President's Report:

Moving Forward Together

-B J Hansen-

There are a lot of new faces in Branch 79 leadership this year. We had a full house for the all day training for new Shop Stewards we held on a Sunday last month. Twenty-three new stewards and alternate stewards attended. Long time stewards Ron Jilk and Dale Martinez showed up to support the new stewards from their stations. I witnessed something I’ve never seen before at any training I’ve ever been at. The stewards were so wrapped up in learning that they wanted to delay the lunch break so we could finish up a section of training.

Thank you to Nick Simmons and Scott Anderson for stepping up to present most of the training, and to all the stewards who showed up ready to learn more. Nick and Scott were new stewards attending the class just a few years ago.

We have a lot of talent in our ranks which management is constantly trying to pilfer by recruiting stewards to be 204Bs. This indicates that the stewards are doing a good job. However, it’s also an unfair labor practice under the National Labor Relations Act for management to interfere with union operations and officials. Thank you to all the stewards who say no.

We have a new board of officers for 2019-2020, which also includes several new members. Now there are twelve since we added the Financial Secretary position. There are always a lot of challenges to deal with as officers, stewards, and carriers. I’m looking forward to how much we can accomplish together as a union in this new year.

(Continued on Page 14)

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(Continued on Page 14)
President B J Hansen called the January Branch meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

Chaplain Don Bennett gave an inspirational message.

A roll call of officers found all officers present.

Communications: Mark read recent communications to the branch.

Applications for Membership: Kevin read the names of 21 new applications for membership.

MSC

Books are closing

By-Laws Committee Mats Julin:

- 2nd reading about increasing funds for the Retired Club. Committee recommendation is one of disapproval. Retired Club President Pat Costello spoke as the creator of the by-laws and in disapproval of the committee’s recommendation. There was a discussion about funding the Retired Club.
- There was a call for the question. MSC
- The motion on the committee’s recommendation of disapproval was upheld. There was a call for a division which held the same result as the vote. MSF
- Motion was made for branch to write a check for $300 in January 2019 to assist the Retired Club with the annual luncheon. There was a discussion and Mark stated these funds will probably come from Gifts & Grants.
- There was a call for the question. MSC
- The motion was to write a check to the Retired Club for $300 in January 2019. MSC
- Mats continued with first reading of by-laws proposed changes.
- Motion to just read the changes to the by-laws. This motion was

(Continued on Page 6)
Shop Stewards

Auburn..........................Julie Blackwell
Auburn............................Tommy Grice
Bainbridge Island...............Erika Wales
Ballard..........................Tyson Burchak
Ballard...............................Matt Rollins
Bellevue Annex...................Jesse Aujla
Bellevue Annex..............Chris Bradshaw
Bellevue Crossroads......Kevin Pearson
Bellevue Main..........................Cory Carlson
Bitterlake........................Ron Grisham
Bothell......................Susan Mulholland
Burien..........................Tracy Steele
Columbia....................Edward Johnson Jr.
Des Moines...........................................
Enumclaw...........................................
Georgetown.....................Bruce Dillow
Interbay......................David Kidder-Fincher
Interbay...........................Jose Martinez
Issaquah...........................................
Kirkland.........................Alfredo Dwan
Kirkland...........................Sabrina Miller
Lake City..........................Andrew Forray
Mercer Island..........................Midtown/Seattle
Mill Creek..........................Brian Wiggins
Mill Creek......................Yoshi Nagamatsu
North City.........................Joshua Berg
North City....................Rachel LeLoo
Part-Time Regulars.............Kevin Cronin
Redmond..........................Ken Stevens
Redmond..........................Dong Young Lee
Renton/Hils..................Deborah Znak-St.Germain
Renton/Hils..........................Willie Castro Jr.
Renton/Main......................Ryan Bell
Riverton............................Dale Martinez
Riverton..........................Donna Tapia
Seattle Carrier Annex...Franklyn Anderson
Seattle Carrier Annex...Teresa Danning
Seattle Carrier Annex...Enrique Molina
Skyway..........................Term Station
Twin Lakes.........................Dan Alexander
Twin Lakes......................Tess Hart
University..........................Will Collins
University..........................Garrett Scott
Wallifornia..................Ralph Coolman
Wallifornia....................Nick Simmons
Wedgewood.....................Susan Steele
West Seattle......................Kim Shasteen
Westwood.....................Scott Anderson
Westwood..........................Brad Larsen

Director of Insurance

Jo Ann Pyle
206-914-2253
(NALC Health Benefit Plan / MBA)

Director of Retirees

John Sweeney
206-283-3079

Branch Meeting

Swedish Club
1920 Dexter Ave N
February 13th / 7 pm

Next Month’s Meeting
March 13th / 7 pm
and at each meeting’s conclusion:
Drawing for $50 Gift card

Retired Club

IHOP
10002 Aurora Ave N
February 19th @ 11:00 AM
Hope to See You All There!

Steward Council

Branch 79 Office
210 Queen Anne Ave N
February 27th / 7 pm

GOLD CARD MEMBERS

Larry Austin
Leonard Berglund
Gene Betz
Billy Bigelow
Robert Bigelow
G.R. Blair
Lawrence J. Branze
Sylvester Bunker
Frank Burdulis
Richard Byland
George Condon
Beverly Cook
William Coyner
Larry Davis
Eugene Dell
George Eggler
Ronald Eng
Ronald Engen
Robert Erb
David Erickson
James Farmer, Jr.
Jon Felker
Willard Fox
Earl Frank, Jr.
William Gallagher
Robert Geiger
Conrad Gettman
June Gravelle
Francis P. Hennessey
Ron Henry
Danny Hess
Kenneth Hicks
Charles H. Hudson
Earlie L. Hudson
John Janousek
Ronald Johnson
Kenneth Johnston
Jerry Jonason
Richard Klein
Frank LaRiviere
Ernest Lendy
Donald Lowe
Roy Luquette
Peter Madsen
Michael Mangan
John Martin
Richard McFadden
Robert McBerry
Bruce Miner
Lafayette Moore
Wayne Morgan
Ed Morris Jr.
Kenneth Nelson
Gary Nolta
Mike Ofield
Junji Ono
John Otis
Charles Owens
Dan Padilla
David Parmelee
David Payne
Robert Peterson
James Robinson
David Rodger
Don Sanders
Donald Shannon
Ronald Sherrard
Wayne Sonnenfeld
Robert Stringer
Robert Studley
Jimmy Terada
Ben Wittick
Donald Wissinger
James Wood
New Steward Training Pictures
Sunday, January 6th
The Seventy-Niner

February 2019

The Future is Bright

-Sgt.-at-Arms Scott Anderson-

I’m writing to you today after completing the 2019 NALC Branch 79 New Steward Training. The training was held at the Executive Inn by the Space Needle in Seattle on January 6, 2019. Altogether we ended up with 28 people, including those who helped lead the training. Credit to President B J Hansen for putting together a good group of individuals and great training!

The New Steward Training is an annual training primarily for newer stewards, but is attended by many current and former stewards. It shows dedication to those who gave up a Sunday (Day Off) to come and learn and for some relearn the basics of “How to Steward.” We had stewards present from the following installations: Auburn, Bellevue, Bothell, Kirkland, and Seattle. Many of the stewards present are BRAND NEW. Thank you to all of you for taking this leap and becoming the leaders we all need.

We covered the basics of “How to Steward” including Article 15, Article 16, Article 17, and Article 31. Essentially, we engaged in the grievance-arbitration procedure, discipline, and steward rights. There were a lot of questions asked, which was highly encouraged. As a new steward just three years ago, I know exactly how our new stewards are feeling. It’s a huge step that stewards take on for all of our co-workers and union brothers and sisters throughout our great union.

The future of Branch 79 is very bright. We have many new individuals involved throughout our branch and it is really exciting to see how engaged all of our new stewards are. It’s not an easy job to be a steward, and it is a thankless job, at times. It can also be a very rewarding job. To all you new stewards, thank you for doing what you’re doing. It means the world to our fellow members.

Today was a great day for me as a leader in the NALC. When new stewards step up as leaders, and want to learn and grow, I see a very positive future ahead of us. Many individuals asked insightful and difficult questions that show they want to learn. I’ve not been around long, and to see this kind of excitement is really inspiring.

Thank you again to all the new (and less-new) stewards that were at the New Steward Training. You are keeping hope alive for the future! Let us harness this hope and engage with our fellow leaders and members in unity to strengthen and grow our union and the United States Postal Service!

In Solidarity -

Scott

A Friendly Reminder

-Jack Hayes-

Do you know a brother or sister who is dedicated to our cause? Someone who has distinguished themselves by their service to our union year after year? A person who freely gives their time to benefit all of us? I believe we all can name several letter carriers who are so qualified.

Why not write a detailed letter about this exceptional person, explaining why they deserve to be honored? Turn it in at the Washington State Association of Letter Carriers convention in Yakima to the Outstanding Service Award Committee for consideration.

Also, if you are not a delegate and will not be attending the state convention you can mail your letter of nomination to the committee. Look for more information on the Outstanding Service Award in an upcoming issue of the state newsletter, The Letter Carrier.
Welcome New Members

Richard Caverly    Amanda Shi    Eric Lewis
Sara Dering       Douglas Hacker  Tyler Hansen
Patricia          Loan Ngo       Gavin Muller
McMahan           James Van Pelt  Keith Goff
Shirley Jenkins   William Fasciano Jordan Marx
Dennis Williams   Aaron Phillips  Thien Nguyen
Brian Chacon      Xiomara Quiroz  Matthew Muna
                  Alissa Love
Greetings, Brothers and Sisters! My name is Kevin Gottlieb and I was recently elected to be the next Vice President of Branch 79. I have over 30 years of carrying mail; I know a lot of you wish your supervisors could say that. I started my career in Detroit for five years before transferring to Seattle where I carried mail for two months in Burien and 17 months at the Westwood Station before transferring closer to home to the Federal Way Post Office and for the last 10 years at the Twin Lakes Post Office.

I joined the union when I started my postal career. In 2005 I asked the current steward why he was not grieving the Overtime Desired List (ODL) not being equitable and he informed me (his words), “Kevin I hate the ODL, if you want it grieved then you be the steward.” I thought to myself that I would do it. In 2006 I became a steward at the Federal Way Post Office and later when the offices merged, I was the steward at Twin Lakes.

In 2012, President Jo Ann Pyle appointed me to be the Assistant Secretary-Treasurer. I have been a part of route adjustment teams, back up to Step B, but the position I enjoyed the most and not really happy about giving up was being a Carrier Academy Instructor. I loved meeting and teaching the new employees about what they needed to know about doing our job. Seeing those smiles all week and the excitement about starting their career with the Service was satisfying to me. Then they get to their assigned office and…well, that’s another article. Thank you to RAA Debbie Dixon for her supportive leadership of the Federal Way Academy. To my co-instructor Ray Johnson, we were a great team, Crystal McArthur from Tacoma Branch 130 and Ken Boetcher from Renton. These carriers are excellent instructors and I thank you.

I would like to thank my mentor. Since I met Jo Ann Pyle she has been pushing me, kicking my ass, being supportive, and getting me out of my comfort zone to where I am at Branch 79 and the NALC. Others who have been supportive are Brooks Bennett and Chriss Daniels. There are others and I thank you, too.

I would also like to thank the members of Branch 79 for electing me to be the Vice President. It’s not something I take lightly. I will represent Branch 79 with the same honor you have given me with your vote.

Lastly, I would like to thank my family at Twin Lakes. It has been an honor to be your steward at Federal Way and Twin Lakes for 12 years. Some days it wasn’t easy, but with the union, we all stood together. The biggest accomplishment was on February 1, 2018 when both the clerk craft and the carrier craft became 100% union at Twin Lakes on the same day. How awesome is that?? I will miss my daily interactions (OK John Rolph, I know I wasn’t there every day) but I will miss being on my route and being in the office with nothing less than some of the greatest people I have met in my life. Twin Lakes has the greatest group of clerks, carriers and janitors.

I look forward to working with President B J Hansen, Secretary Treasure Mark Myers and the other officers of Branch 79.

Gotta get to work!
Retired Club Installs Newly Elected Officers

-Jack Hayes-

At 11:00 AM on January 15th the Retired Club held their first meeting of the New Year at the IHOP restaurant, at 10002 Aurora Avenue in North Seattle. The meeting was called to order by president Pat Costello.

Branch 79 president, B J Hansen, was present to swear in the newly elected officers. Pictured standing left to right are: Sylvia Thompson—Vice President, Don Bennett—Secretary, Gary Nolta—Treasurer, Pat Costello—Retired Club President, Jack Hayes—Trustee, Jim Henderson—Trustee. Seated in front are; Joe Whetung—Trustee, and Chris Larsen—Sergeant At Arms.

Anyone thinking about retiring, or recently retired, drop into a monthly meeting (the third Tuesday of each month) and we will treat you to lunch. It’s always good to see old friends and meet new ones too. The next meeting of the Retired Club at the IHOP at 10002 Aurora Ave N is on February 19th at 11:00 AM

We hope to see you there!
On December 21st I had the pleasure of attending Archie Asberry’s retirement party at the Kirkland Post Office. I have worked with Archie for many years, as he has been a shop steward or an alternate shop steward for much of his time in Kirkland.

I reminisced about working with Archie and Kirkland branch activists Sue Hart and Gloria Belarde. Both have since passed away but while they were with us (and since then) Archie played a critical role in representing letter carriers. There were times when Archie wanted to take a break from stewarding but he always stepped right back up again when there was a need.

Archie’s family also attended his party and we were even entertained by a “happy retirement dance” performed by Archie and his grandson.

All the best to you, Archie and your family, in your retirement and thank you so much for all you did during your time at the Kirkland Post Office.
NALC Member App
Installation instructions for Android and iPhone

Apple iPhone and iPad

1. On Apple iPhones, find the App Store (the letter A in a circle on a blue button) on your phone’s home screen.

2. When it opens, go to the search button (with the magnifying glass) in the lower right and click it.

3. ![NACL member app](image)
   
   In the gray search bar at the top, enter “NALC Member App.” Then hit the blue search button in the lower right.

4. ![NACL Member App](image)
   
   When you see the app, click the blue “Get” button at the right, and then it will turn to a green “Install” button. Click that. You will be asked for your password or touch ID, depending on how you’ve set up your phone. Once you authorize the installation, it will begin.

5. When completed, there will be a blue “Open” button, if you want to use it immediately. The NACL Member App also will appear on your home screen for whenever you want to use it.

   While the app was built for phones, it can be used on iPads as well. Follow the instructions above, but your search will not find the NACL Member App. Simply go to the top left where it says in blue, “iPad Only” and change it to “iPhone Only.” You should now be able to download the app with the instructions above. Once the iPhone app is installed, you’ll notice that it will automatically scale up to display full-size on the iPad screen, causing the buttons, fonts and graphics to look proportionately larger than normal.

Android and other devices

1. On Android phones, find Google Play (sometimes called Google Play Store or Play). It looks like three overlapping triangles pointed right.

2. ![Google Play](image)
   
   When it opens, go to the search bar at the top and enter “NALC Member App.”

3. ![NACL Member App](image)
   
   Click on the entry with the red, white and blue NACL logo, and then click on the green “Install” button. If it asks if you’ll give the app access to your location, click the “Accept” button (location is used only to personalize push notifications and to give you a precise congressional directory).

4. After it has been installed, there will be a green “Open” button, if you want to use it immediately. The NACL Member App may appear on your home screen. If it doesn’t, go to your phone’s Apps function to find it and drag it to the home screen.

   While the app was not designed for Amazon or BlackBerry devices, some features do function on these and on other devices that can install an Android APK file. The NACL Member App APK file is available at www.nalc.org/member-benefits/nalc-member-app for those who know how to manually install the file onto their devices. NACL does not offer technical support for installing the app on these or other devices.

   *At this time, NACL does not have an app for the Windows Phone.*
**OWCP Help is Here**

If you have a work-related illness or injury and are having trouble navigating the confusing OWCP system, or your claim is being denied, please come get assistance from trained OWCP experts at the Branch 79 office. Look in the Seventy-Niner for announcements of future help sessions.

*Next Session:*

Branch 79 office - 210 Queen Anne Ave N, Seattle 98109
Wednesday, March 6th from 5:30 pm - 8:30 pm

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**MEMORIAL**

Brother Larry Olsen
Gold Card

Anthony Mendoza
Brother of Brother Rudy Dizon

Marion D. Glover
Mother of Sister Carol Stiles

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**Shared Services**
(National Human Resources)
1-877-477-3273
http://liteblue.usps.gov
You’ll need your Employee ID# and your USPS PIN.
Branch 79 Scholarship Program

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA
1. At the time of application applicant must be the son, daughter, grandchild, 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 satisfied.
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 cumulative 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 parent's/grandparent's 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 ineligible 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.
to the bus when at the end of the day, it was because they were told to by higher ups. I wouldn’t see myself lasting very long in any organization where I was expected to be a rubber stamp or a company “yes” man. Maybe it’s just me, but I sleep fine at night with the decisions I have made in my job. Certainly, as a union representative, I have been asked or encouraged to pursue a course of action, but in the end it was always my decision to move forward with a grievance or to negotiate a settlement. It’s one of the many things I respect about our union because I have always received advice by other union advocates when I’ve sought it, but never have I been mandated by anyone at any level in our organization to do something or else.

In my last article I made a wild prediction for the holiday mailing season. Let’s check the score card to see how I did.

1 We will be woefully understaffed until mid-January.
2 There will be a shortage of delivery vehicles at virtually all stations.
3 With the penalty overtime exclusion period in Dec, management will still mando improperly.
4 There will be virtually no acknowledgement by management of the hard work performed by the workers, nor will there be any responsibility taken by management for having no successful plan in place during the Christmas rush.
5 In spite of the total chaos, the carriers will push through and find a way to get the job done.

Not to toot my own horn, but I would call that 5 for 5!

The one thing that I did find partly humorous and partly sad this peak season at my office was how little time my manager actually spent at work. While we had carriers routinely working 12, 13 and 14 hours a day 6 and 7 days a week, this guy still managed to put in 6-hour days, 5 days a week. Talk about going that extra mile! It amazes me that this company spends untold amounts of money and time to track carriers’ every movement to make sure we’re not “robbing” the company for an extra 90 seconds on our lunch breaks, and yet the guy in charge at my station is missing in action more than any carrier I know. One would think it would be very difficult to manage your staff or to serve our customers when you’re nowhere to be found. I just chalk it up to another glaring example of “do as I say, not as I do!” Wouldn’t it be interesting if the union were allowed a “shadow day” with those in management to see firsthand what exactly they do all day? I can guarantee you that will never happen, for obvious reasons.

The New Year does find changes occurring as myself and longtime steward Curtis Mathew have decided to step aside as front line stewards at Riverton and pass the torch on to our fellow brothers and sisters. I convinced Curtis last year to stick it out for one more year and he begrudgingly agreed. I would like to say THANK YOU, CURTIS!!! For all the long hours and hard work you have put in over many years representing the carriers of Branch 79 and at Riverton in particular. We have experienced more than our fair share of clowns come through the never ending revolving door of management that is the Post Office, but through thick and thin, we have always prevailed. Another shout out to those who stepped up in November to run for Union Steward in 2019. Dale and Donna will be taking the reins with able assistance from Kevin and Joe as their alternates. I have no doubt that Riverton will continue to be a station that carriers always want to bid into and that management never wants to get assigned to. It’s sad in a way that this is the reality we find ourselves in, but imagine the potential of this company if all parties were on the same page. As a long time union rep I feel comfortable extending the offer of working together to those in the management ranks. An easy and bold course of action by management would be to simply follow the Contract. I mean after all it was agreed to by the Parties at the National level and I don’t understand why management in the field spends so much time constantly violating the rules that those at the top have agreed to follow. In my many years of being a steward, I honestly can’t remember filing a grievance that wasn’t in response to an improper action taken by management.

Recently in Seattle, 9 stations had their improper start time change grievances settled at Formal A of the grievance process. I’m happy to say that they were all settled in the union’s favor. Part of the settlement that was agreed to states that each carrier involved will receive $50 for management improperly changing the start times. I’m guessing this will involve about 500 carriers. If you do the math you will see that this arbitrary and improper action by management will cost the company about $25,000. If you add other offices throughout the District that followed this ridiculous mandate, I’m sure the cost incurred will be staggering. My only question is who in management will be held accountable for this costly blunder? I believe in any other company the person responsible for making the poor decision to change start times that then resulted in a large amount of cash being flushed down the proverbial rat hole would now be in the process of seeking a new employer. My guess is that in this company, that same individual will be soon promoted to yet another rung up the career ladder. I would like to give Nick and the rest of the crew at the Branch office thumbs up for seeing these grievances through to the end. I always tell management that I don’t mind working for my money; however if they are persistent on giving it to me for free, I’ll be happy to take it.

Lastly, as we start another new year, I would like to thank all who stepped up to be union leaders for 2019. Whether you were elected or simply ran for a position unsuccessfully, all members should be thankful that you were willing to step up. I would ask each member reading this article to take a brief moment to thank those who are willing to represent the NALC and to wish you all good luck going forward.

In Solidarity,

Dave
To this day I still don’t know why he was there; or how he even knew to show up. “Did I want Union representation?” I wasn’t even a Union member. Way, way back then, my thought process was, “Who needs Union representation? Union representation was for people who did bad stuff!” Wrong. Union representation is for people who do stuff, period! And Letter Carriers are people stuffed with stuff to do; any or all of which can turn bad in an instant. But, I turned down his offer. Probably the biggest error in my layer of errors, but again, I was new. Besides, it had already been explained to me in great detail, how I owned this muck up. So, I took full responsibility.

Now, let’s skin this onion. If this had been baseball, I would have already committed enough errors to get myself yanked from the game. For those keeping score, here’s the first easy-out I booted right off the bat. First error – listening to the direction of someone who has never done my job! When a supervisor comes screaming at you like a line-drive, don’t let yourself be distracted. Do the first things first. I should have lifted that back gate – first. Then, I would have fielded that task cleanly. The second error was listening to the managerial personnel intently explaining to me how I was guilty as charged, how I had to be disciplined, and that if I played ball I could possibly keep my job. Rounding second and diving head-first into third, I really kicked the error out of that responsibility-ball when I declined Union representation. Duh! There were obviously enough extenuating circumstances to have held management complicit in my dimwittedness, where they should have claimed a greater share of the blame, and where their culpability in my “cluster-truck” would have been exposed. I might have walked. Who knows? And yet, “To error is human; to forgive divine.” Well, there is no divinity within the vicinity of error-ville. You’re in it all alone; except, if you accept – the Union is there to go to bat for you.

Installation of Branch Officers for the 2019-2020 Term

From the January 9th membership meeting at the Swedish Cultural Center

Photo Courtesy of Jack Hayes
The Errors of My Way

-Don Nokes-

R
ehashing the past is seldom beneficial, except maybe for psychiatrists. We’re all defective in some way, shape or form – after all, we’re only human. Of course, if you keep repeating the same mistakes, it’s time to make some other errors. Speaking of errors, I’d like to take this opportunity to go over a bonehead move I made in my “maiden days” as a Letter Carrier. This failure has an odd oniony flavor to it, as there are several different layers, some skins if you will, that need to be fleshed out to be fully understood. Here’s the move that I failed to noodle my way through successfully.

The job was Night Collections, where we ran two ton trucks from the wee hours of the morning to wees of night. We’d travel from dark to dark, collecting mail on the dead run, traipsing through buildings, ransacking blue boxes, shaking down all comers, and hauling it back to the terminal. I would lattice five large hampers together to gather the mail, belting them down from front to back. After a couple of months I had a pretty good grasp of this task. So – so what happened? How did it all go so wrong? How did I park my truck and leave for the day, and leave five hampers packed with raw mail sitting in the back? How could you collect mail all day, drive your truck up to the dock and forget to empty it? How could you collect mail all day, drive your truck up to the dock and forget to empty it? How did I park my truck and leave for the day, and leave five hampers packed with raw mail sitting in the back? The back gate was latched and locked – the way it always was at the end of my day. So – I simply jumped in, parked the truck and went home. I’m not proud of my move, but it is the move I made that day. (Note: My move is not patented, so may replicate it if you want.)

Firstly, visiting the cage was not Hoyle for me. My personal Robert’s Rules of Order was to unload that truck on arrival. Get that mail out and gone and into the mix, but Sir Snit, with his panties in a twist, had nixed it. Instead, off I go to check in, but wouldn’t you know it, everyone had been given this new directive of the day. I was queued up in a line that snaked its way out the door and then some. What usually took me two minutes to do after I had unloaded my truck – took better than a half an hour. There I was in line, and still in line, and still in line – talking with everyone and anyone, about everything and nothing, and losing focus, losing my grasp on the reality of doing my job because I had to do this dumb, mind numbing “By the Book” bullsh**.

What I should have done was jerk open that truck first, and then when I had emerged from that half hour of bookish delay, I would have seen that the truck was still packed to the gunnels. Instead, after being sidetracked by the master of distraction – I walked up to the truck, and observed that it was all buttoned up. The back gate was latched and locked – the way it always was at the end of my day. So – I simply jumped in, parked the truck and went home. I’m not proud of my move, but it is the move I made that day. (Note: My move is not patented, so may replicate it if you want.)

The next day I got called into the office, informed of my failure, given a full explanation of why it was entirely my fault, and was told I had to be disciplined. But there was this strange energy in the room, almost an apologetic air from management. Also, there was this little man who had suddenly appeared. I had never seen him before. He looked like a leprechaun. Here I was on my way to possibly getting fired, and the little man was asking me if I wanted to be represented by the Union. He was such a diminutive creature, but he seemed to hold immense power over the managerial personnel. There was only one of him and three of them, and yet they were all guiltily bouncing about from foot to foot as if they had to pee. They were certainly shifty around him, as if someone had done something wrong. Yes, yes someone had – it was me! I did it! I did the wrong thing. Why were these manager-types all but River Dance around this little gnome? Maybe he was a Leprechaun!? Turns out he was the Union President.

(Continued on Page 15)