

KANSAS MAIL CARRIER SUMMER 2019



Andy Tuttle; President

Spring was as usual, a busy season for the KSALC. We survived a long and harsh winter. We lobbied Congress and gained considerable support for NALC-backed legislation nationally and from the Kansas delegation. We held a successful convention. We had a number of NALC-sponsored local events and activities in state.

The 2019 KSALC Convention was held May 2-4 in Salina. Many thanks go to President Brad Johnson and the members of Branch 486 who gave their time and energy towards a really smooth convention. In addition to Brad I would like to recognize in no particular order: Robert Hutchcraft, Kiffany Suenrum, Mark Turner, Debbie Mendenhall, and anyone else I failed to

mention from the host Branch who gave their time and effort. I am honored and humbled to have been elected to another term as KSALC President. Joining me on the Executive Committee are VP/Director of Education Michelle Jellison, Secretary- Treasurer Ike Donn, Director of Retirees Mike Wamsley, 1st District LCCL Kent Chestnut, 2nd District LCCL Terry P. Miller, 3rd District LCCL Greg Wilson, 4th District LCCL Bob Davidson, and At-large LCCL Chris Mayo.

As always, we had great training provided by the Region 5 office of NBA Mike Birkett, RAA's Dave Teegarden and Charlie Sexton, and RWCA Larrissa Parde. Our assigned National Officer was Director of Safety and Health Manny Peralta. Manny is great, and it's easy to see why he is one the NALC's premier arbitration advocates over the course of his four decades of Union activism. Kansas 1st District Rep. Roger Marshall spoke during lunch about his vision on a number of matters including healthcare and the USPS, of which he is a strong supporter.

Brad and host Branch 486, held a number of fundraising events over the course of the weekend and raised over \$2500 for the Holub Family Scholarship. The scholarship winner this year is Ayden, son of Julianna Burton from Branch 201 Wichita.

A State Chair I try to attend as many events as I can. I was honored to attend the Branch 201 Retiree Dinner in April. NALC Director of Safety and Health Manny Peralta was the National Officer in attendance. In June I attended the Branch 499 Retiree luncheon. NBA Mike Birkett and RAA Dave Teegarden were there as well. At both events several 50-year pins were presented and retirees were honored for their work and sacrifices.

A steward is defined as someone who "manages, looks after, or keeps in order another's property". So even if you are not an elected or appointed steward within your branch, you are a steward of your organization. Any good steward in this sense is obligated to leave the organization in better condition than where they found it. In that sense, retired NALC members truly are great stewards as the organization is always left in better shape than it was before.

So far in the 116th Congress we have achieved considerable support for NALC-backed legislation and Resolutions from the Kansas Congressional Delegation. I have met several times with staffs of our Representatives in Topeka, Kansas City, and Overland Park. At the grand opening of Rep. Sharice Davids office in Kansas City, Kansas I was joined at At-Large LCCL Chris Mayo and Branch 499 President Bob Rivera.

Rep. Davids also attended the Branch 5521 BBQ in June. She and her aide Venetia Washington were able to have one-on-one conversations with many members and their families in a relaxed and comfortable setting. We are thankful she was able to attend and show her support for Letter Carriers.

The rest of the summer and fall will present the usual challenges as well as new ones. Contract negotiations begin and we are dealing with the usual onslaught from privatizers, Union busters, and advocates of slashing our pay and benefits. As always we will advocate for our interests and expose the lies and malice of those who seek to do us harm.



KSALC Officers Installed by NBA Mike Birkett in Salina

Michelle Jellison; Vice President/ Director of Education

The 2019 KSALC Convention is in the books! It was a great and convention and many thanks go to Brad Johnson for the wonderful job he did hosting the convention in Salina. I traveled down the day before and participated in Brad's golf tournament to raise money for the Holub Scholarship Fund. This was only my second time golfing. I am by no means a natural, but I had a blast and the guys were very nice and helpful and never laughed in front of me. Brad raised a good amount of money for the scholarship fund and every golfer left with at least one prize. I urge everyone to attend these fund raisers. Golfer or not, it's a good time, and it's much more fun than carrying mail! I am honored to have been re-elected Vice President for a second term. Thank you everyone for your votes and support.

Manny Peralta, Director of Safety and Health, was the guest speaker from NALC National Headquarters. One of the wonderful things about attending state conventions is getting to meet our national officers. Not only do you get to hear them speak, you are able to sit down and have a conversation with them. Manny made himself available at the golf tournament, the evening before the tournament, and he even hung out in the hospitality room Friday night. Our national officers are the best and Manny is superb.

The upcoming election may still seem far away, but this is going to be an election like no other. We have so much on the line. We are going into contract negotiations and we expect our national officers to stand up and fight for what we want and need from the Postal Service. However, there is another piece to that puzzle. No matter what we negotiate with the Postal Service, we can lose it all through actions that Congress takes. It's sad but money talks. UPS, the brown guys, have a PAC. They would love to see us go down and they use their PAC to try to do just that. We must fight back against them and others who would like to get their hands on a piece of our business. The Postal Service does not and cannot not have a PAC. The Postal Service also cannot lobby on their own behalf. We, the members of the NALC, must do it for them. The NALC has our own PAC. It is called LCPF, Letter Carrier Political Fund. This is necessary because union dues cannot be used for political purposes. Carriers can come up with all kinds of reasons not to join LCPF. All of them can be answered. We are not affiliated with one party or the other. We are concerned only with letter carrier issues. A carrier can contribute as little as \$1.00 per pay period. That's only fifty cents a week! Most people chose to give \$5.00 per pay period. I give \$15.00. I know carriers that give more. Every bit helps. Postal reform is going to happen. There are many bills and resolutions being drawn up. With your help, we can keep Congress informed of what really needs to happen for the best interest of the carriers and other employees, the postal service and the American public that we serve. Please consider contributing. It is very easy to sign up. There are various ways to contribute – through payroll/annuity deduction, bank draft and others. We can find a way that works for you. Is it not worth preserving your job and retirement? I think it is. Have a safe summer. Protect yourself from the heat!



**Vice President Michelle Jellison and President Emeritus Rod Holub
Take in a T-Bones Game With Branch 499**

Mike Wamsley; Director of Retirees

RETIREMENT 2019

Greetings to all my fellow Letter Carriers, both active and retired!!! We just finished our Kansas State Convention in Salina and I would like to say thank you to Brad Johnson and Branch 486 for putting on an excellent convention. I would also like to thank all the Branches in attendance for allowing me to continue to represent you as your Director of Retirees for the next 2 years.

Retirement is a subject that we all get to, sooner or later, in our careers as Letter Carriers. As I have said before, we have 2 programs that support our retirement. Civil Service Retirement System--CSRS (yes, we still have some active members who are part of that system and no remarks about us CSRS retirees being older than dirt) and Federal Employees Retirement System—FERS. Because the number of carriers who are now in the FERS program is now about 96% of our active carriers, most of the classes and trainings we have are aimed at that group. But we do have training for the 4% that are still in the CSRS.

FERS: This program came about in 1984 when President Regan decided that we needed to cut back national spending and the Letter Carriers as well as the other Federal Employees just happened to present a wonderful target. CSRS was a great system that is fully funded for the next 50-60 years but that didn't deter our President. He presented the new plan, FERS, as an opportunity for Letter Carriers to be able to make the same or more than the CSRS retirees. But there was a catch—the Carrier would have to put in more of his own money in order for that to become a possibility. FERS is made up of 3 parts: 1.The OPM Pension; 2.The Thrift Savings plan; and 3. Social Security. It is important to remember that the OPM Pension is about ½ of the CSRS Pension. Because of this, for you to have a retirement that will support you and your family, you must make good use of the other 2 parts. The Thrift Savings plan offers to match your contributions, up to 5% of your base pay. So if you aren't taking advantage of this, you are **"THROWING MONEY AWAY!"** If you don't make use of this part of your retirement, it decreases your chance of having enough to retire on. You must remember that the Thrift Savings Plan is an investment that can lose money based on what you invest in. It is your choice as to how much risk you will accept in your investments. The more risk you take, the more you may make but the larger chance of losing money also comes with this. I would advise you to have a financial advisor to assist you in this part of your retirement. Next, Social Security is available to you starting at age 62. This is a reduced benefit since your full Social Security pension is available at you maximum benefit age—based on your birthdate. If you decide to start taking your Social Security before your maximum benefit date, you lose a percentage per year you start the early payment and this stays that way for the rest of your life. It doesn't go up to the maximum benefit amount when you reach your maximum benefit date. That being

said, if you retire before you get to age 62, as is possible when you reach your FERS minimum retirement age (once again based on your birthdate) with enough years of service, you can qualify for the FERS Special Annuity Supplement. This payment to you is about the same as what you would receive if you start your Social Security pension at age 62 but it comes from OPM (Office of Personnel Management) and not from Social Security. This lasts until you reach age 62 when it drops off and you have a choice to start your Social Security pension or wait till later. These 3 parts make up the FERS retirement and they are very important to understand so your retirement is at a level to let you do what you want to do when you retire.

Sure, you say, I have heard this before. Why are you boring me again with this? The reason is very simple, other than Cost of Living Adjustment (COLAs), your pensions will not rise and you must be able to retire as you want based on the above. This year, the administration has targeted CSRS and FERS retirements to be cut. They have tried to have you pay more for the same retirement (while the government pays less). They have tried to cut the FERS Special Annuity Supplement. They have tried to cut the 5% matching fund in your Thrift Savings plan. And they want to change how your pension is based on the high-3 years of salary to a high-5. This would lessen the amount you would receive at a less cost to the government. In other words, they are after your retirement again because you are an easy target. They have also tried to remove the COLAs on FERS and CSRS. This doesn't allow your pension to keep up with inflation. It is because of this that I urge you to join the Letter Carrier Political Fund (LCPF) in order to support those who support us. All of the above attempts on our retirements have been beaten back for now because of our friends in Congress. But don't think that this is the end---it's not!! We must be ever vigilant in supporting those who support us or we could lose it all. Stand up for your NALC Sisters and Brothers and contribute to LCPF.

~There's a direct relationship between the ballot box and the bread box and what the Union fights for and wins at the bargaining table can be taken away in the legislative halls~

--Walter Reuther



Branch 201 Retiree Dinner. NALC Director of Safety and Health Manny Peralta and RAA Dave Teegarden Attended.



Manny Peralta Addresses Branch 201 Retirees

Rod Holub, President Emeritus On The Importance of the Holub Family Scholarship

I would like to use this article to share one of the great success stories of Andy Tuttle's tenure as our state president. I firmly believe that great leaders benefit from tireless preparation, executing game-plans under pressure, and occasionally being in the right place at the right time. The story of our evolving commitment to the futures of our members' children involves all three.

As our state association was transitioning from my time as president to Andy's, the National Business Agent's office was in the process of transferring the administration of a scholarship fund from the NBA's office to the state associations. The timing of that transition couldn't have been better. Having grown up under the influence of his father, a tenured professor at the University of Kansas, authoring the game-plan of our newly formed scholarship was a classic example of Andy being the right person, in the right place, at the right time. There couldn't have been anyone more qualified for the task at hand than he was.

Andy was able to set the parameters of how the scholarship would be administered including who would be eligible, when applications would be due, and the requirements for essays to be included with each application. Together with Secretary / Treasurer Ike Donn, the specifics of getting the funds to the winner's choice of institution were all established. The way most of those details are spelled out on the application form does not differ significantly from the dozens of other scholarships that are awarded by other states, locals, and even the national union.

There is one significant difference between our scholarship and everyone else's. Andy had the incredible vision to focus on the fact that even though we are thrilled to help the children of our members become accountants and engineers, the Kansas State Association of Letter Carriers is a "trade" union. In one of the last speeches before he was assassinated, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. included these iconic lines:

"So often we overlook the work and the significance of those who are not in professional jobs, of those who are not in the so-called big jobs. But let me say to you tonight, that whenever you are engaged in work that serves humanity and is for the building of humanity, it has dignity, and it has worth..."

Our children that would like to serve our communities by building houses, or restoring power after storms, or fixing leaking pipes, or giving comfort to those recovering in hospitals should be no less important to us that those who serve in the "big jobs". Our children need to know that we respect the dignity of all work. If our children want to be doctors and lawyers, we want to help finance their dreams. If they want to fix air conditioners or build new decks, we want to help finance their dreams too. Certified Nursing Aids should dream just as big as Registered Nurses. Though we have not yet had a winner who has elected to attend one of our state's excellent trade schools, it is my hope and Andy's dream that helping to finance the dreams of a budding "trade unionist" will become a reality sooner rather than later.

To all the branches that have voted to make annual contributions to our scholarship fund, and all those who have staged events to raise funds at conventions or other meetings, we salute you! If your branch is not yet involved, please consider becoming involved. Our communities will thank you!



Rep. Roger Marshall (KS-1) Speaks at the KSALC Convention in Salina

Kent Chestnut; 1st District LCCL

Greetings from the Big 1st District. At our local union meeting we were discussing the Letter Carrier Political Fund and its importance to letter carrier's jobs. Some of the member's that were in attendance made it very clear that they did not care that this money was used to help gain support from legislators no matter their party affiliation, and that in Kansas we have gained the support of several Republicans in recent years. There are carriers that absolutely will not give to the fund if money will be given to Democrats. Its sad to think that the divid in this country is so great that people are willing to risk their livelihood to make sure they don't chance helping a person that may actually be trying to save that same livelihood. Letter Carriers are

always worried about the contract and what we will have after negotiations, but don't seem to understand that congress can pass legislation that can change parts of government employees working conditions and could take away our right to even negotiate a contract. There is a bill in the house USPS Fairness Act (H.R. 2382) which would repeal the mandate that USPS "pre-fund" decades' worth of health benefits for its future retirees this is the number one issue facing the Postal Service and Letter Carriers. This pre-funding issue makes it appear that the Postal Service is going broke, Fix the pre-funding issue and you take away the arguments for other changes. There is true interest in this solution by both parties but not enough to insure its passage. Now is the time to educate congress about what is a solution to the true economic problem that has plagued the Postal Service for years and make them understand the solution. Every carrier needs to contact their Representatives and Senators to insure getting a bill passed that fixes the real financial problem and takes away the false reasoning for trying to pass bills that hurt the Postal Service and carriers. Giving to the Letter Carrier Political Fund helps get support for our issues no matter what side of the isle you support on other issues.

Terry P. Miller; 2nd District LCCL

Summer is here so look out for yourself. Don't be bullied into worrying more about pleasing management and there "projected times", than your own health. Every year we hear the tragedies or carriers getting sick and even dying over heat related issues while working. If you are feeling the effect of heat stress, act immediately. Call 911 and/or your supervisor and inform them of your condition. Your body is telling you your in trouble and don't just do anything. You know the signs and what to do to prevent heat stress. Stay hydrated even when not working and before work. Don't be duped into thinking it's not break time or as management likes to say an authorized break. If you are feeling ill and need a break then your authorized to take it. It's up to you to make sure your lack of taking breaks will lead you to a permanent break from life. As the joke says, "It's so hot I saw a dog chasing a cat and they were both walking". So to some of you being bullied into making somebodies garbage in numbers, WHY YOU RUNNING?

~The essential point here is that all people with small, insecure incomes are in the same boat and ought to be fighting on the same side. Probably we could do with a little less talk about "capitalist" and "proletarian" and a little more about the robbers and the robbed~

--George Orwell



Rep. Sharice Davids (KS-3) Attended the Branch 5521 BBQ.

Greg Wilson; 3rd District LCCL

President Trump. The name alone will cause your heart to beat excitedly or skip a beat. The guy who wrote “Trump, The Art of the Deal” or a political hack. Sly as a fox or dumb as a box of rocks. Love him or loathe him. Opinions vary. I have mine, you have yours. That is what makes our country so freaking awesome. We can agree to disagree. And vote for whomever we please.

But as the old saying goes, “Be careful what you wish for, you may get it.

I’m not here to change your mind or influence your opinion of the president.

I’m here to convey the facts of the world in which we live now.

The President of the US is gunning for your job as a professional letter carrier for the USPS. And by “gunning”, I mean that he wants to put you out of your current job.

My job, your job, your casemates job, my friend Bob and Chuck’s jobs up in KCK at Branch 499, my buddy Blake out in Branch 104 in Lawrence, my brother’s Chris and Rob in Blue Valley, my sister Michelle and all the members from Branch 10 in Topeka.

His “task force” wants to do the following”

- Privatize the United States Postal Service. (Say goodbye to your current wage)
- Sell or rent our mailboxes to private business. (good luck delivering mail, when the box is full of spurs from Amazon.)
- Reduce delivery to 5 days a week. (Think it’s gonna be Saturday, wrong! How about Tuesday or Thursday)
- Eliminate door delivery and install CBU’s for all customers. (Imagine your customers who have for decades relied upon the service you provide having to walking a ½ mile to retrieve their mail)

And in every single scenario, you know who is going to get blamed for this abomination?

It won’t be the President of the U.S. Not the” Teflon” president.

The following presidents will be blamed. Andy Tuttle, president of the KSALC, Chris Mayo, president of Branch, 5521, It will be Bob Rivera from Branch 499 in KCK, Blake Rockers from 104

in Lawrence and Michelle Jellison from Branch 10 in Topeka. And I'm sure Fred Rolando, president of the NALC will take some major hits.

And it will trickle down. Because the one consistent thing USPS Management does is look for a carrier to blame.

It will be Me, YOU and every City Carrier in the state of Kansas. Put that in your pipe and smoke it!

Like you, all the names I mentioned above are Full Time Professional Letter Carriers. We take great pride in our jobs as Letter Carriers. We also contribute on the Branch, State and National levels of the NALC.

Regardless of the title at the branch, state or national level, WE will be blamed. We failed our customers.

As the Financial Officer for Branch 5521, let me put it in numbers.

The negative financial impact would be \$19,500,000. Yes, **19.5 Million Dollars** of lost wages.

That is the loss of jobs at an average of \$25.00 per hour, 2080 work hours per year.

(52 weeks x 40 hours per week)

Oops, forgot to mention one pertinent fact in that calculation. The above referenced **\$19.5 Million Dollars**, is just the lost wages for **Branch 5521**. My casemates at Olathe East, Mark and Jen, gone. My former casemates at Olathe Main, Xochi and Mike and Victoria will be gone too. And those are only 5 names amongst the 375 active members of Branch 5521. 5521 members reside in Olathe, Gardner, Spring Hill, KCK, Lenexa, Ottawa KS and in Kansas City, Blue Springs and Drexel, MO and many other communities around Kansas City. The impact will be felt all over the metro area.

The numbers of the Kansas State Association of Letter Carriers (KSALC) will make your head hurt. According to my Brother Ike Donn, Secretary-Treasurer of the KSALC, we have 2555 members in our state. That includes retirees. So, let's assume we have 1800 active carriers.

That impact grows to \$93,600,000.00. Yes, 93.6 MILLION DOLLARS. Almost 100 Million Dollars in lost wages for members of the KSALC. And that is just the wages. I did not include our current benefits in that calculation. 13 days of Sick Leave, 13-26 days of Annual leave, TSP contributions, etc.

A negative impact of almost \$100 Million would be wreak havoc for Kansas. Multiply that amount by the number of jobs related directly or indirectly to jobs as Letter Carriers and the economic devastation becomes incalculable. Think about this, you visit your local 7-11, Quik Trip or gas station twice a week for a fill up. You also might purchase a coffee or bottle water too.

Now, multiply your visits X your office X your branch or city X the State. The numbers become staggering. My calculator does not have enough 0's to figure that number.

How do you fight it? Simple. Sign up to contribute to the **Letter Carrier Political Fund**. We are asking for \$2.50 per week, \$5.00 per pay period. That's it. 5 bucks every 2 weeks. That's a number we all can wrap our heads around. Your 5 bucks goes towards people that are a hell of a lot smarter than me that can deliver our message in person to the U.S. House of Representatives and U.S. Senate in Washington D.C.

Because, at the end of the day, we as full time Professional Letter Carriers must go face to face with our customers. Nobody else. You, me and our sisters & brothers in the KSALC. We owe our customers our best. And our best means, fighting for your job. Right now, not tomorrow. Sign up and contribute.

Bob Davidson; 4th District LCCL

Greetings from Newton! I hope all is well with everyone and maybe the state can start to dry out, finally. State Convention is now behind us and I want to thank Salina for a great job of hosting. I am also thankful for the opportunity to represent the State Association as a liaison for the next two years. I once again visited with Roger Erickson from Congressman Estes' office. We spent a quite a bit of time discussing The USPS Fairness Act, H.R. 2382, which calls to repeal the requirement that the USPS prepay future retirement benefits. The Postal Service is the only federal agency mandated to do this and it has put them in horrible financial position. I shared with him that since 2013 the Postal Service would have recorded surpluses of nearly \$4 billion had this not been imposed. I asked Roger to ask Congressman Estes to support H.R. 2382. He was going to pass this information on to him. Until next time--stay safe and God Bless.

~Let the Nation and the world know the meaning of our numbers~

--A. Phillip Randolph



Branch 486 Hosted the Holub Family Scholarship Golf Tournament and Raised over \$2500



Governor Laura Kelly Declared May 11, 2019 NALC Food Drive Day in Kansas



Branch 486 Food Drive



Branch 104 MDA Pool Tournament