

# B-Mike



Vol 82 Issue 1 Jan '22

"An Injury to One is an Injury to All"

The Official Publication of Branch 82

Portland, OR

Beaverton·Canby·Clackamas·Forest Grove·Gladstone·Happy Valley·Gresham·Hillsboro·Lake Oswego·McMinnville·Newberg·Oregon City·Portland·St. Helens·Troutdale·West Linr

## Happy New Year



Welcome to 2022

### Changes for the New Year

- David Norton, President

Hello everyone, Happy New Year and welcome to 2022! I don't know about you, but 2021 was a terrible year in many ways. It was for me personally, the Postal Service and also Branch 82. I am ready to put the year behind us and move on.

We are all still dealing with the effects that COVID has had on the Postal Service and the city. We have all been dealing with a historic staffing shortage along with an increase of parcel delivery while conditions have deteriorated all around us.

Not everything was so bad. We received a huge COLA in the fall, and towards the end of 2021 we started hiring new employees, and parcel volume (in most places) started to decline. We ended off peak season with some good momentum going into the New Year. That is a good thing and something to look forward to. Going into 2022, it is already shaping up to see some significant changes in the Postal Service, in the offices, and in the branch.

#### **Some New Faces**

There will be some changes for 2022 around the branch. First, we just had an election for Branch 82 officers, and we will have some new people around the office. Betty Nash is going to be the next Branch 82 Vice President. So, you may be hearing her voice on the other end of the phone when you call. Betty has been a long time carrier out of our Evergreen Station, and has been the Chief Steward of the Beaverton Instillation. She has a lot of experience representing one of our largest offices over the course of her 30+ year career. Also, our current Chief Steward, John Kunz, will be going back to carry mail starting in February. I would like to thank John Kunz for his years of hard work and dedicated service to the members of Branch 82 for the last four years. The role of Chief Steward is a difficult one, and Johnny did some amazing things under some pretty difficult conditions. I know he will continue to be an asset to the branch even after he has gone back to the route. I have chosen Jon Cabral to be the next Chief Steward of Branch 82. Jon is young in his letter carrier career, but he has already shown a command of the contract and a willingness to do the work necessary for the membership. We have leaned heavily on Jon to help out around Branch 82 after the passing of Jim Baxter, so he already has a working knowledge of the office. There is a lot to know in these jobs, and the position of Chief Steward is not an easy one. Jon will have big shoes to fill and follows in a long line of strong advocates (the last few chief stewards have been John Kunz, myself and Jim

Falvey). I am confident that Jon will do an outstanding job for the members and for the branch. I'm sure Jon Cabral and Betty Nash will both do a great job, I just ask for your patience while they get settled into their new positions.

You may also see some changes in management personnel in your office. Management had been under a hiring freeze for quite some time while the Postal Service was in the midst of combining districts. We have had many supervisors, managers and Postmasters that have been "acting" in their positions since then. That freeze finally lifted and people were able to bid into the vacant jobs. Most of those vacant jobs have been filled and people will move into those positions after the first of the year. This will be a welcome sign to many places, especially in some of our associate offices that haven't had some kind of consistent manager or postmaster for a while. It is always easier to know who you are dealing with, and if we could end some of the management carousel of staffing changes maybe we can get a bit more stability in some of our offices.

#### **COVID**

As we have all heard by now, there is a new variant of COVID that is sweeping through the country. The Omicron variant has taken hold in the US and will be reaching us soon in the Pacific NW (it may be here by the time this article reaches you). We were just getting used to doing some of the things around the branch that we had been previously accustomed to, namely, in-person meetings. We hope that it doesn't come down to it, but there is always a possibility that we may have to go back to having Zoom meetings. If that is the case then we will get out the word to the membership. Zoom meetings can be challenging, and we definitely had problems with them last year. At this point, COVID has taught us to be flexible, and we will just try to adapt to whatever the situation is.

#### Things to hope for in the New Year

Postal reform has to be the most important thing on our union's agenda for 2022. The legislation that the committee recommended is in congress right now, The Postal Reform Act of 2021 (H.R. 3076), and awaiting a vote. It has bipartisan support right now, and we are hoping that it remains that way. I know that many of us are unhappy with the new Postmaster General, Louis DeJoy, and for good reason. But being that he is a republican, and Trump donor, his plan (as flawed as it may seem) brings with it Republican support. Louis DeJoy is supporting the current version of Postal Reform as well as the postal craft unions.

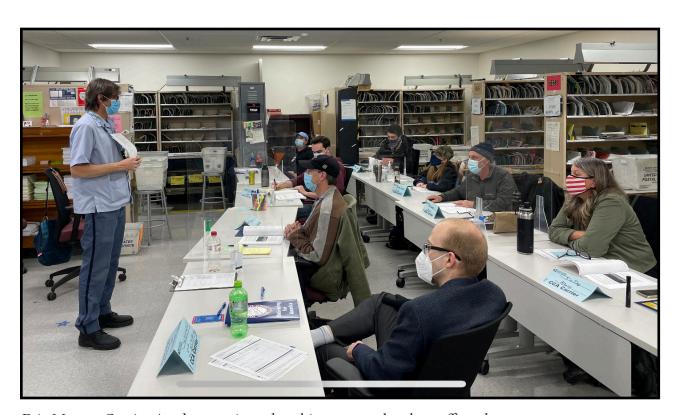


Postal Reform would do away with the unfair prefunding mandate that was imposed upon the Postal Service in 2006. Doing away with this would get a 5.2 billion dollar debt to the federal government off of the Postal Services books. This would get the Postal Service some financial relief and allow them to actually spend some money on capital expenses to help strengthen and grow the service, things like a new fleet of postal vehicles. Without this relief we are going to continue to be bombarded with more "shrink to survive" cost cutting plans that ultimately weaken the Postal Service, our standing with the American public and our future as letter carriers. We are closer than ever to actually achieving meaningful, realistic postal reform. The fear is that we are going to lose some of that republican support if Louis DeJoy gets fired (or maybe even goes to jail! Who knows?). It is our hope that we can get postal reform passed soon while everyone is on board with it.

Staffing is something else on my personal New Year's wish for 2022. I think I can go out on a limb and say it may be on your wish list as well. These last few years

have been brutal and some extra carriers at stations would help alleviate a lot of problems. The good news is that we have been hiring locally and we are actually seeing some payoffs from all of the new employees. This last peak season was actually better than years past. That may not be saying much, but if we keep up the hiring through the first of the year and the spring, and the parcel volume continues to stabilize, we may be looking better and better for the summer months and beyond.

So, just like the beginning of any new year, we have some things to look forward to, things to keep an eye on, and things to watch out for. 2020 and 2021 were absolute dumpster fires of years. 2020 started with a pandemic that never left and 2021 started with insurrection at the capitol. Who knows what is lurking around the corner of 2022. There is certainly a lot of potential for continued calamity, but the New Year also brings hope. That is what I am holding on to going into 2022. I am hoping for postal reform and staffing and peace on earth with wealth and prosperity for all. It is good to dream big, but really, I will settle with just a couple of those.



Eric Matras, Carrier Academy trainer, does his part to solve the staffing shortage.



## Hi, I'm Betty, Your New Vice-President

- Betty Nash, Vice President

Well finally 2021 is over, thank goodness.

It's the beginning of a new year and lots of changes are ahead for all of us. I would like to give you a better understanding of who I am and where I came from. In my new role as your vice president of Branch 82 I will be interacting with all of you, and I would like you to feel as though you know me a little bit better by the end of this article.

My name is Beatrice Mary Margaret (Luna) Nash, but everyone calls me Betty. You could probably guess from my name that I was raised Catholic. I come from a large family of 2 sisters and 10 brothers, yes 10 brothers, again Catholic. We grew up in an agricultural area where there were lots of farms and we worked on many of those farms. We picked prunes, apricots, walnuts, topped garlic, etc. It was very hard work and because of that we never had family vacations. We worked every summer and sometimes into the school year.

Due to our work in the fields my father became a strike organizer for the United Farm Workers of California. Our family was often on the picket line. This included the whole family: Mom, Dad, Grandfather and all of the kids. We had union meetings at our house, and we made signs and arm bands for the strike workers. This was a family affair. These experiences helped shape my outlook on the employee/employer dynamics. It taught me the importance of working together and that common goals are more easily achieved when we work together. This also started my love for union work.

My work experiences range from working in the agricultural fields of California, working in tomato canneries, working in many departments of a large hospital: pbx operator, scheduling for the psych dept, human resources department, emergency room clerk, and cafeteria worker. I have had many various types of jobs. The farm work is back breaking and the hospital was a different animal all on its own. However, being a letter carrier is the one career that offered the stability and good pay that allowed my husband and me to raise our two beautiful daughters.

We were able to pay for all their sporting activities, send them to college, and help them when they struggled, all while providing for our own retirement. I am grateful for all that the USPS and the union has given me, but they didn't just give it. They needed the union to bargain and fight for all of us. All of the benefits that we have can be taken away so every day we must make sure that we enforce our contract. Carriers that come from other areas of the country may not be used to the steward being as involved as much as the stewards of Branch 82, but that is what makes us strong.

I have been a Letter Carrier for almost 37 years. The last 30 years have been spent on a route that is all NBUs and CBUs so I haven't had the day-to-day contact with customers that the walking route carriers have had. All routes have their challenges and as city carriers we get to use our seniority to pick the type of route we work, some carriers switch routes every few years because they get bored, some carriers may stay on a route for their entire career. It's the choice we make, and our contract allows us that choice.

The NALC is not just the president, vice president etc. The union is all of us working together, taking care of each other. Everyone has an important contribution to make. It could be something small like letting your steward know that a 204B was delivering a section, helping with the Annual Leave signup, agreeing to update the NALC bulletin board, helping to run an election or count ballots. These things may seem small but your steward will appreciate the help.

Lastly, can anyone really replace our beloved Baxter? The answer is NO, all I can do is try to maintain the spirit of comfort that he always gave me when I called for help. Sometimes when I called, I was angry with management and sometimes I was frustrated with my fellow carriers. He would always give me contract information for sure, but more importantly he gave me a clarity of my purpose. He reminded me how to achieve my goals to maintain the contract, serve the membership and not get overwhelmed with trying to do everything by myself. He helped teach me how to be an effective leader. Baxter always told me, there are people in your office that can and will help you if you give them an opportunity. Start small and see what happens. Although my feet are small, I will do all I can to fill Baxter's shoes and be there for all of you as he was there for me.

## Change... - John Kunz, Chief Steward

As I write this article December is coming to a close and January is fast approaching. We will be in the year 2022 when people read this. As a child or teenager or young adult, 2022 was too far away to even think about. When I started in the Postal Service in 2000, 2031 was my retirement goal and 2022 was just a sign post on the road to retirement. For a lot of people the New Year brings in New Year resolutions that are goals they would like to achieve in the coming year. For the branch it means new stewards who have stepped up to uphold the contract in the stations and newly elected officers.

The branch had elections this year and you elected a new vice president, new recording secretary, and new executive board members. I congratulate every person who won and I thank every person who ran for office. Elections can be ugly and hurtful, but in the end we are all on the same team. If you lost, keep running for office. That is how democracy works. For the newly elected office stewards this job can be rewarding, frustrating, and stressful. Hang in there, trust your instincts and always try to do the right thing. That is how I survived all these years.

For the stewards who have stepped down and did not run again this year, I thank you from the bottom of my heart for standing with me during my terms as your chief steward. The last four years have been rewarding, exhausting, and stressful. The rewarding part for me is helping people. Over my lifetime I have volunteered for various nonprofits, church functions (yes, at one time I was religious), and any neighbor in need. I really enjoy helping people, and that is why I have always been a steward. Before being hired by the post office I was attending college, working my way towards a bachelors degree in sociology. My goal after graduation was to become a high school guidance counselor or probation officer. I wanted to give back to the people who helped me when I was a troubled youth. Fortunately or unfortunately my plans were sidetracked when I got hired. This goal never panned out, and that's ok, I have made peace with my decisions.

I can't believe I have worked at the Postal Service for 21 years, and 19 of those years have been in the service of my fellow union brothers and sisters. I thank every single person who I have been in contact with over these years. Good, bad, or indifferent they have all influenced me in some way during these 19 years. With that I am announcing that I am stepping down as your chief steward effective 1/30/2022. I am going back to the way I started as a letter carrier 19 years ago, delivering my route. I am both excited and nervous, I hate learning a new route.

Again I thank everyone for the opportunity to serve you and the branch and who knows maybe people may ask me to be a steward in my new station. I will cross that bridge when and if it comes.

Your Chief Steward, John D Kunz

President	David Norton	503.493.5903
Vice- President	Betty Nash	503.493.5903
Secretary- Treasurer	Matt Pierce	503.493.5903
Chief Steward	John Kunz	503.493.5903
Editor	Suzanne Miller	503.493.5903
Recording Secretary	Jon Cabral	503.493.5903
Sergeant At Arms	Chuck Solomon	503.493.5903
Safety Officer	Don Cadwell	503.493.5903
Dir. of Retirees	Sam Smith	503.493.5903
Health Benefits	Eric Matras	503.493.5903
LCPF Rep	Sue Canfield	503.493.5903
Veterans Rep	Bruce Hall	503.285.8468
MDA Rep	Abe RedCloud	503.493.5903
EXECUTI	VE BOARD AT LARG	GE .
Randall Hoxie		503.493.5903
John Kunz		503.493.5903
Janelle Lee		503.493.5903
Abe Redcloud		503.493.5903
	TRUSTEES	
Lois Brumfield		503.493.5903
Casey English		503.493.5903
Dave Esch		503.493.5903
Ted Lulich		503.493.5903

## Hello Again From The Office Of Your Secretary-Treasurer. - Matt Pierce, Secretary-Treasurer

Hello again from the desk of your Secretary-Treasurer and Happy New Year. Another December mailing season is behind us and with it the close on another Open Season to change or enroll in multiple employee benefits. Something that unfortunately happens way too often around here is that a carrier will call asking for help because they will have failed to enroll in their benefits. Missing an opportunity to make these changes could mean wasting money or not having the coverage you and your family need. Fortunately you don't always have to wait until open season to change your benefits. Certain Qualifying Life Events (QLE) also allow anyone eligible to make changes to their USPS benefits enrollment outside of Open Season. A QLE is an event, such as a change in family or employment status, that may allow individuals eligible for benefits programs to enroll, or if already enrolled, to cancel or change their enrollment outside of an Open Season or other normal election opportunity (such as new hire elections).

The benefits enrollment that can be changed by a QLE are: Federal Employees Health Benefits (FEHB), Federal Employees Dental and Vision Insurance Program (FEDVIP), USPS Health Benefits Plan, Flexible Spending Accounts (FSA), and Federal Employees' Group Life Insurance (FEGLI). QLEs are not the same for all programs, so make sure to refer to the applicable guidelines on liteblue.gov.

I'll focus on Federal Employee Health Benefit first, because it's the one that we deal with most often and is often the most serious to a member's health and/or finances. Carriers can enroll in an FEHB program, change enrollment, or cancel coverage when any of these QLEs occur. Many people are aware of some of the major QLEs which are: marriage, birth or adoption of a child, acquisition of a foster child, legal separation, divorce or death of a spouse or dependent. But one that many people are not aware of is eligibility to make enrollment changes can occur if a family member loses FEHB or other coverage, or a change in employment status. Meaning if a spouse or dependent loses their job or their employer ceases to offer coverage under certain conditions you can then add them back to your FEHB coverage outside of open season.

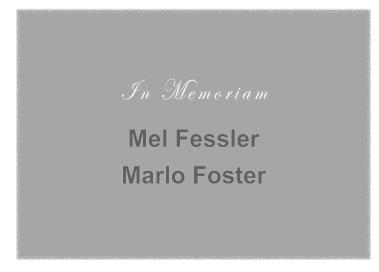
A complete list of FEHB Qualifying Life Events can be found at liteblue.usps.gov/humanresources/benefits/elections/pdf/Table-of-PC.pdf.

Please pay close attention to the time limits and the effective dates of coverage as they vary by event. As a personal example I didn't sign up for Federal Employees' Group Life Insurance when I was a new hire in 1999. As my career progressed and my life circumstances changed I wanted to sign up but that wasn't an option. FEGLI life insurance Open Seasons are extremely rare. Outside of an Open Season, eligible employees can enroll in FEGLI with one of the following Qualifying Life Events; Marriage, Divorce, Death of a spouse, Acquisition or birth of an eligible child.

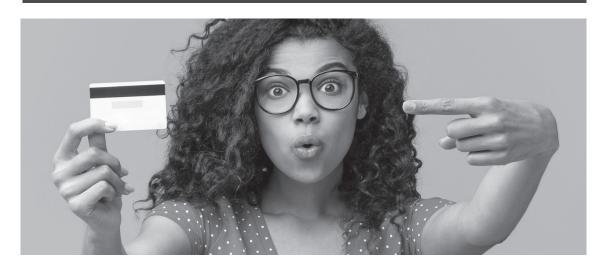
When I got married in 2018 I was finally able to sign up for FEGLI but I still had to keep my deadlines in mind. To enroll based on a Qualifying Life Event, you must submit a Life Insurance Election (SF 2817) to your human resources office within 60 days after the day of the event. So had I dragged my feet, planned my honeymoon instead etc... I may have missed out on what may have been the final chance in my career to enroll.

Finally I want to thank all of the candidates in last year's branch election for running and to welcome your new Vice-President Betty Nash to our office. I have known Betty for a long-time and I very much look forward to working with her.

Until next time I wish all of you a happy and healthy 2022.



on Balance Transfers for 12 Months when you transfer your high-rate credit card balances to your NWPCU VISA Credit Card!



Pay off your VISA, MasterCard, Discover or Store Credit Cards. Our Regular or Platinum VISA Credit Card has:

No Annual Fee

- 28-Day Grace Period
- No Balance Transfer Fee
- No Cash Advance Fee

Our Platinum VISA Credit Card has a fantastic rewards program, uChoose, that you can redeem points earned (1 point per \$1 spent) for travel, merchandise or cash. There are also opportunities to earn extra points from promotions throughout the year.

To take advantage of this offer, apply for one of our credit cards or upgrade to a Platinum VISA; give us a call or email us at marketing@nwprioritycu.org.

#### OUR #1 PRIORITY IS YOU!

503-760-5304 or 800-331-0968 www.nwprioritycu.org









**MILWAUKIE • SE PORTLAND BEAVERTON • PORTLAND P&DC** VANCOUVER • PORTLAND AIRBASE (AIRBASE REOPENING LATE 2021)



\*1.99% APR is an introductory rate for 12 months (12 billing cycles). After the introductory rate, any balances that have not been paid off will revert to our regular rate of 12.9% APR. Account must remain in good standing throughout the promotional period to continue the promotional rate. Offer valid on non-NWPCU Credit Card balances only. The total amount of outstanding transfer requests cannot total more than your available credit. \*\*APR=Annual Percentage Rate. Restrictions may apply. Subject to credit approval. The promotional offer is effective August 10 through October 31, 2021.





## Last Punch Bunch

Matthew Bradford - Beaverton

Richard Brumfield - Lake Oswego

Young Choi - Tigard

Randy Corbett - Parkrose

Michael Lewis - Parkrose

Terri Noble - Parkrose

**Debra Totten** - Multnomah



Matthew Bradford deals with some last minute paperwork on the morning of his retirement from the Beaverton office. Congrats!



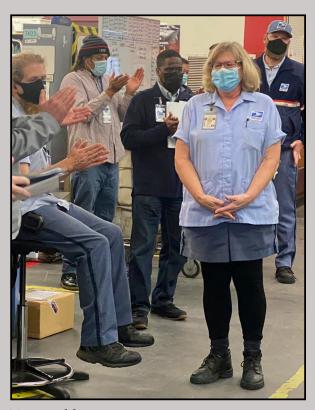


Randy Corbett



Michael Lewis

## Last Punch Bunch



Terri Noble

Congratulaions to these three Parkrose carriers.

(It looks like there will be some routes opening up at Parkrose Station.)

Happy New Year indeed!



## A Challenging New Year

#### - Bruce Hall, Veterans Representative

The beginning of a New Year is a time of reflection and also a time of anticipation. Our nation is in a state of flux. Many things have changed, many things are changing, and many things will change. We will face many challenges in this New Year. Hopefully, we will overcome these challenges and have a GOOD year.

We saw the start of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, and it continued throughout 2021. Our lives have been greatly affected by the pandemic along with many challenging political events, increased inflation, and dissatisfaction in the labor force resulting in labor disputes and strikes. There is much unrest and disunity in our society. So, we will have many challenges to deal with in 2022.

Each of us will face different challenges on an individual basis as well as society created challenges. I continue to deal with an individual challenge of having had a stroke on 11/1/20 and losing sensation in my left fingers. It has been over a year, henceforth, I get depressed and frustrated trying to perform simple tasks. I've gained some insight on how people can get depressed.

We just have to think positively and do our best to look to the future and be thankful for our friends and family who are constantly helping and encouraging us, and the good Lord looking over us. Hopefully, I'll be able to meet this challenge in 2022.

As we look back over the past few years, we see a time of war and turmoil. We had the horrific event of 9/11/2001, which started our Global War on Terrorism. We went to war in Afghanistan, followed by war in Iraq 2003-2011, then a renewed conflict in Afghanistan which ended at the end of 2014. Supposedly these wars ended, but we still have troops in Iraq as supporters and trainers to those countries' armies. They are still in harm's way.

We also have Americans and friendlies trapped in Afghanistan after our sudden withdrawal in August 2021. Our troops continue to perform extraordinarily and give much in the fight to provide freedom. Only time will tell how effective their efforts have been. Freedom is not Free!

War has been a part of this world since the beginning of civilization. No one really likes war, but it has been a reality throughout history. We need to look at history and realize that war should be the last resort in our country's foreign relations, and we should seek peace and reconciliation wherever possible. But we need to exercise wisdom and reservations in immediately withdrawing troops and assistance in areas where we have been involved. War is bad but if it wasn't for war, we wouldn't have our freedom. Freedom is not Free! There are still forces in the world that need to be dealt with. We need to keep a military force ready to deal with these forces. I feel that there are resources available to assist veterans. We need to continue to take advantage of these resources.

Over the past several years, the military has experienced several challenges related to war: excessive deployments, separation from family and friends, severe injuries, and many deaths. Then as our involvement in the war was decreased, the military was faced with different challenges such as reduction in force, which forced many troops out of the service, resulting in unemployment and readjusting to civilian life like having to find housing, medical coverage, schools, jobs, and ways to meet every day needs. This has been tough in our depressed economy. We need to ensure that these veterans receive the support and benefits for their dedication and sacrificial service for freedom!

Of course, benefits and assistance due to veterans is controlled by congress, so we need to continually inform and hopefully influence our political leaders to make the right decisions regarding veterans. This will take a continuous effort from us, to contact our Representatives and Senators. If you would like to receive a weekly update of Veterans Issues and Legislative Actions, please send your Name, E-mail, and Zip Code to me via Mail: Bruce Hall, 8017 N. Washburne Ave., Portland, OR, 97217, or email to: vfwbruce@gmail. com. I can get you signed up for the VFW Action Corps Weekly. It is available to anyone who desires it.

Hopefully, we can meet the challenges and support and assist our Veterans during this New Year!!

#### 100% ORGANIZED OFFICES

Aloha

Collections

Creston

East Portland

Forest Park

Gladstone/Happy Valley

Holladay Park

Hillsboro

Kenton

Lake Oswego

Midway

Parkrose

**Piedmont** 

River District

Rose City Park

Sellwood

St. Helens

St. Johns

Tigard

Waterfront

### **INJURED AT WORK?**

Call BRANCH 82 OWCP REP Mike O'Connor

Wednesdays and Thursdays 503 493-5903

#### MCKANNA, BISHOP, JOFFE

Attorneys

1635 NW Johnson Street

Portland, Oregon, 97209

Telephone: 503 226-6111

Fax: 503 226-5121

John S. Bishop

Elizabeth A. Joffe

Elizabeth A. McKanna

Legal Assistant

Marla R. Menkins

Representing Oregon Unions

And Employees in

Matters of Collective Bargaining

And Civil Rights

(Law Firm retained by NALC Branch 82)

#### **Branch 82 Monthly Meetings**

General Membership 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday, 7:00PM

Retiree Luncheon 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday, 11:30AM

Stewards Council 3rd Wednesday, 7PM

Executive Board 4th Wednesday, 6:30PM

All members are welcome, unless otherwise noted.

All meetings are held at the NALC Branch 82 Office,

5265 NE 42<sup>nd</sup> Avenue.

Retiree Luncheons are held at

Izzy's EastPort Plaza, 3846 SE 82nd Avenue

The B-Mike is the official publication of Charles N. Coyle Branch 82 National Association of Letter Carriers, affiliated with Oregon AFL-CIO and Northwest Oregon Labor Council (OLC), 5265 NE 42nd Avenue, Portland, Oregon 97218. Phone 503·493·5903. Office hours: M-F 8:00am-5pm, Sat 8:00-11:00am.

The B-Mike is published monthly and mailed to the Branch 82 mailing list. The B-Mike is published to promote the objectives of this Branch and to provide better communication with our members. Individual opinions expressed herein are not necessarily those of the Branch Officers or Branch 82, unless identified as such. The editorial committee reserves the right to edit or refuse publication of any article. Articles for publication must be in Word or PDF form and received by the 15th of the month. E-mail articles to: smiller.eightytwo@gmail.com. If you have questions or to request a deadline extension, call the editor in advance. The advertising deadline is also the 15th of the month. All ads must be in PDF form or have prior approval of the editor. Mail to the B-Mike, c/o Branch 82. For rates and further information, call 503·493·5903.

### MDA Report

- Abe RedCloud, MDA Rep

HAPPY 2022 EVERYONE!! How is it 2022 already? Well hopefully this year will bring us a LABOR BOWL again!! I am currently looking into making that happen. I'll have an update in the February edition if it's going to happen in the spring.

So how about an update for our total amount raised in 2021? DRUM ROLL PLEASE....bdabdabdabdabdabdabdabdabdabda.... \$15,999! Awesome job everyone! I'd like to thank everyone that either donated or helped in any way with any event to help make this happen! Without you this would not have been possible. This is \$4,979 more than we raised in 2020, so we are definitely moving in the right direction! Maybe we hit \$20,000 in 2022?!?!?

In fact, that's my challenge!!! I officially challenge Branch 82's members to help us raise \$20,000 for MDA in 2022. Always have a goal to achieve and this is a goal for an amazing charity to help lives in an amazing way! So, let's all be amazing and shoot for this goal!! WE CAN DO IT!!!!

That's all for now. I hope you all had an awesome holiday season filled with love and joy.

In Solidarity, Abe RedCloud



## Brookfield Uniforms

#### EXPERIENCE THE BEST IN POSTAL UNIFORM QUALITY AND SERVICE

- Union Preferred Supplier of Union Made and Made in the USA products
- Free Hem Free Waist Alterations Free Shipping
- Spend the Full Allowance and Receive a Pair of 5 oz. Slacks or Shorts Or Full Allotment Bonus of \$45

#### **Buv Union It Matters**

**Call Your Experienced Representative** Donna Halvorson 503-781-0624 or Fax: 503-786-6120 **Covering the Greater Portland Area** 

#### World Class Service

**Brookfield Customer Service at 1-800-527-0606** Monday-Friday 7am-6pm & Saturday 8am-1pm, CST www.brookfielduniforms.com



Rose City Park carrier Nick Weston found a friend on a recent snowy day.





## **Unionism Comes to a New Industry**

- Casey English, Rose City Park Steward, Trustee

This past year has been historic for organized labor. From teacher strikes across the country, to the Nabisco strike; from the ongoing John Deere strike as well as IATSE and Kaiser, who both narrowly averted strikes. Organized labor has been becoming more powerful and more popular as it becomes plain to the general public that those at the top of the economy have no interest in helping to raise up those on the bottom.

But it's not just strikes (or threats to strike) that are sweeping the nation. On October 14th, employees at the tabletop roleplaying game (TTRPG) company Paizo announced they were forming a union, the United Paizo Workers (UPW). Now, I'm pretty sure I can count on one hand the number of people that have heard of Paizo prior to reading this article, but that's okay! Despite being a small company (by the UPW's own generous estimate, only about 50 employees are union eligible), they are actually one of

the largest TTRPG companies in the world, second only really to Hasbro-owned Wizards of the Coast (who make Dungeons & Dragons, as well as the popular trading card game Magic: The Gathering).

Now, while it's certainly always welcome to hear about companies organizing, why am I writing an article about it? Well, in addition to personally giving Paizo way too much of my money, I felt it important to spread the word about the UPW because they are the first TTRPG union ever. That's right, no other TTRPG company has ever unionized before. Granted, the industry is small, with only a handful of companies even large enough for unions to make sense (many of them only have a couple of people who work part-time). But the ones that are large enough have been secretly trying to figure out how to organize for years, due to several problems that are inherent throughout the industry.

Like I said before, the industry is small, and the profit margins tend to be tight. This leads to most employees at these companies working for far less than is acceptable, especially considering the heart of the industry (at least in the US) is based out of the Seattle Metropolitan Area (home to Wizards and Paizo, as well as others). Additionally, as it becomes closer in time for a major product release, these companies enter "crunch time," with in-

creased hours and workloads to get the product finished in time. Employees have been willing to put up with these conditions because, quite frankly, they live and breathe what they make. It's hard to find an industry where the term "labor of love" seems more apt.

But that didn't stop them from trying to figure out ways to make it better. And finally, UPW was able to break through. Before going public with the formation, they worked with the local chapter of the Communications Workers of America to help navigate them through the

process of filing for an election and how to prepare for potential union-busting. When they went public on October 14th, they had signed union cards for roughly 30 employees (out of 50 or so), and that number kept growing until finally, exactly one week later, the management at Paizo agreed to voluntarily recognize the union, foregoing the process of having the National Labor Relations Board conduct an election. Now the process begins for them to sit down with management and hash out a contract that can hopefully keep the company strong for years to come, while bringing better pay, transparency, and conditions for the employees who put their heart and soul into what they make. As well as the process for bringing unions to more companies in the industry.

All this to say, if there's a nerd in your life you're trying to shop for, maybe get them something from the only organized TTRPG company in the world. They might like that.





#### **NALC Branch 82 Membership Meeting** December 8, 2021

Call to Order: 7:07

Pledge of Alliance: Bruce Hall

Members Deceased: Mel Fessler, Marlo Foster

Moment of Silence

#### **Roll Call of Officers:**

President David Norton, Secretary Treasurer Matt Pierce, B-Mike Editor Suzanne Miller, Chief Steward John Kunz, Beaverton Chief Steward Betty Nash, Health Benefits Officer Eric Matras, Director of Retirees Sam Smith, Sergeant At Arms Chuck Solomon, **Executive Board Members at Large** Jon Cabral, Jamie Partridge Trustees Lois Brumfield, Casey English, Julius Fildes, Sallie Williamson, Ted Lulich, Safety Officer Don Cadwell LCPF Representative Sue Canfield, Veterans Representative Bruce Hall, MDA Representative Abe RedCloud

Officers Absent: Brumfield, Fildes

First Time Members: Jason Finn, Rose City Park

Reading of the Minutes: Motion: Casey English made a motion to dispense with the reading of the minutes. Seconded: Eric Matras, carried.

Communications: We are receiving Christmas Cards. They can be found in the President's office.

#### **Membership Report:**

Regular: 1147, CCA: 219, Retiree: 518, Gold Card: 73 Management & Other Crafts: 36,

New Members: CCA-36, Total Membership: 1993

Non-Members: 42, Organized: 97%

#### **Newly Retired**:

Nancy Luster - Aloha, Lisa Sandell - Beaverton, Michael Lewis - Parkrose, Terri Noble - Parkrose, Randy Corbett - Parkrose, Young Choi - Tigard

#### Canceled:

Joseph Feldmann - St. Johns, Jonathan Ford – Oak Grove Michael Poppe - Tigard

#### Secretary Treasurer's Report:

Matt Pierce handed out a copy of the most recent budget.

Financial Transaction Report/Review

#### **Budget Report:**

Motion: John Kunz made a motion to pay the bills. Seconded: Multiple members seconded from the floor. Carried.

#### 2022 Budget Review

Brother Pierce: For 2022 we are down 125 members from where we estimated to be for this year (2021). Motion: John Kunz Made a motion to approve the proposed 2022 Budget. Seconded: Casey English. Carried.

#### **Executive Board Expenditure** Recommendations:

The Executive Board has made a recommendation to donate an additional \$498.00, to round up our end of year contributions to Fill the Satchel from \$1,502.00 to \$2,000.00. David Norton: No Second is needed. Carried.

#### **Unfinished Business**

Norton said that the only unfinished business we have is the 2022 Election and that he would like to thank Char Bryce and the Election Committee in addition to all of the volunteers who came in and counted.

Volunteers: Lois Brumfield, Sue Canfield, Karen Carlson, Casey English, Willie Groshell.

Norton said that the \$100.00 down payment for the National Convention is due by the next meeting.

#### Trustee's Financial Report:

Williamson: we have gotten through October.

#### Resolutions and Bylaws

Proposed Resolution: Check in on Frail and Elderly: Norton held a vote for the committee's recommendation of approval.

Brad Melon Called for Division For: 21 Against: 15, Carried.

#### **Food Drive Report**

#### **Health Benefits Report:**

Matris reported that Open Season is currently happening.

#### **Labor Management Report:**

There are currently no removals. We are converting at pretty good pace still, we just converted 4-Portland, 2-Hillsboro, 2-Lake Oswego. Staffing is better than last year, and we have 26 more members than we did this time last year.

#### **COVID Update:**

It is still a major problem.

#### **MDA Report:**

We have raised \$6,485.00

#### Retiree's Report

Veteran's Report: Hall: I've got essays, basically all from Portland, we are handing out checks for about \$1,200. The Dollar Tree stores have a toy program where they send toys out to veteran families. I still have some Thanksgiving boxes left, I've heard that there is an organization that is going to be handling Christmas food boxes.

#### **Labor Solidarity Report:**

Norton: Starbucks is voting to unionize one of their stores in Buffalo and that the APWU is in contract negotiations right now.

#### **Hospitality Committee Report**

#### Good of the Association

#### For the Betterment of the Service

Kitty Award:

George Wallenstein won \$77.

Jackpot:

\$575 was unclaimed by Nicole Aranda-Berumen.

**Treasure Chest:** 

\$345 was unclaimed by David Whiting, Creston retiree.

Adjourned: 8:42



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF LETTER CARRIERS
Branch 82
5265 NE 42nd Ave
Portland, Oregon 97218

Non-Profit U.S. Postage Paid Portland , Oregon Permit No. 4 Address service requested



The next General Membership meetings will be held Wednesday, January 12 and Wednesday February 9, both at 7pm. These will be in-person meetings at the Branch 82 Union Hall. (We will not be serving dinner at this time.) You must be fully vaccinated and register in advance. To register, please call the hall with your name, station, and email address. If anything changes due to COVID restrictions, Branch 82 will contact you.

