewards College. Those at training will be able to ask them how they came to a settlement on one or more of their grievances.

FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF THE SERVICE:

DRAW AND ADJOURN – 7:51 pm

- \$25 drawing winners: Blake Mellor and Mike Simonsen
- RETIREES – \$100 (Cary Webb was not present). Next month it will be \$125.
- PROGRESSIVE A - \$500 (Mary Wilcox Riggs was not present). Next Meeting it will be \$525.
- PROGRESSIVE B - \$400 (Jeremy Manwell was not present). Next Meeting it will be \$425.
- BRANCH HOODIE - Spencer Heinz



John George Zambos

1953 — 2023

Dedicated to the people of our great nation, John spent his entire adult life in uniform. He honorably served his country for four years in the US Navy, then worked for the US Postal Service for 46 years. As a letter carrier he always took care of his customers, with a particular dedication to the elderly. John was very active in the Letter Carriers Union and was shop steward for many years. Sadly, John retired only five months ago.

National Association of Letter Carriers
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Michelle Snapp Retirement Photo

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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Vice-President
Mike Hansen
Vice-President
Amie B. Gallo
Treasurer
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