

# BUCKEYE BRANCH 78

## BULLETIN

### Columbus and Central Ohio



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**DECEMBER 2021**



**VOL. 41 NO. 12**



## PRESIDENT'S PAGE



**Todd Hornyak**

I hope all carriers enjoyed a Happy Thanksgiving Holiday with their family. I believe with all the issues we are currently facing with understaffing in several offices, this peak season will be the most difficult time for letter carriers ever. I want to thank all the letter carriers for their hard work delivering mail and packages during these trying times, so far this holiday season. The month of December will be extremely challenging. More customers will be ordering online because they can do so safely. Fed Ex, UPS and Amazon can only deliver a portion of the parcels they

will be receiving, they will send the overflow to the Postal Service. Letter carriers will deliver as we always do. I want to wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

All Letter Carriers are aware of the issues with staffing in Columbus and several other large cities nationwide. NALC at the national level has been in discussions for months with the Postal Service regarding ways to hire Letter Carriers. The national parties recently signed a Memorandum of Understanding in which NALC and USPS agree to temporarily detail city letter carriers to installations other than their own on a voluntary basis. The parties recognize that staffing issues may be temporarily

addressed by the voluntary detail of city letter carriers to different installations while long-term solutions are being developed or implemented. Columbus was one of the Installations listed and USPS has sent out flyers stating that Carriers that volunteer and travel more than 50 miles will receive per diem and hotel accommodations. At the time this article was written there have been no volunteers.

We have been informed that a new Officer in Charge (OIC) has been appointed to Columbus. The new OIC is John Umphlett, a Manager Post Office Operations (POOM) from the Indiana District. He is originally from the Chicago area. I have not had a chance to

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## FROM THE VICE PRESIDENT



**Mark Beach**

Recently NALC Branch 78 sent out post cards to all members who have served in the Armed Forces asking them to join the NALC Veterans group. I hope all members took advantage of the self-addressed mailing to join this group. If you are a NALC Branch 78 member and veteran and didn't join the group I ask that you reconsider for two reasons. One, so the NALC can recognize you for the sacrifice and service you have made. Second, so you can have access to information that specifically affects you as it pertains to your work at USPS and your rights as a veteran. You can sign up at [www.nalc.org/member-benefits/join-the-nalc-veterans-group](http://www.nalc.org/member-benefits/join-the-nalc-veterans-group). Thank you for your service.

Most of you have probably already heard of the recent tragedy suffered by our letter carrier family. Jamie Marple, Hilliard City letter carrier was killed in a traffic accident on October 26, 2021. Her husband and fellow carrier Scott Marple, Postmaster Patrick LaRosa, were involved in a one car accident after regular work hours. Both Scott and LaRosa were seriously injured in the crash but are expected to recover from their physical injuries, in time. This is a tragic situation, I ask that you respect the individuals' privacy and keep all in your thoughts and prayers.

The number one contractual issue that we have been dealing with in the City of Columbus has

been forced overtime and violations of ELM 432 and the 12 & 60 provisions found in Article 8. The major reason for these violations is a lack of staffing. Call offs have been affecting the forcing to a lesser extent, but certainly is minor compared to the lack of staffing impact.

The Branch has been filing weekly class actions for the Columbus Installation on these matters. The union has received multiple cease and desist from the DRT on the matter 8.G, yet management continues to violate these limits. These branch grievances are now being settled in part with the union requesting an additional remedy for management failing to abide by the previous cease and desists.

Additionally, 8.5G provides that these limits do not apply during the December exception period, (Dec. 4 through Dec. 31, 2021). When employees on the ODL and work assignment carriers may be required to work more than 12 hours in respect to their assigned list. This exception does not apply to non-list carriers and CCAs, whose hours are then governed by ELM 432 which effectively limits them 11.5 hours in a day of work and a half hour lunch. The Branch will continue to seek remedies for these violations for the foreseeable future.

Management is finally starting to realize how dire the situation is in Columbus and several surrounding offices. The union has lobbied to make Columbus and surrounding area a PTF preferred hiring area. Thus, proposing that

all CCAs currently on the rolls would be converted to PTF status. That all new hires would come in as PTFs starting immediately career employees. The union believes this along with the higher starting wages will help attract new hires. Then it will be up to certain managers to treat them with a lot more respect to help retain them.

Daylight Savings time concluded on Saturday November 7, 2021. As days get shorter carriers in some areas will find themselves delivering in the dark. National arbitrators have already ruled that darkness in and by itself does not necessarily create a safety hazard. The safety issue boils down to the area, the hazards that can no longer be seen because of the darkness. Always attempt delivery, but if you encounter issues such as dogs, criminal activity, and tripping hazards that you can no longer see, report the issue to management. If they send you back out again attempt the delivery. If you cannot make the delivery safely, again report the matter to management. Fill out a PS form 1767 reporting the hazard encountered, i.e., dog that you could not see, sidewalk cracks that you tripped over, a hole in the yard, etc. Also fill out and have management sign a PS form 1571 for any curtailed mail. If you are in an area that is not well lit and decide to deliver the mail then take the time to make the delivery safely, even if that means walking out to the street for each delivery. Safety is always the carriers call, period, just make sure you take the proper

**Continued on page 5**

# MILLERS MUSINGS



**Yana Miller-Farney**

Hard to believe the end of this year is upon us. It is ONE NEW TOY time again. We are late requesting donations. Due to COVID we are not collecting toys so gift cards and cash will be collected up to the December Branch Meeting, December 10th the latest. We need \$15, \$20 and \$25 gift cards. Checks must be written to Gary Porter with ONT in the memo area.

It is my hope that everyone had a pleasant holiday. May the joy continue through the New Year. Have the connections with family and friends that we have been without since COVID disrupted our lives. The fact that a new, more highly mutating strain of COVID has been discovered in South Africa, is not the holiday gift we wanted. Just when things seemed to be opening up, another threat looms.

More businesses are requesting their employees get vaccinated or tested weekly. They are trying to stop the devastation of COVID. This pandemic has caused health care providers of all levels to leave their careers because they are burned out. No longer willing to bear the pressure and overload this has created. The President has requested all federal employees get vaccinated. USPS and NALC have been conferring on how to deal with this edict by OSHA since published in the Federal Record, November 4. We are in a wait and see pattern, at present.

After many years I have decided to retire. It's a rather frightening decision. As that day nears I'm getting lazy about getting up, hitting snooze

on a regular basis. Lucky for me I have always gotten to work earlier than my start time, so not really late to work. Thinking about all those retirement seminars attended over thirty years as a Carrier, the brain went blank. So fortunate to have so many local and regional resources. When the "blue book" arrived, it took a month to peel off the plastic wrap. Reading, re-reading, confusing myself thoroughly; afraid of making a mistake and it not being accepted, oh my. Finally, began putting ink on the forms because the time was shrinking. The ultimate blow was calling Shared Services, careful to skip the beginning of the week to schedule my Retirement Counseling session, only to hear, your wait time is fourteen to thirty-four HOURS. Are you sh-88-ng me! Left the hold on my cell to continue to work on the business line. Over an hour into the call, I accidentally cut the call off. For real, I hit end call. There was no way I could dial again, too angry with myself. The evening I decided to try again, I had a ZOOM call with granddaughter's cheer coach and other parents. Put Shared Services on the cell, placed it out of my reach; logged into the meeting on another device completed that hour meeting, grateful I have multiple devices. Two and a half hours later, a half hour after Shared Services hours ended, a representative answered, to my utter surprise, just couldn't persuade myself to hang up as long as the, Your call is very important to us, played. "How can I help you?" I would like to schedule my Retirement Counseling appointment. "What is your retirement date?" January 31, 2022. "Oh, you'll have to call back after December 1." You have got to be kidding,

I have been on hold two and a half hours and you want me to call back in seventeen days. "Why yes, it was changed in September that you had to call within sixty days of your retirement date; is there anything else I can assist you with?" I must have been in shock because I thanked her and hung up, without one F bomb or expletive. Definitely in shock! Very soon I'll have the privilege of reaching out to Shared Services, again, pray for me folks, I'll need it. Being on hold for two plus hours is not an acceptable way to spend one's few after work hours. More to come on this saga.

**WISHING YOU ALL A VERY HAPPY, SAFE AND BLESSED HOLIDAY SEASON.**

**Much Love, Yana**

## Buckeye Br. 78 Bulletin

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Asst. Secretary/Editor	Yana Miller-Farney
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Views expressed are not necessarily those of the Branch.

**Please notify your local union of address changes as soon as possible.**

Send address changes to:

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## President Continued from page 1

speak with him yet, but I am hopeful that he can make improvements in Columbus. Acting OIC Brad Grubb has been returned to his bid assignment as POOM for Area 2.

I would like to congratulate Doug Bryant from German Village Station, Charles Schneider from

West Worthington Station, Tom Bennett from Main office Carrier Unit and Dee Dee Miller from Westerville Post Office on their recent retirement. I wish them the best on their retirement. Please attend our December Branch meeting in person or watch using Zoom.

Information regarding the meeting can be found on our Branch 78 website [www.nalc-branch78.org](http://www.nalc-branch78.org). I look forward to seeing you at the meeting.

*Fraternally*  
**Todd Hornyak**

## IT'S OPEN SEASON, WHAT A WONDERFUL TIME OF THE YEAR!!!!



**Ramon Lawson**

is the time of year when federal employees can select, update or elect to change their health benefits for the upcoming year. Open Season for year 2022 starts on Monday, November 8, 2021 and runs through Monday, December 13, 2021. The benefit year begins on January 1, 2022, for selections made during FEHB Open Season. Opm.gov has valuable information including plan rates, comparison tools, flexible spending account programs, retirement and more.

In my experience as NALC Branch 78 MBA/Health Benefits representative I have learned that Letter Carriers have different needs for health insurance. Some Letter Carriers are younger, don't have children, are in college and don't need to visit the doctor often. Other Letter Carriers are middle age, have families to provide for, and need a primary care physician. Then there are the retired Letter Carriers that have raised families, worked for 20+ years, may have some medical issues and need more specialized

care. The NALC Health Benefit Plan (HBP) has a plan that will accommodate the needs of each of these Letter Carriers.

The Value Option Plan of the NALC HBP may benefit the younger Letter Carriers best. With this plan you pay less in premiums (the amount that comes out of your paycheck). Most routine exam and tests are 100% covered if provided by a CIGNA network provider. Other specialized care requires you to pay a deductible. Once your deductible is met you would still pay a percentage of the cost of your treatments. This plan comes with a Personal Care Account (PCA) that is used to offset your out-of-pocket costs. This plan allows you to enroll in a Flexible Spending Account (FSA) which allows you to save or put aside money for health care expenses.

The Consumer Driven Health Plan of the NALC HBP is similar to the Value Option Plan. You get the same benefits and coverage. The difference with the Consumer Driven Plan is you have lower deductibles but a pay a higher premium out of your paycheck bi-weekly. This plan is popular among Letter Carriers that have a few years' experience and starting a family.

The most popular and best option in my opinion in the NALC HBP

is the High Option Plan. This plan was designed by Letter Carriers for Letter Carriers. The plan uses the CIGNA PPO network of providers and provides coverage nationwide. You will pay more in bi-weekly premiums, but the benefits outweigh the cost. You will pay only a copay when seeing your physician as opposed to a deductible and then percentage. There is a small deductible with this plan, but once it's met for the year, the plan covers everything at 100%. The copay cost is only \$20 to see a physician or specialist. You enjoy the benefits of using any pharmacy you choose but may receive a lower price if you use CVS or another participating pharmacy. The more Letter Carriers we enroll in the plan, the lower the premium cost will be.

When making your decision this Open Season about health care plans, I encourage you to look at the NALC HBP and its options. Our prices are comparable, benefits are extraordinary, and the plan is run by someone that did the same job you are doing. She knows the needs of Letter Carriers and fights to get those needs included in our plans.

***Until next time.....Love,  
Peace and Safe city streets.....***

*Fraternally your NALC MBA/HBP*  
**Ramon Lawson**

## Vice President Continued from page 2

steps to document any issues. It is our job as letter carriers to deliver the mail, but also ensure that it is done safely.

I wish all the membership a happy upcoming holiday season. I hope and pray that you and your families are blessed this holiday season. It has been an extremely difficult time to be a letter carrier, especially in Columbus and

several of the surrounding associate offices. I thank all of you for hanging in there and doing a great job for the American public.

**Mark Beach**  
**VP Branch 78**

**We need  
YOU!**



**GET INVOLVED!  
HELP MAKE YOUR  
UNION STRONG!  
BECOME A  
UNION STEWARD!**

## FROM REGION II NBA MARK CAMILLI



**Mark Camilli**

The Holiday Season has arrived and along with it comes peak season for the nation's letter carriers. If the added volume and day to day personal challenges were not enough, you might as well add colder temperatures and winter precipitation. Year after year, letter carriers step up to the challenge that this time of year brings. Delivering a card from a distant relative to picking up a care package to be sent to a service member overseas and everything in between, letter carriers help make this time of year special to the customers we serve.

Staffing has been an issue throughout the pandemic. Some cities struggle to get applicants while others can't retain new employees (and many face both challenges). There's no way to sugar coat it and we are not alone. It seems like no industry is spared. Help wanted signs are everywhere. Heck - even my local school district must send notifications two to three times per week notifying parents that they must bring their children to school due to not having

enough bus drivers! Fortunately, the NALC and the USPS at the national level recognize the position we are in and just signed a new memorandum of understanding, "Re: Temporary Details to Other Installations". This memo addresses staffing issues in offices of need by allowing letter carriers from properly staffed offices to volunteer to be temporarily detailed. Detailed city letter carriers will be compensated consistent with Handbook F-15 for travel, lodging, meals, etc. The goal of this memo is to react quickly and temporarily to staffing needs while long-term solutions are being developed and/or implemented.

For those of you who have had the opportunity to work with or get assistance from RWCA Doug Lawrence, you know the professionalism and dedication he applied to assisting injured letter carriers. As the position is based out of Lorain, OH, Doug has just recently made the decision to leave his position as RWCA to go back home in Syracuse, NY to be with his family. I want to thank Doug for all that he has done. I wish him and his family all the best! Doug is only a phone call away and pledged his assis-

tance. With the newly vacated position, President Rolando has named David Picconi, Br. 38 New Jersey Merged as Region 11 and 14's new RWCA. David brings his experience in assisting injured workers and I look forward to him hitting the ground running. Welcome to Team 11 Dave!

Stay safe this Holiday Season and please help and assist your new co-workers acclimate to winter work.

I know we have faced a lot of challenges this past year, but there is a lot to build on and look forward to. We're very hopeful for postal reform, investment in the postal infrastructure, new vehicles and most importantly investment in our employees. Let's focus on our mission in serving the American public - if we have their support and each other's, we'll get thru any challenge. Stay safe, deliver with a smile, make a new friend each day. *On behalf of RAAs John Collins and Dave Kennedy, RGA Mike Brim, RWCA's Doug Lawrence and Dave Picconi, LPO Marc Ashmon and Field Secretary Darla Gerace - from all of us to you and yours, we wish you the very best this holiday season and brighter days ahead...*

# NOVEMBER 2021 BRANCH MEETING MINUTES

Meeting called to order by VP Beach at 6:30; Pledge led by Dean Peruzzi; Invocation by Val Davis. Moment of Silence for Jamie Markle of Hilliard, who passed 10/26/21.

Deviated from regular order of business to honor the Veterans of Branch 78, names read by Jacki Mitchell.

NBA Mark Camilli joined in thanking all Veterans for their service and offering condolences to the Markle family, friends and coworkers. Discussed reconciliation and blockages by Manchin and Sinema to Infrastructure bill that contains \$6 million for electric vehicles and charging stations for USPS; confirmation of 3076 next priority in House and Senate.

Resumed regular order of business with reading of Minutes by Yana Miller-Farney and accepted.

Deviated for Jason Fry to propose the Budget for 2022.

Trevor still carrying, Jacki read Communication from Tammy Hemmer of Canal Winchester, 8 applications for membership. Kelsie Crosby and Jackie Habash doing Union presentation for New Hires, signing up almost a 100%. Jason Fry read Bills List

Education - Beach, discussed proper handling of Vacation List for Stewards

Retirees - Val thanked Retiree Dinner attendees, positive feedback; thinking of sending cards to Veterans for Christmas.

Ramon reminded OPEN SEASON 11/08 till 2/13/21 for changes to FEHBP, opportunity to get insurance; mentioned MBA Disability Plan available with three levels of coverage.

Jason Fry read the Treasurers Report

Safety & Health - Reiterated the policy on delivering in the dark, follow management instruction, go out, survey if route conditions are safe. Is there sufficient lighting to safely walk and recognize hazards. Are there unsavory people loitering. If you do not feel you can safely deliver, return to station and report the safety hazards. If they send you back out, go, if the conditions have not improved and YOU feel your safety is jeopardized go back, report unsafe conditions, ask for a 1767, complete it and a 1571 cut slip (band with undeliverable mail), have management sign off on both, keep copies for yourself, then clock out, not before.

Gary Porter, ONE NEW TOY, we are still not accepting toys due to COVID, only gift cards in \$15, \$20 or \$25 amounts or cash to purchase gift cards. Make Checks to Gary Porter with ONT in the memo area.

## NEW BUSINESS

Todd is on a well deserved vacation. Eleven conversions scheduled for 11/20/21.

Formal A backing up since management is not releasing reps. Class Action filed on 8-40 restrictions was won. Documentation may be requested but those documents go to the Nurse not postmaster or managers, HIPAA VIOLATION. Audit process has resumed also backlogged. Val did a fantastic job with the Retiree dinner, this being her first, 108 there. LiteBlue has not been working so call Shared services. Retirement process is about 60 days for OPM processing. Planning to resume social rec events this year with picnics, ball games, etc.

Board approved donating \$250 to Scott Markle family in light of recent tragedy having three members pass in a short span of weeks. Voluntary donations accepted.

Discussed COP(Committee of Presidents), President Rolando and most of the Executive Committee present. He went over issues we are facing, COVID numbers nationwide, peaked last December, June was the lowest. OSHA released comments on mandatory vaccinations or tests. USPS and NALC believe it will apply to USPS. Went over many questions about what is done on the clock, who pays for testing, etc. Emergency Temporary Standard or ETS filed November 4 in Federal Register. NALC reviewing ETS and impact on USPS and its employees. COVID CCA extension thru 2021. Discussed staffing and possibility of loaning employees from other

installations and changing to all career instead of CCA. Uniforms changes being considered for 2022 include cargo pants and moisture wicking polo shirts in 2023. Discussed using allotment early rather than late because vendors can't bill till items shipped, carriers have lost allotments waiting on back ordered items. Use as soon as possible. Upcoming conventions are 2022 in Chicago 8/7-8/12; 2024 in Boston 8/5 - 8/9; 2026 in Los Angeles 8/3 - 8/7.

Ohio State Association convention for 2023 will be held in Columbus. Convention Committee is being formed with Jackie Habash, Jacki Mitchell, Don Shepherd, Brian, Ramon, Eric Scarberry, and many more volunteers needed; please contact the Hall if interested.

Steward openings will be posted in January. When the call comes to contact your legislators to support 3076, please answer and call those who haven't signed on to cosign and thank the ones that are already onboard.

### Good of the Association

A new flag for the Hall has been purchased. Funds have been transferred from PNC to a new CD with Wright-Patt Credit Union due to FDIC coverage limits. Jeremy Boller has serviced our HVAC systems. Jacki Mitchell has been appointed as a delegate to the local AFL-CIO along with retiree, Brenda Barton, who has been serving. Jason discussed the proposed budget, based on 872 active members, for \$515,485.28. Jacki Mitchell made a motion to accept the proposal and Val Davis seconded. **PASSED**

Mike Brim commented on the congestion at the Hall due to the number of banker boxes lining our halls, offices, meeting spaces. Unfortunately, we have filed an unprecedented number of grievances for contractual violations by management and we are required to maintain those grievances for a specific time limit. He did not offer any suggestions on remedying the problem but the Board will consider his comment.

Had he been present Joe Higley could have won \$90 in the member drawing.

Meeting adjourned at 7:50.

*Submitted by Yana Miller-Farney*

### Attention Members

#### Change of Address -

Please notify Branch 78 any time you move. It cost your dues money to send to bad addresses.

**COME TO THE  
RETIRES MEETING  
FIRST TUESDAY OF EACH MONTH**



Doug Bryant from German Village Station Retires.



Orlando Diaz retires from South Columbus.



**Buckeye Branch 78**  
 1029 Harrisburg Pike  
 Columbus, Ohio 43223-2524  
 National Association of  
 Letter Carriers  
 AFL-CIO



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BEX Bexley	Roderick Robinson	614-237-2830
Canal Winchester	Mark Beach	614-837-7953
CIR Circleville	Bryce Dilts	740-474-3113
DEL Delaware	Mark Beach	740-363-1906
DUB Dublin	Debbie Brown/Kent Reeves	614-889-6571
Eastland	Jeff Stiverson	614-237-1912
East City	Charles Sanders/Alt. Dillen Miller	614-469-4466
F German Village	Dean Peruzzi	614-449-9565
G South Columbus	Rob Arnold/ Alt. Dean Peruzi	614-444-0217
GAH Gahanna	Kirk Hilty/Brenda Stidams/Dante Mix	614-472-0696
GP Groveport	Mark Beach	614-836-5452
GC Grove City	Mike Zeller/Alt. Tricia Douglas	614-875-6327
HILL Hilliard	Mark Beach	614-876-7021
LIV Livingston	Ramon Lawson/Alt. Kisha Moman	614-237-9570
LON London	Mark Beach	740-852-1881
MV Marysville	Dave Eblin/Alt. Adam Tullis	937-642-1961
MT Gilead	Joe Kegley	419-946-5846
NL Northland	Sammy Tonyemba/Alt. Larez Harper	614-890-1180
NW Northwest	Myron Miller Jr.	614-451-1502
OP Oakland Park	Dan Dillinger/Alt. Jeremy Starkey/Ericka Anderson	614-476-1680
PIC Pickerington	Mark Beach	614-837-5793
PLN CTY Plain City	Mark Beach	614-837-4004
REY Reynoldsburg	Mark Beach	614-866-6049
UA Upper Arlington	Jeffrey Williams/Alts. Joshua Anthony/Jacquelyn Mitchell	614-451-2302
West City	Allan Moore Sr./Heather Christy/Alt. Richard Hannon	614-469-4465
WV Westerville	Mark Beach/ Alt. Dee Dee Miller	614-882-2243
Westland	Samuel "Cory" Bailey/Eric Scarberry/Alt. Kelsie Crosbie	614-351-0138
WJ West Jefferson	Mark Beach	614-879-9145
WW West Worthington	Jeremy Hirschfeld/Cornelius Scott/Alts. Jason Fry/Charles Schneider/ Jeff Freeman	614-793-9789
WH Whitehall	Gary Porter/Rob Gravely Alt.	614-237-1722

**LOOK**  
 FOR THE  
**UNION**  
**LABEL**



**THE JOB YOU SAVE  
 COULD BE YOUR OWN!**

**ARTICLES RECEIVED AFTER THE  
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The views expressed in articles printed in this publication do not directly reflect those of Branch 78 or the Editor.

**ADDRESS ALL COMMUNICATIONS TO :**  
 1029 Harrisburg Pike  
 Columbus, Ohio 43223-2524

**STEWARDS MEETING-6:30 P.M.**

First Wednesday of each month  
**OFFICERS MEETING-6:00 P.M.**

The Monday preceding Steward Meeting

**BRANCH MEETING-6:30 P.M.**

Second Wednesday of each month  
**RETIREEES MEETING-1:00 P.M.**

First Tuesday of each month

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www.nalc-branch78.org