

The Monthly Report

118 Years of Representing Letter Carriers



Snohomish County Branch 791
National Association of Letter Carriers
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(425) 252-0184
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November 2019 92% Organized



Vol. 118 Issue 11

Chartered April 6, 1901

Calendar of Events

Next Branch Meeting

Thurs Nov 7th
Labor Hall
2812 Lombard AVE
Everett WA

Combined Federal Campaign

Sept 9th thru January 12th

Health Benefits Open Season

Nov 11th thru Dec 9th

Washington State Convention

May 15th thru 17th
Bellingham, WA

Br. 791 Annual Summer Picnic

Sunday July 26th 2020

National Convention

August 17th thru 21st
Honolulu, HI

Look for other Branch Events
on our website:

www.nalcbranch791.com



President's Page

President
Michelle Decker

We have been sending several stewards to training recently. The training the stewards receive is to help and support our members. For many, if injured on the job, filing an OWCP claim is frustrating as there are several forms that need to be provided with time limits to be followed. With the OWCP and OWCP advanced training, our stewards are receiving the information that is greatly needed to help with this overwhelming process. It is not unusual when a letter carrier suffers an on-the-job injury. Our job is physically demanding, often injurious and it is to be expected that there will be on-the-job injuries. Fortunately, there is a law designed to protect us from the adverse financial consequences of those injuries. The law is known as the Federal Employees' Compensation Act, or FECA. The FECA establishes the Office of Workers' Compensation Programs, or OWCP, and tasks that agency with deciding all matters relating to claims of on-the-job injuries by federal employees. OWCP decides, for example, whether an injury is job-related, whether compensation is payable and, if so, how much, and whether a limited duty job offer is medically suitable. While we have the right to file such claims, there are several things that if Management does not do can delay your claim. Here are a few:

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2018 Brad Webb 425-367-8731
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Visit our website: www.nalcbranch791.com

October Branch Meeting Minutes

October meeting called to order 7:01PM. Flag salute was done. 21 members present

Roll Call, all officers were present except for Trustee/ Sergeant-at-arms Brad Webb

New members- none

Guest- none

Committee Reports:

Legislative – Bob James report-HR 2382 has 261 cosponsors-goal of 290 for automatic vote in house

Health Benefits - Frank Costa –open season soon-going to HBR training this month-talked about training schedule

Financial Report – Annette Buechler- Total deposits-\$18,797.65-Total withdrawals- \$21,413.23-Balance-\$31,507.57-Building fund- \$450,623.68

Food Drive-talk about new coordinator/coordinator's

District Safety Task Force-Dee Ann Johnstone-Quarterly meetings Discussed winter plan and supplies

MDA-discussing a MDA bowl athon

Planned Events-October 19th-Stalker farms @7:00pm corn maze zombie paintball

Convention committee-Meeting set for October 17th to discuss committee tasks and theme

Correspondence in-

WSLC is seeking nominations of members of affiliated unions to form committees and guide the work of the Washington state labor council.

2019 resolutions created these committees-

WSLC-Addiction recovery retreat for couples-October 12-13 in Seattle

Correspondence out-Letter to Snohomish PM Lisa Wood on minor route adjustments that I've been told are planned. Gave her the Unions position on this.

Letter to Lynnwood Management -Carlson certified for Formal A Representative.

Letter to Director of Education Jamie Lumm-Requested information or comments for our Leadership academy applicants.

Old Business –

Nominations are now in order for position of trustee 3 year term-2020, 2021, 2022-Randall Wirtz nominated last month

No new nominations-declared Randall trustee through acclamation

Open nominations for State Convention-September meeting-Motion passed all that qualify be accepted-12 qualified.

Open nominations for National convention-

Eric Cavcey nominated

Proposed to send a total of 8 to National convention.

3 automatic+5-Motion made by Chris Kelly to send additional 5-second by Dan Newman-Motion passed- will be voted on at the November meeting.

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Franklin1st
De Franklin
Vice President
Shop Steward Lynnwood

The Drive By Grievance

I was recently asked why I didn't file a specific grievance. Well, there are a few things that come with filing grievances and the first one is the statement from the person or persons who were wronged. I can't do much with hearsay, and I can't write a statement for you. Rule #1, if you have reason to believe that a violation has occurred, take notes, write a statement and ask to see a Steward. We the Stewards don't have the time to put together the bits and pieces that you give us during your drive by.

drive-by [drahyv-bahy]
noun, plural drive-bys.

The action of a carrier approaching a specific Shop Steward (sometimes while the Steward is on break/lunch or off the clock) and relaying information that a violation may have occurred, while the carrier has not asked to see a Steward, has not written a statement, but expects that a grievance will be filed on behalf of the carrier or the unsubstantiated violation.

This people... is a drive by.

I have NO problem doing the leg work for a grievance, but I do need solid ground to walk on. Even unstable ground at times works, but I need a foundation for the grievance.

We, I... can't just take something that you said in passing and go file a grievance, especially on hearsay. Filing a grievance on hearsay is when management loves to refer their golden statement, "the Stewards are *Fishing*" for grievances.

The Lynnwood Office has come down dramatically in the grievances, although management is continuing to violate several simple things such as; still messing up employees pay, not providing documents for borrowed or lent carriers, refusing to call/schedule the ODL carriers, etc....

Common sense tells us that management should know better when doing the things that they do. Reality shows us that management doesn't care and will continue to do things (whether right or wrong) as they see fit, and in conclusion.... Grievances will always be filed.

Here are a few things to remember that might help us help you, when you believe that a violation has occurred.

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Retiree's Corner
Jim Reid
Director of Retired Members

I have gone through the NALC retirement manual and written articles on each chapter, but even though I have covered some subjects numerous times, I still get the same questions, so I have come to the conclusion that many carriers who are still years away from retirement probably skip my articles. Since I believe this is the case, and that knowing about retirement is important, I have decided to repeat those articles. This month's article originally appeared in the March 2006 newsletter.

This month's topic is disability retirement under CSRS and FERS. The requirements for disability retirement under the two systems are similar except for the creditable service time. Under CSRS, an employee must have completed 5 years of service; under FERS that requirement is 18 months.

Another difference in language is that under CSRS, the "Employing office must be unable to accommodate the disabling medical condition in the position held or in an existing vacant position (same grade or pay level and tenure that is located in the same commuting area)." The requirement under FERS is "Accommodation of the disabling medical condition in the position held must be unreasonable."

Common to both systems are the requirements that the disability must have resulted in a deficiency in performance, conduct or attendance, or if none of the above is met, the disability must be incompatible with either useful and efficient service or retention in the position. The disabling condition must be expected to continue for at least one year and the employee must not have declined an offer of reassignment to a vacant position.

Obviously, the declining a vacant position part must be reasonable. In other words, if management offered a disabled employee a position which they could not fulfill because of that disability (in an attempt to deny the employee the retirement), declining that offer would probably be seen by OPM (Office of Personnel Management) as a reasonable action.

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"minutes" continued from page 2

Bob James made motion to have 2 alternates to National Convention, Chris Kelly second motion-motion passed
Bob James made motion-If member qualifies to be a delegate to National Convention but not voted in to be compensated-can pay their own expense to be an unpaid delegate-second by Chris Kelly-motion passed

New Business-

Proposed Bylaw change to Article 4 section 4

Announcements-

Certificate for Jacob Bak completing Regional Shop Steward College year 2

We received honorable mention for 2017 MDA fundraising

Received 2018 honor roll certificate of achievement collected \$2,214-Thanks to Mark Hawkins most of that donation.

Western Washington union members-score half price seats to select Silvertips games this season and avoid all fees-Visit everettsilvertips.com/union

Branch Picnic -Reserved for July 26th 2020

Case consolidation test-Not going well in the offices.

National filed a lawsuit against the USPS-asking for the Postal Service to stop its consolidated casing Initiative until NALC's pending national level grievance is resolved which is set for December-

NALC reaches impasse with the postal service in negotiations for a new collective bargaining agreement-60 day mediation period requires by statute. During this period they continue to negotiate as they try and select a neutral arbitrator.

U.S. to remain in the Universal Postal Union

NALC and the Labor movement fight for human rights-NALC will participate in the activities October 30th in El Paso TX

Open season for CFC closes January 12th 2020.

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"minutes" continued from page 4

Letter Carrier Political fund-Go to NALC.org to sign up-**Office Visits**- Snohomish on September 26th. Met with new PM Lisa Wood-talked on union position to their possible minor adjustments.

Open Floor-

Lynnwood and Edmonds route counts-
Copies of standard training-on the job training guide-
Emailed the Participants guide-over 300 pages-
Management must supply the OJI's with this guide and allow them to review on the clock-4 hours.

2019 Training-

Frank to the HBR seminar in October-
DeAntha and Michelle went to Branch officer training Sept. 16th-

Regional Second year steward college- September 8 to 12 sent

Randall Wirtz, Dee Ann Johnstone, Chris Carlson, Mary

Bowler, Jacob Bak

2019 RAP- Missoula, Montana, and Sep 29 to Oct 4-
discussion on training received

2020-Anchorage Alaska Oct 4th-9th

2021-Somewhere in Utah

OWCP advanced in November 7th-10th-DeAntha and Randall signed up to go

Arbitrations-None

Step B Decisions-

19-011-EMM-Monroe counts-Union and management representatives must review the data-errors will be jointly corrected and any route found to be out of adjustment will be brought into proper adjustment. Adjustment to be made no later than 52 days after the joint review process has began.

19-267-EMW-7 day suspension-failure to work in a safe manner-reduced to an Article 16.2 discussion.

Branch Impasse items-none

Grievance numbers-call Michelle

Death and Condolences- Cartwright step dad passed

NEXT MEETING - Thursday November 7th, 2019 @ 7 PM

Pot Drawing-MDA-collected \$19-split \$9 Michelle donated to MDA, Plant Bob James, Cookies-Mary, Jenny and Michelle

Adjourn-8:10pm

"franklin 1st" continued from page 3

Take Notes, have the facts, **WHO** (person committing the violation), **WHEN** (date and time of incident/action), **WHAT** (what action/violation occurred), **Where** (place that incident/action took place) and **WHY** (what was the cause for the situation).

Write a statement (Tell us what happened, be descriptive if possible, without writing a novel, include any witness if possible).

Ask to see a Steward (Steward time is paid time, if you are at work ask to see a Steward).

Report the incident immediately. (Time limit to file a grievance is 14 calendar days from the date of incident).

So if you feel that your grievance was ignored, or a Steward brushed you off, ask yourself if you did any or all of the above mentioned, and then ask yourself again... was your grievance really ignored? Or you can come to a Union meeting and we can discuss it there. Meetings are held every first Thursday of the month, with the exception of No July or August meeting.

Let's talk about it

De'Antha

Shop Steward - Everett HUB District Safety Task Force

DeeAnn Johnstone

I wanted to take a moment to say thank you for sending myself and others to two training sessions; September 8th- 12th the Regional Steward Training Program; Steward College Year 2 Formal Step A to Appeal to Step B and September 30th- Oct 3rd Regional Assembly in Missoula Montana.

Article 15 of our National Agreement spells out the dispute resolution process. Three meetings are standard prior to an arbitration; Informal A, Formal A and Step B also known as the Dispute Resolution Team (DRT). During Regional Steward training, we reviewed the grievance procedure and learned to prepare and perform "Formal A" meetings using mock exercises. We were taught how to send an appeal to Step B. We practiced writing a narrative, position page, disputed facts and contentions.

In Missoula we had the opportunity to pick from a bunch of great classes. I really enjoyed OWCP part I & part II taught by Kevin Card (Assistant to the President for Workers' Compensation) & Scott Anderson (Branch 79 Officer). I also really enjoyed JSVOB (Joint Statement on Violence and Behavior in the Workplace) & mental health taught by RAA Debbie Dixon and Brother Doug Christi (Montana).

If you have ever struggled with OWCP, you may be happy to hear, a new electronic system for filing work related injuries is on the horizon. The new system will roll out in stages across the country. Ecomp registration will take about five minutes. A Carrier can file a claim once an account is created. Electronic filing will verify if a CA16 was not given. If Management misses a ten day policy, it will be tracked. This new system is quite amazing. If you need to file a claim, make sure talk to your Steward and ask them about '*Elements of a Successful Medical Report*'.

Another topic addressed in Missoula; the hardships Carriers' are facing with consolidated casing. We heard from observers who witnessed firsthand these deplorable conditions. Our brothers and sisters are being subjected to unreasonable hours and working conditions. Ask any Delegate what they heard, it is insanity. The NALC filed a lawsuit over the consolidated casing initiative: "the suit asks the court to issue an injunction stopping the Postal Service from continuing to test the consolidated casing

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Shop Steward - Marysville

Randall Wirtz

Maximizing Postal Discounts. I am sure many are aware of some of the discounts you can receive by working for the Post Office and by being a member of the NALC. I will be mentioning a few of these today and if you use these companies and aren't receiving a discount, please do so.

Phone Plans: AT&T offers 25% off for active postal employees on their 2 year plans (Up to 5 lines). They waive activation fees. Offer 50% off on accessories.

Verizon offers 20% off monthly fees and 25% off on accessories. Sprint offers discounted monthly rates, 25% off on accessories, and \$20/month in Uber credits. US Cellular will offer 10% off monthly rates.

Further information on these plans can be found on <https://liteblue.usps.gov/news/deals/welcome.htm>

USPS workers can also get discounts on pet insurance. Trupanion offers an 11% discount. This covers prescription foods, diagnostic tests, medications, hospital stays, surgeries and prosthetic devices among other things. AARP offers 15% discounts on 1, 3, or 5 year term for eligible members of all ages. Current members can also get this discount and spouses are no additional charge. Some benefits of getting AARP include access to their magazine, discounts on travel, dining, and tools to help with everything from finances to healthier living. Once you sign, it will take AARP between 4-8 weeks to process your registration and send you your membership cards. During this time any mailings from AARP asking you to join or renew your membership can be ignored. They were being processed prior to your enrollment.

HP product discounts are available up to 35% for postal employees as well as free shipping and expert assistance. Further details can be found at:

[https://store.hp.com/us/en/cv/employee?](https://store.hp.com/us/en/cv/employee?company-)

[company-Name=USPS&jumpid=ex_r329_EPP_USPS&:eppCompanyCode=USPS](https://store.hp.com/us/en/cv/employee?company-Name=USPS&jumpid=ex_r329_EPP_USPS&:eppCompanyCode=USPS)

If you are interested in furthering your education, the post office has deals with many Universities. University of Phoenix offers a 6th class free after you complete 5 classes. This could save thousands. Concordia offers 10% discounts on all classes as well as waiving application fees.

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Proposed By-Law Change

Change Article 4 section 4 be deleting the words: Shop Stewards and Alternate Stewards shall be selected by the members assigned to each office of Branch #791 or. Article 4 Section 4

Now reads:

ARTICLE 4 OFFICERS AND DUTIES

Section 4-It shall be the President's duty to appoint the Labor Management Committees. The Condolence Committee, whose duty it is to send flowers to any member of this Branch, their spouse and legal dependents who have been hospitalized. Flowers will be sent for the funerals of member's parents, spouse and dependents. In lieu of flowers for funerals of deceased members, five hundred dollars (\$500.00) shall be donated, in their names, to the WSALC Scholarship Fund at the next state convention. A letter indicating the donation will be sent to the families of deceased members. The President may appoint any other committee as may be needed, Shop Stewards and Alternate Stewards shall be selected by the members assigned to each office of Branch # 791 or the President shall appoint the Stewards and Alternates. (Jun 05)

Change to:

ARTICLE 4 OFFICERS AND DUTIES

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"postal discounts" continued from page 5

New England College of Business will waive application fees as well as 25% off tuition. Full list of schools participating: **American Intercontinental University. American Military University. American Public University. Ashford University. Capella University. Colorado State University. Colorado Technical University Columbia Southern University. Concordia University. DeVry University. Excelsior College. Grand Canyon University. Judson University. New England College. New England College of Business. Peirce College. Purdue University Global. Strayer University. University of Phoenix. Waldorf College**

NALC members have access to Union Plus benefits that offer scholarships, discounts, and access to the Postal Employee Relief Fund (PERF) if you are ever in need after a natural disaster.

The NALC is also a great way to get into the Mutual Benefits Association (MBA) which offers members the greatest possible life insurance for the lowest cost. Currently has more than \$224 Million in life insurance protection on its members.

NALC medical insurance is also a great benefit. Which is a not for profit organization run by letter carriers for letter carriers. The plans goal is to be a competitive health care plan at an affordable rate.

In addition there is an hour tracking app now available for your phone at

<https://www.nalc.org/member-benefits/nalc-track-hours-app> installation instructions are located on the site. If you have questions or concerns that your hours are different than you have recorded, please see your local Steward. - **Rise with Us**

“president’s page” continued from page 1

1. Failing to provide a CA-16 in the case of traumatic injuries
2. Providing a CA-2a instead of a CA-1 or CA-2
3. Failing to provide a receipt for a submitted CA-1 or CA-2
4. Delaying forwarding of CA-1 or CA-2 to OWCP
5. Failing to provide completed copy of CA-1 or CA-2.
6. Contacting a carrier’s physician in person or by phone
7. Failing to provide copy of written contact with physician to carrier and OWCP
8. Failing to provide employee notice of controversy and challenge information
9. Failing to advise carrier of the right to select a physician of his or her choice
10. Delaying forwarding of CA-7 to OWCP

These management mistakes lead to some of the worst injustices to injured letter carriers who seek workers’ compensation benefits. The FECA requires postal management to process claims in accordance with the regulations, but frequently supervisors do not. Shop stewards should do something about it. They should hold postal managers accountable to comply with the law and regulations governing on-the-job injuries. If necessary, they should do so using the grievance procedure. When it comes to helping injured letter carriers pursue on-the-job injury claims with OWCP, NALC representatives have no right to time on the clock. If you need help with filing a claim or questions about the paperwork, please let us know so we can help. When it comes to grieving management violations relating to on-the-job injury claims, however, shop stewards do have a right to time on the clock. If you feel management made a mistake with your OWCP claim processing, request to speak with a steward on the clock and they will investigate and file a grievance if violations were found.

“consolidated casing” continued from page 5

until NALC’s pending national level grievance is resolved by an arbitrator”-The NALC app (9/25/19). Consolidated casing is an attack of our hours, wages, working conditions and bargaining rights. If there was ever a time get information and join our political fund, it’s now. Help us protect what we’ve worked so hard for.

Take care, be safe

“retiree’s corner” continued from page 3

The employee must complete form SF 3112, “Documentation in support of disability retirement application” and the appropriate “Application for immediate retirement”, form SF 2801 for CSRS and SF 3107 for FERS. Of course, this all must have adequate medical documentation.

If OPM approves the retirement application, the employee will be notified, if it is disapproved, the employee has the right to appeal the decision and ask for reconsideration. If approved, OPM has the right to require the employee to periodically provide current medical information until the age of 60.

If an employee is eligible for disability retirement and OWCP benefits from an on the job injury or illness, they cannot have both at the same time, they must choose one or the other. However, by applying for disability retirement while receiving OWCP benefits, once OPM approves the request, the employee will be considered an annuitant and the annuity will be suspended during the time OWCP benefits are being paid. Once the OWCP compensation ends, the annuity payments will be reinstated.

This has only been a quick review, there is a lot more. If anyone is considering disability retirement, I urge you to contact me and/or download the appropriate pamphlet for what ever system (CSRS/FERS) you are under. The pamphlets can be found at WWW.opm.gov. At the website, click on OPM publications. On the next page, click on search for publications and periodicals.

To get the CSRS publication, type retirement facts 4 in the title bar. For the FERS publication, type 3112 -2 in the ID_No bar.



Legislative Info

Bob James

**Branch Legislative Director
Second District L C,**

As you may know, the NALC is working to pass the USPS Fairness Act, H.R. 2382. This bill seeks to right the wrong that the 2006 legislation required that the USPS pre-fund the future retiree health benefits. President Rolando wrote about this effort by the NALC in his August 2019 column in The Postal Record.

As I write this article, Congress has just returned from its August recess. H. R. 2382 has 237 cosponsors. Our goal is to get this legislation to 290 cosponsors, then the bill would automatically be added to the U S House calendar for a floor vote.

**The Monthly Report
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ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Attention Retirees

**Don't forget the
retirees' breakfast
Thursdays
10:00 AM at
Evergreen Lanes
in Everett.**

The Monthly Report is published monthly by National Association of Letter Carriers, Branch 791. Letters or articles published are not necessarily the views of Branch 791 or its officers and must be signed by the writer. Co-written letters or articles must be signed by all writers. Deadline for the next issue is the tenth of the month or receipt by the Editor on that date. Editor's address: 2812 Lombard Ave Suite 209, Everett, Wa. 98201-5821

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