

News and Views



Official Publication of Central Kentucky Bluegrass Branch 361, NALC

2022 Issue 8

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Inside this issue:

Financial Report	1
Steward Report	2
Treasurer	3
Robert's Ramblings	4
Zoom Invitation	4
Health Benefits	5
Dir. of Retirees	6
Trustee Report	6
July Winner	6
Financial Report	6
Share Your Views	7
New Members	7
Announcements	7
Central Kentucky Congressional Delegation	7
Grievance Report	8
Upcoming Events	8

President's Page - Denise Preston

Hello I hope everyone is well. Looks like covid has risen again. I know quite a few people have gotten covid lately. I personally am washing my hands and practicing safer habits once again. I know most of you know Zed has stepped down as Vice President and is only being a steward at Gardenside station as well as Crystal has stepped down as steward for Brentwood. I would like to thank Diane Blackburn for stepping up and helping with PDI's and ODL violations for Bluegrass, I would also like to thank Brad Coulter for stepping up as steward at Beaumont. I am still looking for stewards so if you are interested, please let me know. I have been extremely busy the last few months. As everyone knows we do not have stewards in all of the AO's either.

Due to the Covid numbers being in the red still we will be doing the monthly meetings by zoom while we are in the red category. It looks like covid is not really going to be under control anytime soon. I really hate this for everyone. I have seen a lot more people in public wearing their masks again. I know with it being hot it makes it a lot more uncomfortable for people to wear the mask. If you test positive for covid or you call in sick because you think you have covid make sure you inform your supervisor and/or station managers so they can get with the Nurse and have her call you. You have to be cleared by the nurse before you come back. Also you should fill out a CA-1 for covid.

Talking about the weather being so hot Lexington has had some carriers having heat exhaustion. The stations have been ordering bottled water. Please take advantage of this and take some to the street with you. Some of the CCA's do not realize that drinking caffeinated drinks while carrying mail just dehydrates you quicker. I hope everyone is checking on your coworker making sure they are ok. If you start showing signs of heat exhaustion, please call for help. We do not want to lose anyone. If you can't reach a supervisor call 911 then call a coworker if you can and let them try reaching a supervisor for you.

Denise

The determination of whether the August 2nd monthly meeting will be in person/zoom or by zoom only will be made the Friday prior to the meeting. Please check the branch website and Facebook page the weekend before the August 2nd meeting to verify how you will be able to attend.

Steward Report - Zed Waltz

In the past few months, it has come to my attention that many do not fully understand the grievance procedure set forth in the 2019-2023 National Agreement and at times it may be confusing. It is my hope with a few short paragraphs to provide clarity on this matter and inform the many members who are unaware or may be new to the process.

Informal Step A

An employee or union representative must discuss the grievance with the employee's immediate supervisor **within 14 calendar days** of when the grievant or the union first learned, or may reasonably have been expected to learn, of its cause. The date of this discussion is the Informal Step A filing date. If the parties are unable to resolve the grievance during the Informal Step A meeting the union may file a written appeal to Formal Step A **within 7 calendar days** of the date of the discussion, by filling out the Informal Step A portion of the USPS-NALC Joint Step A Grievance Form (Form PS 8190) and sending it to the installation head or designee.

Formal Step A

The Formal A meeting must be held between the USPS installation head or designee and NALC branch president or designee as soon as possible but no later than **7 calendar days** after the installation head receives the Joint Step A Grievance Form. The Formal Step A decision must be made and the Joint Step A Grievance Form completed on the day of the meeting unless the time limit is mutually extended. If the grievance is not resolved at Formal Step A, the Union may appeal it to Step B **within 7 calendar days** of the Step A decision.

Step B-Dispute Resolution Team

Appeals from grievances unresolved at Formal Step A are in writing to the Step B Dispute Resolution Team. The Dispute resolution Team must issue a written decision within **14 calendar days** after the receipt of the appeal from Step A, unless this time is mutually extended. The decision may: Resolve the grievance, Impasse the grievance if the team cannot resolve it, Remand the grievance to the Step A parties with specific instructions, or Hold the decision pending resolution of a representative case or national interpretive case. If the grievance is remanded, the parties' Step A representative must meet to discuss the grievance again **within 7 calendar days** after the remand is returned to Formal Step A.

Arbitration

The National Business Agent may appeal an impassed grievance to arbitration **within 14 calendar days** after the receipt of the Step B decision.

Interpretive Step

If either member of the Step B team, or the NBA or USPS Area representative, believes that a grievance involves an interpretive issue, the issue will be discussed with the appropriate National Union/Management Representative at the Headquarters level. If either party's National Representative determines the issue to be interpretive, the grievance will be held at Step B pending discussion at the National level or the outcome of a National Arbitration award.

I know for many this information may be redundant, but we must realize at least 50% of our current members are new and have only been employed for 5 years or less. The information used for this article is straight from Article 15 of the 2019-2023 National Agreement and for the Stewards of Branch 361 the time limits are inside all grievance folders. I hope this will be a help to someone who is unclear of the time limits for grievances filed.

Zed

Financial Secretart/Treasurer - Cindi Lindsay

I've heard a lot of our members complaining, not just recently, but throughout my postal career that the union does not do enough (or anything) about the conditions in which we are forced to work at the Postal Service. Anything from managements bullying, being forced to work overtime when not on the ODL, to any other variety of issues that pop up at any given time. I've had other jobs before I started working at the USPS. Only one of them was represented by a union. I'll admit that at that previous job that I didn't see much reason for the union. I only worked there for about a year before I got my letter carrier position. I can't say as to why I had those feelings. Maybe it was because I was only there for a short time and wasn't really involved with the union, or maybe it was because it was so strong that I never noticed all the work going on behind the scenes. Either way, I was unsure about joining another union when I started at the USPS. I decided to give it a go mostly because everyone else in my class signed up and I simply didn't want to rock the boat at my new job. The first year or so, I will admit that I still didn't get very involved with the union or any of the branch activities. I started going to the branch meetings not to educate myself, but to see other carriers that had bid to other stations and to socialize with other carriers. Let's face it, when anyone starts their careers at the Postal Service, they tend to lose contact with friends and family who don't understand the long hours and physical demands that are placed upon us. It helped me to talk to people who I could connect with and understood the pressures of being a Mail Carrier. But little by little I was learning more and more about my rights and obligations. The more I learned the more comfortable I got standing up for myself and others when supervisors tried to circumvent the contract. I have never been a steward, but that has never stopped me from helping my fellow carriers with questions or concerns. The problem we as a branch are facing right now is that there are very few of our members who are willing to put themselves out there to learn their rights or even do anything to try to make the work place a safer and more pleasant environment. Everyone wants to complain but do nothing to try to help out. There is only so much these few people can do. Our branch stewards and officers are stretched so thin that yes, somethings are slipping through the cracks and not being addressed. This branch can not survive without people who are willing to step up and help enforce the contract and learn the grievance process. Most of us who are in these positions are either retired or nearing retirement. Who's going to represent you then? At my previous job that had union representation, I didn't really see the need. I shudder to think how much worse this job could be without it. That's the future without some of our younger members stepping up. Think about it.

Cindi



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NCUA

Robert's Ramblings - Bob McNulty

Convention info from Chicago will highlight my article next issue. Robert's Ramblings has been my take on Branch info since I started @ USPS and joined NALC on day one. Bill "Frenchy" Lafrana was the editor of "News and Views" back then. He sometimes wrote "Frenchy's Fumings." The technology has advanced since then, but the antics used by USPS management have not. Learn your National Agreement and Local Contract so you can perform the job properly and protect your rights. An educated employee and union member is safer, productive, and a more efficient worker. Am hoping the new electric and other vehicles we need to replace the obsolete and unsafe LLV's will come sooner than later.

It seems that political and legislative action and pressure by our members is necessary. The Postal Reform Bill which saves USPS, gives us job security, and ensures that the USA Public will have 6/7 day delivery, and a reliable schedule. The financial benefits to our employer are both long-term and massive. We have two important Bills that are now before Congress in US House that will benefit our members as they plan for retirement. How many want to work forever? The First Bill endorsed by NALC is HR 82. This is known as the Social Security Fairness Act. You can go to nalc.org to access information how WEP, Windfall Elimination Provision, and GPO, Government Pension Offset, unfairly target Civil Service Employees and others like teachers. It penalizes those who legitimately contributed to Social Security, and portrays them as "double dippers," although every nickel earned was taxed according to US Code! When you call, email, or otherwise contact your US Congressman, be sure you are out of uniform and off the clock.

The second Bill is Federal Retiree Fairness Act, HR #4268. This Bill would cover letter carriers who began their careers as non-career employees. This includes CCA's, TE's, and casuals. It would allow these federal employees to make catch-up retirement contributions after December 31, 1988, making such time creditable service under FERS. Incredibly, 50% of our workforce would benefit from this legislation. Want to learn more about NALC legislative action? Contact me, or our 6th CD LCCL, Zed Waltz. Anna Mudd is our regional legislative NALC organizer.

Branch 361 invitation to the August Zoom meeting.

Join Zoom Meeting

Topic: Branch 361 Apr. Monthly Meeting Time: August 2, 2022 07:00 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

Meeting ID: 378 690 4822

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/3786904822>

One tap mobile: +16465588656,,5325217930#,,,,,0#,,794941# US (New York)
+13017158592,,5325217930#,,,,,0#,,794941# US (Germantown)

Dial by your location;

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+1 301 715 8592 US (Germantown)

+1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago)

+1 669 900 9128 US (San Jose)

+1 253 215 8782 US (Tacoma)

+1 346 248 7799 US (Houston)

Meeting ID: 378 690 4822

Find your local number: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/kcLIXzzZq>

DUE TO SECURITY ISSUES, PLEASE REQUEST A NEW LINK. PRIOR LINKS WILL NOT WORK

Heath Benefits - Mark Whitcomb

It is HOT folks. It's that time of year again shorts and sunscreen. Last year it stayed in the 80s to above 90 with a few days of heat index over 100 from the end of May to the end of August folks that's Hot. Management seems concerned enough to bring up the subject of heat related illness at least once a week at plan fives. There are several heat related illnesses from Heat Rash, Heat Syncope (fainting), Heat Cramps to Heat Exhaustion and Heat Stroke the two main of concern is Heat exhaustion and Heat Stroke. Its important that you know the signs

Heat Exhaustion signs include thirst, confusion, weakness, dizziness, nausea, and profuse sweating the body temperature is usually normal. The heart pulse is normal or elevated. I've had this seems at least once a year. You get off work after walking in the heat all day and you just don't feel right for hours .

Heat Stroke is the most serious heat-related illness. It occurs when sweating stops and the body is unable to control its temperature. a person develops a fever that rapidly rises to dangerous levels in minutes. The person becomes confused, confrontational, feel faint, stagger, a strong rapid pulse and dry skin from not sweating. It can cause delirium, coma or death.

Now I'll cover some steps you can take to aid in prevention:

Wear light loose fitting breathable clothing.

Stay hydrated The USPS recommends we drink 8ounces every 20 minutes that's 24oz per hour.

Maintain normal salt intake. You lose a lot of salt when you sweat Salty Cracker or Snacks help.

Take breaks in the shade or cool area.

On extremely hot days I roll ice into a hand towel and wear it around my neck.

Don't forget it takes longer to deliver mail when the weather is HOT . On your 3996 write Heat and Humidity as the reason and if management denies this ask for a steward. Everyone please be safe this summer.

Mark

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Director of Retirees - Mike Holbrook

With many of the Branch activities again at the mercy of the Covid transmission numbers, it has become more difficult to plan for retirement seminars while attempting to prognosticate whether the transmission rate a month or two in the future will be going up or coming down.

In an attempt to continue to have retirement seminars, which are very beneficial to members contemplating retirement, I will be changing the requirements for those who wish to attend for the foreseeable future. Beginning with the next retirement seminar, which will be Sunday September 18th, the maximum number of reservations will be limited to twelve. Each attendee will be required to wear a mask and not sit at a table with anyone else, unless they bring their spouse.

The seminar will begin at 1:30 and anyone wishing to attend must reserve their seat by calling me at 859-248-2401 by Friday the 16th. I feel that by returning to these safety measures, the Branch can continue to provide this valuable resource to the membership.

On another note former National Director of Retirees Ernie Kirkland and I have been discussing starting a recurring breakfast event at the hall for the retired members residing in the central Kentucky area. This like many other activities will be at the mercy of the Covid numbers particularly if well attended. Even if we are unable to have the inaugural event this fall as we have been discussing, we will continue to plan for it, in case the Covid numbers cooperate and begin to go down. More updates will be given as they become available. Whether retired or still working continue to make your safety, including Covid precautions, a priority so that you can make it to or continue to enjoy retirement.

Mike

July Door Prize Winner

Caitline Armstrong \$50.00

Trustee Report - Jim Smith

It is that time of year that you are planning your family vacations. Most of you will drive for some miles to get to your favorite summer spot. You take the time to pack your clothes and toys for the kids. In doing so you take great pains to get things right. Also, one should not overlook having the car in good running condition. Some of the things that need to be checked are the tires, Make sure they are properly inflated. All your lights front and back. Even check the main drive belt and battery.

Another thing to consider is putting together a safety kit. Get a shallow plastic tub or something similar that will fit under a seat or in the trunk of your vehicle. In it place a flash light and batteries, first aid stuff, water and snacks, and a small jumper box or cables. Depending on where you are going you might even throw in a blanket in the box. With all the construction going on or God forbid a wreck might put you at a stand- still for some time. The water and snacks might come in handy.

Another topic is about our union. We need for some members to step-up and get involved with the everyday activities of the branch. It is your union also. We are all in this together. You are the future of this branch so just do not set back and let someone else do it for you. The more you learn the better off you will be. I do hope that more of you will take an active part in this union.

Jim

Financial Report for June 2022

Deposits	\$13,820.07
Checks	\$20,790.05

Balances

Checking	\$85,038.60
Savings	\$76,275.34
Building Fund	\$13,045.31
Retiree Fund	\$15,361.02
Hall Rental Fund	\$11,986.82
Convention Fund	\$18,006.84

Share Your Views!

The deadline for submissions to News and Views is the 1st of each month. Interested parties are encouraged to submit articles to be printed subject to space available and approval of the President. To submit an article to News & Views please send it to;

President Denise Preston P O Box 911203 Lexington, KY 40591 or electronically to; ilovejosph95@icloud.com	Editor Mike Holbrook PO Box 371 Richmond, KY 40476 mhkynalcde@aol.com
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All articles must be typed in Ariel 11 font and signed by the author, or submitted on electronic media.

The articles in this newsletter do not necessarily reflect the views of the Editor or the local Branch. The Editor reserves the right to edit, delete, or reject any article in the interest of the good of the Branch.

In the interest of benefitting the goals of the NALC, permission is hereby granted to other parties to use any part of this newsletter as long as credit is given.

As covid infections in central Kentucky counties have increased a determination of whether the August 2nd monthly meeting will be in person/zoom or by Zoom only will be made July 29th. Contact below to reserve your seat or to receive the clickable link depending on which method is determined.

Denise 859-221-2854	ilovejosph95@icloud.com
Crystal 859-396-8648	crystalsmithsecretarybr361@gmail.com

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New Members

Please welcome the following new members, whose applications were approved at the July 12th Monthly Meeting.

Jonathon Smith
Joshua Wethington
Cody Huff
Christopher Linkous
Andrew Preece
Jaxon Pilcher
Lesley Burgess
Carey Schultz
Husein Suleimen.

Convention Delegates, remember you are required to attend 80% of meetings from the time of nomination to receive Branch funds to attend State and National Conventions. Attendance by Zoom counts but be sure to turn your video on, it is required. If you do not have video capability you must contact Denise or Crystal prior to the meetings.

Central Kentucky Congressional Delegation

	Local Phone #	D.C. Phone #
Rand Paul, Senator	1-270-782-8303	1-202-224-4343
Mitch McConnell, Senator	1-859-224-8286	1-202-224-2541
Bret Guthrie, 2nd District Rep.	1-270-842-9896	1-202-225-3501
Thomas Massie, 4th District Rep	1-859-426-0080	1-202-225-3465
Hal Rogers, 5th District Rep	1-606-679-8346	1-202-225-4601
Andy Barr, 6th District Rep	1-859-219-1366	1-202-225-4706

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NEWS AND VIEWS

Grievance Report June 2022

OFFICE	FILED	SETTLED	OPEN
Beaumont	1	1	0
Berea	0	0	0
Bluegrass	5	1	4
Brentwood	1	1	0
Danville	0	0	0
Frankfort	4	1	3
Gardenside	11	0	11
Georgetown	0	0	0
Harrodsburg	0	0	0
Lancaster	0	0	0
Liberty	2	0	2
Nicholasville	0	0	0
Paris	0	0	0
Richmond	0	0	0
Stanford	0	0	0
Versailles	0	0	0
Wilmore	0	0	0
Winchester	0	0	0

Upcoming Events

Even if we are able to return to the hall in person for the August 2nd meeting, with the Covid numbers remaining high we will not have a meal. This will be reassessed on a monthly basis.

Even as the committee continues to work on the Fall Festival, the increasing numbers of Covid infections and hospitalizations that are occurring in Central Kentucky threaten to cancel the event. That is not a call that the E-board would make until late September, but in the mean time you can do your part in driving the numbers down by taking the common sense steps that have been proven to work; including hand hygiene, avoiding crowded indoor venues and wearing a mask when in crowded areas.