

Letter Carrier's Review

FALL

Letter Carrier's Review

2021

NALC
BRANCH 210
RETIREES
BREAKFAST



ALL RETIRED MEMBERS
OF BRANCH 210
AND THEIR SPOUSES ARE INVITED TO
ATTEND THIS YEARS

FREE RETIREMENT BREAKFAST.

WHEN: FRIDAY
OCTOBER 8TH 2021
9:00AM TILL

WHERE: DIPLOMAT PARTY HOUSE
1956 LYELL AVE.
ROCHESTER, NY. 14606



PLEASE NOTIFY THE UNION OFFICE
@427-2450 BY SEPTEMBER 30, 2021
IF YOU PLAN TO ATTEND.
(Active Carriers also welcomed to attend)

National Association of Letter Carriers Branch 210

The Branch Union Hall is located at
2491 Brighton Henrietta Townline Rd.
Rochester New York
14623

and can be reached at (585) 427-2450

or

www.NALC210.com

Branch 210 Meetings: 1st Wednesday of every month @ IBEW Hall
2300 East River Rd. Rochester, NY 14623



The Letter Carriers Review is a quarterly newsletter published by NALC Branch 210. Opinions expressed in this publication are those of the writers, and not necessarily the official view of the Branch Officers. The editor has written articles without a by-line. The editor reserves the right to edit or reject any material received for publication. Branch 210 members are invited to submit material to: Michael Masters, Editor, Letter Carrier's Review, 223 Winfield Rd. Rochester, NY 14622, or e-mail me at mjmnalc210@yahoo.com.

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FROM THE DESK OF THE PRESIDENT

KENNETH A. MONTGOMERY



By the time you read this article the backpay from our latest contract should be complete. One main question we get on the backpay is what does the “**MISC**” on your mailed paystub mean under deductions. Misc. means they ran out of rows on your paycheck. There were many adjustments that needed to be made due to backpay going back to November 2019. Each pay period needed to be adjusted and pay raises applied to them. With each adjustment comes deductions like Federal and State Tax, Social Security, and Medicare. There is only so much room on your paystub so MISC. deductions are the deductions from your adjustments. You can go online at liteblue.usps.gov and log into epayroll and look at your adjustments individually and you will see that those numbers add up and match.

We have learned the newest Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) for career active carriers is finalized at \$1,934 at top pay and will be paid beginning August 28, 2021, which is payable September 17, 2021. The COLA is proportional to your pay step and the easiest way to figure out what your COLA is would be to understand this COLA is 2.88% of your salary. City Carrier Assistants do not get a COLA raise, instead they receive an additional 1% pay raise in lieu of COLA every November. This is NOT a lump sum and will be added to your yearly salary. The retirees COLA will not be announced until the end of December but was at 5.1% at the end of June. Retirees under CSRS get the COLA when they retire, FERS retirees only get the COLA after they turn 62 and is reduced by 1%.

Some legislation that is vital to our existence and your future: first H.R. 3076 and its companion bill in the Senate S.1720. This bill addresses the finances and operations of the U.S. Postal Service (USPS). The bill requires the Office of Personnel Management to establish the Postal Service Health Benefits Program for USPS employees and retirees and provides for coordinated enrollment of retirees under this program and Medicare. The bill repeals the requirement that the USPS annually prepay future retirement health benefits. Passage of this legislation will help ensure the Postal Service survives well into the future.

A bill that will affect most of our members is H.R. 4268, Federal Retirement Fairness Act. The bill would provide certain federal employees, including letter carriers, the opportunity to make catch-up retirement contributions for time spent as temporary employees (TE, Casual and CCA's) after Dec. 31, 1988, thus making such time creditable service under the Federal Employees Retirement System. In other words, if passed you would be able to buyback your casual, TE or CCA time and it would count towards retirement credit.

I would like to remind carriers that are retiring the branch accepts your used uniforms as donations which are shared with our new carriers. They are always appreciative of getting a uniform to wear so they look like they belong.

There has been a lot of misinformation online about the mask and vaccine mandates regarding President Biden's recent order that all federal employees will either be vaccinated or submit for weekly testing. This order by President Biden does NOT apply to the Postal Service. Therefore, currently there is no vaccine mandate that applies to the Postal Service. Of course, this is subject to change like all things in this world and will be discussed with the NALC at the headquarters level. The current mask rule says you do not need to wear it if you have been vaccinated. If you have not been vaccinated, you are supposed to still be wearing the mask while in the office and cannot socially distance yourself. My personal recommendation is to get vaccinated; I have been vaccinated, and I choose to still wear a mask when inside with large groups of people. While the choice to get the vaccine is yours, please consider it to protect you and your family.

With the reorganization of the Postal Service and the combining of District offices we have lost the “Western NY” district and are now part of “New York District 3” which runs from Buffalo all the way over to Westchester including Syracuse Binghamton, Albany, Jamestown and everywhere in between. This has made fixing personnel problems like payroll and hiring issues ever more challenging as those people working in HR are now responsible for twice as many offices and people. It has been challenging however, Monique and I are up to the challenge, and we will continue to fight for your rights and make sure you get what you have earned.

FROM THE DESK OF THE VICE PRESIDENT

~ MONIQUE MATE



Here we are more than half of 2021 is already over. Though the pandemic is still looming we are leaps and bounds from where we were last year at this time. This applies both to our altered work conditions due to the pandemic and the Rochester Article 8 grievances. As for the work conditions, carrier start times are no longer staggered and those who are vaccinated are no longer required to wear a mask. This can be subject to change if the COVID-19 rates increase, but as of today this is not the case. Masks and hand sanitizer should still be available for all letter carriers who request it. If your station is short supplies, please notify us and we will have that corrected immediately. As for the hundreds of pending Rochester Article 8 overtime grievances we wrote about in the spring edition, management has finally agreed they violated the National Agreement and in turn have agreed to pay out our requested remedy, which is 350% (of the regular pay rate) for those who were forced off assignment overtime and 300% (of the regular pay rate) for those on the overtime list who were bypassed for overtime. Once those grievances are finalized, we will send out the names and totals to the stewards.

Now that management, is (at least for now) adhering to the overtime rules, the violation that is currently becoming prominent is the 12/60- maximum hour rule. The Article 8.5.G provision states in part:

Article 8.5.G provides that employees on the ODL may be required to work up to 12 hours per day and 60 hours per week. It further provides that the 12-hour and 60-hour restrictions do not apply to employees on the ODL during the penalty overtime exclusion period (December)...The 12/60 limitations are inclusive of all hours, including any type of leave taken, consistent with the 20-hour overtime.

Summarizing the rule, ODLs are required to work up to 12 hours in a workday (not including lunch), prior to forcing a NON-ODL. If an ODL is forced, their daily work hour limit is 12 hours (with a lunch). A full-time employee may not be forced over 60 hours in a work week. PTF's and CCA's do NOT have the 60-hour week limit, only the 12 hour (including lunch) daily limit. Any violations that occur in your station please notify your steward so they can file a grievance.

With summer coming to an end and holiday season approaching, I would like to remind carriers of the additional holiday provision added to our current 2019-2023 National Agreement. Article 11 Section 3 states in part:

Effective with the 2021 Independence Day holiday, employees who work their holiday, at their option, may elect to have their annual leave balance credited with up to eight (8) hours of annual leave in lieu of holiday leave pay. (This provision includes CCA's as applicable)

Letter carriers wishing to exercise this option must complete and submit a PS Form 3971 to their supervisor, indicating such by checking "Holiday/Lv Exch" in the "Type of Absence" section.

Lastly, as a reminder to all active and retired carriers "Open Season" is just around the corner. Anyone looking to change their health benefits or adding dental and vision, this is the time. CCA's who serve their initial 360-day term upon return may participate in the Federal Employees Health Benefits (FEHB), though they pay the full amount for health premiums. Although it's unlikely CCA's will choose to participate in the FEHB program, serving the initial 360-day term also gives access to Federal Dental and Vision insurance (FEDVIP) and would pay the same premiums career employees pay. Keep your eyes open, Branch 210 will be sending out information which will include, the specific open season time frame, along with the updated prices for the NALC plan. Once "Open Season" begins all FEHB plans updated prices will be available on *opm.gov*. Updated Dental and Vision Insurance (FEDVIP) prices will be available on *benefeds.com*.

As always, **thank you** to all letter carriers and congratulations to those who have recently retired. Be safe and hope to see everyone at our annual Retiree Breakfast on Friday October 8, 2021, and/or our Columbus Day Golf Tournament on Monday October 11, 2021.



INSURANCE REPORT

Director of Insurance, Michael Masters

585-278-7241

mjmnalc210@yahoo.com



Wellness incentive for COVID vaccine:

In the last issue of *Letter Carrier's Review*, I wrote about the NALC Plan's Health Savings Reward Program. Beginning in mid-July the NALC Plan added another Health Savings Reward to the program. All Plan members and dependents will receive an additional **\$50** when they become fully vaccinated against COVID-19. As of the writing of this article, the *Pfizer* vaccine has been granted full FDA approval. Members will receive this incentive regardless of which NALC Plan they are enrolled (*High Option, CDHP, or Value*). If NALC has already received a medical or pharmacy claim for your vaccine, there is nothing more to do. The \$50 will be added to your TASC debit card if you have already completed other incentives. If you have not, a TASC card will be issued to you. You should receive the card 4-6 weeks after the wellness incentive is completed. If you received your vaccine for free, and no claim was submitted, you must mail a copy (not the original) of your vaccination card. As the medical community has stated: vaccination against COVID-19 makes you far less likely to contract the virus, and far more likely to have milder symptoms and shorter length of illness if contracted. As if the advice of your doctor, the CDC, and other professional medical dignitaries was not enough; the NALC has now given another reason to become vaccinated.

Active & Fit Direct Program:

The Active & Fit direct program is other benefit for all NALC Plan members. It's a flexible low-cost fitness program through American Health Fitness, Inc. Basically for \$25/moth with a \$25 enrollment fee, members will have access to over 11,000 fitness centers throughout the country. Once enrolled you can print your Active & FIT direct card or save it to your phone. This gives a complete standard membership to the participating facility in your area. There is a 2-month minimum enrollment, then after that the enrollment is month to month. There are zero penalties or fees if you terminate your enrollment after two months. To enroll please call-800-870-3470 or High Option members can visit nalc.yourcareallies.com CDHP/Value members can visit mycigna.com.

Some local participating fitness centers are:

World Gym (Greece & Rochester) • Esporta Fitness (Irondequoit, Greece, Henrietta) • Harro East Athletic Club 14604 • Knockout Fitness 14609 • Chili Fitness Center 14624

For more NALC Health Benefit Plan information visit: www.nalchbp.org

Employee Assistance Program

Jill Morris, EAP Coordinator

Several Rochester area letter carriers have had traumatic experiences while delivering the mail. Examples are being followed, threatened and witness shootings, a carrier being shot in the head with a pellet gun, another was physically attacked, and another was robbed at gun point. Kenny Montgomery estimates there have been 8-10 instances within the last three months. This is outrageous to say the least.

The fear, anger, and outrage were evident as I read the Facebook comments. The carriers directly involved have suffered severe traumatic experiences. Although not being directly involved, these events have affected the rest of us as well. We have all had to go back out to the street wondering "Am I next?". I have done research on trauma; its causes, and signs. First, what is trauma? The definition of trauma is a deeply distressing or disturbing experience. The above-mentioned incidences, no doubt, qualify as trauma. Some examples of traumatic experiences are being attacked, traffic collisions, bullying, harassment, life threatening illness, physical, psychological, or sexual abuse. These are just a few of a long list of causes. Keep in mind that a person may experience trauma with any event they find physically or emotionally threatening. Trauma can be experienced right away and in the long term. Trauma can cause physical and emotional symptoms such as: fear, anger, anxiety, depression, irritability, headaches, fatigue, feeling jumpy as well as digestive issues. While researching I came across a symptom called *hyperarousal*. This is when a person feels as though they are in a constant state of alertness. Which off the clock, can make things like falling asleep challenging; yet I thought, hyperarousal can also make it hard to perform our duties on the clock. If we are constantly worried about what might happen to us it is difficult to concentrate on and do our job safely and effectively.

Everyone experiences trauma differently, yet it is treatable. This is where the EAP is there for you.. EAP can help you work through the trauma you may have experienced and EAP is available to you 24-7-365. It's just a phone call away at 800-EAP-4YOU or by visiting the website at EAP4YOU.com can put you in touch with a counselor. My intention for this article was to focus on trauma given the current events some of our sisters and brothers have experienced. Although always remember, EAP is there for any other part of your life you may be struggling with.

Be well, be safe, continue to wear that mask and as always feel free to reach out to me, Ann Pacher or Kenny Montgomery with any questions you may have.

Make the Call!

USPS Employee Assistance Program

1-800-327-4968

(1-800-EAP-4-YOU) TTY: 1-877-492-7341

www.EAP4YOU.com

eap4u.com



TIME TO JOIN THE TEAM...



THE NALC BRANCH 210 - LCPF TEAM

Football Season is upon us!! While we cheer for our favorite teams on Sundays this fall, don't forget about another important team - The Letter Carrier Political Fund (LCPF) team.

Attacks on the Postal Service, Labor Unions, and the middle-class are relentless. There is important legislation in Congress which will benefit all NALC members. One easy, effortless way to support this is by signing up to contribute to the LCPF. Our collective contributions are then distributed to those representatives who support the benefits and livelihood we have enjoyed throughout our careers. A small contribution of \$5 per paycheck equals less than \$1 per day. If \$5 is too much contribute less, whatever you can! This will help support those in Congress who protect our job, benefits, pensions, and livelihood. Career Regulars, Retirees, and CCA's are all able to contribute. Contributions can be made through payroll deduction, or automatically from your bank account. Help support those who will support us on Capitol Hill!

GET OFF THE SIDELINE, GET INTO THE GAME!

For more information or to sign up, contact the NALC Branch 210 office: (585) 427-2450



Branch 210 Columbus Day Golf Tournament

Monday

October 11, 2021

Victor Hills Golf Club

1450 Brace Road, Victor, NY

Shotgun start at 10am - \$75 per golfer

4 person scramble

Includes unlimited Hot Dogs, Hamburgers and
Sausage ALL DAY

**For more information or to make reservation
call the office**

585-427-2450



Here is an updated list of co-sponsors for current legislation supported by the NALC:

House Bills

Postal Reform Act of 2021 - H.R. 3076

Democrats: 37
Republicans: 24

USPS Fairness Act - H.R. 695

Democrats: 217
Republicans: 58

Social Security Fairness Act - H.R. 82

Democrats: 160
Republicans: 54

Senate Bills

Postal Reform Act of 2021 - S. 1720

Democrats: 13
Republicans: 11
Independents: 1

USPS Fairness Act - S. 145

Democrats: 5
Republicans: 5

The first 2 bills H.R. 3076 and S 1720 are our main focus point currently due to the importance of fixing the pre-funding mandate that has crippled the Postal Service for the last 14 years.

Looking for a good American built car made by hard working union workers?

See Jolene at Bob Johnson Buick. Jolene is the daughter of our past Vice-President Jerry Vitto



Buying a New House? Need an Attorney?

Call Moyer & Associates 458-2800 Ext. 314



Free will for Branch 210 members

28 E. Main St Suite 1200 Roch., N.Y. 14614



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INDIVIDUAL COUNSULTING, FORM PREPARATION AND SEMINARS

CCA's... Need uniforms???

NALC Branch 210 has used uniforms available for pick up 2491 Brighton-Henrietta TL Rd. Rochester, NY 14623

Regulars/Retirees...Have uniforms you haven't worn in a while??? Don't fit anymore?? Donate them!!

Stop by the union office anytime, please call first (585) 427-2450

Are you on the sidelines, or in the game?

**LCPF
Letter Carrier Political Fund**

NALC Branch 210 is up to 15% of members donating to the LCPF

LET'S AIM HIGHER!!

THANK YOU!! To those who donate

Those who do not...what are you waiting for??

EFFORTLESS - EASY - EFFECTIVE paycheck or bank account deductions

Call the Branch 210 office to sign up **FIGHT FOR OUR FUTURE!**



Darien Lake Summer Picnic 2021



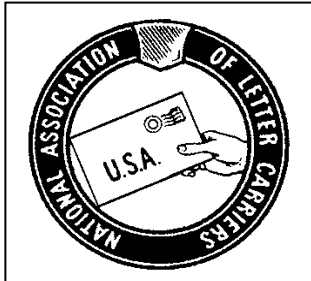
Darien Lake Summer Picnic 2021



Branch 210
National Association of Letter Carriers
2491 Brighton Henrietta Townline Rd.
Rochester, New York 14623

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Paid
Rochester, N.Y.
Permit No. 808

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To:

The Benefits of Membership

Designed exclusively For Branch 210 Members

NALC INSURANCE

Branch Insurance Director,

Michael Masters

**Health Benefit Plan*

**Mutual Benefits*

Association

(585) 278-7241

Benefit Trust Fund

Trust Officer: Sam Hogan

733-4873

For More Information on any of these
Benefits contact the Union Office at
(585) 427-2450

Real Estate - Wills & Trusts
Divorce - Criminal Defense - DWI

For all your legal services call...

Vincent Moyer

585-458-2800 Ext. 314

Moyer & Associates, P. C.

Vincent M. Moyer, Esq.

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Geneseo * Geneva * Hilton * Holley * Lyons * Mt. Morris * Newark * North Chili * Palmyra * Penfield * Penn Yan * Perry
Phelps * Pittsford * Scottsville * Sodus * Spencerport * Victor * Warsaw * Wayland * Webster * Wellsville * Wolcott