

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

www.branch111.com

Pavement Pounder



Publication 2023.11

November 2023

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

Election Issue

November

Wednesday 15th Steward Training

Tuesday 21st Branch Officer Ballots Mailed

December

Thursday 7th E-Board

Monday 14th Voting Polls Close

Thursday 14th Branch Meeting/Election Results

Wednesday 20th Steward Training

January

Thursday 4th E-Board

Thursday 11th Branch Meeting

Wednesday 17th Steward Training

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

Report of the President

Happy Holidays

The Holiday Season is on the horizon. This should be a time of celebration, family, gifts, and joy. It can also be a time of great stress. The media portrays Thanksgiving and Christmas as picture-perfect Norman Rockwell portraits, where no one is unhappy, the food is mouth-watering, the gifts are bountiful, and the bill never comes. While the Holidays are enjoyable, many people find the accompanying stress-level difficult to endure. Should you, your coworker, or a family member need the free counseling provided by EAP (Employee Assistance Program), please call 1-800-327-4968 (1-800-EAP-4YOU). Yes, it is free for your family members as well as for yourself.

Over the years, I have seen stress come into the workplace more times than I can remember. Whether the stress is being caused by a Supervisor, a Station manager, or a fellow employee, it must be dealt with by the USPS and by Union in an appropriate manner. Many people have heard of the “Joint Statement on Violence and Behavior in the Workplace” (M-01242), yet few know what it really says. The following is an exact quote:

“We openly acknowledge that in some places or units there is an unacceptable level of stress in the workplace; that there is no excuse for and will be no tolerance of violence or any threats of violence by anyone at any level of the Postal Service; and that there is no excuse for and will be no tolerance of harassment, intimidation, threats or bullying by anyone.

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.

We obviously cannot ensure that however seriously intentioned our words may be, they will not be treated with winks and nods, or skepticism, by some of our over 700,000 employees. But let there be no mistake that we mean what we say and we will enforce our commitment to a workplace where dignity respect and fairness are basic human rights, and where those who do not respect those rights are not tolerated.

Our intention is to make the workroom floor a safer, more harmonious, as well as a more productive workplace. We pledge our efforts to these objectives.”

Our staffing is low, and more people will want to be off to spend time with their families. We have and will have additional mail, most of it in the form of packages. And of course, we will have supervisors trying to micro-manage us so severely that they might as well be physically riding on our backs instead of figuratively doing so. But we need to remember that we have the contractual and legal right to work in an environment free from disrespect and abuse. If we are not treated with dignity and respect, or if we see someone else who is not treated with dignity and respect, we need to be proactive and do something about it. If a Supervisor or a

Station Manager is not treating people with dignity and respect, we need to let the local Shop Steward know about it. People often assume that Shop Stewards know everything that happens in a zone. While we do have the best bunch of Stewards that I have ever seen, and while I'm sure that they are as observant as they can be, they simply can't see and hear everything that goes on in a zone, so we need to inform them of problems that we see in the workplace. Does our involvement end there? No, we should also be ready to back up the Steward with support, which may include writing a statement as to what was witnessed. We will only have a decent place to work if we are willing to unite and strive to get it.

One thing to remember is that the Joint Statement was a pact made by two parties, the NALC and the USPS. That means every one of us is responsible and liable to do all that we can to make sure that people are being treated fairly. Does this mean that a Supervisor can not disagree with you about your estimate? Of course not, but in disagreeing with you they must treat you with dignity and respect. If you have any questions about whether your Supervisor/Manager has violated the Joint Statement, just tell your Steward about what happened, and they will let you know if the behavior was "over the line".

In fact, on that note, and since Thanksgiving is coming quickly, I'd like to list a couple of things that we should all be grateful for. Hiring is going better than it has in several years. Mike Hansen and I spoke with Tony Cline last week and he told us that the USPS anticipates having 76 CCAs in the Salt Lake Installation by the time we hit peak this year. That would be about double what we had last peak season. We should be grateful that we have a Union, which has negotiated a livable wage and great benefits, and even now is negotiating for an even better contract. And we should be grateful for every Letter Carrier who belongs to this great Union, for making all of this possible. May we all have a safe and happy Holiday Season!

Mike Wahlquist

Branch President



LETTER CARRIER POLITICAL FUND

By making a contribution to the Letter Carrier Political Fund, you are donating so voluntarily with the understanding that your contribution is not a condition of membership in the National Association of Letter Carriers or of employment by the Postal Service, nor is it part of union dues. You have a right to refuse to contribute without any reprisal. The Letter Carrier Political Fund will use the money it receives to contribute to candidates for federal office and undertake other political spending as permitted by law. Your selection shall remain in full force and effect until cancelled. Contributions to the Letter Carrier Political Fund are not deductible for federal income tax purposes. Federal law prohibits the Letter Carrier Political Fund from soliciting contributions from individuals who are not NALC members, executive and administrative staff or their families. Any contribution received from such an individual will be refunded to that contributor. Federal law requires us to use our best efforts to collect and report the name, mailing address, occupation and name of employer of individuals whose contributions exceed \$200 per calendar year. Any guideline amount is merely a suggestion, and an individual is free to contribute more or less than the guideline suggests and the Union will not favor or disadvantage anyone by reason of the amount of their contribution or their decision not to contribute.

Tough Job, But Someone's Gotta Do It

The members of Branch 111 are very lucky to be well represented by a large crew of dedicated Stewards. Currently in the 24 offices within Branch 111 we have 31 Stewards, 16 Alternates, several Formal A Representatives, and 16 Officers. I am proud to serve beside this amazing group of brothers and sisters.

So why do we do it? Some of us have served for decades and some of us are new to the job. We all have our reasons why we decided to serve. Some of the stewards come from Union families and it is in their blood, others are natural protectors and serving is very rewarding. Some are advocates of the contract and others could no longer sit back and watch management abuse their fellow Letter Carriers. I believe that management is a great recruiter of Stewards. When some people see their fellow carriers' contractual rights being violated, they have a strong desire to stand up. I became a Steward many years ago in Bountiful. I had been enjoying carrying my route and making lifelong friends with my coworkers. Then everything changed and our management team changed as they always do and we were assigned a tyrant bully as our Postmaster. This was a shock to almost all of the carriers in Bountiful and I saw my friends being abused daily and made the decision to stand up and do something about it. I remained a Steward when I transferred to Sandy and I remain a Steward today.

All Stewards know that the job is not an easy one, so why do we do it? Stewards can be a lifeline for carriers and be a median between the carrier and management. Stewards address the complaints of their coworkers and monitor workplace situations. Stewards are leaders in their offices, they have devoted many hours to become knowledgeable in the National Agreement for those who don't have that knowledge. Stewards use that knowledge to hold management accountable and protect their fellow carriers. Stewards know that it isn't possible to please everyone. Situations arise when opinions differ amongst the body and the Steward must navigate the issue and try to make everyone satisfied with the situation. The contract rules, please remember that the next time you feel like your Steward didn't react the way you thought they should have. They are there to help you and we all need help sooner or later. That is a fact.

If you have interest in becoming a Steward in your office or just becoming more active in Branch 111, please reach out to me. Dip your toe or jump right in.

In Solidarity

Mike Hansen

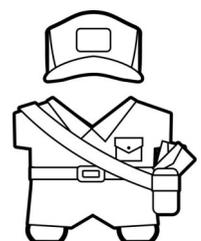
Executive Vice President

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.



A Couple of Tips

It's never too early to start saving for retirement. Right now, CCA's are not able to contribute to the TSP (Thrift Savings Plan). Alternatively, they can save towards their retirement by enrolling in the NALC CCA Retirement Savings Plan, which is administered by the Mutual Benefit Association. When a CCA converts to career they are able to transfer the CCA Retirement Saving Plan (Traditional IRA only) funds to the Thrift Savings Plan. However, at this time the TSP is not set up to receive Roth IRA. You can choose the contribution amount per period, with a minimum contribution of \$15 per pay period. For more information, please visit Nalc.org under the member benefits tab.

Another thing I wanted to touch on is logging onto the liteblue.usps.gov website. There have been changes to the login process of the website and its security. You should double check and make sure that you are able to log in. The liteblue website has many beneficial resources that can help us. We can use it to monitor our daily hours through the virtual timecard, sign up for medical benefits, access our personnel file, bid, transfer, and so much more. Most importantly we should be looking to make sure we are getting paid right, as well as our leave being run correctly. If you find that there is an issue, please notify your steward as soon as possible so the errors can be fixed/grieved. If you are having trouble logging in, try using a computer with ACE access (supervisors' computer) or call HRSSC at (877) 477-3273.

In Solidarity,
Destiney Carrillo

HEALTH BENEFITS Jim Kerekes

OPEN SEASON DATES: NOVEMBER 13th through DECEMBER 11th 2023.

Your opportunity to change Dental, Vision and Health plans. If you want to keep everything you currently have you don't need to do anything. If you are a CCA and haven't converted to regular, you will continue the plan offered by the post office.

For the FEHBP members active carriers and retirees, these are the 2024 rates that we will pay.

NALC High Option: Active Carriers

Self is \$109.41, Self plus one is \$255.86, Self and Family is \$221.79

NALC CDHP OPTION: Active Carriers:

Self is \$55.26, Self plus one is \$123.96, Self and Family is \$134.19.

NALC High Option: Retirees

Self is \$237.05, Self plus one is \$554.36, Self and Family is \$480.54.

NALC CDHP OPTION: Retirees

Self is \$119.72, Self plus one is \$268.59, Self and Family is \$290.74.

Medicare Part B premium is going to be \$174.70. If your income is higher than a limit they set, you may have to pay more than the \$174.70.

Active carriers can go to lite-blue under Benefits and click until you find Checkbooks and you can research health plans. You can also and anybody else can go to opm.gov/insure. Anyone who wants to research Dental and Vision needs to go to BENEFEDS.COM to research and sign up or make changes to your dental and vision if you desire.

Call for questions.

Good Luck to all candidates running for office.

NALC BRANCH 111
Minutes of the Regular Union Meeting
October 12, 2023

Convened at 6:38 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 McNees

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

Reading of the Communications by Steve McNees

- NALC Memorandum to NBAs, RAAs, RGAs. The USPS will insource Surface Transfer Center operations in three cities. Salt Lake City will transfer the contracted work to the SLC Post Office no sooner than Sept 2023. There are no city carrier duties affected.

Application for Membership by Mike Hansen

- Miguel Mendez Marroquin, Damien Auger, Talea Turner, John Mister, Connor Stevens, Kayden Wood, Jessica Eakins, Justin Willis, Alejandra Williams, John Wright, Noah Genoway, Rebekah Charlton, Nikolas Simpson, Mike Roberto, Phyllis Bradford, Keenan Ortiz, Anthony Anderson, Veasna Chham, Cody Smith, Thayne Stanley, Bobbi Meadows, Coleton Beesley, Daine Rask, Mark Shaffer, Maria Yopez, Elizabeth Estrada-Murillo, Jose Weffer.
- John Mister was sworn in.

LETTER CARRIER POLITICAL FUND (LCPF) by Josh Thibodeau

- He has signed up a couple more this last month. He will be calling new members as he gets their information.

MDA COORDINATOR by Jeremy Bailey

- Jeremy announced that the Rap Session in two weeks will probably be the last event he does for the MDA. He has been the MDA Coordinator for the last five or six years but he will be stepping down after the end of this year.

DIRECTOR OF VETERAN AFFAIRS by Jimmy Fleming – no report

LEGISLATIVE by Chad Mortensen

- Marni Lefevre reached out and thanked us for our endorsement. She is running for City Council District 1 in West Valley (around the union hall). She would like some help distributing flyers on Sundays (3-4pm). Contact President Wahlquist or Chad to help.
- Utah state legislator – Representative Tessor, has introduced the Anti-Union Bill. State employees would not be allowed to automatically have their union dues deducted from their pay checks. This is another attack on unions.

TRUSTEES by Chad Mortensen

- The trustees met last Tuesday. Mike Madsen was out of town on vacation so there are some issues that still need to be addressed. They should all be fixed and squared away when Madsen returns.

MBA / COMPENSATION, by Bob Jewell

- How many are register with OWCP? Most raised their hands. Those that don't know probably are not registered. Everyone else needs to get registered with OWCP. If you are registered and get hurt, you can fill out the injury report on the spot.
- Last week a carrier was injured and given a CA-1 to complete. It was given to the supervisor but the supervisor didn't turn it in. It was still on his desk on Wednesday. • You should turn the paperwork in yourself. It can be uploaded to OWCP and your claim will get processed faster. • CA-16s are important to get your doctor visits paid for.

HEALTH BENEFITS by Jim Kerekes

- He has a 4-day seminar coming up, for the new health plans for next year. • Nov 13 through Dec 11th is open season.
- Those who didn't sign up for Medicare Part B will have 6 months to sign up starting next April. • Costs will be going up for health plans next year. • OPM is not allowing any changes to the plans (other than cost).

ORGANIZER by Justin Lindquist

- There are 10 to 12 new CCAs in orientation each week. Usually, he gets 100% with a single person not joining the union occasionally. • If there is more than 6 at an Academy class, the USPS is supposed to break the class down, and create another class.

SAFETY AND HEALTH by Justin Lindquist

- He is trying to get a better safety plan going in Utah. Management hasn't had a real safety plan going since Covid.
- CCAs need to get their uniforms after their 90 days, when the USPS is required to provide them with a uniform allowance. Let your steward know if you don't get your clothing allowance. • It is a safety issue, especially when it gets dark early. • You can go on LiteBlue and find out what is going on.

DIRECTOR OF RETIREES by Jeff Asay

- October 25th is the retiree dinner at the Chuck-a-Rama in Draper, from 3:30pm to 5:30pm. • Social Security cost of living adjustments for next year will only be 3.2 percent, effective in January.

TREASURER by Mike Madsen – no report

VICE PRESIDENT by Destiney Carrillo

- Steward training next Wednesday will be about Form 1731s, to make sure they are getting filed and everyone is comfortable filling them out.

EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT by Mike Hansen

- 2,433 grievances filed so far this year.
- Management said they are going to change everyone’s start time to 8:00am. Later start time changes should be grieved. Mike has some help for those who need it.
- Rap session is next week.
- At the Steward dinner, the Steward of the Year Awards were given out. 2nd runner up was Kortnie Chatterton, 1st runner up was Aaron Johnson, and Mike Simonsen was awarded Steward of the Year.

PRESIDENT by Mike Wahlquist

- This is not a good year for our budget. Thank goodness, we have a lot of money in savings. We had an assessment of \$32,000 from the building upgrades. We finally got around to remodelling our office. Justin Lindquist did the work. We also bought a trailer that was approved in a prior year for \$10,000.
- Otherwise, we are under budget on almost all categories.
- We currently have 45 CCAs. We are supposed to get up to 130 CCAs. Management is refusing to hire. The USPS is the only one holding us back on proper staffing. That also means that our union is not getting the dues from the CCAs that should be hired (a lot of money lost)
- Management says we should have 76 CCAs by peek season in SLC. Last year we had less than 4.

SPECIAL ORDERS: Nominations of Branch Offices

SECRETARY

Steve McNees
Joe Horsley

TRESURER

Mike Madsen (elected by acclamation)

VICE PRESIDENT

Kim Mortensen
Destiney Carrillo

EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT

Mike Hansen
Monte Jones

PRESIDENT

Mike Wahlquist
Chris Zambos

TRUSTEES (elect 3)

Kortnie Chatterton
Chad Mortenson
Quincy Mason
Kirk McLaughlin
Fernando Palafox
Josh Thibodeau

SAFETY OFFICER

Justin Lindquist
Nathan Chester

HEALTH BENEFITS REPRESENTATIVE

Jimmy Kerekes (elected by acclamation)

OWCP/COMPENSATION SPECIALIST

Bob Jewell (elected by acclamation)

DIRECTOR OF RETIREES

Jeff Asay (elected by acclamation)

SERGEANT AT ARMS

Mike Simonsen (elected by acclamation)

- The election committee will be Sharla Groves, chairperson, and Brent Bray.
- Nominees can place a biography in the Pavement Pounder, but they must be received no later than Nov.9th. Articles can be no more than one page. You can opt to have a nick name on the ballot.
- You must make sure that the branch has your current address if you wish to receive a ballot or materials from the election committee.

NEW BUSINESS: none

GOOD OF THE ASSOCIATION:

- Downtown delivery of parcels – Management has posted a goal of 20 parcels per hour. CCAs need to know that there are no standards other than you must be safe. Don’t let anyone bully you into doing more than you safely can. Magic Conversation Ender: I’m going as fast as I can safely go. You’re not asking me to be unsafe, are you? Any answer other than “no”, you should contact your shop steward.
- Special chains or studded snow tires are supposed to be available for the new Mercedes Vans.

FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF THE SERVICE:

DRAW AND ADJOURN – 8:03 pm

- \$25 drawing winners: Jeremy Bailey and Robert Cottrell
- RETIREES – \$250 (Richard Nielson was not present). Next month it will be \$275.
- PROGRESSIVE A - \$650 (Elizabeth Zinck was not present). Next Meeting it will be \$675.
- PROGRESSIVE B - \$550 (Melissa Martinez was not present). Next Meeting it will be \$575.

@NALCbranch111



@nalc111



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

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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
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Mike Madsen
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