



VOLUME 62 No 9 Official Publication of Branch Nine, NALC November 2010

The Good, The Bad, and The Ugly! (Elections 2010)

The Good



Barb Watzak (Brklyn Ctr), and Pete Wilson (Lowry), prepare to go out and door knock for labor friendly candidates

Phone bank volunteers gave up their free time to encourage residents to get out and vote. Door knockers also gave up their free time to visit with resident's about the election and the benefits of union endorsed candidates. Envelope stuffer's prepared a mailing to union members.



Phone bank volunteers contacted union members and relayed the benefits of voting for labor friendly candidates



Rick Onslow, (Powderhorn) collating the hundreds of envelopes for mailing to union members



The St. Louis Park Riding Group raise over \$500 for Branch 9's "Warm Hands Warm Hearts" Coat Drive. Members are (from left to right): Scott Bultuna, Brian Boyington, Barb Stevens, Lisa Tanner, Dale Ford, Steve Roland (steward), and Steve Chaplin.

The Bad

Members who couldn't see the long term benefits of union endorsed candidates. The difficult mountain that the NALC has to climb to keep protecting our negotiated standard of living and health care benefits.

The Ugly

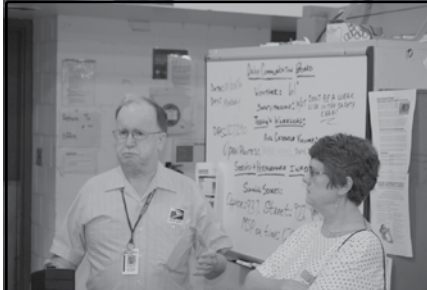
The detrimental ramifications of a labor unfriendly Congress which will seek to destroy the collective bargaining process and legislate away pay and benefits that we've gained over the past decades.

Warm Hands Warm Hearts Coat Drive Results.

We Raised \$1255.90

and Donated 85+ Coats

Last Punch Bunch



Dale McNellis (Blaine) gives his farewell talk to carriers while his wife, Kathleen, looks on.



Gary and Lisa Reck (Thomas Burnett) pose on their last day with Steward, Vicki Chlebeck.



Jeanne Lewis (East Side) is all smiles on her last day as she practices her last punch.



**Cheryl Stately
Director of Retirees**

Thanksgiving and Christmas are just around the corner. I want to remind everyone to get their Retiree Christmas Party RSVP form in to the Branch office by November 26. There is a flyer elsewhere in this paper. We are looking forward to seeing you all there! It's always a great time and active members are always welcome.

The Cribbage Tournament was held in St. Paul on Nov. 3rd. Minneapolis won 2 out of the 3 places. Ric Colburn (Branch 9) won 1st Place. Tom Garvey (Branch 28) won 2nd Place. Dan Norling (Branch 9) won 3rd Place. Thanks guys we did it again!

Due to the Retiree Christmas Party at the Fred Babcock VFW there will NOT be a Southside Breakfast in December.

Wishing you all a great Holiday Season!
Cheryl Stately

Thank You to our Branch 9 Political Coordinators

**Bob Baird, Connie Beissel
Joel Carter, Deb Grunnes
Lenny Larson, Ned McCraine
Olin Moore, Lisa O'Neill
Rick Onslow, Jeremy Rothstein
Mike Smith, Barry Weiner**

**Branch Nine, NALC
2408 Central Ave. NE
Minneapolis, MN 55418
Voice: (612) 781-9858
Fax: (612) 781-9849**

E-Mail Addresses:

Website:

branch9nalc.com

Editor:

branch9news@branch9nalc.com

Branch Nine Officers

**President
Pam Donato**

**Exec. Vice President
Mike Zagaros**

**Recording Secretary
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**Trustee
Samantha Hartwig**

**Director of Retirees
Cheryl Stately**

**NALC Health Benefits Rep.
Julie Waldemar
(612) 963-6252**

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President's Report

NOW WHAT?

WOW! Once again, Letter carriers out did themselves this election cycle! Locally here at Branch 9, carriers logged over a thousand volunteer hours this election working for candidates that supported letter carrier and working family issues. While it's obvious by the outcome that our actions were not enough to retain the majority in Congress, we definitely were a major contributor in winning every constitutional Minnesota State race and that of Governor-elect Dayton. (And yes, he WILL absolutely be the next Governor of Minnesota!) Every single letter carrier should be proud of that. To those who stepped up, many for the very first time, THANK YOU! Your efforts made a huge difference and your work was marveled by the rest of the labor family. Bar none, letter carriers out produced any other union in Minneapolis! For a union our size, we out paced the rest in the labor community by sheer number of volunteers, total hours logged pounding the pavement and on the phones, and in general-great people skills! Letter carriers have continued the tradition and lived up to the wonderful reputation we have earned over the years.

A special thanks to Olin Moore, Connie Beissel and Lisa O'Neill for their extraordinary efforts working full time as released letter carriers in Labor 2010. They worked long hours, every evening and weekends too, helping to get Labor endorsed candidates elected. Thank you for your personal sacrifice and hard work!

Mike Zagaros did an outstanding job as the main "recruiter" of volunteers! We had a lot of first time political volunteers, and Mike gets alot of the credit for that. He and Lisa O'Neill exhausted their cell phone roster of phone numbers and refused to accept a simple "no" from anyone! Everyone had fun taking part in our political efforts, whatever their role. And last but not least, I want to recognize and thank our Branch 9 Political Committee. They have been working for over a year, shaping our plan to communicate with our members and motivate them into action. They worked on getting sponsors in Congress for HR 5746 and H Res 173, created the postcard drive to the Postal Regulatory Commission on preserving 6 day delivery and ran a great campaign for our endorsed candidates in the elections. We won a lot more races than we lost, and in this environment, that's pretty damn good! My hats off to all of you, along with much appreciation and respect!

SO, WHERE DOES THAT LEAVE US?

Weeks after the election results, many are still opining the change in control of Congress and the latest mood swing for "change" that swept most of the country. I understand the feeling of frustration many Americans are experiencing, while I think the cause of my frustration may be a little different. I'm fully cognizant that times are still very challenging for many people. Unemployment is still high and way too many are still facing



Pam Donato
Branch Nine President

foreclosures and/or bankruptcy. But, things are better than they were 2 years ago. I also believe that the change the Democrats were making, while a bit slower than preferred, was in the right direction. And there is little mistake just who and how we ended up in this train wreck economy. That would be corporate greed, deregulation and corporate greed (worthy of a double mention). So, in typical impatient angry style, voters returned many of those ideologue nuts who caused the wreck back into control of Congress. It may have been a while since I've had the experience of a long night of drinking, but even I remember that it wasn't the sunlight that caused my hangover in the morning, but rather the overindulgent drinking the night before! Recognizing the real cause of a problem is important to not repeating the same mistakes over and over and over again. Either way, here we go again, fruitcake Tea Partiers at the wheel of the Republican Party, and they feel they have permission to drive the car back into the ditch. Seat belts fastened please, it's going to be bumpy!

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Customer Connect:

By Carol Garnto, District Customer Connect Coordinator

Welcome to Customer Connect, my name is Carol Garnto. The time has come to shift gears and move onto another mission. Think about it. If we didn't have the friendly Letter Carrier coming to our doors, would it seem like the same world to you? This is something we have grown up with and have come to expect as the norm. It is actually something we take for granted that will always be there and couldn't possibly go away. Or can it?

When I watch the changing habits of the generation that is growing up now, I see that maybe they might not care so much about maintaining the 600,000 jobs in the Postal Service. Everyone seems to email, fax, text, and send pics over their phone more and more these days. Even the IRS isn't sending out paper tax forms to everyone anymore. Paper is what we deal in, and it is being used less and less - instant is the way of the future. Instant is good, I love texting, sending pics over my cell, and the Internet has opened up a whole new shopping world for many.

A carrier used to only have to deal with the last mile of delivery. Now the carrier has become an even more valuable asset and is an important part in the first mile of the trek of a piece of mail. We need to get competitive, we need to snatch the business back and put it in our red, white and blue trucks and our mailbags. We need to show people how important we are and how much we believe in our company. We do this and they will continue to use the Postal Service for their shipping and mailing needs and we will maintain a decent livable wage with benefits for generations to come.

If you see an opportunity for a business, simply get a name and number. Pass the information on to your Station Customer Connect Coordinator and we will take it from there. Fiscal year 2010, Northland District generated \$3,442,111 in lead driven revenue. Impressive!!

Richard Langsdorf (Richfield Station) and Richard Schulze (Burnsville) submitted leads. Their "Eagle Eye" to their customers needs resulted in a combined \$110,000 annual revenue for the USPS. In addition, their customers benefit from the competitive rates and trusted service of the USPS and its employees. Ten new Customer Connect leads came in last week, who will be pictured in Branch 9 News Customer Connect next month?



**Carol Garnto (Lost Lake),
Customer Connect
Coordinator**



Richard Langsdorf and Joe Rian. Richard displays a congratulatory letter from the USPS for submitting a Customer Connect lead that resulted in a projected \$60,000 annual revenue.



Richard Schulze receives a letter of recognition for a Customer Connect lead that resulted in nearly \$50,000 in projected revenue.

Executive Vice President's Report

“Leave Yourself An Out”

Recently my youngest son passed his driver's test and is a licensed driver. Now he keeps asking to borrow the car. Every time he does, he gets my not so subtle reminders, “Leave yourself an out and wear your seatbelt” He always responds with an “I know.” One day his friend asked me why I always do this? I told him that it was just a reminder to be safe, to expect the unexpected and always wear your seatbelt. This led to a longer conversation about defensive driving and expecting people to do what is least expected.

Shortly after this conversation, a Branch 9 carrier was involved in a serious accident. The carrier, (driving an Uplander) while going through an uncontrolled intersection was broadsided by another vehicle. The Uplander ended up on its roof. Fortunately, the carrier was wearing his seatbelt and escaped any injury. He climbed out the vehicle on the passenger side, reported the accident, assisted the other driver, and collected his mail. He then went back to the office re-cased the mail and delivered it. He walked away because he was wearing his seatbelt. So, I continue to offer the same reminder to my son “leave yourself an out and wear your seatbelt.”

Workplace safety is one of the primary reasons that people formed Unions in the first place. Workers realized that they should be more concerned about workplace safety for themselves and their families.

That is why we keep repeating the mantra an injury to one is an injury to all. It is also why it is frustrating when carriers continue to take shortcuts that infringe on their personal safety. If we don't think it is important to protect our safety does anyone believe that management will? We need to take the time to not only do it right, but do it safely.

The Postal Inspectors are making presentations at units called “Safe and Secure.” It is a short video presentation followed by a question and answer session with the Inspectors about your personal safety on the route. This has become even more important as there have been several assaults on letter carriers on their routes lately. Their message is very simple. If you are threatened, give them what they want. If they want the mail, give it to them. Do not argue. You are your first priority. Get to a place of safety. After you are safe, call 911 and your supervisor. Give yourself and out.

Winter arrived today. The snow is falling and there is no site of any plows. Snow emergencies are being called and everyone is learning how to drive in Minnesota winter again. It is also time for letter carriers to re-learn how to deliver mail in the winter. The last few winters, we have had several carriers seriously injured some with broken legs and ankles on the route. Last December was one of the busiest months for slips, trips and falls but what is the



Mike Zagaros
Exec. Vice President

most peculiar is that the majority of them don't happen on the day of bad weather. No, carriers tend to the extra precautions during the bad weather. But on the days after the storm or when there has been a freeze – thaw - freeze – thaw cycle carriers sometimes let their guards down. We need to start asking ourselves before the situation arises did we leave ourselves an out? Should we go up the snow covered steps? Do we know what's underneath the snow? The time to think about an out is not when it happening. Then it is too late.

How well do we know our surroundings? What is your winter plan? Have you made accommodations for the shorter days? Can you change your delivery patterns if needed? All these issues should be part of your winter plan. When do you do overtime on other routes? Is it at the beginning of your day on the street? Unless you have businesses, it should be. That's because you can give yourselves an out by doing the overtime earlier and leaving the territory you are most familiar with to the end of the day. If you have apartments, perhaps the time you deliver them can be changed. Again, the time to be looking for outs is before you

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GOTV Get Out The Vote



Samantha Hartwig (Eastside), Anne Baird (Auxilliary), and Cathy Burton (Lake Street) were three of the dozens of Branch 9 members and spouses who turned out at the Central Labor Building in Minneapolis to make calls to union families around the state to get out and vote, and talk about the benefits of union endorsed candidates.



Lenny Larson (Br 9 President Emeritus) preparing mailings to union households



Pat Paplow (Andover) checking over his address list before heading out to door-knock.

Casino Run

Branch 9 members boarded the *Turtle Express* on Sunday, October 24th for a day of gaming at Wisconsin's Turtle Lake Casino. The \$10 registration fee netted each person a round trip ride, bingo games on the bus, \$5 for gaming, and a lunch ticket for the buffet loaded with seafood, hand-carved beef and table service. Bus service began at 10:00AM in the Southdale parking lot and a 2nd pickup point was on the north end of the cities, with a return time around 5:00PM. Consider joining us next time for a day of fun, good food, and a chance at Lady Luck!

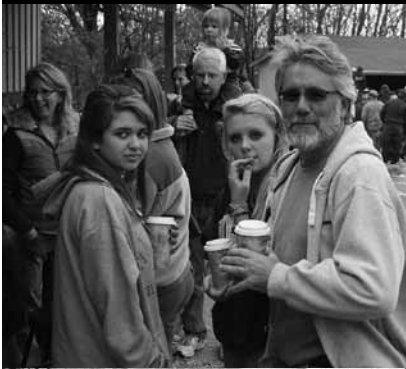


Show of hands of gaming winners on the bus ride back home.



Ken Jambois (Brklyn Ctr), Chair of the Entertainment Committee, checking off the roster as Branch 9 members board the *Turtle Express* back to the Twin Cities.





Branch 9 members and their families spent a beautiful fall day at Minnetonka Orchards. Family activities included a petting zoo, buggy rides, playground, a huge corn maze, and a hayride around the orchard. The orchard staff gave a hands-on demonstration on how an apple juice press works. Parents with smaller children had a mini- hayride pulled by a garden tractor. Food vendors made sure nobody went hungry, and a gift shop had craft items for sale.



Will You Dare To Compare?

Take the FEHBP Open Season Challenge

It's that time of year again ... time to decide what Health Plan (FEHB) you want to be in for 2011. Time to ask yourself are you happy with your health coverage? What changes will there be in 2011? Is there a better health benefit plan for me and my family? There is a way that you can compare the various health plans side by side if you are willing to dare to compare.

If you have access to a computer there are 2 LINKS listed for active (postal) and retired (non-postal) carriers NALC Health Benefit Plan www.nalc.org/depart/hbp/index2. The other website is from the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) www.opm.gov/insure/health/planinfo/index.asp. The following is information about the NALC Plan as well as how children between the ages of 22 and 26 can remain on their parents health plans.

OPEN SEASON runs Monday, November 8, 2010 through Monday, December 13, 2010 (Postal employees – December 14, 2010, 5:00 p.m. Central time)

The staff and the employees here at the Plan have been working diligently to bring you a comprehensive 2011 health benefits package at an affordable price. I am sure once you have reviewed the official 2011 brochure (RI71-009) you will realize that we have listened to our members and have tailored our benefit package to meet your needs. I trust current members will make a decision to stay with the NALC

Health Benefit Plan, and those of you who aren't currently enrolled in the Plan will decide to become a member during this Open Season. The 2011 premiums for the NALC Health Benefit plan are listed in the chart below

Coverage Extension for Dependents up to Age 26 Requirements

On March 23, 2010 the Affordable Care Act, Public Law 111-148 was signed into law. As a result of this law, children will be eligible for health coverage under their parent's Self and Family enrollment up to

Type of Enrollment	Enrollment Code	Non-Postal Premium				Postal Premium	
		Biweekly		Monthly		Biweekly	
		Gov't Share	Your Share	Gov't Share	Your Share	USPS Share	Your Share
High Option Self Only	321	\$180.66	\$74.14	\$391.43	\$160.64	\$203.24	\$51.56
High Option Self and Family	322	\$403.98	\$151.07	\$875.29	\$327.32	\$454.48	\$100.57

age 26. This law allows married children to be covered, removes dependency requirements, removes residency requirements, and does not require a child to be a student or have prior or current insurance coverage to be placed on their parent's Self and Family enrollment. For the FEHB Program, this provision is effective January 1, 2011.

The following are the changes to FEHB dependent requirements: Between ages 22 and 26:

Children between the ages of 22 and 26 are eligible for coverage under their parent's Self and Family



Julie Waldemar,
NALC Health Benefits Rep

enrollment up to age 26.

Married Children:

Married children (but NOT their spouse or their own children) are eligible for coverage up to age 26. This is true even if the child is currently under age 22.

Children with or eligible for Employer-Provided Health Insurance:

Children who are eligible for or have their own employer-provided health insurance are eligible for coverage up to age 26.

Stepchildren:

Stepchildren do not need to live with the enrollee in a parent-child relationship to be eligible for coverage up to age 26. Birthday rule will always apply.

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HBR cont. from page 8**Children Incapable of Self-Support:**

Children who are incapable of self-support because of a mental or physical disability that began before age 26 are eligible to continue coverage.

Foster Children:

Foster children are eligible for coverage up to age 26.

Enrollees may also make this change during Open Season between November 8 and December 13, 2010 (for Postal employees through December 14). If the change is made during Open Season, coverage for the child will not begin until the effective date of the Open Season change. This is January 1, 2011 for Postal employees.

If the member is enrolled through Temporary Continuation of Coverage (TCC), they must

NALC Health Benefit Plan will be notifying current enrollees by way of a letter included in our Open Season materials.

So, what does a member need to do to enroll a newly eligible child? Anyone that is currently enrolled in a Self and Family policy will need to send their request to us by completing the form on the reverse side of the letter they will receive in their Open Season kit. If the dependent was never listed on our enrollment, a copy of the birth certificate must be included with the form. We will update the newly eligible child(ren) upon receipt of the requested information.

If the member is currently enrolled

in a Self Only policy, they must change to a Self and Family enrollment through their human resources or retirement system. Postal employees may access PostalEASE through the Employee WEB on the Intranet or through an Employee Self-Service Kiosk to make the change by following the screen instructions. Or, call PostalEASE at 1-877-4PS-EASE (1-877-477-3273, option 1). This is considered a "Change in Family Status" Qualifying Life Event (QLE). The child will not be covered until their Self and Family enrollment takes effect. The enrollee has 31 days prior to January 1, 2011 (December 1, 2010) to 60 days after January 1, 2011 (March 3, 2011) to make the QLE change. The newly eligible child's effective date of coverage will be January 1, 2011.

Enrollees may also make this change during Open Season between November 8 and December 13, 2010 (for Postal employees through December 14). If the change is made during Open Season, coverage for the child will not begin until the effective date of the Open Season change. This is January 1, 2011 for Postal employees.

If the member is enrolled through Temporary Continuation of Coverage (TCC), they must provide us with the completed form on the reverse side of their letter if they are currently enrolled in a Self and Family plan. If they are currently enrolled in a Self-Only policy, they must make a change to a Self and Family enrollment through the National Finance Center (NFC) or retirement system. The Plan may ask for a copy of the newly eligible child's birth certificate or other documentation in order to verify eligibility for coverage.

For children with their own TCC policy, we will notify them that they are again eligible for coverage under their parent's Self and Family enrollment. They should not cancel their TCC enrollment until they are assured of the date they will be covered under their parent's Self and Family enrollment.

For children who converted to an individual policy with their parent's carrier, they may no longer need that policy once they resume coverage under their parent's Self and Family enrollment through the National Finance Center (NFC).

Health Fairs

If you don't have access to a computer you can attend a Health Benefit Fair in the Metropolitan Minneapolis/St Paul area

2010 Open Season Health Benefit Fairs

*** for active USPS workers
Not Open To The Public**

Dec 1 -

**USPS- Twin Cities Metro STC
3501 Broadway St. NE
Minneapolis**

Carrier Bre

7:00 a.m. - 10:00 a.m.

2:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Interpreter available 7 - 9 a.m.

December 2

**USPS NDC (formerly BMC)
3165 Lexington Avenue South
Eagan, MN
Cafeteria**

7:00 - 10:00 AM

6:00 - 9:00 PM

Please contact me or the Branch Office if you have questions.

5K RUN FOR MDA



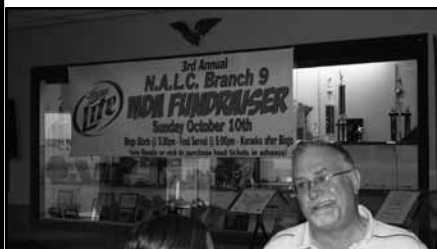
Warren Wehmas (MDA Coordinator for MSALC) sponsored a 5K run which collected \$1100 for MDA. 1st Place in the mens division was Dane Liebel (Richfield), and 1st Place in the womens division was Melia Derrick (Brklyn Park).



Bingo/ Karaoke Night



Branch 9 members and spouses enjoying the contestants acts.



Pete Wilson (Lowry) enjoying the talent show.



Samantha Hartwig (Eastside), and Lisa O'Neill sold tickets for the for the Bingo games



OMG!



Br 9 IDOL, Mike Zagaros

UNIFORMS UNLIMITED

The Twin Cities Postal Headquarters

Minneapolis
2220 Lyndale Avenue South
Minneapolis, MN 55405
612-377-0011

USA
Union preferred

St. Paul
935 N. Dale Street
St. Paul, MN 55103
651-224-7567

Retiree Holiday Party Wednesday, December 1st

This year's event will once again feature friendly libations, good food, and plenty of time for reminiscing and extending holiday cheer to all our colleagues whom we have worked with and known for so many years. Join us at Fred Babcock VFW Post 5555. The social hour begins at 6:00PM with dinner from 7:00 - 9:00PM

Date: December 1st, 2010
Time: 6:00PM - Cocktails (cash bar)
Dinner: 7:00 - 9:00PM
Place: Fred Babcock VFW Post 5555
6715 Lakeshore Drive
Richfield, MN
612.869.5555

Dinner Menu
Choice of Prime Rib or
1/2 Oven-baked
Chicken or Walleye
Salad
Potato
Vegetable
Coffee, Tea, Milk

Please complete the reservation form & return to the Branch Office by November 26th

NALC Retiree Holiday Party

Name _____

(Choose One) Chicken Prime Rib Walleye

I will be bringing _____ guest(s) @ \$17.00 each

Name of guest _____ Chicken Prime Rib Walleye

Name of guest _____ Chicken Prime Rib Walleye

Cost: \$17.00 per plate

*All checks must be
made out and mailed to:*

**NALC Branch 9 - Holiday Party
2408 Central Avenue NE
Minneapolis, MN 55418**



So long, farewell, *auf wiedersehen*, goodbye....

Over the years I've written several articles for the *Branch Nine News*, most of it repetitive though heartfelt. I am retiring from the Postal Service now, and thought I might write one last valedictory article, offering the fruits of my wisdom (???) --- or at least my experience --- to present and future letter carriers.

I have three "lessons" to offer. The first is to SUPPORT YOUR UNION. For the past 37 years that I know of, we have been blessed with gifted union officials like

Pam, Mike, Lenny, Gene, Barry, and innumerable others, who daily stand between us and disaster, usually not only to ingratitude but often undeserved thanklessness. I am particularly annoyed whenever I hear a brother or sister carrier loudly proclaim that they're withdrawing from the union for some perceived offense. At that moment, I know that I'm listening to a fool. Because the brutal truth is that the only reason we're not working 12 hour days, 6 days per week, for \$6 per hour and no bennies is the National Association

of Letter Carriers. They need, they *deserve*, your full support. They've had mine for my entire career, and always will.

The second thing I want to advise present and future carriers is to NEVER TRUST misMANAGEMENT. I've known many supervisors over the past 37½ years, a few of whom were decent people. But frankly the Postal Service is the only workplace I know where mismanagement

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President's Rep. cont. fr page 3

So, what do we do now? As the majority in Congress, Republicans will now have control of all chair persons for Congressional Committees. This puts the people that want to privatize, eliminate or screw the USPS in charge. If you thought 5 day delivery wasn't such a bad idea (weekends off and all), then you're going to love 3 day a week even better! THAT IS NO JOKE! Either way, you can bet there will be a push to reduce delivery to part time work, no defined pension or benefits and forget annual and sick leave... they were already suggesting a forced unpaid furlough of 12 days per year! Think your house/car/credit card payments are hard to keep up with *now*? Do it with 40% less money! Obviously, we are in a very defensive position with the Republicans in control. The workers at the state, local and federal level are all under attack

from the legislators who ran on cutting the big bad government. We need all members to READ your union papers (Postal Record, Branch 9 News and both local and national web sites) and consider the effects on your job and pay as you decide on how or whether to act. We need every single active and retired member plugged in to what's going on, willing to get involved in the fight to save the USPS and our career compensation. Simply getting angry once every election cycle is not enough! We have to get involved with what's happening right now, 750 days out from the next election!

I make a great effort personally to learn from each and every one of you. Regardless of whether I agree with you or not, I am interested in hearing everyone's concerns and opinions. In the last few years, I have gotten a great education from our Transitional Employees (TE's). They are not like our casuals before them, young kids out of high

school or home from college for the summer. The job as a TE is not their first trip to the rodeo as they say nowadays. They have worked at other companies, been down sized, outsourced and chewed up. For God's sake, they came to work as a contracted employee, carrying mail- with no guarantee of career work EVER! No pension, no health insurance and little control over their destiny. And having seen the rest of the work world first hand, they still fight each year to get re appointed to the same position. HELLO! TE's remind me of what we have earned as career carriers- of the sacrifices and work of other carriers before us. Of the reality that even if things aren't exactly as you'd like, you stay in and keep fighting and make what headway you can....but you never give up!

And so, we will carry on...both literally and figuratively. Stay solid with YOUR UNION, stay informed from YOUR UNION and take part IN YOUR UNION!

Goodbye cont. from page 12

is rewarded for negligence, incompetence, and stupidity. Theirs is mostly an unnecessary job, which rewards blundering incompetence and absolutely fêtes callous ineptitude. The more idiotic the suggestion, the better upper misManagement likes it, and the greater the reward. These are people who chose that “job” because they’re too incompetent, too craven, too lazy, and/or too stupid to do ours.

Whenever I think of our “leadership”, I chuckle at the memory of what British humorist G. K. Chesterton wrote of the British Empire:

They that fought for England,
Following a falling star,
Alas, alas for England
They have their graves afar.
And they that rule in England,
In stately conclave met,
Alas, alas for England
They have no graves as yet.

The last thing I want to say is THANK YOU to my brother and sister letter carriers for your friendship, your loyalty, and your support over the past (nearly) four decades. Whatever satisfaction, whatever happiness, whatever joy I have derived from this job has been largely because of my fellow letter carriers.

Actually my wife put me onto this idea. She taught in the St. Paul Public Schools for 31½ years, and watched thousands of children grow and prosper (or not). She once rhetorically asked me, “Do you know what is the most important thing to a child’s development into a happy and productive adult?”

What would you guess? Small class sizes? Learning to read early? High grades? A computer on every desk?

No, no, no, and no. She said that the most important thing for any child to blossom and prosper is FRIENDS. A child who has friends, peers whom they can trust and upon whom they can rely, and who learn to move easily in social situations, will do all right in life, despite their school experiences, despite their home life, despite their grades. Conversely, children who are lonely and friendless are marked to be tormented souls, occasionally a burden to themselves and to society.

The miserable little misanthropes might even grow up to become postal supervisors.

It’s the same with us letter carriers, though we call it “solidarity”. We are each others’ support group, occasionally each others’ social circle, certainly each others’ friends and helpmates. Many was the time I would get into a wrangle with some shrieking halfwit with a red badge and a purple face, and would be facing some sort of disciplinary measures from the dim and the dumb. But other carriers would come over, put their arms around my shoulders, and tell me that they were with me. Thus I was able to suffer the slings and arrows of misManagement with equanimity--and usually with commensurate insolence as well. My brother and sister carriers are what got me through many troubled times, and I thank you all. I will remember your kindness and our solidarity to my dying day.

So I leave this career now and go on with whatever is left of my life. I wish the best of fortune to all of you

in your own careers, and I hope that those who knew me will remember me with a kind thought now and again. Meanwhile, in the words of the old movie musical,

Good luck, old chums,
Good health,
Goodbye.

Rotten Rodney Anderson
**Main Office/Blaine/
Minnehaha/Fridley/Central
Avenue/Highland**

VP Rep continued from page 5
need them.

The same is true about driving. You are coming up to an intersection; do you know how the traction will be? Will others give you the right of way? Just because you should have it does not mean that the other driver knows that or will comply. It doesn’t matter if you are right if you get hurt in an accident. We need to ask ourselves, “Did we leave ourselves an out?” Did you take that extra look? Did you give the car next to you the extra room just in case?

My son survived his first winter driving experience with me in the car. When he got back home, he looked at me and said that there are some people driving crazy out there. Before I could say a word, he said yes I left myself plenty of outs today and it was a good thing. All I could say was thank you. Thank you for taking the time to drive safely and making it home in one piece.

As we try to increase our awareness on safety. We all should ask ourselves whether at work or at home, did we leave ourselves an out? Safety begins with us.

Winter Survival In a Coffee Can

Equip your vehicle with some basic winter survival gear. Here's what you'll need:

- * Large metal coffee can with 3 holes punched in the top that are equal distance apart. The other items will be stored inside the can.
- * 60-inch length of twine or heavy string, cut into 3 equal pieces. You will use this to suspend the can.
- * 3 large safety pins. You will tie the string to the safety pins and pin to the car roof interior so you can suspend the coffee can over the candle.
- * A 2" diameter (votive size) candle. Place the candle on the coffee can lid under the suspended can to melt snow.
- * 2 books of matches.
- * A pocket knife or pair of sharp scissors.
- * Several long strips of brightly colored cloth that you can tie to to the antenna or door handle to help searchers locate you.
- * Several packets of soup mix, hot chocolate mix, tea bags, bouillon cubes, etc. Mix into the melted snow to provide warmth and nutrition.
- * A plastic spoon.
- * Several small packages of peanuts and fruit-flavored candy.
- * 1 pen light flashlight and batteries (keep separate until needed).
- * 1 pair of insulated socks and 1 pair of insulated gloves or glove liners that can fit in the can.
- * A sun shield blanket or 2 large green or black plastic leaf bags (to reflect body heat).

When your survival kit in a can is complete, place a stocking cap over the entire kit and stash it in the passenger compartment of your car. If you have a 3 pound coffee can, you will have room for additional items like band-aids, aspirin, a small radio, etc. If there is still room, add more of the items you already have included or other items you feel might be necessary.

Beyond Basic Winter Survival Kit

To be well prepared for a longer winter emergency, or to provide for several people, it is wise to store a number of other items in your car.

- * ***Several sleeping bags or blankets and some warm clothing, such as a parka, boots, long underwear, heavy socks, mittens and a ski mask.***
- * ***A heat source, such as a multiple wick candle can heater. Be sure to have matches to light your candle as some lighters don't work in cold weather.***
- * ***A radio and large flashlight with extra batteries for both.***
- * ***Food, including hard candy, jellybeans, raisins, nuts, candy bars, dehydrated fruit, and jerky.***
- * ***Magazines or a book to read to help keep you awake.***
- * ***A cup.***
- * ***Toilet tissue.***
- * ***A whistle to signal for help.***
- * ***Nylon rope.***
- * ***Cell phone.***

Winter Survival Kit. From www.minnesota-visitor.com

“They’re Not All Rats”

With PMG Potter calling it quits next month, I thought it appropriate to convey to our union brothers and sisters that their were decent Postmaster Generals who really cared about their employees, and how refreshing it must have been.

Chuck Glover (Burnsville).

In 1921, the new President, Warren G. Harding, usually regarded as one of the worst presidents of the United States, appointed a new Postmaster General, Will H. Hays. Four days after taking office, Hays electrified all postal employees with this proclamation:

“Every effort shall be exercised to humanize the....[post office department]. Labor is not a commodity.... There are 300,000 employees. They have the brain[s] and they have the hand[s] to do the job well and they shall have the heart to do it well.”

Seven days later, on March 16, Hays invited the president of the NALC, Edward J. Gainor, and the leaders of other postal unions to see him whenever they had a problem.

...The April 1921 issue of the *Postal Record* described the outpouring of good feeling in an article entitled “The Dawn of a New Day”: *When one emerges from a dungeon into the sunlight, one is temporarily blinded and confused. Letter carriers and other postal employees are in a similar situation.... The selection of Mr. Hays of the word “humanize” in expressing the Department’s attitude toward the men and women workers in the postal establishment, was happy.... Not in years has such a sentiment been expressed by*

a head of this Department. How strange and yet how sweet!

To improve the working conditions of postal employees, Hays sought to develop a closer relationship with representatives from the various postal employees’ organizations. To this end, he established a National Welfare Council - later called the National Service Relations Council. ...right from its inception in 1921....

On the national level, the National Service Relations Council discussed topics directly related to the welfare of city delivery letter carriers such as uniforms, the possibility of a Christmas holiday, working conditions within local post offices, cafeterias, credit unions, and free physical examinations for workers. Councils were also established to focus on conditions within individual post offices, including such issues as drinking fountains, swing rooms, dust, sanitation and lighting.

Will Hays remained in office only one year. ...during his year in office, Hays’ commitment to improving the working lives of letter carriers and his belief that improvement in conditions and morale would improve delivery service for the American people left a lasting legacy.

When Hays resigned, the NALC continued its tradition of honoring friends by making Hays an honorary lifetime member of the NALC.”

From *Carriers in a Common Cause. A History of Letter Carriers and the NALC*

How to Kill Your Union

from ElSol, NALC Branch 504, Albuquerque, New Mexico.

17 Ways to Kill Most Any Organization

- 1. Don’t attend meetings, but if you do, arrive late.**
- 2. Be sure to leave before the meeting is closed.**
- 3. Never have anything to say at meetings, wait until you get outside.**
- 4. When at meetings, vote to do everything, then go home and do nothing.**
- 5. The next day, find fault with the officers and members.**
- 6. Take no part in the organization affairs.**
- 7. Be sure to sit in the back, so you can talk it over with a member.**
- 8. Get all the organization will give you, but don’t give the organization anything.**
- 9. Never ask anyone to join the organization.**
- 10. At every opportunity, threaten to resign and try to get others to go.**
- 11. Talk cooperation, but don’t cooperate.**
- 12. If asked to help, say you haven’t time.**
- 13. Never read anything pertaining to the organization.**
- 14. Never accept any office, as it is easier to criticize than do things.**
- 15. If appointed to a committee, never give any time or service to this committee.**
- 16. If you receive a bill for dues, ignore it.**
- 17. Don’t do any more than you have to, and when the others willingly and unselfishly use their ability to help the good cause along, howl because the organization is run by a clique.**

Branch Nine News
2408 Central Avenue NE
Minneapolis, MN 55418-3712

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Branch Nine Calendar

Tuesday, November 30

General Membership Meeting
7:00PM
Crystal VFW Post 494
5222 56th Ave North, Crystal

December 1

Retiree Holiday Party
6:00PM
Fred Babcock VFW Post 5555
6715 Lakeshore Drive
Richfield, MN

December 7

Northside Retiree's Breakfast
9:30AM Elsie's
729 Marshall St. NE, Minneapolis

December 7

Steward's Meeting
7:00PM
Crystal VFW Post 494
5222 56th Ave North, Crystal

No Southside Retiree
Breakfast because of
Christmas Party

December 10

1.85% Wage Increase shows on
paycheck

December 28

General Membership Meeting
7:00PM
Crystal VFW Post 494
5222 56th Ave North, Crystal

December 28

Nokomis Retiree Breakfast
9:00AM
Fred Babcock VFW
6715 Lakeshore Drive, Richfield

January 2, 2011

New Leave Year