

BR. 14 NEWSLETTER



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LEBANON, EMINENCE, SHELBYVILLE, VINE GROVE, SPRINGFIELD, & CAMPBELLSVILLE

JANUARY 2024



HONORING THE DREAM

MARTIN LUTHER KING
JR. DAY



TONY WEDDLE
President

The new year is well under way, but we're just picking up where 2023 ended and that's with continuing efforts by management to improve attendance of letter carriers. Management's preferred way to improve attendance is obviously by issuing discipline. So, it's no surprise that discipline attendance grievances are on the rise. But, like many other older carriers, we can agree that the threat of discipline to many of our younger or less senior carriers doesn't carry the same weight that it once did. Let's face it, job opportunities are better for today's younger workers, and they don't appear to be too worried about receiving discipline or losing their jobs. That's not to mention that with the excessive working hours many carriers are currently working, they can work 60 to 70 hours this week and call in for a few days next week, and still make more money. And for some, if they do get removed from the service, they're likely to find a better job, where they're treated better, with weekends off, and with comparable benefits around Louisville - anyways.

“Management’s preferred way to improve attendance is obviously by issuing discipline. The threat of discipline to many of our younger or less senior carriers doesn’t carry the same weight that it once did. And for some, if they do get removed from the service, they’re likely to find a better job.”

It would be great if the Postal Service would promote some supervisors and managers with sufficient leadership skills that would create a working environment to where carriers wanted to come to work, but after 30 plus years of working here, I'm not sure that day will ever come. Just look at the situation for the Louisville installation with its inability to retain new hires and its poor staffing issues with carriers working excessive hours. This situation has been going on for somewhere around 11 or 12 years. I guess if you're an overtime hog, it's a good place to work. But if you're like most folks, and appreciate a decent work-life balance, this place needs a whole lot of improvement.

I've been the branch president for 11 years now. And during that period, I've worked with 12 Louisville Postmasters. And I'm probably forgetting one or two, but that's a new postmaster every year. Of those 12 that I can recall, I can honestly say that there were only three that cared about employees, attempted to improve the workplace, and had adequate personable skills that branch representatives could work with. For several of the others, well, if you put them all together, I'm not confident they would have enough skills to run a street taco stand. But a lot of that fault can be directed at the buffoon(s) way up the management ladder that keeps detailing unqualified and inexperienced folks to our city. Obviously selecting their drinking buddy, the workplace side kick, or maybe even the best chair sniffer in the room isn't working. This installation is way past due of getting someone appointed to the postmaster position that will work at improving the workplace to where carriers wanted to come to work. At least improve it to where carriers didn't dread every second of their drive to work. Heck, that would be a great start and it may actually improve attendance. So, my hopes for 2024 is to get a postmaster in Louisville that is knowledgeable, treats folks right, wants to do good for all employees, can mentor young supervisors and managers to improve their abilities and wants to make the Louisville installation a better place to work. I know, don't hold my breath, right?

“It would be great if the Postal Service would promote some supervisors and managers with sufficient leadership skills that would create a working environment to where carriers wanted to come to work. I’ve been the branch president for 11 years now. I’ve worked with 12 Louisville Postmasters, only three that cared about employees, attempted to improve the workplace, and had adequate personable skills that branch representatives could work with. For several of the others, well, if you put them all together, I’m not confident they would have enough skills to run a street taco stand. “

As you can probably tell by reading this article, it's not the most uplifting article that I've ever written but it should indicate to everyone that 2024 hasn't started off well. Early indication is that 2024 may be a very challenging year for our branch representatives and stewards in our

endeavors to protect the rights of our members from those with no contractual knowledge, who mistreat carriers, and exhibit a lack of honor and integrity when it comes to following the terms of our national agreement.

Nevertheless, I hope to see many of you at the next union meeting. Until then, be safe and remember, if you're going to do the job, you might as well take the time it takes to do the job right. Because any workday could be used for inspection purposes.



BRANCH 14 NEWSLETTER

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- 40202.....Leroy Gutierrez
- 40203/08/10.....Yodari Balcarcel
- 40204.....Leroy Gutierrez
- 40205.....Thomas Derringer
- 40206.....Jason Hawkins
- 40207.....Russell Johnson
- 40209/14/15.....Josh Shelby
- 40209/14/15.....Mark Wright
- 40211/12.....Damon Braxton
- 40213.....Kyle Moert
- 40216.....Angelo Bravo
- 40217.....Jeff Richards
- 40218.....Matt Weegens
- 40219.....Vacant
- 40220.....Rodgerick Streater
- 40222.....Nick Schneider
- 40228/91.....Tina Davis
- 40229.....Brandon Reid
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- Lebanon.....Ryan McCormick
- Shelbyville.....Bailey Hendrix
- Springfield.....Ryan McCormick
- Fort Knox.....Vacant
- Radcliff.....Mike Watson
- Vine Grove.....Timothy Embry

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

Visit the Branch Website at:
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Shared Services (National Human Resources)
1-877-477-3273 <http://liteblue.usps.gov>
You'll need your Employee ID# and USPS PIN.



RON GAST

Executive Vice-President

I am going to start off this year with a Congratulations and Welcome to our 6 new Stewards. We have been saying for many years that we need new members to step up and get involved, and this year we have 6 of our members who have done just that. The new stewards are:

- *Yodari Balcarcel – Downtown – 40203/08/10
- *Josh Shelby – Iroquois – 40209/14/15
- *Mark Wright – Iroquois – 40209/14/15
- *Rodgerick Streater – Hikes Point – 40220
- *Brandon Reid – Okolona – 40229
- *Timothy Embry – Vine Grove

I am glad to welcome them aboard and I hope that you do the same. They are all eager to learn and do what they can for the membership. Let's give them a chance to do just that.

On a different subject, I normally try to write an article about something contractual, but this month I would like to discuss something that is a little different. All of you know that we have a contract with the Postal Service that is known as the National Agreement. Our most recent National Agreement was effective from September 20, 2019, through May 20, 2023. However, since a new agreement was not reached prior to the ending date, an agreement was made between the national parties to continue with the current agreement until a new one is reached. This is covered in Article 43.2 of the National Agreement. However, I want to talk about Article 43.1 which states:

Section 1. Separability

Should any part of this Agreement or any provision contained herein be rendered or declared invalid by reason of any exist-ing or subsequently enacted legislation or by a court of compe-tent jurisdiction, such invalidation of such part or provision of this Agreement shall not invalidate the remaining portions of this Agreement, and they shall remain in full force and effect.

I ask that you read the first part of that provision which states: ***“Should any part of this Agreement or any provision contained herein be rendered or declared invalid by reason of any exist-ing or subsequently enacted legislation or by a court of compe-tent jurisdiction...”***

Our National leaders have worked for many years to ensure that all letter carriers receive a fair day's work for a fair day's pay. They have worked to ensure that we receive paid vacation, paid sick leave, paid holidays and appropriate pay increases, among many other things over the years. In a nutshell, the above language gives our legislators the right to discontinue all or part of our collective bargaining agreement (contract) with the stroke of a pen. While we have an agreement with the Postal Service, which is binding through the grievance procedure, it could all go away if Congress decided to do so. If this happens, you would probably be looking at a lower pay scale, less vacation time, less if not no sick leave and less to no paid holidays, among many other changes. The contract also ensures that management cannot fire a carrier without just cause. This would definitely go away without the contract. Just imagine, you get stuck in traffic due to an accident on your way to work, which causes you to be late. Upon arrival you find that you are unable to clock in. When you ask your supervisor, they tell you that you are fired for being late. There would be no recourse, no grievance, no nothing. You would simply be looking for another job.

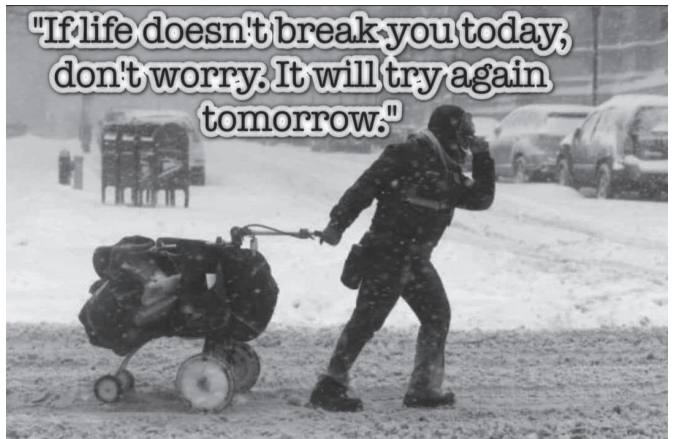
This is why it is vitally important for all of us to get involved in the legislative process and work toward putting those into positions in Washington who will help our cause. We need to send those folks to Washington who support our issues and support our rights to bargain collectively. It doesn't matter which party you support, as long as you support those who support us. Now comes the dirty word that no one wants to hear (actually it's an acronym) and that is LCPF. LCPF stands for Letter Carrier Political Fund. This is a fund run by the NALC to help those in power who help us. The money for LCPF comes from donations by letter carriers such as you and I. As we all know, this is once again a huge election year and now is the time for all letter carriers to stand up for ourselves and to support those who support us. If you are not currently contributing to LCPF, I strongly urge you to reconsider. I have heard many arguments from “we shouldn't have to pay politicians to support us” to “the money only goes

to one party". I agree that we shouldn't have to pay, but if that's the system that will allow us to keep our rights, I guess I'm okay with it. As far as the dissemination of funds, LCPF gives money to members of all parties, as long as they show support for us. This isn't an opinion, it's a fact.

Therefore, I am asking that every carrier give \$5 per payday to LCPF. You can give by payroll deduction, so the money is taken out before you ever see it. \$5 out of your paycheck every two weeks should not even have a noticeable impact on you, but it will have a great effect on our future. As it has been called in the past, this is "job insurance". We all have car insurance, health insurance and home insurance. Now it's time to put a few dollars toward your future with the Postal Service. If you need any help making your donation, please call the union hall and we will get you taken care of or you can get it done at this months meeting.

If you're still reading this, I want to thank you for all you do. None of us can do this job by ourselves, it takes a team effort. Working together we can make amazing things happen. Let's all work together to ensure our future. I will be on vacation for the next Union meeting on January 23rd, but I hope that many of you are in attendance and ready to go at 7:30 pm.

Knowledge is power. Solidarity forever!



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**BECOME A CONTRIBUTOR
AND MAKE A DIFFERENCE**

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JARETT SIMS
Vice-President

Every piece of mail is important. Not just to the customers, but it should be to us as city letter carriers as well. From express mail to Red Plums, every piece of mail is vital. When I was trained, my facilitator labeled Bulk Business mail as “Bread and Butter” mail because that was what put food on his family’s table.

When speaking of the sanctity of the mail, the National Postal Museum at the Smithsonian writes:

“From the postal system's very earliest days, security and privacy have been critical concerns for administrators. What has become known as the 'sanctity of the seal' is a critical part of the bargain of trust between sender and service. Once a piece of mail has entered the mail stream, it is subject to the protection of the postal service and assured of privacy until it reaches the recipient.”

Along those same lines, it is important to note that whatever management tasks you to deliver on your bid assignment or overtime, there are only two choices. The first option is to safely deliver all the mail. The second option is to get management’s approval for mail not delivered.

If you think you will not be able to deliver all the mail as instructed by management in the allotted time, notify management as soon as possible. After doing so, when you return to the office, complete a PS Form 1571 or “Undelivered Mail Report” for all items you did not deliver. Complete the form in its entirety and have management sign verifying all returned undeliverable mail. Make a copy and keep for your records.

Section 442 of Handbook M-41, City Delivery Carriers Duties and Responsibilities addresses this as follows:

- 44 Undelivered Mail:
- 442 Completing Form 1571
 - 442.1 - After return from trip, obtain Form 1571, Undelivered Mail Report, (see exhibit 442.1) from unit manager.
 - 442.2 - Add any mail which was not

delivered but was returned to the office.
442.3 - Sign the form and give it to a unit manager

If management refuses to give you a Form 1571, ask to see your union steward.

Each day you bring back mail, make sure to follow these steps. Put the onus on management to make decisions regarding any undeliverable mail.

You should also complete a PS Form 1571 for a bevy of reasons, including but not limited to, blocked boxes, closed businesses, dog issues, and safety reasons like icy or broken steps.

Management will *attempt* to hold carriers responsible for delaying mail. Make sure that you always follow the guidelines.

I unfortunately will not be at our January union meeting, I will be training in warm and sunny Detroit, Michigan at our National Business Agent’s office. I hope to see many of you in February at our union meeting.



New members Lakisha, Caleb, and Ramonica





Quotes and contributions from Martin Luther King Jr.



Still true to this day!

- ♦ “Darkness cannot drive out darkness: only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate: only love can do that.”
- ♦ “I have decided to stick to love...Hate is too great a burden to bear.”
- ♦ “Our lives begin to end the day we become silent about things that matter.”
- ♦ “In the end, we will remember not the words of our enemies, but the silence of our friends.”
- ♦ “Faith is taking the first step even when you can't see the whole staircase.”
- ♦ “If you can't fly then run, if you can't run then walk, if you can't walk then crawl, but whatever you do you have to keep moving forward.”
- ♦ “Let no man pull you so low as to hate him.”
- ♦ “There comes a time when one must take a position that is neither safe, nor politic, nor popular, but he must take it because conscience tells him it is right.”
- ♦ “Nothing in the world is more dangerous than sincere ignorance and conscientious stupidity.”
- ♦ “The ultimate measure of a man is not where he stands in moments of comfort and convenience, but where he stands at times of challenge and controversy.”
- ♦ “Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere.”
- ♦ “Forgiveness is not an occasional act, it is a constant attitude.”
- ♦ “If a man is called to be a street sweeper, he should sweep streets even as a Michaelangelo painted, or Beethoven composed music or Shakespeare wrote poetry. He should sweep streets so well that all the hosts of heaven and earth will pause to say, 'Here lived a great street sweeper who did his job well.’”
- ♦ “There comes a time when silence is betrayal.”
- ♦ “We must live together as brothers or perish together as fools.”
- ♦ “People fail to get along because they fear each other; they fear each other because they don't know each other; they don't know each other because they have not communicated with each other.”

Being Passed, By the Past!



UNION MEETING

Date: 11/28/2023

| Br 14 Union Meeting Attendance by Zone | |
|--|-----------|
| Annshire 40205 | 2 |
| Annshire 40213 | 2 |
| Annshire 40218 | 1 |
| DTCU 40202 | 1 |
| DTCU 40203 | 0 |
| DTCU 40204 | 0 |
| DTCU 40208 | 0 |
| DTCU 40210 | 0 |
| Fern Creek 40228 | 1 |
| Fern Creek 40291 | 1 |
| Hikes Point 40220 | 0 |
| Iroquois 40209/14 | 4 |
| Iroquois 40215 | 0 |
| J-Town 40299 | 1 |
| Lyndon 40222 | 1 |
| Lyndon 40241/42 | 2 |
| Middletown 40243 | 1 |
| MLK 40211 | 1 |
| MLK 40212 | 0 |
| Okolona 40219 | 1 |
| Okolona 40229 | 0 |
| PRP 40258 | 1 |
| PRP 40272 | 1 |
| Shelby 40217 | 1 |
| Shively 40216 | 1 |
| St Matthews 40206 | 1 |
| St Matthews 40207 | 1 |
| Bardstown 40004 | 0 |
| Campbellsville 42718 | 0 |
| Eminence 40019 | 0 |
| Ft Knox 40121 | 0 |
| LaGrange 40031 | 1 |
| Lebanon 40033 | 1 |
| Radcliff 40160 | 1 |
| Shelbyville 40065 | 0 |
| Springfield 40069 | 0 |
| Vine Grove 40175 | 0 |
| Retired | 16 |
| Guests | 0 |
| Total | 44 |

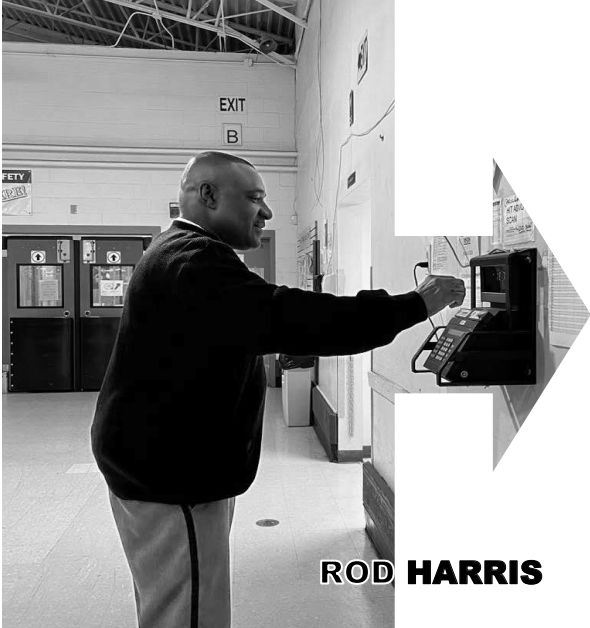
Officers & Stewards Excused:
Johnson and Hendrix

Officers and Stewards Absent:
None

MDA 50/50 Drawing.....\$115 MDA
.....\$114 Kyle Wysong

\$50 Door Prize.....Steve Terry
\$50 Gift Card Bud's Tavern....Tony Weddle
\$25 Gift Card Shack in the Back.....
.....Mike Watson

LAST PUNCH



ROD HARRIS

LCPF DRAWING FOR NOVEMBER 2023

POT.....\$200

Last Month Winner.....Eric Smith

Last Month Winnings.....\$0

Next Union Meeting
January 23rd, 2024 at 7:30pm

United we bargain, Divided we beg

IN MEMORIAM



Jerry Epperson SR



TOM WEBB

Health Benefits/Retirement

Happy New Year. It's a new year and it's the time we make resolutions that are supposed to be for self-improvement. However, most of the time they go by the wayside and we return to our old ways. For 2024 let's all make some resolutions we can keep.

Take better care of ourselves and live a more healthy life style. Eat a better diet, take our prescribed medications the way the doctor directed, get proper rest, and take better care of ourselves in general.

Set a goal of attending at least 4 Union Meetings in the upcoming year. You will get a lot of good information that will help you do your job in a professional manner.

Retirees, read the health benefit information provided to you so that you will better understand your rights and benefits.

Hope to see you at the next Union Meeting.

Deliver the Cure



MDA

Family receives letter that was originally sent to relatives in 1943



Saleen Martin

A letter mailed over 80 years ago has finally been delivered to its rightful family in Illinois, and it all happened by chance.

The letter resurfaced at the DeKalb Post Office, about 70 miles west of Chicago, reported television station [WIFR](#).

It was mailed in June 1943 and addressed to the late Louis and Lavena George. The address was listed with a Dekalb street name, but no house number.

The family patriarch's first cousin mailed the letter, waiting to send comforting words to the couple after losing their daughter, Evelyn, to Cystic Fibrosis, WIFR reported.

A post office employee began searching for the family and eventually, delivered it to Grace Salazar, one of their daughters. Her sister, Jeannette, also read the letter.

According to WIFR, Jeannette and Grace are the only two surviving children of Louis and Lavena George. The couple married on April 14, 1932 and had eight children altogether, an [online obituary](#) shows.

Louis died at 74 years old on [Sept. 16, 1986](#). His wife, [Lavena](#), lived to be 98 and died on March 13, 2012.

Daughter of late couple moved by recovered letter

When their daughter Jeannette found out about the newly recovered letter, she called it “incredible” and said it moved her. “I mean, losing a child is always horrific,” she told the outlet. “It just sort of put me in touch with my parents’ grief and the losses my family went through before I was even born.”

According to WIFR, the post office employee who found the letter said it likely got lost because there was no house number in the mailing address.

How did a letter get delivered 80 years late?

In a statement to USA TODAY, the U.S. Postal Service said most cases do not involve mail that was lost. Instead, old letters and postcards are sometimes purchased at flea markets, antique shops and online, then re-entered into the USPS system.

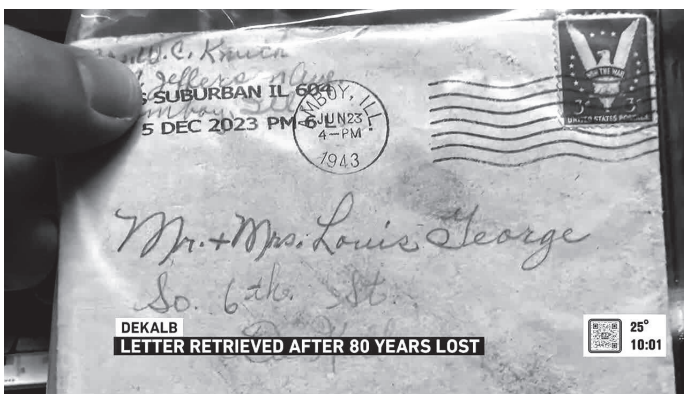
“The end result is what we do best – as long as there is a deliverable address and postage, the card or letter gets delivered,” wrote Tim Norman of USPS Strategic Communications.

He said the USPS processes 160 billion pieces of mail each year, averaging more than 5 million pieces per business day.

“Based on that figure we can estimate that since 1943 there (have) been trillions of pieces of mail processed and ultimately delivered,” he wrote.

Jeannette, the couple’s daughter who read the letter, told WIFR the experience has made her even more grateful for her family, especially her nieces and nephews.

“I just have more of a sense of continuity of life, of families,” Jeannette told the television station.



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