

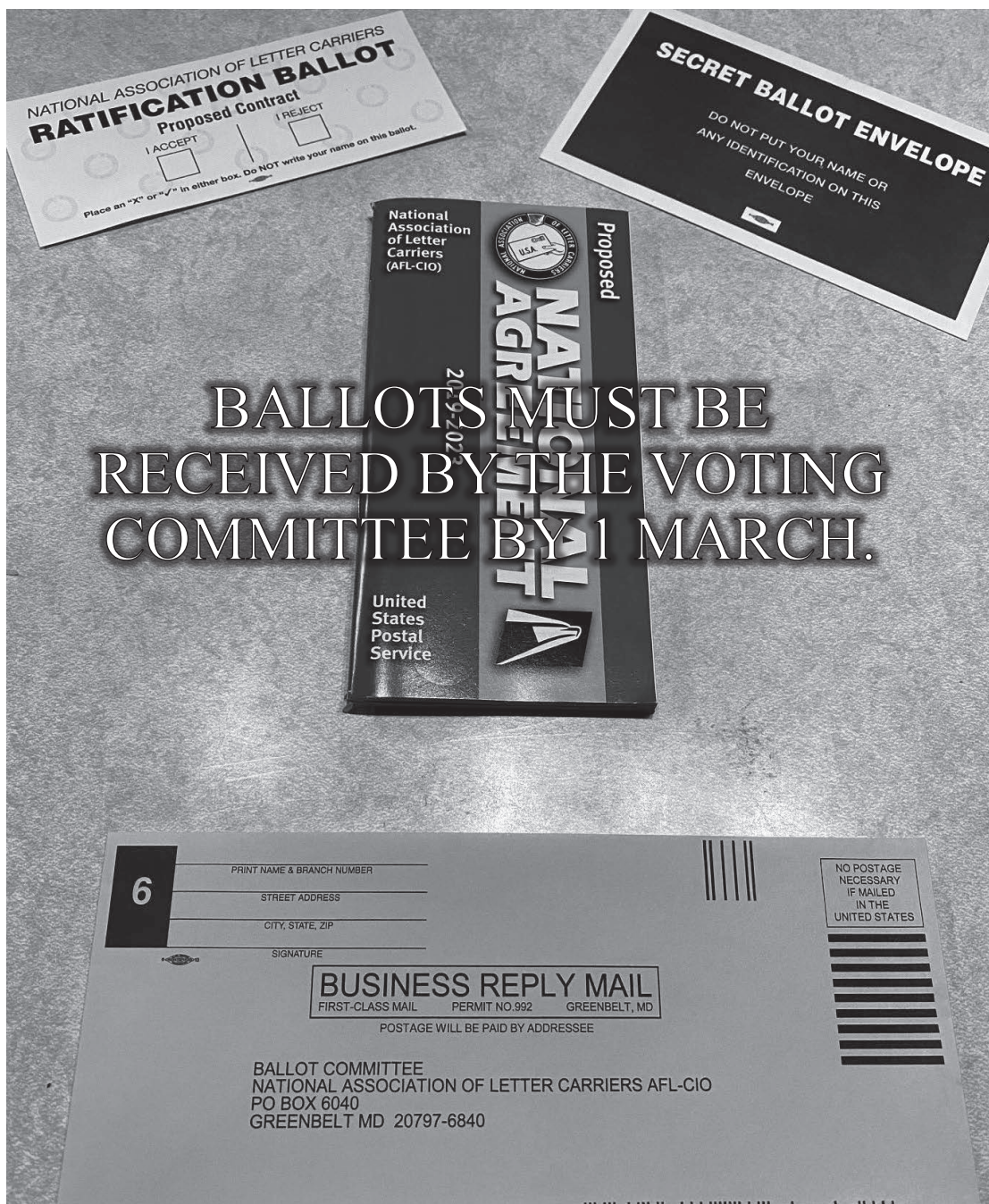
# BR. 14 NEWSLETTER



VOL 50, NO. 02

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF BRANCH 14, NALC  
SERVING LOUISVILLE, FORT KNOX, BARDSTOWN, RADCLIFF, LAGRANGE,  
LEBANON, EMINENCE, SHELBYVILLE, VINE GROVE, & SPRINGFIELD

FEBRUARY 2021





**TONY WEDDLE**  
*President*

Every month as I try come up with a topic to write about for our Branch Newsletter, it seems to get more and more difficult. I try to write about something positive relating to news and other current events that may affect our jobs as letter carriers. Or, I'll try to address concerns by members of issues happening on the workroom floor. But for the past several months, I keep coming back to the topic that is causing the most frustration, grief, and low morale for our members. STAFFING!

For the past few years management's inadequate staffing has been the primary topic of concerns and the root cause of so many of our disputes and grievances. We've been hoping that staffing will improve but it's evident that we have been heading in the wrong direction since staffing levels continue to decline. We now have members that have never experienced what should be

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*"Many of our junior carriers today have only known and experienced daily chaos and management's dumpster fire operations of trying to get routes covered and the mail delivered."*

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considered normal delivery operations. You know, the kind where carriers report for work and nearly every route has an assigned carrier. Every carrier performs their office and street duties for their assigned routes and returns home at a decent time when the work is done. Which allows time to attend to after work affairs and the needs of the family. Many of our junior carriers today have only known and experienced daily chaos and management's dumpster fire operations of trying to get routes covered and the mail delivered. Where working non-scheduled days and a ridiculous number of hours for the week, whether you're listed on the Overtime Desired List or not,

has become the new normal for delivery operations.

For months branch officers have expressed to management that unsatisfactory staffing is the cause to almost all our disputes and grievances we are experiencing and that they have got to do a better job of hiring to replace CCA's, and full-time carriers too, who have resigned. Last year stewards in our branch filed more grievances than we've filed in our history. And the reasons all point to poor staffing. I'm not sure filing record number of grievances is something we should be proud of because it demonstrates management's incompetency to fix the issue and it shows their lack of honor to abide to our contract. Management states that they're trying to hire CCA's but it's evident that CCA's are quitting faster than management hires.

We all have our opinions of why CCA's are quitting but most of us can agree that being overworked appears to be the leading cause. Before the next class of CCA's can be trained and sent to their units, current CCA's have already called it the day out of frustration and being overworked. We've suggested to just hire an excess number of CCA's and inflate the rolls to help get us out of the rut we're stuck in but management is concerned of exceeding district CCA caps. Yes, that's not a joke, apparently the CCA rolls show that we're near caps. But we all know those numbers are corrupted and it's probably because management doesn't audit the CCA rolls adequately. On any given month's seniority rosters, we can review CCA names and discover several CCA's that quit several weeks or months ago. And that's just at the Louisville installation. If every installation in the district is as equally incompetent at cleaning up the rolls, it makes us wonder just how many ghost CCA's there are on the district's rolls.

With full-time carriers resigning, we're experiencing situations where it's taking months to remove their names from the rolls as well. When a full-time carrier abruptly quits with no signed resignation, management apparently isn't taking the necessary measures to go through the process of removing them from the Postal Service.

Nevertheless, until staffing greatly improves, carriers will unfortunately continue to work excessive hours. Our stewards will continue to file the necessary grievances to protect carriers' rights and we'll keep pushing management to hire new workers. But it's hopeful that management will eventually realize that their jobs would get easier too if we were better staffed. And, that they could save a lot of resources by not having to process record number of grievances and pay out money in settlements if they just followed the terms of our contract.

Hope to see many of you at the next union meeting. Until then, remember, if you're going to do the job, you might as well take the time it takes to do the job right.



## BRANCH 14 NEWSLETTER

Published monthly by  
Branch 14 National Association of Letter Carriers  
4815 Poplar Level Road  
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40204.....Rick Cate  
40205.....Jarett Sims  
40206.....Bob Cradic  
40207.....Josh White  
40209/14/15.....Missy Harris  
40211/12.....Damon Braxton  
40213.....Jarett Sims  
40216.....Vacant  
40217.....Jeff Richards  
40218.....Matt Weegens  
40219.....Matt Weegens  
40220.....Carol Gast  
40222.....Bill Davis  
40228/91.....Tina Davis  
40229.....Vacant  
40241/42.....Adriane Shanklin  
40243.....Vacant  
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*All facts, opinions and statements appearing within this publication are those of the writers and editors themselves, and are in no way to be construed as statements, positions or endorsements by Branch 14 or its officers.*

**RON GAST*****Executive Vice-President***

Well winter is in full swing and we have seen some of the weather that we have avoided in recent years. At the writing of this article, we have just survived an ice storm that caused serious problems for letter carriers. Many were not able to make it in to work, which left a lot of mail undelivered. Efforts of hard-working letter carriers ensured that even with a delay, all of the mail has been delivered on the wake of a new storm. Tonight, we are expecting a snow event which is expected to bring in up to 6" of snow, which will be falling in many places on top of existing ice. Fortunately, it is coming in on a holiday which should allow some time for snow removal before we get back to getting the mail out

*"While it is understood that many of us just could not safely make it in to work, with the onset of absenteeism that we have seen lately, it is possible that some just looked outside and decided that they didn't want to try. We have to do better than this."*

once again. Caution is always warranted when we are carrying in snow that is sitting on ice. I am hopeful that we get past this event with no injuries to any letter carriers.

As mentioned before, when we had this ice storm, one of the reasons for the mail delay issues was lack of carriers at work. While it is understood that many of us just could not safely

make it in to work, with the onset of absenteeism that we have seen lately, it is possible that some just looked outside and decided that they didn't want to try. We have to do better than this. Somehow, somehow, it has become acceptable to some letter carriers to accept not coming to work, placing the additional workload on their fellow carriers. Now I am of course not saying that many of these absences are not warranted, but I don't see how in past years carriers were able to make it to work on a regular basis, but now we have an extreme level of absences. FMLA has become the norm, with some employees having numerous FMLA cases. I only ask that each and every carrier reevaluate their dedication to the job that pays you a very good salary and provides benefits that assist you and your family.

With this being said, it often makes we wonder how carriers can survive without a paycheck, due to receiving Leave Without Pay (LWOP). Anytime that you take LWOP, it can drastically affect your paycheck down the road. For every 80 hours of LWOP (2 weeks), you will lose 4, 6 or 8 hours of annual leave (depending on your earning) as well as not earning 4 hours of sick leave. As leave is depleted through extended absences, you will begin to be charged LWOP. Not only does this deplete leave balances, but it also will affect your retirement and other benefits, such as health care. Not to mention, no paycheck.

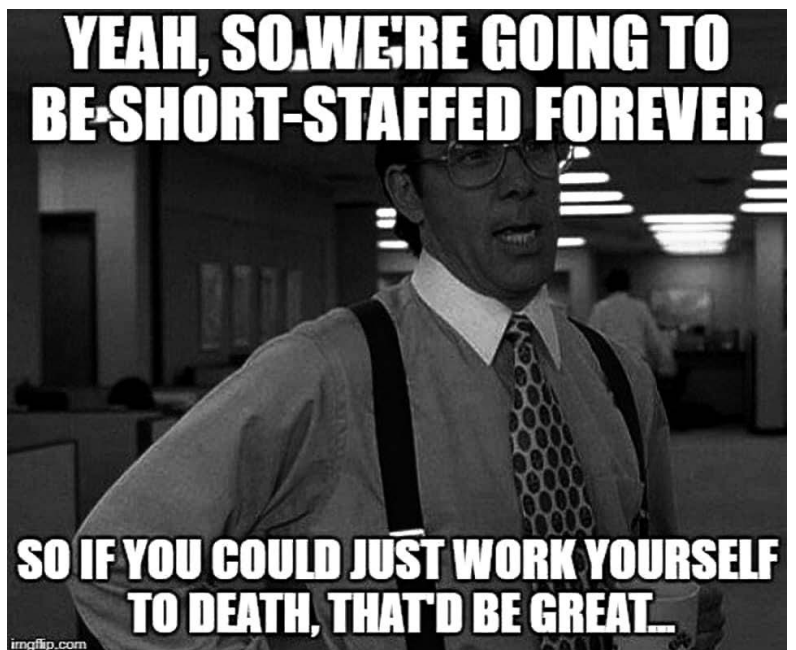
I don't want anyone thinking that I am questioning or challenging any carriers right to use sick leave as needed, or FMLA which is your right. I only ask that prior to calling in on any occasion, you consider what the effect will be on your fellow carriers and then decide if you really



must call in. If the answer is yes, then by all means take the time that you need. Just keep in mind that this may affect many things down the road.

So please stay safe, stay healthy and look out for each other. We are all in this together. Hope to see you at the February meeting on the 23<sup>rd</sup> at 7:30 pm.

Knowledge is power. Solidarity forever!



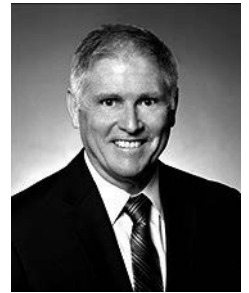
**The Branch 14 CCA clothing closet is in need of uniform donations! Please go through your closets and bring all spare serviceable uniforms to the hall for our CCAs. If you can't make it to the hall, give them to your steward to turn in for you.**

**The Point of Contact for the CCA Clothing Closet is Tina Davis She can be reached at (502) 817-4445. Tina may be available before each Eboard and Union Meeting at 6:30 PM.**

*Next Union Meeting  
February 23rd at 7:30pm*

*Steward Meeting 6:30 pm  
United we bargain, Divided we beg*

**National Association of Letter Carriers – Region 6**  
**National Business Agent**  
**February 2020 Report**



Brothers and Sisters,

Recently, with all the attention on Capitol Hill, many political figures have been reciting the preamble to the Constitution. I found it interesting the interpretation of what our forefathers meant by the phrase “to form a more perfect Union”. The experts indicate this implies the progress of the American experience is never complete. I realized that saying could also be applied to our union, the National Association of Letter Carriers. Although I could be a little biased regarding how great our Union is. It would be foolish to think that even we, the NALC, could not continue to improve.

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*Are NALC representatives perfect? Of course not. But that does not mean someone should get out of the union or file charges against their officers for their imperfection. No, instead, step up and help make us a “more perfect Union”.*

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The Union is not an individual or a small exclusive group of people; instead, everyone is a member. We are over 94% organized, which means there is plenty of ideas and talent amongst our members. Step up! Be an active part of the union. It is easy to complain, but it takes effort to be a contributing, “more perfect Union” (member).

I put out messages like this every so often, usually, after I have entertained discussions with members on how unhappy they are with someone in a union

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leadership role. Comments like, “Well, I pay union dues, and I want a grievance filed”, or “I pay union dues and I didn’t get a return phone call”, or even “I pay union dues, but what for?” I do not make excuses for the union leadership; however, I try to explain to the member to please be patient – they are probably handling someone else’s issue now. They will return your phone call and get back to you regarding your grievance. Are NALC representatives perfect? Of course not. But that does not mean someone should get out of the union or file charges against their officers for their imperfection. No, instead, step up and help make us a “more perfect Union”.

I would also like to briefly touch base on another closely related topic that our office is asked to do by members, which is to change their steward. Usually, the reason for this request comes from a personality issue between the member and their steward. As most know, stewards are either elected or appointed by an elected branch officer. Thus, it is the branch memberships’ will to have that person as the office’s steward. Therefore, I explain to those individuals it would be improper for our office to interfere with the wishes of the branch.

By law and the oath that stewards take, they must represent their craft when circumstances require their representation. However, when there ever comes a time that someone is not being represented properly, there is a provision in the NALC Constitution that states the branch president “...shall at all times have the authority to relieve any steward, whether appointed or elected, of any representational duties or functions and to assign such duties or functions to another member appointed by the President, whenever the President concludes that such action is necessary to ensure that the Branch meets its representational responsibilities or to ensure Branch compliance with NALC policy.” Again, the steward representing carriers in a unit is ultimately determined by the members of that branch.

As I complete this article, a tentative agreement with the Postal Service is being voted upon by our membership. The return of ballots has been extended until March

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1, 2021. Please take a minute to complete your ballot and get it back into the mail stream as soon as possible. If the contract is ratified by our members, local negotiations are scheduled to begin on April 29, 2021. Now is the time to prepare for negotiations. Our office will be setting up virtual trainings to help branches prepare.

In closing, I just want to remind everyone to please stay safe, wear a mask and maintain social distancing. Your life or the life of a loved one may depend upon it!

In Solidarity,  
Troy Clark  
National Business Agent – Region 6  
Kentucky – Indiana – Michigan (KIM)

Visit the Branch Website at:  
[nalcbr14.com](http://nalcbr14.com)  
or **Like** us on Facebook

### Quarterly Audit Reports

#### INCOME FOR THE PERIOD OF OCT 1ST THRU DEC 31ST 2020

DUES	\$	-
NEWSLETTER ADS	\$	-
BUILDING FUND	\$	-
DUES		
WITHHOLDING	\$	68,498.91
MISCELLANEOUS	\$	3,498.45
(Golf Scramble, MDA, misc.)		
TOTAL	\$	71,997.36
SAVINGS INTEREST	\$	2.27
TOTAL INTEREST	\$	2.27
GRAND TOTAL	\$	71,999.63

#### BRANCH 14 QUARTERLY FINANCIAL REPORT TREASURERS REPORT FOR THE PERIOD OF OCT 1ST THRU DEC 31 2020

##### GENERAL CHECKING

CHECKING BALANCE BROUGHT FORWARD	\$	83,380.65
DEPOSITS FOR THE QUARTER	\$	71,997.36
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>155,378.01</b>

DISBURSEMENTS	\$	66,541.42
CHECKBOOK BALANCE	\$	88,836.59

##### SAVINGS/CONVENTION FUND

DEPOSITS	\$	2.27
ACCOUNT BALANCE	\$	90,245.22
MORGAN STANLEY	\$	133,285.27
<b>TOTAL CASH NET WORTH</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>312,367.08</b>



**TOM WEBB*****Health Benefits/Retirement*****Telehealth Visits.**

You can now see your doctor online. Use NALCHBP Telehealth for 24/7 access to a board-certified doctor. Talk to doctor in minutes with no appointment or long wait times. It's a great option for care right from your home and more convenient than a trip to an urgent care center. These visits can be accessed on your smartphone, tablet, or computer.

Professional medical service at your fingertips. Some of the services that are available to are, care for the flu, common cold, cough, fever, sinus infections, pink eye, skin rash and more. Doctors will assess your condition, provide a treatment plan, and send a prescription to the pharmacy of your choice. When you opt to use the Telehealth visit there is a \$10:00 co-pay. This is still more reasonable than a doctor's office visit or a trip to an immediate care center.

Telehealth visits are one of many optional services the NALC Health Benefit Plan offer its members. The NALC Plan has many other services available to its members. The 2021 booklets have a summary of the benefits in the NALC Health Benefit Plan. To contact the Plan, call 1-888-636-6552 Monday thru Friday 8:30 am to 3:30 pm or at [www.nalchbp.org](http://www.nalchbp.org)

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**MISSY HARRIS*****Community Activities Coordinator***

Well, 2020 is gone and we start a new year. So far things seem to be the same, so make this year different. Reach out to your loved ones and tell them you love them, often. Get involved in something that makes you happy or helps others. That's how I got involved with the Union oh so many years ago. Bob Bracy came to our station to sign people up for the Combined Federal Campaign. He talked to me about all the things that Union brothers and Sisters did for charity. Bob invited me to the Muscular Dystrophy Summer camp. I took him up on the offer to go hang out with kids for the day and was hooked. For that week, those kids are the regular kids, not the ones with a disability. They wheel around and have fun just like any other kid that week. Swimming, boating, and horseback riding are some of the things they do at camp. All of that comes at a cost.

Bob showed me so much from charity fundraising, to volunteering with the Labor Council and getting involved with building homes for homeless veterans. He will be greatly missed by many, but a lot by me. Fly high brother. I challenge all of you to look at our times and see where the future is heading and get involved with the Union so we can fight for a better work environment. It takes more than a select few to make change. We will be having a trivia night on March 27<sup>th</sup>, if COVID protocol allows. Until then, be safe and make good choices.

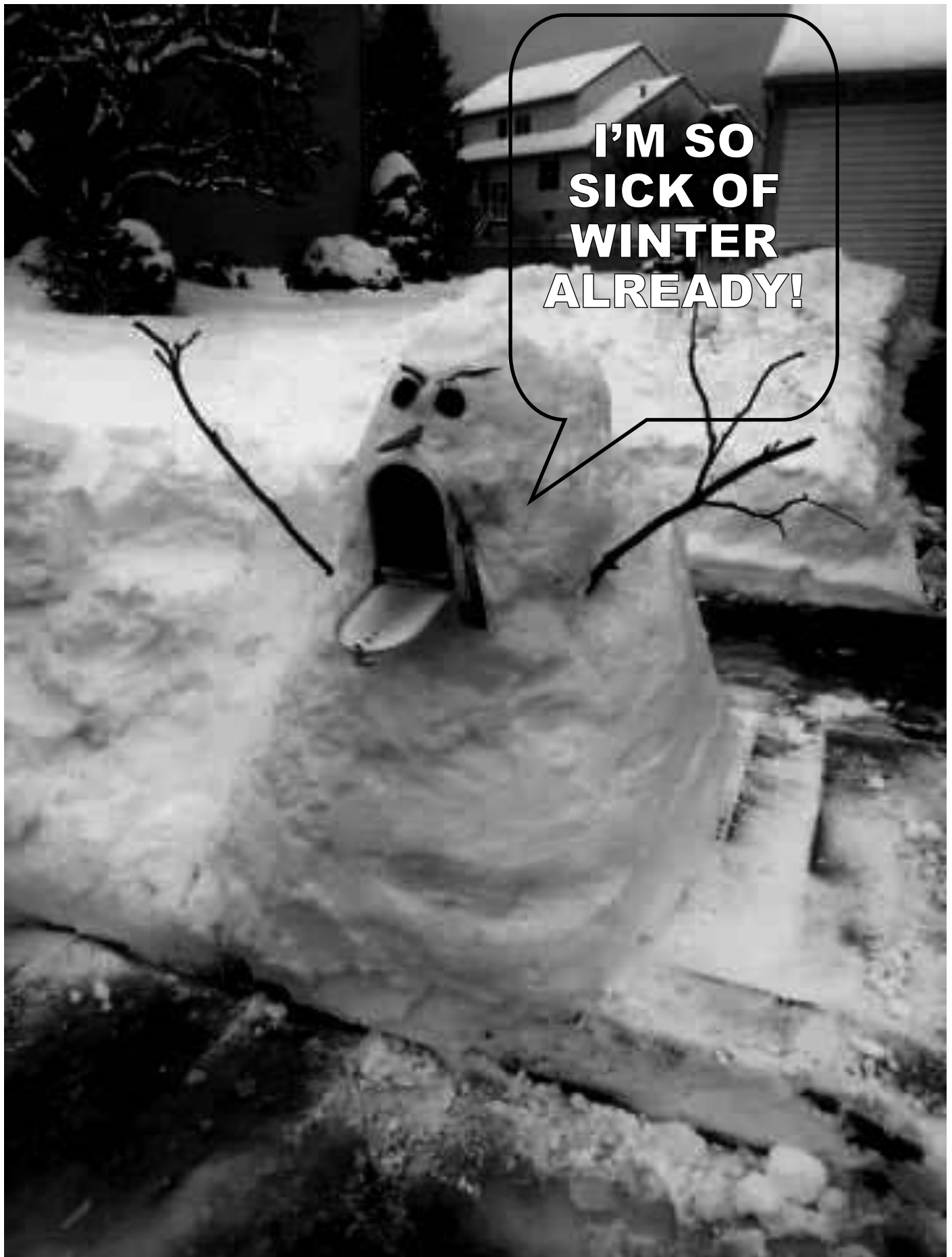
## **Shared Services**

(National Human Resources)

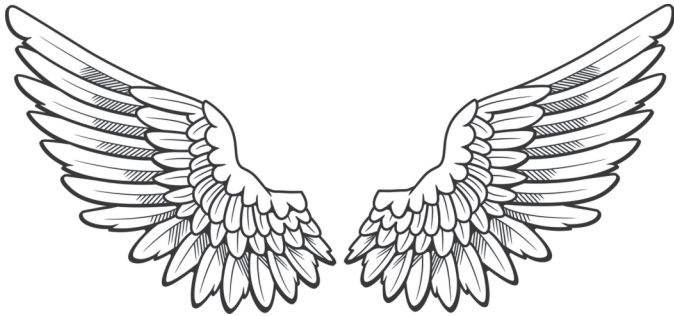
1-877-477-3273

<http://liteblue.usps.gov>

Any picture that you would like to see in the Branch 14 Newsletter should be emailed to the editor ([billrock2k@yahoo.com](mailto:billrock2k@yahoo.com)) You can also text photos (with a short explanation) to the editor at 502-345-3732  
Thank you, Bill Davis.



# IN MEMORIAM



**WALTER  
WARD SR**



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