



# The Pavement Pounder

## Branch 111 NALC

### “The Wasatch Branch”

Publication  
2025.4  
April  
edition

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

#### President’s Report **Committee of Presidents**

On March 28<sup>th</sup> I flew to Vancouver, Washington, to attend the 2025 Region 2 Committee of Presidents. I met with the other Branch Presidents for two days, and we discussed our problems and successes, and what we wanted to accomplish in the future as a Region. I will try and outline here some of the things we discussed that are important to the membership.

The first thing that came up was our problems with the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB). President Trump kicked labor-friendly Gwynne A. Wilcox off the board, which meant that the board has no quorum and can no longer make rulings, but she filed a lawsuit, and a lower court put her back on the board. But, after she rejoined the board, President Trump appealed the case to the Supreme Court, which ruled in his favor and she was fired again, which means that we again have no quorum, and we can no longer obtain top-level rulings from the NLRB.

The NLRB is where we ultimately enforce our rights as a union. The NLRB doesn’t make rulings as often as they used to because we have a working contract with the Post Office. The NLRB has deferred more and more filings back to the grievance procedure because they want us to work out our problems through grievances. I have seen them do this more and more often during the last 20 years, and I believe it is out of laziness on the part of the NLRB, as investigating and processing complaints can take a lot of time and effort.

The NBA’s office spoke about a specific case in our region where the NALC deliberately did not file a grievance so that there could be no deferral from the NLRB. However, the NLRB still deferred the complaint back to the grievance process. We reappealed the case, stating that the time limits had passed and argued that no grievance could be filed. The NLRB then contacted the Post Office and agreed with their labor department to unilaterally waive the time limits for filing a grievance (which cannot be done). Despite this, we are still trying to force the NLRB to issue a decision on the case. Of course, without a quorum at the head of the NLRB, we may be stuck in limbo regardless.

Then we talked about the new contract. The new Pay-Scale will go into effect on April 19<sup>th</sup>, which means that we will see it on the paycheck that we receive on May

9<sup>th</sup>. Most of the contract provisions will not start immediately, such as volunteering for more than 12 hours (which cannot start until we receive automatic pay for it), and new equalization lists (which won’t start until July 1<sup>st</sup> at the earliest). What has started right now is the right of refusal (which means that you no longer have to work past 12 hours). If you work past 12 hours it means that you have volunteered, so our advice is not to do so. Communication will be key, as well as allowing yourself a safe amount of driving time/clean-up time to ensure that you don’t exceed the 12-hour limit unless you are volunteering to do so.

We then spoke about current legislation that is affecting letter carriers. All LCPF money will be spent on legislation for the next year and a half, according to John Beaumont, our regional legislative director. He said that some bills we should be writing and calling our Representatives and Senators about are:

- HR 70** - Protecting the People’s Post Office (self-explanatory)
- S 1006** - Federal Workforce Freedom Act - A bill to prohibit Federal employees from organizing, joining, or participating in labor unions for purposes of collective bargaining or representation, and for other purposes.
- HR 1522** - Fairness Act – allowing CCAs/TEs to buy-back their non-career time for retirement.

**There has never been a time when we need to be contacting out Representatives and Senators more than right now.** I want to thank all the people who put this event on, and all those who showed up to the NALC rally that we held on March 23<sup>rd</sup>. We had between 400 and 500 attendees, and it was reported on several news stations and media sites. Jeff Worthington, President of the Utah ALF-CIO, stated that it was one of the best rallies that he has ever attended (and he has been to hundreds). We wrote postcards at the rally, and Representative Kennedy’s office called to thank us for the cards and said that our message was heard. In all my years, I have never had a Representative’s office reach out to us. We need Congress on our side, so lets keep going! Let’s continue to raise our voices, by phone, by letter, by any way we can, to get Congress on our side!

In solidarity,  
Michael J. Wahlquist  
President, NALC Branch 111

Executive Vice President's Report:  
**National Agreement– what changes?**

**Money Matters:**

- **Coming Soon (Effective April 19th, reflected in May 9th Paycheck):**  
Career Carriers: 1.3% and 1.4% General Wage Increases.  
All: Four retroactive Cost of Living Adjustments (COLAs).  
CCAs: 2.3% and 2.4% General Wage Increases.
- **Coming Within Roughly the Next 6 Months (Up to 180 Days):**  
Elimination of Step AA and A for career carriers.  
\$1,000 payment for career carriers at Step P.  
Extra \$0.50 per hour for CCAs.
- **Later This Year (November 15, 2025):**  
Career Carriers: Remaining 1.5% General Wage Increase.  
CCAs: Remaining 2.5% General Wage Increase.  
Future COLAs: September 2025 and March 2026 (specific amounts to be announced).  
Back Pay: Calculations will start after April 19th and will take several months.

**Rule Changes:**

- **Already Here:**  
Right of Refusal for working beyond limits.
- **Waiting on Payroll Fix (Timeline Unknown):**  
Volunteering to work past work hour limits will take effect after the double time and a half payroll correction is implemented.
- **Hoping for July 1st:**  
New Overtime Desired List (ODL) implementation is targeted for the quarter after the new payroll system goes live.
- **When National Parties Agree (Timeline Unknown):**  
Implementation of the Employee Retention Program.  
If a Joint Agreement is Reached: Office Time Changes will only occur if there's an agreement on a Joint Route Inspection process.

**Key Takeaway for Members:**

- Know Your Rights NOW: The Right of Refusal is in effect.
- Communicate Clearly: When approaching work hour limits, make your intentions clear to management. Checking in when you anticipate exceeding estimates will be essential.

We know that there are going to be some growing pains when it comes to the new rule changes and Branch 111 will make it a priority to offer education to both the stewards and the rank and file members.

In Solidarity,  
Mike Hansen  
Executive Vice President  
Branch 111, NALC

Upcoming  
for



**NALC**  
BRANCH 111

May

Thursday 1st	E-Board
Thursday 8th	Branch Meeting
11th - 15th	Year 1 Steward College
Wednesday 21st	Steward Training

June

Thursday 5th	E-Board
Thursday 12th	Branch Meeting
Wednesday 18th	Steward Training
Saturday 21st	Summer Party

July

Thursday 3rd	E-Board
Thursday 10th	Branch Meeting
Wednesday 16th	Steward Training



**NALC**  
BRANCH 111



**2023-2026**  
**National Agreement**  
**Summary**

**NALC BRANCH 111**  
**Minutes of the Regular Union Meeting**  
**April 10, 2025**

**Convened** at 6:40 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 March 2025 union meeting were posted. With no objection the minutes will be filed for future reference.

**Reading of the Communications** by Steve McNeas  
• We received a summary, by branch, of the voting on the National Agreement held in January. • The NALC State officers were sent a request for a financial report to be prepared for the State Convention delegates, including all income and detailed expenses during the period from the 2023 convention until the 2025 Convention. • A new Automatic Dues Correction Program has been created at National to automatically correct dues to the regular branch amount. We will need to opt in to the program to participate. • Sabrina Clark has been designated by management as the new Management Representative at Formal A for all grievances regarding Route Count grievances in the West Jordan station. • Scheduled Formal Route Counts and Inspections are as follows: SLC Foothill 3/29/25-4/4/25; SLC Collections 4/5/25-4/11/25; West Jordan Station 4/19/25-4/25/25. • A registration form for the 2025 Labor Day Picnic & Car Show, 9/1/2025, has been received. Levels of sponsorship range from \$350 to \$2,250, due no later than 7/11/25. T-shirts are on sale for \$20.

**Application for Membership** by Mike Hansen • Christian Richardson, Ryan Woodland, Alex Tafua, John Diaz

**LETTER CARRIER POLITICAL FUND** (LCPF) by Josh Thibodeau  
• He had 5-6 sign up for LCPF at the rally 2 weeks ago. • Money talks in politics. If we want Congress to listen to us, we have to donate to LCPF.

**MDA COORDINATOR** by Nathan Chester  
We sent a check to MDA for quarter 1 of 2025 of \$3,014 (from Super Bowl Squares we sold). We were 4<sup>th</sup> in the nation. • He would like to hear any suggestion you might have for activities the rest of the year.

**DIRECTOR OF VETERAN AFFAIRS** by Jimmy Fleming – Not present  
**LEGISLATIVE** by Chad Mortensen

• HR70 (USPS remain independent) has sufficient support but is being held up by the Speaker of the House. • Call you representatives! They track the calls. The number of calls they receive is important in determining how their constituents want them to vote on issues. It makes a big difference.

**TRUSTEES** by Chad Mortensen  
• No meeting last month because of State Convention.

**MBA / COMPENSATION** by Bob Jewell  
• MBA stands for Mutual Benefit Association. It is the NALC's version of AFLAC (supplemental insurance). It will help cover what your regular health insurance doesn't cover, especially when you have very high expenses. • Call Bob if you are injured and on compensation. It is important to make sure your health benefits are still being paid while you are off. You can look it up on the OWCP website, but let Bob help you.

**HEALTH BENEFITS** by Jim Kerekes  
Those on SilverScript for drug benefits, are entitled to a refund of \$600 each year. After 4 months into the year, you have paid enough premiums to SilverScript to collect the entire \$600 refund (end of this month). • There are situations where SilverScript may not cover a drug that used to be covered by our previous plan. It may still be covered by NALC. You may need to call Jim to get help to straighten out the problem.

**ORGANIZER** by Justin Lindquist  
Two trainees didn't sign up for the union this last month. One doesn't work here anymore and the other probably won't be for very long. The hiring process has slowed down to about 3 per week. • On shadow days, you should talk to the new hires, introduce yourself and let them know what we are all about and how important the union is.

**SAFETY AND HEALTH** by Justin Lindquist –  
• Justin is trying to get out to the stations and hear what you have to say. You are in charge of your safety no matter what management is saying or doing (your pace, when you will get done, etc). You do your work safely based on the conditions you have.

**DIRECTOR OF RETIREES** by Jeff Asay - excused  
**SPECIAL SERVICE AWARD CEREMONY:** Gold Cards are awarded for 50 years of membership and include not having to pay dues anymore. Awards were presented to: Doug Harding (Gold Card), Glenn Christensen (Gold Card and 55- & 60-year pins), John Groves (Gold Card), Eldon Butters (70-year plaque), Steve Franz (60-year pin). Not present: Paul Robison (70-year Plaque),

Meeting minutes (continued)

Lee Mortensen (Gold Card), Gilbert Kocher (Gold Card).

**TREASURER** by Mike Madsen

Last month: Income \$41,759, expenses \$55,632, with \$13,873 spent more than brought in. • Additionally, \$30,000 was used for training from our PPR fund (grievance remedies account)

**VICE PRESIDENT** by Destiney Carrillo –

For steward training next week, she will be reviewing a couple of B-team decision and discussing different parts of the decisions. • On April 23<sup>rd</sup>, Destiney will be in the union hall from 6:30 to 8:00pm for anyone who wants to work on grievances or needs help with anything.

**EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT** by Mike Hansen

•687 grievances filed this year. • The new grievance log is being created so that stewards will be able to search for grievances by name, contract provision, results, etc. to help them file new grievances. It is about 1/3 done and usable. Stewards, please bring your closed grievance files to the office. • He and Destiney are working on creating training on new rules and regulations for all carriers, not just the stewards. It may be in multiple forms like in person training and Webex. But, if regular carriers don't come to learn, then we only have Facebook, the Pavement Pounder, meetings and the stewards to get the word out. Such training would include "the right of refusal" which in now live regarding work beyond 12 hours. Another issue is the Mentor Program for PTFs in the new

contract. Technically, PTFs in their first 4 months are not supposed to work more than 8 hours. This training and much more is very important for all carriers.

**PRESIDENT** by Mike Wahlquist

• Thanked all of the outgoing State Assoc officers. • We have an 804-case backlog on grievances at Region. Nationally this is broken nationwide. • New provisions of Article 8 will become effective July 1<sup>st</sup>. • Pay increases should become effective on the 19<sup>th</sup>. • Letter Carriers of the Year are Eric Grotepas (111) and Zak Harris (Provo). • Recent B Team grievances are all uploaded. Stewards with Google Drive will now be able to access these decisions.

**SPECIAL ORDERS:** none

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS:** none

**NEW BUSINESS:** none

**GOOD OF THE ASSOCIATION:** Motion to require members who win a door prize while on Zoom, will be required to acknowledge they are still online to win the prize. Motion: No vote, meeting time expired.

**IMPROVEMENT OF THE ASSOCIATION:** none:

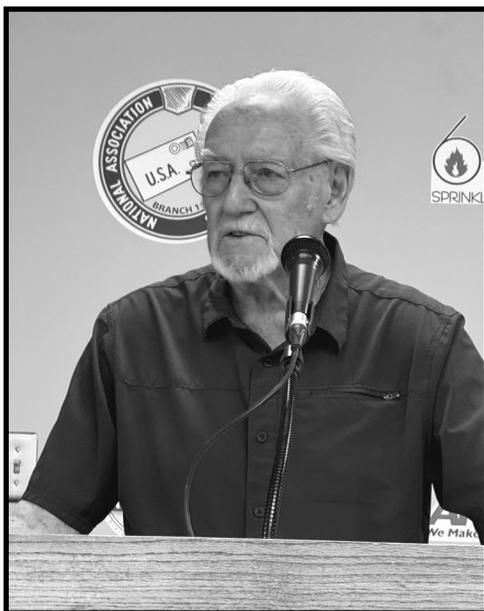
**DRAW AND ADJOURN** – 8:30pm

• \$50 DRAWING WINNERS: John Groves and Chad Mortensen

• RETIREES – \$700 (Julie Sealock - was not present). Next month it will be \$725.

• PROGRESSIVE A - \$1,100 (Roxy Lyon - was not present). Next Meeting it will be \$1,125.

• PROGRESSIVE B - \$75 (Ashley Wall - was not present). Next Meeting it will be \$100



Eldon Butters addresses the branch after receiving his 70-year plaque



Retirees awarded: Doug Harding (Gold Card), Glen Christensen (Gold card, 55 year pin and 60 year pin), John Groves (Gold Card), Eldon Butters (70-year plaque!), Steve Franz (60-year pin). Not Present: Paul Robison (70- year plaque), Lee Mortensen, (Gold Card), Gilbert Kocher (Gold Card).

## NALC HEALTH BENEFITS

Jimmy Kerekes

### Silver Script Information:

Beginning in May you can file with Health Equity/ Wage Works for a \$600.00 dollars reimbursement of your part B premiums of \$185.00/month. Health Equity/ Wage Works phone # 1-844-768-5644.

If Silver Script takes a drug off their list of drugs and you have been taking that drug, they should notify you of that drug being removed. You can request a copy (booklet) of all the drugs on their list. You can also see the drug list on their website. It pays to check twice a year at least to see if your drugs are still on the list. They update their drug list every year.

If all your medical card information is correct it should re-route to NALC drug list to get the drug that was removed from Silver Script. That system is called wrap around coverage. Remember NALC uses CVS CARE-MARK DRUG PROGRAM.

### NALC HEALTH GENERAL INFORMATION:

When reporting on our health plan, I usually reference the high option plan. Of course, we have the FEHB High option plan and then FEHB Consumer Driven Health Plan. Both plans are operated by CIGNA. The NALC, I believe, negotiates with OPM for both options. When I talk about a topic of insurance be sure and look in the official brochure the option you have to understand the topic. I always try to put out correct information.

Here's a topic I wanted to touch on since I recently got a text message from my doctor.

**TELE-VISITS:** As I mentioned above the two options are different. If you use the official brochure about this topic, be sure and use the index for each option about the topic.

**High Option:** There is a \$10.00 co-pay for Urgent Care and Dermatology. The other two or three offered services there is no co-pay. The high option tele-visit is accessible by Download the NALCHBP Telehealth mobile app. Powered by Amwell from Google Play on the Apple App Store, visit [www.nalchbptelehealth.org](http://www.nalchbptelehealth.org).

**The CDHP OPTION:** tele-health is accessed by MDLIVE by logging into [www.mycigna.com](http://www.mycigna.com) and clicking "Talk to the Doctor".

With the high option plan, you pay a \$10.00 co-pay for a tele-visit (for in-network providers). Those who have Medicare part B together with the NALC high option will pay nothing. I've never used the tele service. In future union meetings, if anyone has a story of using tele-health and would like to share it, let me know.

Thanks everyone. Hope we'll keep all we've worked to achieve, including our Health Insurance.

## "Action Is The Antidote To Anxiety"

### Ways to Act!

- 1-Give to LCPF (letter carrier's political fund) call Josh Thibodeau (801)953-6343
- 2-Convince ALL letter carriers to join NALC
- 3-Call or write your Senators, ask them to

**Protect the USPS** by supporting HR 70

### 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

- 7-Invite others to join our efforts





NALC BRANCH 68 PRESENTS  
**5TH ANNUAL MDA FUNDRAISER  
 18 HOLE GOLF TOURNAMENT  
 4-PERSON SCRAMBLE**  
**JUNE 19, 2025 @ 7AM CHECKIN**

.....  
 @ MT OGDEN GOLF  
 COURSE  
 1787 CONSTITUTION WAY  
 OGDEN, UTAH

OPPORTUNITY PRIZE TICKETS WILL BE SOLD AT EVENT & FOR \$5

- Cost \$80 per person
- Lunch included
- Shotgun start @ 8:00am
- Deadline to enter and pay June 2nd
- You can Venmo @ Larry-Mathie
- Contact Larry Mathie with questions: 801-678-1715

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My husband has been a letter carrier for 27 years, so I know and understand how vacations work for the post office

**More Information :**

- 📞 1-801-864-7662
- 🌐 [Stephtravel.com](http://Stephtravel.com)
- ✉️ [stephtravel16@gmail.com](mailto:stephtravel16@gmail.com)

**State Convention:**

Congratulations to Branch 111’s own **Eric Grotepas**, who was awarded 2024 State of Utah’s Carrier of the Year!

Congratulations to the following Branch 111 members who were elected and appointed to state association offices:

Michael Wahlquist– Secretary

Connor Lawrence– Trustee

Jimmy Kerekes– Director of Retirees

Spencer Heinz– Trustee

John Mister– Editor

Quincy Mason– Sargent-At-Arms

**IN THE NEWS:**

More reasons to contact your Senators and Representatives. During proposals in this year’s federal budget will severely impact USPS employees. As reported in “Federal News Network”, the following are currently being proposed. I know it’s intimidating for some to call their members of Congress, but know that **THEY ARE WORKING FOR YOU!** They are just normal people like us, and once you make that first call, it gets easier and easier. I heard so many people very upset with our contract raises, but these proposals will wipe those raises out plus some. Download the app “5 calls”, which makes it extremely easy to contact your representatives.

The budget resolution could additionally include changes to retirement benefits for many federal employees and annuitants through the Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS).

In one proposal from House Republicans, lawmakers are considering increasing federal employees’ FERS contribution rates to a 4.4% across-the-board contribution toward the civil service retirement and disability fund. Currently, FERS employees contribute 0.8% if they were hired in 2012 or earlier, 3.1% if they were hired in 2013, and 4.4% if they were hired during or after 2014.

The changes, if implemented, would put all federal employees at a contribution rate of 4.4%. The proposal would not alter the value of federal employees’ annuity payments, but it would result in feds paying more from their paychecks into OPM’s retirement fund. Changing high-3 to high-5 for retiring feds

Republicans have also been eyeing possible changes to the current “high-3” calculation for determining the value of federal employees’ retirement annuities.

Currently, the retirement formula calculates federal employees’ annuities by taking the average of their highest three consecutive years of earnings. But the proposal, if implemented, would move federal employees instead to a “high-5” calculation for the FERS retiree benefit — in other words, calculating feds’ annuities based on the average of their highest five consecutive years of earnings in the civil service. Removing FERS supplemental payments

Another proposal from House Republicans seeks to eliminate FERS supplemental retirement payments, which the lawmakers said would save somewhere between \$5 billion and \$13 billion over the next 10 years.

By law, federal employees who retire before age 62 earn a supplemental FERS payment to bridge the gap until they become eligible for Social Security. But House Republicans are considering entirely removing that benefit for federal retirees.

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The Pavement Pounder is the official publication of NALC Branch 111

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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.