The Seventy-Niner

Volume MCII Number 3 March 2017

President's Report:

Join E-Activist to Get the Good News You Need

-BJ Hansen-

One of the most important things you can do today to know what's going on and protect our jobs, completely free of charge, is to join the E-Activist network. It's as simple as going online to NALC.org and clicking a button. Please "join together with tens of thousands of other letter carriers to make your voice heard! NALC will send you e-mail alerts when it's time to act on issues affecting active and retired letter carriers and the future of the Postal Service."

It's especially important to stay in the loop at this time because postal reform is on the table in a serious way. NALC President Rolando recently testified before Congress regarding several reform bills being considered. There is hope of a good postal reform bill actually passing this year.

There are also major attacks on our rights as federal workers brewing. If any of these gain traction please be ready to send messages to Congress. Here are two recent examples shown on the website:

Rep. Todd Rokita (R-IN) is preparing to introduce the Promote Accountability and Government Efficiency (PAGE) Act, a proposal that calls for taking away newly hired federal employees' union representation and grants political appointees overseeing federal agencies the power to terminate, demote and discipline workers for "good reason, bad reason, or no reason." It would prevent union representation on the worksite. Before Rokita formally introduces the measure, he is seeking other members of Congress to add their names as co-sponsor of the bill. NALC is asking letter carriers to please contact their House members and urge them to oppose the PAGE Act.

Rep. Barry Loudermilk (R-GA) recently introduced H.R.559, the Modern Employment Reform and Transformation (MERIT) Act. This bill would make it easier for agencies to fire federal employees. The legislation was referred to the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee, whose chairman, Rep. Jason Chaffetz (R-UT), has stated that one of his priorities during this 115th Congress includes making it easier

(Continued on Page 4)

Pass the Paranoia

-Don Nokes-

There has always been constant pressure to have "the numbers" make sense, and the carriers are the ones caught in this continuous squeeze. As management plays an endless game of "Pass the Paranoia," where the PMG Big Ender feeds fear and panic to their fingerling bosses, they in turn pass it on to the underling supervisors, who then foist all that dread onto the workers to shoulder. As if we didn't have enough to carry, sadly management must constantly "chum the waters" as it were, with threats, intimidation, and Letters of Warning. Consequently the workroom floor becomes awash in the effluvial wake of all this trickle down stress and anxiety. "We didn't make budget!" Ever had that one screamed in your ear? Making budget has always been a mystery to me. And you, as a carrier, haven't a clue about "the budget" either, I'll bet. You're highly unaware of how it's stitched together with "SPLY" (Same Period Last Year) whole cloth and fabricated with alternative facts, and yet, they want to hold you accountable for not making it. Here the manager abuses the workers as if he were carrying a mouse in his pocket. "We are the worst station in all of Seattle!" Ever heard that

(Continued on Page 6)

Branch Meeting Summarized Minutes February 8th, 2017

Assistant Secretary-Treasurer, Kevin Gottlieb

President BJ Hansen called the February Branch meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

Chaplain Mats Julin read an inspirational message.

A roll call of officers found all officers present.

Communications:
Mark Myers read a recent thank you to the branch.

Applications for Membership:
Kevin Gottlieb read the names of 38 new applications for membership. **MSC**

Visitor: Tammy Morales from UFCW was welcomed

- Tammy addressed the members about a non-union store moving into the Ballard area.

No Unfinished Business

No New Business

No Officer Recommendations

President BJ Hansen:

- Transition going well, despite some stress at the office.
- Next Friday labor/management meeting at Kirkland. Spoke about issues at the Kirkland office.
- Thanked all officers and stewards
- Hiring freeze does not apply to the Postal Service.
- Rolando gave testimony. Outline is on back table.
- All 4 unions support HR 756 & 760.
- Seattle Post Office found guilty of another OSHA violation and was fined.
- A labor candidate will be running for Seattle City Council.

Vice President Chriss Daniels:

- Talked about carrier rights.
- Bowl-a- thon in Tacoma.
- 400 grievances to date.
- Picnic is August 20, 2017 at Petrovisky Park.

Business from the Floor:

- The recent Postal Record and the Letter Carrier Political Fund.
- Today is the last day to buy Democratic crab feed tickets at a reduced rate.
- Member spoke about CCA's.

Band Ken Eline:

- Thanked the officers of the last two years for their support of the band.
- Spoke about a band member.
- The band schedule is full.
- Uniform issues were spoken about.

Condolence Committee Ron Jilk:

- Gold Card member Donald Ballard past away. A moment of silence was observed.

KCLC/WSLC Mark Myers:

- Spoke about recent and upcoming labor events.
- BJ talked about last week's lobby trip to Olympia.
- Don Bennett also talked about the lobby trip, a Seattle City Council candidate Teresa Moscada and democracy vouchers.
- BJ talked about democracy vouchers.
- Rick Horner said you can donate money to her campaign.
- BJ stated that Right to Work has been introduced in the State.
- Garrett Scott spoke about the lobby trip.
- Rick spoke about the Right to Work hearing.
- Don spoke about the changes to the workers' compensation program.
- Coby Jones spoke about the workers' compensation program.

Organizing Committee Edward Johnson & Garrett Scott:

- Black History trivia and prizes were awarded.

Good of Order: no report

Legislative Committee Rick Horner:

- Contact representatives concerning the Page Act.
- BJ read the highlights of the Page Act.
- 22 bills introduced last week concerning veterans.
- Spoke about resolutions that are visible. HR 15, HR 28 & HR 31.
- Spoke about Postal Reform.

Books are closing

(Continued on Page 4)

The Seventy-Niner

Official publication of Branch 79. Published monthly in the interest of Branch 79, National Association of Letter Carriers, AFL-CIO, representing the Letter Carriers of Auburn, Bellevue, Bothell, Federal Way, Enumclaw, Issaquah, Kirkland, Mercer Island, Redmond, Renton and Seattle.
All articles are the opinion of the writers and do not necessarily reflect the attitude of Branch 79, its Officers or Members.

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Branch 79 Editorial Policy
Contributors are expected to use good taste and keep articles free of personal attacks and discriminatory or prejudicial references. Facts presented must be accurate. Submissions must comply with Article 1 of Branch 79's by-laws, which states, in part, that the object of this Branch is to unite members into one harmonious body for their mutual benefit. All articles submitted to The Seventy-Niner are reviewed to ensure compliance with this policy.

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Branch Officers

President .....B J Hansen
Vice-President .....Chriss Daniels
Secretary-Treasurer.....Mark Myers
Asst. Sec-Treas.....Kevin Gottlieb
Sergeant-at-Arms..Edward Johnson Jr.
Dir. of Insurance.....Michael C. Keels
Director of Retirees.....John Sweeney
Editor .....Garrett Scott
Trustee .....Rick Horner
Trustee .....Jo Ann Pyle
Trustee .....Brian Wiggins

Shop Stewards

Auburn.....Sam Dekhytar
Auburn.....Jonathan McKeon
Bainbridge Island.....Erika Wales
Ballard.....Tyson Burchak
Ballard.....Michelle Holthaus
Ballard.....Matt Rollins
Bellevue Annex.....Jasbinder Aujla
Bellevue Annex.....Sonny Diwan
Bellevue Crossroads.....James Maddux
Bellevue Crossroads.....Tisha Peterson
Bellevue Main.....Cory Carlson
Bellevue Main.....Victor Correa
Bitterlake.....Carol Ford
Bitterlake.....Ron Jilk
Bothell.....Susan Mulholland
Bothell.....Terry Nixon
Burien.....George Kelsey III
Columbia.....Edward Johnson Jr.
Des Moines.....John Flynn
Enumclaw.....Steve McMullen
Georgetown.....JV Cortez
Interbay.....David Kidder-Fincher
Interbay.....Jose Martinez
Issaquah.....
Kirkland.....Alfredo Dwan
Kirkland.....Tracy Holzworth
Lake City.....Andrew Forray
Mercer Island.....Rebecca Griffith
Midtown/Seattle.....Jamar Brown
Mill Creek.....Angie Shoemaker
Mill Creek.....Brian Wiggins
North City.....Bay Young
North City.....Billy Young
Part-Time Regulars.....Cliff Traylor
Redmond .....Melissa Sandvick
Redmond.....Ken Stevens
Renton/Hlds.Deborah Znak-St.Germain
Renton/Hlds.....
Renton/Main.....Tracie Bennett
Riverton.....Dave Heiszler
Riverton.....Curtis Matthews
Seattle Carrier Annex....Teresa Danning
Seattle Carrier Annex. Enrique Monlina
Seattle Carrier Annex.....
Skyway.....Lee Brown
Term Station.....Emily Taylor
Twin Lakes.....Tawnie Brenner
Twin Lakes.....Kevin Gottlieb
University.....Will Collins
Wallingford.....Scott Anderson
Wallingford.....Nick Simmons
Wedgwood.....Susan Steele
West Seattle.....Tim Ainsworth
Westwood.....Gonzaldo Gonzales
Westwood.....Brad Larrsen

Director of Retirees
John Sweeney
206-283-3079

Director of Insurance
Michael C. Keels
206-380-5971

Dates to Remember

Branch Meeting
Swedish Club
1920 Dexter Ave N
March 8th / 7 pm

Next Month's Meeting
April 12th/ 7 pm
and at each meeting's conclusion:
Drawing for $50 Gift card

Retired Club
Hope to See You All!
IHOP
10002 Aurora Ave N
March 21st @ 11:00 AM

Steward Council
Branch 79 Office
210 Queen Anne Ave N
March 22nd / 7 pm

Retirement Seminar
Branch 79 Office
April 20th / 7 pm

Gold Card Members

Arthur Ackerman
Darrell Anderson
Larry Austin
Gene Betz
Billy Bigelow
Robert Bigelow
G.R. Blair
Lawrence J. Branze
Frank Burdulis
Richard Byland
George Condon
William Coyner
Eugene Dell
John Dunlap
George Eggler
Ronald Eng
Ronald Engen
Robert Erb
James Farmer, Jr.
Willard Fox
Earl Frank, Jr.
Conrad Gettman
Jack Gummer
Elmer Gunnerson
Francis P. Hennessey
Ron Henry
Danny Hess
Kenneth Hicks
Charles H. Houston
Earlie L. Hudson
Arthur Jenkins
John Janousek
Kenneth Johnston
Jerry Jonason
Richard Klein
Noel Lambert
Frank LaRiviere
Robert Leahy
Donald Lowe
Roy Luquette
Peter Madsen
Michael Mangan
John Martin
Richard McFadden
Robert Michels
Robert McBerry
Lafayette Moore
Wayne Morgan
Ed Morris Jr.
Kenneth Nelson
Gary Nolta
Mike Offield
Larry Olsen
Junji Ono
Eugene Orcutt
Earl Osterberg
John Otis
Charles Owens
Dan Padilla
David Parmelee
David Payne
William Petersen
Robert Peterson
Bernhart Ritscher
Charles Roberts
James Robinson
David Rodger
Don Sanders
Gerald Samson
Donald Shannon
Wayne Sonnenfeld
Griffith Stockwell
Robert Studley
Gerald Swanson
Jimmy Terada
James Wood

(Join E-Activist from Front)

to fire "poor performers" in the federal workforce. With Congress moving swiftly on priority issues, this legislation could advance. Letter carriers should be alert for calls to action.

According to the Seattle Postmaster, for the first time since we started having CCA positions in 2013, Seattle installation is at full complement. I guess a little more time will tell how this plays out in terms of mandatory overtime, etc., but overall good news.

Although we have yet to see any notable decrease in contract violations or number of grievances filed, there has recently been some joint training regarding the grievance procedure at a couple of the stations. Although past attempts at this kind of intervention have had limited success we need to keep trying. I'm asking the postmasters to please make reducing contract violations a priority, and to follow through with supervisors to ensure that they are making it a priority.

Remember that supervisors are required to set the standard for accident prevention and to set the example for maintaining a mutual dignity and respect work atmosphere. Hold them to it!

(Summarized Minutes from Page 2)

MDA Brian Wiggins & Chriss Daniels:

- Brian informed the members of tonight's MDA drawing prizes.

Retired Club Pat Costello:

- Meeting next Tuesday at IHOP
- Spoke about the political climate and we need to be speaking to our representatives.

Brian Wiggins announced that Garrett Scott is the new CDL for the 7th District.

Seventy-Niner Garrett Scott:

- Deadline is Sunday

Director of Retirees & Scholarship Committee John Sweeney:

- Retirement seminar April 20, 2017. Notice will be in Seventy-Niner.
- Scholarship applications in this and next issue of Seventy-Niner. Deadline April 1, 2017 and drawing at the May branch meeting.
- BJ thanked John for his work as Director of Retirees

Director of Insurance Michael C Keels:
no report

Trustees' Report:

- Rick reported that the trustees met and found the books in good order. **MSC.**
- The membership was also informed of the donations approved by the officers.
- Jo Ann spoke about her first meeting as a Trustee and thanked Brian for mentoring.

Secretary-Treasurer Mark Myers:

- Reported on the Branch finances. **MSC**
- Chris Larsen asked a question about per capita tax & administrative column.
- Membership report was given**.**

Dates to Remember:

- Jo Ann's retirement party 2/18/17
- Shop Steward meeting 2/22/17
- Branch meeting 3/8/17
- Museum of Flight 3/19/17

Black Hitory Month Trivia won by Brooks Bennett, Coby Jones and Chris Larsen

MDA drawing won by Chris Larsen & Door Prize won by Edward Johnson Jr

Meeting adjourned at 8:15 PM.

On the lighter side….

Is Your Carrier Supervisor a Space Alien?

Here's the test:

1. Do they count in a different way than you do?

2. Can they disappear at will?

3. When you speak to them do they have a vacant look in their eyes?

4. Are they unable to comprehend what illness is?

5. Is their hair always on fire?

6. Do they relate better to their computers than to their human employees?

7. Are their eyes unable to see stacked trays of mail?

8. Do their watches seem to run at warp speed?

9. Can they compress the mail in your trays from 2 feet to 6 inches with their strength?

10. Do radios in the office interfere with their communication to the Mother Ship?

If you answered "yes" to five or more of the above, your supervisor may well be a space alien.

Thanks to Chris Larsen for passing this along from the internet.

Legislative Corner

-Rick Horner, Legislative Committee Chair-

The Page Act

We were recently informed by NALC Headquarters that another attack on Federal and Postal Service employees called "The Page Act" (Promote Accountability and Government Efficiency) could soon be introduced to Congress by Indiana Congressman Todd Rokita. This bill, if introduced, calls for all new federal employees to be "at will" workers, be subject to immediate suspension without pay or appeal, have pay raises be based on some arbitrary, as yet undisclosed, formula and would prevent union representation at the workplace. Representative Rokita is shopping his new bill around the halls of Congress looking for co-sponsors before he attempts to introduce it. At this time the act doesn't have an assigned bill number. Let's hope it never does. Last month, I reported on the evils of the "Holman Rule" and now it's "The Page Act." What draconian measure is next? How about H.R. 559, "The Merit Act" (The Modern Employment Reform and Transformation Act), which also gives the heads of Federal agencies authority to fire public employees arbitrarily. NALC President Rolando is calling on us to contact our members of congress to urge them to oppose H.R. 559 and "The Page Act" before and if it happens to be introduced. We're definitely living in interesting times. If you need help contacting your member of congress, call the Branch office at 206-284-3420.

Postal Reform Bills

On January 31st, two Postal Service reform bills were introduced to Congress, H.R. 756 and H.R.760. Both bills contain provisions that have been identified by the four Postal Service employee unions, including the NALC, and other mailing industry coalition members, as being essential to the future financial stability of the Service. H.R. 756, the "Postal Reform Act of 2017" addresses and reasonably resolves the burden of pre-funding future retiree health premiums for those who don't yet work for the Service or have yet to be born. The bill does this by fully integrating retirees with Medicare parts A and B when they reach 65.

H.R. 760, the "Postal Service Financial Improvement Act of 2017" would allow the money already in the Postal Service Retiree Health Benefit Fund to be invested in financial vehicles other than U.S. Treasury Securities that currently grow below the rate of health care inflation. Allowing a portion of the money to be invested in the professionally managed TSP (Thrift Savings Plan) funds would make more sense.

Washington State Legislature

Legislation to make Washington State a "Right-to-Work" for less state was introduced into the Washington State Senate on February 2nd. A hearing was held on the bill Feb 8th in a room packed with Washington State Labor Council affiliated union members loudly opposing that any such thing happen in Washington. "Right-to-Work never has and doesn't now have anything to do with creating or protecting jobs. Its purpose is to curb the power of workers and their unions at the bargaining table and in the Legislature," said Jeff Johnson, President of the Washington State Labor Council, AFL-CIO, during testimony on the bill. Well said Jeff.

In my article last month, I reported that SB 5019 was introduced into the Washington State Senate and read on 1/9/2017. On 2/9/2017, Washington State Senate bill 5019 was moved out the Senate State Government committee in the form of a substitute with a do pass recommendation and was sent to the Senate Ways and Means committee. SSB 5019 provides for prepaid postage for returning ballots in all elections including special elections. Previously, SB 5019 provided for return postage for only primary and general election ballots. The committee will now hold hearings on Substitute Senate Bill 5019. The cost of the bill remains to be determined by the State and counties. The Secretary of State is still researching the potential use of Business Reply Mail as a cost effective way to return the ballots if the problem of establishing a postmark can be resolved. Returned ballots in Washington State have to be postmarked by the day of election. In solidarity.

Please see page 7 for our Washington State congressional contact information.

(Pass the Paranoia from Front)

one? Let's see a show of hands. You should attend the Shop Steward Council – compare notes – see how many "worst" stations there are in our installation. It's comical. We used to laugh about it. "We're the worst station." "No, no….We are the worst." "No, that cannot be. We had a standup today and we were definitively told, 'We – Were – the – Worst!'" It's certainly no badge of honor, and it's truly not funny when it's being used to put pressure on the workforce. It's just more paranoia. It seems the Post Office can't manage without it.

Next time you're threatened with an L.O.W. if you don't return by zero hour; next time you're being bullied into believing they can turn you into a pumpkin if you don't make their witching hour, or that you're going to get your fingers slammed in their operational window if it closes before you can get off the street after being told to, "Take them, this, that, those, these and pivot for your pal the supervisor as well." Go all "George W" on them. "Letter of Warning? Bring it on! Give me two. No make that a half dozen; I'm wallpapering the kid's nursery." The numbers game is an illusion. L.O.W.s for street time, office time, time wasting, etc., etc., all their circus bag of gags. Everything evaporates when it's exposed to the light of contractual truth. Management's got nothing to push but paranoia. And they're continually reaping the profits of the fear they spread: it's called "pay for performance" bonus bucks, paid for by you, the workers.

According to the Pass the Paranoia plan, your supervisor's job is to push you into a panic so you will run around in the office and out on the street as if your pants were on fire. Stop! Drop! It's droll. You've got to learn to laugh it off. You've got the job. You are the worker. Your job is NOT to manage the mail! Or make a budget. You're not responsible for any rise or fall in the station rankings. And unless you do something totally egregious (and by egregious, I mean something dumb, like stealing.) Don't steal. Anything. Ever. Carriers have been fired for sifting through the mail for "valuable coupons" then snipping them out, taking them home and then finding themselves on the firing line, as in "You're fired!" So, don't steal ever, anything. Besides, in my estimation, it would be like crossing crafts, which is another thing you shouldn't do if you can avoid it.

Also, you can lose a lot of things without getting terminated, but you can't lose your cool. There are many things that are not your responsibility to manage, but managing to keep your head when others around you are losing theirs and blaming it on you, well, that is your job. And by "others" I most especially mean that carrier supervisor bouncing up and down in front of your face, chattering like a chimpanzee, spewing spume and spittle – those "others" who should be wearing a lobster bib to catch all that froth and foam – those "others" who are all but asking for it. Don't give it to him/her. Don't give them the time of day. No argument here boss. "I'll do my best!" I had a manager that used to explode on me when I'd say that. You'd think I had just kicked him in the nards. "You're best!" He'd say. "No wonder this company is going broke!" Great, I went from being the source of a bad budget to the one worker in the world directly responsible for the wreck of the USPS Titanic. Do your best. Keep your cool. If management doesn't like the message, do that biblical trick, where you metaphorically shake the dust off your feet and move on. Keep your cool; keep your job. Your spouse and your family will appreciate your best efforts. Those are the only numbers that truly count.

You can't do much about COR (Carrier Optimal Routing) either. If management has added six condos to your route and simultaneously subtracted 45 minutes of street time, you can argue it, you can grieve it, but other than that your best defense is to fill out the form (PS3996), and ask for Auxiliary Assistance. Don't battle the prattle. And if your supervisor gets all burnt up because you won't run around like Chicken Licken, if you won't accept their doom and gloom prognostications, if you won't run your route to save their jobs, well what happens? They yank you into the backroom to tell you the sky is falling and that it's all your fault. Yes, it's all about you. It has nothing to do with the 40 % pay raise the upper echelon has engineered for themselves since 2006. It has nothing to do with the "Pay for Performance" incentives for the managerial staff and the dollars they keep doling out to each other. It's because you can't make an 8 hour day out of a 12 hour work assignment. It's because you can't knit a silk purse out of that sow's ear they have so generously gifted you. It's because you won't pivot. It's because you're so greedy that you have to take your lunch – and your breaks – and blah, blah, blah. Well, I'm here to tell you it's not about you. It's about them. And not the "them" that is part of the "them, this, that, those, and these" you have to lug out the door with you on a daily basis. It's about the other-side-of-the-clipboarders, the Big Enders, who swoon if they don't see you in the door by 5 pm, and break into a sweat if you don't file out to the street in accordance with their formula. It's about that "them." Something really needs to be done about them and the penchant they have of polluting our workspace with their paranoia.

Membership Report

As Reported at the February 2017 Branch Meeting

Secretary-Treasurer Mark Myers

New Members	**38**
Left Service	21
Transfer Out	0
Cancelled	0
Retired	7
Deaths	1
Active	1958
Associate	29
Total Retired	521*
*Includes Gold Card Members	77
Total Membership	**2508**

Congratulations Recent Retirees

Brian Adams
Kenneth Adkins
Chris Harris
J. Kingsbury
Ray Lavadia
Mark Myers
Deborah Patterson
Richard Williams

Congressional Contacts

House of Representatives

WA-1 Suzan Del Bene (425) 485-0085
WA-2 Rick Larsen (425) 252-3188
WA-3 Jaime Herrera-Beutler (360) 695-6292
WA-4 Dan Newhouse (509) 452-3243
WA-5 Cathy McMorris Rodgers (509) 353-2374
WA-6 Derek Kilmer (253) 272-3515
WA-7 Pramila Jayapal (206)74-0040
WA-8 Dave Reichert (425) 677-7414
WA-9 Adam Smith (425) 793-5180
WA-10 Denny Heck (253) 208-6172

Senate

Patty Murray (206) 553-5545
Maria Cantwell (206) 220-6400

MEMORIAL

Sister Natasha Domingcil

Ray Jorgenson
Father of Sister Peggy Cooper

Herb Myers
Brother of Brother Mark Myers

Shared Services

(National Human Resources)
1-877-477-3273
http://liteblue.usps.gov
You'll need your Employee ID#
and your USPS PIN.

Branch Event at the Museum of Flight

THE MUSEUM OF FLIGHT

Branch 79 is planning an event at

The Museum of Flight

Sunday, March 19, 2017
Noon – 4:00 p.m.

Branch 79 has reserved the Skyline Room

Catering by McCormick & Schmick's

Free passes to the museum on day of event

Possibly other entertainment

Call the Branch to RSVP if you plan to attend. 206-284-3420

Welcome New Members

W. T. Childers
C. S. Mahal
Kimly Le
Joseph Couch
Wilbert Williams, II
Justin Strong
Toan Tran
John Kobelak
Michael Alemayehu
Soleiman Jama
Stephen Garcia
Christina Brown
Victor Ng
Jesse Brazil
Christopher Moreno
Richard Cooper
Wayne Walker
Anissa Bester
James Nelson
Stephen Borgens
Lewis Brancati
Keith Johnson
Matthew Coplin
Nelly Hwee
Angelito Mendiola
Shenea Cobb
Lixia Pan
John Brickley
Rymma Nazarova
Nhan Pham
Hieu Nguyen
Peter Smith
Joel Sia
Angie Davis
Kyong Baron
Ruth Rotunda
John Heng
Nai Saephanh

The installation of new officers at the January branch meeting - Photo courtesy of Ken Park

Brookfield Uniforms

Designers and Producers
of Highest Quality
Union Made Uniforms

Get $465 for your $420 allowance.

Seattle Odd Zips
Ken Eline
Retired Br. 79
1526 NE 165th St
Shoreline WA 98155
206-365-2659 Cell: 206-271-3053

Seattle Even Zips
Larry Anderson
Retired Br. 79
P.O. Box 69444
Seattle WA 98168
206-653-7815

Save the Date!

The Branch 79 Retired Club Annual Reunion Luncheon Is Coming Up On May 6th.

More info in the April issue of the Seventy-Niner

February is LCPF Month

-Trustee Jo Anne Pyle-

When the February Postal Record comes in the mail it reminds us of the importance of the Letter Carrier Political Fund (LCPF). Every year the names of contributors from the preceding year are published along with articles and statistics about the fund.

For those of you who are new to the Post Office this fund is our (NALC) Political Action Fund (PAC). Dues dollars cannot be used for partisan politics but money talks so LCPF is how letter carriers can make sure our voices are heard in Congress. Our PAC contributes to both Democrats and Republicans. If candidates support us we want to support them and ensure they remain in Congress fighting for us.

Washington State shows 5.97% of our members contributing to LCPF with Branch 79's contributors slightly less than that at 5.75%. We can do better. Even though we would like all of our members to contribute something we do want to thank those who understand the importance of participating. Because this is so important I wanted to print names of our members who are listed in the magazine:

Ruelito Alabado
Froilan Alfonso
Archibald Asberry Jr.
Larry Austin
Sean Bailey
Elet Banks
Mary Bartley
Micheal Bell Sr.
Brooks Bennett
Donald Bennett
Julia Benson
Kenneth Boetcher Jr.
Lance Bourgault
Barbara Boyle
Elizabeth Breen
Tawnie Brenner
Lee Bui
Tyson Burchak
Michael Campeau
Satit Chivapatanathor
Patricia Christenson
William Collins Jr.
Austin Cooper
Phil Cords
Priscilla Cressman
Tony Curtis
Christine Daniels
Patrick Deagen
Scott Deel
Andrea Demajewski
Sanjiv Diwan
Alfredo Dwan
Kenneth Eline
Lisa Englund
John Fletcher
Dana Fosberg
Patricia Franks
Ken Fulton
Jeffrey Gears
Abraham Gebreselase
Jack Gilmore
Gonzaldo Gonzales
Kevin Gottlieb
Olivia Guevara
Luong Ha
Dana Hagerman
Betty Hansen
Christopher Harris
John Hayes
David Heiszler
Rem Heng
Ronald Henry
Rick Hoang
Douglas Hoisington
Kathryn Holthaus
Richard Horner
Scott Huntoon
Debbie Jackson
John Janousek
Scott Jensen
Ron Jilk
Edward Johnson Jr.
Coby Jones
Mats Julin
Surinder Kalia
Sophea Keal
Michael Keels
Joung Kim
J. Kingsbury
Sally Knowle
John Kozu
Jim Kramer
Christine Larsen
Ray Lavadia
Thomas Layden
Quang Le
Jinah Lim
Steven Loren
Joni Marsicano
Nathaniel Martin
Dale Martinez
Mary Martinez

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(LCPF Month from Page 10)

Robert McBerry
Paul McGuire
Cecil McKenzie
Robert McLean
Sarah Merkel
Dwayne Miller
J. Morris
Mark Myers
Son Nguyen
Terrence Nixon
Donald Nokes
Michael Norris
Bonnie Nygren
Larry Olsen
Eugene Orcutt
Frank Parente
Kenneth Park
Janet Petersen
Poe Poe Jr.
Jo Ann Pyle
Michael Rexroad
Michael Reynolds
Jesse Rogers
Matthew Rollins
Harold Ross Jr.
Pa Saetern
Paul Salois
Gordon Sawyer
Gregg Schlilaty
Kathleen Schlilaty
Paul Scott
Paul Selig
Angelia Shoemaker
Daniel Shoemaker
Wei Qang Situ
Kenneth Stevens
Brian Straub
John Sweeney
Sylvia Thompson
Gregory Thornsburg
Dionne Tobey
Gerald Todd
Robin Torres
David Tsui
Ana Verlaine
Robert Vetter
Douglas Washington
Lisa Webb
Brian Wiggins
Connie Wigle
Norman Wold
Savann Yann
Patrice Yeatter
Margaret Yellowwolf
Curtis Young

In the LCPF portion of the magazine there are pictures of several of our members. These pictures came from the legislative booth at last year's National Convention where we wrote a note about why we give to LCPF. The notes were posted on the walls of the booth for delegates to read. In the words of President Rolando, "We all have different reasons for supporting the Letter Carrier Political Fund. Letter carriers are a diverse group; a cross-section of America. But we all come together to speak with one voice. That's what a union is all about."

Kevin Gottlieb is on page 25
Chriss Daniels is on page 31
BJ Hansen is on page 32
Chris Larsen is on page 46
Tawnie Brenner is on page 77
(I hope I didn't miss a picture.)

If your name is not listed as a contributor please make sure that you read the content of the LCPF article beginning on page 18 of the February Postal Record and then hopefully you will make the decision to contribute. It's easy to do. Instructions begin on page 93 of the same issue.

Money talks. It's for our future!

The Oligarch's Party

-Jack Hayes-

The oligarchs are planning a posh party
Cookin' up a cauldron of 'Glutton Gumbo Stew'
They are carving up our world in plundered pieces
And Big Brother is part of the kitchen crew!

They will grind up every remaining labor union
All the activists will be turned into fillets
Privatized workers will create the gravy
With shredded bits of job benefits after they're sautéed.

Healthcare will be gutted and beat till tender
Slave wages help to season up the broth
Our bitter tears will provide the salt that's needed
As the pigs feed on the slop that overflows their troughs.

Chanting "All for us and none for them," their mantra
Their appetites are fueled with Evil Greed
The more they feast on our means of survival
The hungrier they get.... and more they breed.

In order to control us they must starve us
And make us struggle each day that we live
To them, we are mere servants for their pleasures
Their shameful hearts just take but do not give.

Worker productivity has remained sky-high
Yet our wages are in free-fall every year
'Trickle Down' can never work and they knew it
They were just blowin' smoke out of their ears.

What kind of world are we duped to live in
When 400 greedy swine are in control?
The One Percent own half of the World's Riches
And won't be satisfied until they steal our souls!

'Offshore' they hide their incomes avoiding taxes
They squeal as champagne bubbles tickle in their snouts
The privileged few, the parasites who control the masses
Having lost all their humanity by selfishly selling out.

They are dumbing down our schools till we are brain-dead
The media fills our minds with violence, sports and MMA
They invest in 'Mass Incarceration' and 'For Profit Prisons'
As we exist in an 'Orwellian Surveillance USA'.

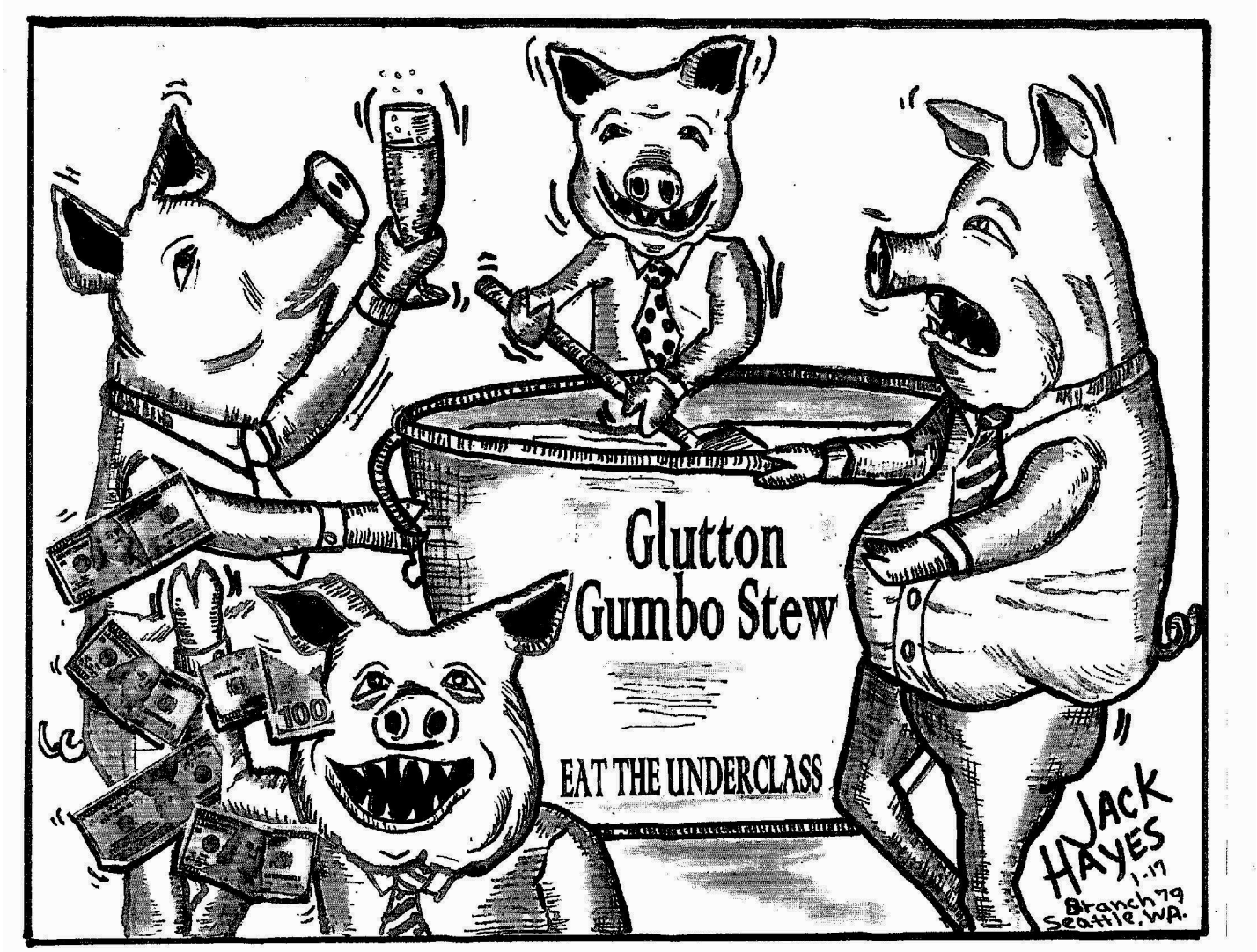
Our brave soldiers are led into foreign battles
While the oligarchs bankroll the obscene War Industry
The working class fights and dies to protect 'their holdings'
While the Elite are safely hidden in the lap of luxury.

Our lawmakers are bribed to favor just the wealthy
From the cradle to the grave we are restrained
But yet, we hold the power, all along it has been ours
If we convince the 99 percent, we can break these Evil Chains.

I see the world as one big connected family
Where Love and Truth will triumph over Greed
It's just a crime when millions are homeless and hungry
And the oligarchs just snort about our struggles and needs.

How sad I think when wealth is their obsession
And not know compassion, or the joys from being kind
Life is short and they can't take their money with them
But it lives on in the tax-deferred dynasties they leave behind.

Oligarch's Party courtesy of Jack Hayes



www.thestand.org the STAND

Where is a carrier to go for news about working people?

Every Day the Stand is delivering AWARD WINNING news.
Every Day the Stand is updated about working people's issues.
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Take a STAND for the news that is for us by us,
every day!

Stewarding for the Non-Steward - Second Installment

-Mats Julin-

For those who missed my first (now collectable) issue, this column is about postal and contractual rules but aimed towards those who are not stewards.

The first time around I talked about why telling your steward about a problem as soon as possible is important.

Topic number two is "the iron rule." Sounds kind of ominous, doesn't it? Images of a popular television show with its Iron Throne come to mind. No? Well, it does for me, but then I'm a nerd.

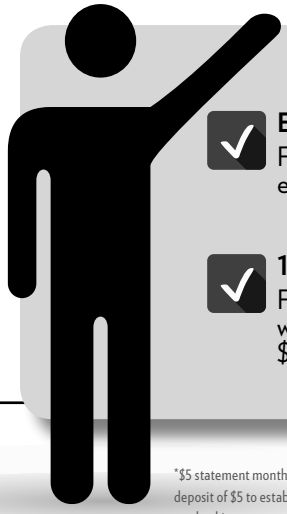
Anyway, the iron rule is:"obey now and grieve later." There are narrow exceptions to that rule which permit you to disobey. Those exceptions are: if an order would be illegal, morally repugnant, and/or you have a good faith, reasonable belief that following the order would cause imminent danger to life or limb.

Let's take a look at those exceptions. The illegal part is pretty self-explanatory. If management orders you to steal, you are exempt from the iron rule. For something to be morally repugnant does not mean that it is something you don't like, it has to be something that negatively affects you to your very core. For example, something akin to, say, telling a Jewish person who keeps kosher to eat pork. The third exception is the most common one invoked, but not always correctly. The key is imminent danger to life or limb. Being ordered to wrestle an angry bear would qualify, but to deliver the mail in the rain would not. A mere belief that a safety hazard *may* exist usually will not grant you that exception to the iron rule. The simplest test is to ask yourself, "do I honestly believe that more likely than not, I'll be in the intensive care unit of a nearby hospital if I follow this instruction?" If you do believe that, you might be able to disobey, but unless you firmly believe that, chances are you should just follow the instruction.

Now this does not mean that whatever management told you to do was proper. The instruction may seem like a waste of time, be bad business practice, defy logic, violate the contract and/or Postal rules, or what have you, but management does have the right to manage. Yes, that includes, to an extent, a right to mismanage. Just do what they told you to do. And after that the thing you need to do is tell your steward. Your steward will then go and investigate whether to file a grievance on your behalf.

And for those of you who read my first article, when would you tell your steward about it? That's right, ASAP!

3 FREE ACCOUNTS & EARLY PAY DAYS



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Branch 79 Scholarship Program

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

1. At the time of application applicant must be the son, daughter, or dependent of an active, retired, or deceased regular member of Branch 79 as defined in Branch 79's by-laws.
2. Applicants who have one parent in management and one parent a Branch 79 member are eligible, provided all other eligibility requirements are statisfied.
3. When making application, applicant must be a high school senior or in her or his freshman year of college, community college, university, or vocational/technical institute.

REQUIREMENTS

1. Applicants must have a cummulative GPA of 2.0 on a complete school transcript or SAT and/or ACT scores reflecting the national average. GPA or SAT and/or ACT scores must accompany application.
2. Two letters of recommendation must accompany the application. One from a community member and one from a member of any union (must include name of union).
3. Application must be signed by the President or Secretary of Branch 79 to verify paren'ts Branch 79 membership.
4. **The above requirements (1,2, &3) must be completed prior to submitting the application to the Branch Office.**

REGULATIONS

1. Scholarship will be paid to the student and the college after acceptance to the college.
2. Scholarship may be used for any accredited trade school, vocational/technical institute, community college, or university.
3. Scholarship is non-renewable. Past recipients are inelgible to apply for future scholarships. Scholarship applications are valid for current year only.
4. Winners will be selected by a random drawing at the May branch meeting.
5. Four scholarships in the amount of $2,000 each will be awarded.
6. Applications must be postmarked by April 1st.
7. The Scholarship Committee will administer the program as it relates to advertising, applications, selections etc.

Branch 79 Scholarship Application

Must be postmarked by April 1, 2017. Fill out and mail to:
Branch 79 Scholarship Committee 210 Queen Anne Ave N #201 Seattle WA 98109
PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY.

Please accept my application for a Branch 79 Scholarship. I am a senior in high school in the year 2016-2017, or a freshman in college, community college, university, or vocational/technical institute in the school year 2016-2017.

Branch 79 Member Name _____ Active Retired Deceased

Relation to Branch 79 Member Daughter Son Dependent

Applicant's Name _____

Applicant's home address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Applicant's Phone Number _____

This is to certify that the above named Branch 79 parent is a member in good standing in Branch 79.

_____Date_____
(Signature of Branch 79 President or Secretary)

I certify that the foregoing information is correct to the best of my knowledge and that I have included all required items with this application.

Signature of Applicant:_____Date_____

Manufactured Emergencies Part 2

-John Fletcher-

This is the second part of my article on understaffing at University Station, a situation that is common in Seattle area Post Offices. Understaffing drags down worker quality of life, customer service, safety, and efficiency. The primary responsibility for our problem is with management. Managers in this business operate on authoritarian ideologies and hand-to-mouth career numbers-seeking, rather than on big-picture thinking. Workers should be as clear as possible on what is happening so that we can put responsibility and pressure where it properly belongs, and not on each other instead.

So far, I have covered many of the ways management cuts the number of personnel in our office, so that there are not enough workers to reliably get the work done without "emergencies." There are also many ways management exaggerates the resulting worker/workload imbalance, by causing workload spikes.

For example, our mail sorting plants dump wild variations in mail on the stations from one day to the next, despite the fact that a lot of this mail is third class, and might appropriately be evened out from one day to the next. These mail dumps lead to fluctuations in staffing needs that do not help when a station is understaffed in the first place. Mail sorting plants dump on the office in other ways. It is apparently too much to ask that our DPS letters arrive all right-side up. I had a sort the other day where it was half upside-down. It is also apparently too much to ask that our DPS trays be put on gym packs with shelves, rather than slammed floor to ceiling into gym packs without shelves for the station workers to sort out for themselves. These are just examples. It is as if the plant managers' career numbers have to do with cutting labor in the plants, rather than with making things more efficient for the Postal Service as a whole.

High level managerial mandates have furthermore stripped office managers of their discretion with managing third-class mail at the office level. Now all mail must go out the same as first class, regardless what labor may be on hand. "Emergencies" frequently worsen as a result of these flexibility-reducing directives.

Surprise, surprise: our official last dispatch is scheduled early.

This loss of work volume flexibility even applies to Redplum grocery fliers. Although the Redplum people are paying a discount price with a three-day delivery window, management has ordered that the window be cut down to one or two days, assuming the fliers are delivered to the offices on time. And if the Redplum delivery is late, then they get one-day express service at a rock bottom price, no matter how bad our staffing situation may be. The day after our Martin Luther King Jr. holiday this year, management ordered all mail to go, including mail dumps from the plants, including all Redplums for many routes, on a day with driving rain, until well after dark, despite the fact that we were only on the first day of the Redplum delivery window, and despite the fact that we are clearly understaffed in the first place. Needless to say, it was a disaster. That was a manufactured emergency if ever I saw one.

Then there are the fake emergencies related to our last dispatch. If the last dispatch goes out late enough, overtime-desired carriers have to work two hours of penalty before anyone else gets slapped with a mando. But if the last dispatch goes out earlier, now all of a sudden it's an emergency to get all the day's work done in time to catch that truck. And since it's an "emergency," management can mando everybody else to do the work in straight overtime before ODLers have done much penalty at all. With an early dispatch, more of the station's work theoretically gets done in straight overtime, rather than penalty.

Surprise, surprise: our official last dispatch is scheduled early. So everybody gets mandoed into being off-assignment workers in order to make that last chopper out of Saigon. But meanwhile, without much attention, actual dispatches frequently go out much later than the official time. So the last dispatch on the schedule isn't the actual last dispatch. Union adjudication has established that the trigger for mandatory overtime is the actual last dispatch, and not the theoretical time written on a schedule. It does not sound to me like there has been

(Continued on Page 17)

(Emergencies from Page 16)

a grievance over this issue at our station within anyone's memory. But regardless, the fake last dispatch is another way management makes "emergencies" that lead to more mandos.

Early starts for overtime-desired carriers are another option management could use to spread the daily workload out and lessen"emergencies" during prime delivery hours. But management isn't using or getting the most out of the early start option either. Clerks have been too understaffed to reliably get the mail to carriers even at the regular start time. Sure, they can do it sometimes. But not reliably. Management has not set up clerk staffing in a way that would make early starts a reliable option for reducing evening "emergencies" — especially on heavy mail days.

I should also point out that University Station is part of a city-wide system, which, if it had enough leeway, could send both clerk and carrier help our way when we really needed it. But as much as our office managers may try, the city as a whole usually cannot seem to spare enough help without apparently harming productivity in some other part of the operation. So the problems aren't just with our station: the whole city-wide system seems to be set up without enough staffing leeway to keep the assembly line running smoothly for all of us.

When management cuts staffing too close to the edge, a vicious circle develops. Office managers get under stress and they start pushing the workers harder. Then everybody's under stress and grumbling. Overtime desired carriers get off the list because they are tired of being overworked. And then people need a break so the sick calls go up. And then somebody storms off the floor because of an issue with a manager. And then more people are out because a fight happened. And then somebody gets into an accident because of hurrying. It all spirals downhill. Managers may throw up their hands at every single falling domino in this chain like it's a complete surprise, but the whole thing is predictable to a proactive thinker. Things unravel in a station that is chronically understaffed. It is Psychology 101.

Wouldn't things run smoother with a properly staffed system? Mandos would be reduced or disappear. Overtime carrier exhaustion would be reduced. Stations would stop hemorrhaging money on disasters every time we turn around. The quality of customer service would improve. Office managers would have time to do constructive things, rather than perpetually responding to "emergencies" and cleaning up the consequences of them. Higher level managers could stop yelling. Workers would feel better. Emergency personnel would be called to our offices less often. Grievance payouts would be reduced. Attendance would likely improve. The assembly line would move along like clockwork. And management might even get an improvement in their worker satisfaction surveys, that they always seem to forget about until it's time to do the surveys.

The whole city-wide system seems to be set up without enough staffing leeway to keep the assembly line running smoothly for all of us.

Instead of that, we have a cornucopia of ways management is staging staffing problems. I know my account here is not perfect. Tackling a subject with so many vested parties isn't easy. But hopefully the gist is clear: managerial machinations have set us up with too little staffing leeway. Once that happened, recurring "emergencies" were guaranteed. It isn't like our primary problem is mail volume, or sick calls, or vacation leave, or any of the other small-picture excuses management constantly offers. When things are set up right, there should be leeway to handle the usual things that have been happening for years in the real-life functioning of a station. Only after management has done a good faith job of setting things up right: only then, if staffing problems still persist, would it be appropriate to turn our primary attention to other factors. Until that time, management deserves the brunt of the blame.

What can we do about this situation? Well, for one thing, stop buying into management's spin that there is no big-picture problem here. That only enables managers to carry on with their fake reality. Talk to your union representatives with an educated mind as to what is going on. Not all the problems I describe here can be fixed by

(Continued on Page 18)

(Manufactured Emergencies from Page 17)

the union. Still, a lot of this stuff can be challenged and grieved more aggressively than it is. Bureaucratic staffing questions may be less inspiring to stewards than getting someone paid or getting someone out of trouble. But it's a big deal to anyone who values his or her freedom. And there are business implications, too. Customers don't blame management for the low quality service that inevitably goes along with an understaffed station: they blame "spoiled" union workers. We don't need them thinking that. For our own quality of life and for the success of our business, we would be best off taking on staffing problems aggressively.

A complicating issue here is a built-in conflict of interest which might undermine stewards' work on staffing violations. Our stewards typically want to do a good job with enforcing the rules. But many of them also want overtime. Those two interests inherently conflict, when out comes to staffing violations. Overtime desired carriers depend on understaffing as a source of income. And as a matter of identity, they typically like being helpful when things are tough. With these kinds of personal interests in play, overtime carriers tend to think of understaffing as "normal," and may get upset when overtime hours diminish. If their station gets properly staffed and everything is humming along smoothly without the need for ODLers to step in and save the day, their paychecks and their identities are going to take a hit. So is it possible that overtime-loving stewards might not see it as such a problem when managers drag their feet on staffing procedures? Of course it is possible.

Political appointments aside, we cannot avoid conflicts of interest everywhere, and there are all kinds of people who deal with it well. But when a conflict of interest does exist, the worst thing we can do is pretend it is not there, for the sake of being polite. What I talk about here is not a condemnation. Nor is it a question of who is better than whom. The issue is about how our system would best run. With this purpose in mind, questioning our elected officials is fundamental to an optimally functioning system. So if I raise questions about our elected officials here in the press, I hope we can understand that this is our system working.

At University Station, our steward does a better job than the rest of us would do, including myself. But that does not mean he is perfect. I have talked to him many times on staffing issues at our station. He is aggressive with getting carriers paid for staffing violations. But I think it is fair to say he is more sympathetic to management's excuses for staffing problems than I am myself. Without some pressure from interested rank-and-file, I doubt priorities would change in our office or in the city as a whole.

Jason Valian wrote an article for the September 2016 Seventy-Niner covering how a third-party poll basically indicates the U. S. Postal Service has some of the worst working conditions in America. Our management scored rock bottom on such questions as whether they seem to care about workers and whether they value workers' opinions. Staging staffing shortages such that workers need to be chronically on-call, like indentured servants, is a golden example of why management scores so low. Having a predictable schedule is a basic necessity for many people who have lives and responsibilities outside of work. And predictability is a reasonable expectation for a properly functioning Postal Service. The USPS is not paying us an on-call premium, and most of us did not sign up for that.

Management likes to one-sidedly remind workers of their obligations when they took a job with this organization. But managers are also obligated to respect the terms of employment in good faith. Of all the ways management is failing in its obligations, station understaffing is clearly an example. If our offices were properly set up, mandos should only be happening once in a blue moon, if ever. Until Postal managers fix this staffing situation amongst the many other problems they have created, they deserve to be rock bottom on the surveys.

Problems thrive when regular people just accept things as they are. I hope we will do better than that. Getting informed and persistently talking about what is going on with understaffing is one of the best ways we can influence things to go better for ourselves and the business. Results will not be sure or swift. But at the very least, we can have the satisfaction of calling a spade a spade. Here's hoping for some success with that this year. Here's hoping for a smoother functioning Postal Service in 2017.

Happy Retirement, Deborah!

Congratulations to Deborah Patterson (Center) of Seattle Carrier Annex on her retirement. Thank you, sister, for being a mentor, a friend, a mama and a fighter for the carriers for all these years. Enjoy your well-earned retirement. (photos courtesy of Rod Leisam)

NEEDED: UNIFORMS For New Members of Branch 79

Better yet, bring them to a branch meeting!

Better yet, bring them to a branch meeting!

Sisters and Brothers:

The good news is we've had an uptick in members thanks to the hiring of CCA's. The bad news:

The Branch 79 Uniform Bank is low on *clean wearable and gently-used* uniform items for our new members.

So if you have uniform items you don't use much **PLEASE** give them to your Steward or bring them to the Branch 79 office so we can replenish our Uniform Bank.

We especially need clean wearable shirts, jackets and accessories.

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Off to a Running Start

-Vice President, Chriss Daniels-

I would like to thank the members for the overwhelming support I have received since I took office. It has made the transition from carrier to Vice President a lot easier and I look forward to representing each and every one of you.

I would like to mention a few issues I have received calls about. Some calls have been related to non-ODL carriers working overtime off their assignment. Before management requires a non-ODL carrier to work overtime on a non-scheduled day or off his/her own assignment, management must seek to use a carrier from the ODL, even if the ODL carrier would be working penalty overtime (Article 8.5.D). This needs to take place prior to non-ODL carriers volunteering or being mandated to work overtime off their assignment. Those that are volunteering or being mandated should be worked to the extent possible in order to take as few volunteers and mandate as few carriers as possible. Let your steward know when this happens. They may not know about it and they may need to investigate to see if there is a violation.

I have received calls relating to CCAs not being reimbursed for their travel mileage when attending Carrier Academy, Union Orientation, Postal Orientation and Vehicle training. (Provisions are in the F-15 Postal Handbook.) Some CCAs are not getting paid for all the days and hours of the training programs either. If this has happened to you let your steward know right away and provide them with a copy of your training records and a statement. Always keep a copy of any document you provide to management in case the information is misplaced.

I have also received a number of specific calls that have been disturbing. One of them was from a newly hired CCA who was not being scheduled to work, instead was placed on stand-by every day waiting for a call from management to let him know whether or not he was working. CCAs are not required to remain on "stand-by" or remain at home for a call on days they are not scheduled to work. (JCAM page 7-23)

Another call I received was from a very upset member who is being harassed and yelled at on a daily basis by a member of management who has already been in trouble for this very same issue. Again, please let your steward know if this is happening to you. It could very well fall under the Joint Statement On Violence And Behavior In The Workplace. (M-01242) At the very least it could violate management's contractual obligation to treat employees with dignity and respect.

One more issue to think about. Management in some stations is calling carriers on their personal cell phones several times a day, interrupting the carriers' duties, just to instruct them to move faster. If management wasn't constantly disrupting you with phone calls, you would be able to move faster. If you believe management abuses the use of your cell phone let it go to voice mail: Management can use the scanners to text anything they need to inform you. Any member having issues, no matter what they are, don't be afraid to discuss it with your steward or an officer at the Branch office. That is what we are here for. No question is a dumb question.

Retirement Seminar Announcement

There will be a Retirement Seminar
(For FERS and CSRS Both)
At the Branch 79 Office
210 Queen Anne Ave N

April 20th / 7 pm

Spouses are welcome.