



# B·Mike



Vol 84  
Issue one  
Jan 2024

*"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 Linn



Photo by Mark Weddle

# 2024 Goals and a Look Ahead

- David Norton, President

2023 is over, and I for one am looking forward to the new year.

2023 wasn't terrible. We saw staffing get better in the city of Portland as well as some other Associate Offices. This is something that we have been striving to accomplish for some time. No one was fired, and we kept management's discipline at bay. We filed a record number of grievances for contractual violations and got members paid a premium rate for those violations. We also expanded on those monetary remedies in 2023, something that we are looking to continue in the new year. We also had plenty of trying times, and many difficult issues came up. This happens every year. You always know it is coming, and sometimes it is all about how you weather the inevitable storm that blows in from postal management. Aside from the disastrous route adjustment in Piedmont Station which we are still in the midst of trying to deal with (and wasn't something that we had any say in), I believe that Branch 82 did a pretty good job at making gains and minimizing any damage.

Still, a new year brings possibility, and I have high hopes for 2024. I consider myself a goal-oriented person, and I always like to make goals for myself for the new year. I do this for myself in my personal life, set some objectives and try to make a reasonable plan to follow in order to meet those targets, or let's face it, try and come close. A "resolution" at this point in my life seems like some sort of decree that I am never going to live up to. As much as I would like to resolve to become wealthy or totally ripped in the new year, I would just be asking for failure. However, I can at least try and keep moving the needle in the right direction. I also like to look ahead for things to look forward to as well as possible pitfalls in the future.

I am not alone in this, as most people make some sort of new year's resolution. I also like to do the same in my professional life. Having work goals and looking ahead is a great way to plan for the upcoming year and work towards accomplishments in the work place. That could be something as easy as making sure you keep up with the forwards on the route and red book maintenance. That could also mean going through your closet and getting rid of old uniforms (we could use them for new employees at the union hall). I'm sure that everyone can come up with plenty of their own, but I have a few recommendations myself. First we will start off with things to look for in 2024.

## Route Adjustments

I have talked about it a lot and lately, none of it has been

good. Piedmont station is still reeling from the most recent route adjustment there. The latest route adjustment agreement between the national parties ends at the end of 2023. However, it is more than likely going to be extended after the first of the year, and my suspicion is it will probably run up to the summer months. By the time you are reading this, it may have already been renewed. I have been very unhappy with the latest adjustment we got at Piedmont, and the fall out from it has been a disaster. I, as president of Branch 82, will not be opting in any additional zones for adjustment if this process continues. That is basically the extent of my involvement with it as it is. (Piedmont was opted into the adjustment by management.) We still have routes out of adjustment in many stations where Branch 82 represents, and there is a need for those adjustments to take place. Until management's side begins to work with the NALC representatives like this actually was a "joint" route adjustment agreement, I do not have a lot of faith in the process. That being said, if your office is in the middle a route count or there has been one in your office where the results are less than favorable, there is hope. We have a review process after every adjustment, and routes and stations will always have another shot at either getting fixed or at least get closer to it.

I am hoping for a permanent route adjustment process in our next contract, one that we can grieve locally. That would give us more control over them and help prevent bad actors on management's end from solely using route adjustments to try and reduce routes and screw over letter carriers. Our national president has openly spoken about on-going negotiations with management about this in a new contract.

In the meantime, for 2024, I would like carriers everywhere in Branch 82 to resolve to do your route the same way every single day as well as to try and keep up with the maintenance on your route. When you can, take your breaks and bathroom stops at the same time every day. Now, obviously every day is different and sometimes it just isn't possible, but when it comes to adjustments, seeing the same data every day will only help in determining your route's value and structure.

## New contract

I believe it is completely reasonable to think that we will have a new contract in 2024. Historically, it takes awhile for our national parties to negotiate a contract for us. It has been that way with every new contract that has been negotiated since I have been a letter carrier. Our national president has said that we are close, but we are also preparing to go to arbitration. If we end up going to arbitration, they feel good about any case that we will be making for a new national agreement that is



befitting letter carriers. I hope that is true. Letter carriers have never been more important to the future of the Postal Service, and after keeping this country moving through COVID and negotiating for the first time since the repeal of the 2006 prefunding mandate, we should be bargaining from a position of strength. That is good because letter carriers deserve a raise, a good one, and there are a host of other issues on the table that should be addressed in this contract in order to move this craft and this job forward. It can be done, but it won't be easy.

I know firsthand how difficult it is to negotiate with the Postal Service, and there is a lot on the line. The Postal Service is one of the largest employers in the country, and a national contract affects over 200,000 active letter carriers. Any raises in wages and benefits will cost the agency billions of dollars. It is pretty massive in scope, and it takes time. We want our national officers to get it right. That doesn't mean that it is easy to be patient, and that doesn't mean that it should take forever. We should see some movement, and I believe that we should see it sooner rather than later, whether the members are going to vote on a contract or it goes before an arbitrator.

With the hiring of so many new employees, this contract will be the first one for a lot new NALC members. If the parties put a contract out to the members for a ratification, it will be up to everyone to decide whether it is a contract worth voting for. Either way, this coming year should bring us something. Hopefully it is everything we are hoping for (or at least mostly).

### **The 2024 Election**

For everyone that has delivered mail during an election season, you know how difficult it can be. You have to case all of those thin political advertisements, some of them from the same potential candidate, and some saying the same thing each time, and it doesn't end until after the election is over. You also have a couple of super heavy days with voter's pamphlets and ballots. It is really annoying. The 2024 election is shaping up to be a contentious one and one that could have major implications on the future of this country. For letter carriers, regardless of where you fall on the political scale, it means that you are going to have a huge influx of tedious, obnoxious mail and a lot of extra work. This is also a very important time for the Postal Service. Political mail is a special designation of mail and is of the utmost importance, and as Oregon is a vote by mail state, letter carriers literally deliver democracy to our customers. It is something to be proud of, but it is also something to prepare for in the coming year.

Now for the resolution (or whatever you want to call it):

### **Solidarity**

As I said before, I'm sure that everyone can come up with a myriad of goals for the workplace and the route, but my wish for all letter carriers in Branch 82 is to have more solidarity with their fellow letter carriers. There are so many new carriers working today- many that are just starting this career, many that either don't know their rights in the workplace or the rules that we must follow. They could use some assistance or a helpful tip from their fellow carrier. A well informed workforce, knowing how to enforce their rights, is essential to push back against management overreach and abuse. That won't happen unless we all take the time to get to know each other. Taking an interest in the job you are doing and the co-workers around you is essential for a strong craft and a strong union.

2023 brought us several new management implementations that did not necessarily have the benefit of letter carriers in mind. Management is trying to force us out of the station as fast as possible, and many carriers are going along with it. Management is trying to get carriers to abide by an arbitrary office time and load time. Management is expecting carriers to perform to their "demonstrated performance" and then pressuring them when they inevitably cannot meet their unrealistic standards. Some supervisors pick on the carriers they feel are the most vulnerable. Sometimes it takes a peer to tell them that, while it may feel uncomfortable, it really means nothing. Do your route, be safe, be efficient but you don't need to be afraid of management's shenanigans. You better believe that management will be coming up with new ideas and new implementations in 2024 that are not designed to make our jobs easier or help us in our duties. We will be discussing more of this throughout the year, but the bottom line is that carriers need to look out for each other. I know that everyone wants to do their job and go home, but we really need to be working together.

As I said before, we can all come up with goals for the new year, and I hope that everyone does. I also hope that it includes solidarity with your fellow carrier. You see them for a short time in the morning and that time is getting shorter and shorter. Management has tried for years to get carriers to stop taking their breaks together in the office. I get a lot of complaints from carriers about how they don't want to take a morning break. Why give management what they want? Get to know the people around you. At the end of the day, your fellow letter carrier is the only one that will have your back at the post office. Let's build that relationship with each other and through collective solidarity, we can overcome any challenge that faces us in the new year.





# Vice President's Report

- Betty Nash, Vice President

Hello, city letter carriers. I first want to thank all of you that voted to re-elect me to serve as your Vice President for the next two years. It has been a pleasure and an honor to work for the branch, and I look forward to the next two years.

Congratulations to all of the members that will serve the branch in one capacity or another. Every position within the branch helps our union to be strong. The members of the Trustees help to monitor all of the branch funds to make sure that all monies are properly spent and documented. They are able to question each and every expenditure and monitor all of the branch assets.

The members of the Executive Board represent the membership and make sure that all proposed expenditures are in the best interest of the branch, however no money can be spent without approval from the branch. The E-Board helps to find ways to review the month-to-month operations and direction of Branch 82. They try to come up with ideas to improve Steward Support as well as ensure that all members' views are being heard.

I would like to thank all candidates that ran for an office. If you did not win your contest, please don't give up. I did not win my first effort to be Recording Secretary, but that did not stop me from running for office. If you are interested in being an officer or a member of a committee, don't be afraid to put yourself out there. Interest in being part of the operation of the branch is great thing.

Sadly, there are branches that are on the verge of being dissolved because of a lack of interest. No one wants to take part in or responsibility for their membership. I know that will never be Branch 82. We are fortunate to have a wealth of knowledge and enthusiasm. Every person that ran for office would have done a good job; we are very lucky.

Going forward in 2024, I am eager to work hard for the membership in whatever capacity will help the city letter carrier. I know that this will be an especially important year, and hopefully we will have a new contract soon. I know that we are all hoping to have the same success as the United Auto Workers and UPS. City Letter Carriers have been underpaid for a while now, and its our turn to get what we deserve.

I hope that any new contract we get includes a program that has the welfare of the City Carrier in mind.

The City Letter Carrier's need and deserve a safety program that is not just a good sound bite, but actually does something for the health and safety of all employees. These past years the "safety" policy and programs

in the Portland District have been a joke, a very sad joke. There are hardly any safety meetings in most offices, unless there is someone asking "hey when was your last safety meeting" then all of the sudden we need a safety meeting. Most Carriers don't know what a 1767 is, where they are located, and what to do with them. There are Supervisors that discourage the use of 1767's because they know that this means that they will need to do something besides play video poker all day.

Safety is driven by money and numbers. If it takes too long to watch a safety video, then lets just falsify records and pretend the Carriers all watched the video.

There are so many aspects of Safety that need to be addressed, lots of work for someone willing to listen and make an effort. If we find that person then the Branch and all Letter Carriers have something to say.

A real Safety Department that cares about the safety and welfare of its employees would truly be a new concept to the Portland District. Is it too late to wish for a Christmas miracle?



**These new employees all found something to wear out of the Branch 82 uniform closet. Please donate uniforms so our new carriers will have proper clothing to wear on the street.**

# Hello Again from the Desk of your Secretary-Treasurer

- Matt Pierce, Secretary-Treasurer

I hope and trust this finds you well. As you either know or imagine we get a lot of calls at our union hall. A lot of the calls involve the general theme of “My supervisor told me this,” and “My manager told me that.” Generally, conversations go something like this: “my supervisor told me that I have to deliver 16 full coverages, 250 parcels and have an 8-hour day, and they are ordering me not to fill out a 3996 and ask for help. They say they have a right to, under some book with a number? And that someone at the union hall signed off on it.” The person then wants to know why we agreed to that and how come no one told them about that handbook before and how could the union let this be. This is what is known as the bare assertion fallacy. Humans have a tendency to trust the first thing they hear. It often takes a lot of evidence to disprove something that had no proof to back it up in the first place.

In both my many years as a steward and my current stint as an officer, I became a little bit of a student of humanity. Any study of what convinces people and the why and how to successfully overcome or counter an argument, ultimately leads to logical fallacies. A fallacy is an incorrect argument in logic which undermines an argument's logical soundness. Here's a very common example: “I drank tap water last night with dinner and now I am sick, so the water must have made me sick.” This conclusion has no rational basis without further proof, but it's a very easy trap to fall into.

All people commit them, and all people fall for them. It has nothing to do with who you are or how smart you are. It's like magic tricks or optical illusions. You don't have to believe the person is really a sorcerer to fall for tricks of sleight of hand. They take advantage of the way humans are built and how our brains and eyes work and how they interact.

Human rationality is wonderful but limited. It uses short cuts and tricks to save time, and this leaves it open to common mistakes. This is where reason should kick in. In this case is it reasonable to assume my new supervisor knows all 70,000 pages of postal rules and regulations? Is it reasonable to assume that the local union would or even could sign away my rights? Is it reasonable to assume my supervisor is lying or is just parroting what they were told to make their numbers look better? People often assume after they are convinced of the real rules that their supervisor lied to them. But again, that's just an assumption based on nothing more than they said something untrue. It's usually much more likely that they were told some-

thing that then they also believed and just passed on.

Remember an assertion itself isn't really proof of anything, or even a real argument - assertion only demonstrates that the person making the statement believes in it or says they do. This fallacy is often accompanied by a phrase such as “Trust me.” Also remember though, those who argue by assertion often do think that they're making a real argument. The proper response then is to never argue back. If you do, you're arguing back with the same proof. The proper response is to always ask questions, lots of them. Things like: “I have an M-41 right here in my route book. Can you show me where it says that?” “Oh really? Can I have a copy of that agreement when I get back?” etc., etc.

Obviously, I would never suggest that a carrier disobey the instructions of their supervisor except in the most extreme cases. But as anyone in an Investigative interview knows, carriers are supposed to be aware of the rules and are asked about them. Therefore, it's perfectly reasonable to ask your supervisor some follow up questions in a respectful manner when confronted with seemingly unreasonable assertions.

We've all been there. We're faced with unreasonable demands, and our natural instinct is to accept it or to argue back. Don't fall for it. It's our job to do the work of the post office and the supervisor's job to direct it. We tell them how long it is going to take, and they tell us what to do to cover that time. That's it. So don't argue or assume, just ask and ask and ask.

Until next time in solidarity, Matt.



**A big thank you to these Branch 82 members who volunteered to count ballots for the recent election. The count took many hours. Thank you for your time and dedication!**





# Route Adjustments: Results, Regrets, and Reform

- Julius Fildes, Waterfront

For those who may not know me, I work at and am the steward for Waterfront Station. I'm also the NALC District Lead for route adjustments in Idaho, Montana, and Oregon (IMO), although by the time you read this, I may no longer hold that position. The TIAREAP Memorandum of Understanding that governs the present route adjustment process is set to expire on December 31 and as of this writing we have received no concrete word on whether it will be extended, or what it will look like if it is. I have mixed feelings about continuing as DLT because I took the job with the hope of doing good things for letter carriers, but I have been disillusioned and disappointed by how the process has turned out.

That is not to say we haven't done good things; in fact, I think we've done quite a bit of good, and I will tell you about some of it, but to my mind we haven't done enough good for as many carriers as we should have. We've taken too long to do it and caused too much pain along the way. Also, we are always judged on our failures more than on our successes, and we have had some profound failures. More on that later as well.

TIAREAP is what is called a "joint process." Unlike the grievance-arbitration procedure where somewhere up the line is a theoretically neutral party who makes decisions based on facts and the contract, decisions the parties are bound by, a joint process is intended to be a cooperative one where decisions are reached through consensus and compromise. To work properly, it depends on both parties to pursue their (often differing) goals with integrity and openness, and to act in good faith. Unfortunately, at some point early on (no surprise here), the Postal Service chose not to do that.

The people involved in the process matter too. I have been privileged to be part of a team of NALC members who have done an often dull and frustrating job with intelligence, humor, and a dedication to represent letter carriers fairly in the route adjustment process. Likewise, most of the managers who I have met and worked with in this process are also intelligent, fair-minded, and have represented the Service's interests and done their jobs with competence, independence, and integrity. Note that I said most, not all, and the ones that lack those qualities have been part of the problem.

Other issues have been constant interference from district management and from USPS Headquarters, a corresponding lack of support and guidance from the national NALC, a lack of clarity in parts of the TIAREAP agreement, and a flawed dispute resolution procedure.

If there was one clear goal that I had going into this, it was to

get as many overburdened routes as I could back to eight hours. There were dozens of them all over the district. There still are, and new ones are continually coming to light, but since the process began we have adjusted at least 90 routes that were overburdened according to Section 271g of the M-39. Along the way, however, it has become clear to me that upper management, in this district at least, has no genuine interest in giving relief to overburdened routes. Many of those special inspection requests had gone unaddressed for years, costing the Service untold thousands of dollars in grievance remedies. During TIAREAP, management has cynically exploited the MOU's dispute procedure to put off adjusting these routes as long as possible. Why? The natural result of adjusting large numbers of overburdened routes is that routes that desperately need to be added get added, and the USPS would rather pay out grievances and force carriers to work long hours than add routes.

Despite their efforts, routes were in fact added, because that is what the data showed should happen. District-wide, since TIAREAP began, we've completed adjustments in zones with a combined total of 421 routes, to which we have added 37 new full time routes and created new auxiliary routes and T6 positions. We have so far only eliminated two routes, one in Albany and one in Canby. This is significant, but it's really only a modest beginning. The IMO district is still full of far too many offices that have not been adjusted in years and carriers working ridiculously long hours on long routes. We could have adjusted more of them if the USPS hadn't been so resistant.

There's also been a lot of aggravation for letter carriers along the way. Adjusting an office that hasn't had one in a long time, especially if you add routes to it, inevitably causes a big disruption and makes for a lot of unhappy people, even carriers that got a cut. The COR program, which is used to make territorial changes, is deeply flawed and terribly sensitive to any issues with the 3999 used with it and to irregularities in map data. It also tends to make a mess of lines of travel that then require reworking for carriers to be able to deliver their routes. The use of COR needs to be administered carefully, and that has not always been the case.

Which brings us to more problems closer to home. In Branch 82 offices that have been part of TIAREAP, the results of those adjustments have been less impressive, to say the least. We added badly needed routes in Lents, Hillsboro, Evergreen, and other places, but lost one in Canby and will likely lose some in other places once the adjustments are done. Out of 232 routes evaluated, I estimate a final net gain of just 5 to 7 new routes added. We adjusted 17 271g routes, but still have some very old ones that remain unfinished. In a personal sore spot for me, we

# PROPOSED RESOLUTION

## Proposed Resolution: Contract Campaign

grew the auxiliary in Holladay Park but I could not get my USPS DLT counterpart to agree to make it a full route even though it clearly qualifies. Branch 82 is now pursuing that through the grievance procedure, and I will be indebted to several people if they succeed.

Which brings us to Piedmont, which is by far the biggest failure of the TIAREAP process in this district. To make a long story short, the management evaluator for that office and my counterpart, the USPS DLT, used the COR program to effectively negate the results of the evaluation, so while we should have added two routes, we added none. At least the results in other Portland-area offices were supported by the data, but not in the case of Piedmont. Worse, the routes themselves are now a mess, the result of a poor COR adjustment. The carriers there are suffering for it, and the fabric of that office has been irreparably damaged.

I will always maintain that most of the blame for Piedmont lies with management because they were bound and determined to do the wrong thing, but as this is a "joint process," the NALC has to share it. We always expect management to do the wrong thing, and we have to be able to use the contract or some other binding process to force them to do the right thing. We did not have one here. Casey English (the NALC evaluator) and I fought for months with our counterparts to get a better outcome, but were ultimately hemmed in by a series of decisions from above us and by the terms of the TIAREAP MOU itself. Casey wanted to keep fighting, but ultimately I felt that I had to agree to implement what I knew was going to be a bad adjustment, rather than pass the buck and have someone else make the same decision. A major factor in that decision was that doing nothing or starting over was not an option (I tried to argue for that, to no avail), and I believe that by going forward, we will be able to force the USPS to do right by Piedmont, either through the TIAREAP review process or through the grievance procedure. Branch 82 had no role in or responsibility for breaking Piedmont but, as with Holladay Park, it may be the Branch that is able to put it back together.

If you have been working at Piedmont the past couple of months, I regret having a role in what happened. I'm sure my apologies are not worth much to the people who actually have to get the mail delivered. The Piedmont adjustment is a major reason for my ambivalence about being a part of TIAREAP in the future unless a lot of things change: not just the MOU itself but the attitude of the USPS, the quality of the managers they appoint, and the way the national NALC administers it. I certainly hope we can reform the process, because we have to. Thank you, and here's hoping for a better route adjustment agreement in the new year.

Whereas: National conventions include numerous excellent resolutions containing proposed contract language that would improve the working conditions and lives of all carriers; and

Whereas: The power of a union to move management is increased when it involves and mobilizes its membership and its customers, i.e. the public; and

Whereas: Other unions have successfully conducted visible contract campaigns involving large numbers of members and the public to strengthen their negotiating position and make gains at the bargaining table; and

Whereas: Many unions issue frequent bargaining updates with side-by-side comparisons of union and management proposals, in order to inform, agitate, and mobilize their members and the public, therefore be it

Resolved: that NALC Branch 82 call on the national NALC to

- 1) Post all adopted national convention resolutions on the NALC website, and, based on these resolutions, conduct a member survey on contract priorities, to help involve members in building a contract campaign,
- 2) Post frequent side-by-side bargaining updates of contract negotiations on the website and in NALC bulletins, and
- 3) Organize a visible contract campaign that involves and mobilizes members and the public, in stations and in the street, throughout the country to help us achieve the best possible contract at the bargaining table, and be it further

Resolved: that this resolution be submitted to the Oregon State Association of Letter Carriers and the National NALC 2024 Convention for concurrence.

Submitted by: Stephen Schmidt, Tiare Rose Bent, Taylor Peckham, Jamie Partridge, Ryder Canepa, Rogue Robertson, Mark Flegal, Benjamin Stutz, Tom Richardson, Zoe Freeman, Nick Mast, Ben Morrow, Luda Basarab, David Medford, Jason Haire, Brandon Rasmussen, Ralph Huntley, John Rypczynski, Alex West, Gabriel Nugent, Kitjapas Srisataporn, Thomas Akeson, Jeremy Palacio, George Crosland, Brittany Thomas, Steven Hecht



# 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, and has been an on and off threat ever since then. Our lives have been greatly affected by the pandemic. Along with many challenging political events, increased inflation, 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 2023. 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 a stroke on 11/1/20 and losing sensation in my left fingers. It has been over two years and I still 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 2024.

I came across an article by Kay Hoffman which suggests that we should not try to accomplish everything at once, but rather go moment by moment. So consider this:

## Only a Moment

If it only takes a moment,  
to give a word of cheer,  
to warm the heart of someone  
whose skies are dark and drear.

It only takes a moment  
to breathe a little prayer,  
asking God to bless His children  
in places everywhere.

Perhaps we have forgotten  
when in our hour of need  
how much it meant when others gave  
a kindly word or deed.

It only takes a moment  
and yet, in hurried pace,  
we often neglect small kindnesses,  
a frown upon our face.

It only takes a moment  
to clasp another's hand,  
tell him that you'd like to help,  
you care and understand.

These precious little moments  
send winging far and near,  
like homing pigeons that will return  
to bring our own heart cheer.

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 that country's army. They are still in harms 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!

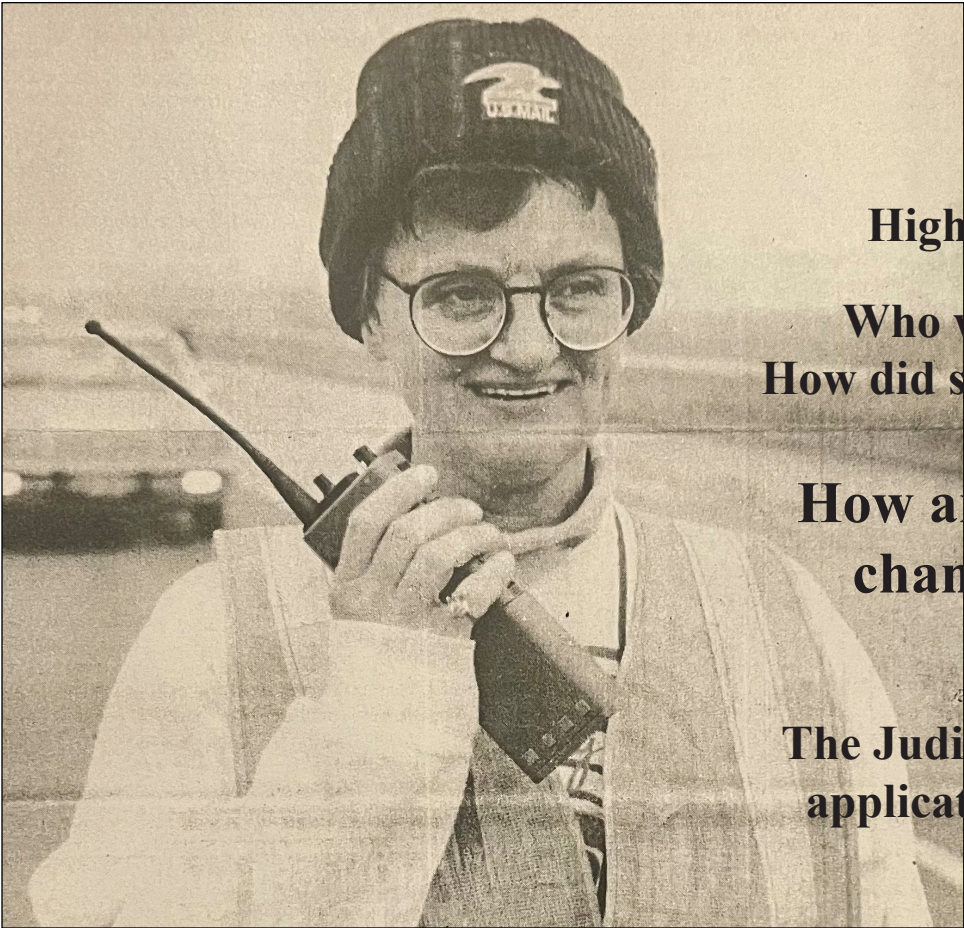
War has been a part of this world since the beginning of civilization. No one really likes war, but it has been a reality throughout history. We need to look at history and realize that war should be the last resort in our country's foreign relations, and we should seek peace and reconciliation wherever 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 forces, which forced many troops out of the service, resulting in unemployment and readjusting to civilian life; having to find housing, medical coverage, schools, jobs, and ways to meet everyday 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 veterans is controlled by congress, so we need to continually inform and hopefully influence our political leaders to make the right decisions in regard to 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](mailto: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!!





**High School Seniors:**

**Who was Judith Hyde?  
How did she change the world?**

**How are YOU going to  
change the world?**

**The Judith Hyde Scholarship  
application is coming soon.**

ARE YOU A **MEMBER** OF NW PRIORITY  
CREDIT UNION? IF YOU ARE NOT,  
**YOU SHOULD BE.**

NW Priority Credit Union has been serving Postal Workers for 95 years. We started with nine postal workers, \$5 each and a shoe box in 1928. Since that time we have been serving postal families along with other Select Employee Groups.

We are a full-service financial institution and we are ready to serve your financial needs. You can join online at [www.nwprioritycu.org](http://www.nwprioritycu.org). You can click the "Become a Member" link at the very top of the homepage.



**OUR #1 PRIORITY IS YOU!**  
503-760-5304 or 800-331-0968 | [www.nwprioritycu.org](http://www.nwprioritycu.org)



MILWAUKIE | SE PORTLAND | BEAVERTON | PORTLAND P&DC | VANCOUVER





# 2023 In Memoriam

At the beginning of every membership meeting we have a moment of silence for any departed brother or sister we may have lost from the previous month. If you have ever been to a membership meeting, you would know that it is rare to go an entire month without losing a member of Branch 82. We have a strong membership that goes back years, and unlike most other unions, NALC members have an opportunity to stay active into retirement. Many of our retirees continue membership after their retirement and most stay members for the remainder of their lives. It is hard when you lose members, and when you have been around awhile, you get to know so many of them.

The end of December, 2023 was like so many other months where we lost fellow brother and sister members:

**Debby Burbank** was a retiree out of University Station. She was a steward, an Executive Board Member, and she served as Vice President. Debby was also the Branch 82 MDA rep, organizing events like the Labor Bowl to benefit MDA. She was an active volunteer and a big part of Branch 82.



**Debby Burbank at a Branch 82 Christmas party.**

**Meredith Enriquez** was a retiree out of our Forest Park (now SW DCU) Station where she was a shop steward for many years, and she also spent years at St. Johns. She was very active in the branch as a delegate to many conventions and was a staple at our membership meetings. Meredith's family asked us to include her obituary in this month's B-Mike.

**Kevin Stewart** was an active carrier at Lents Station. He had almost 20 years in and had just turned 48 years old. I knew Kevin as a fantastic letter carrier, hard worker and an all-around great guy.

There were many members that passed in 2023, and we always keep them in our thoughts. They were our brothers and sisters and part of our union family.

For Meredith, Debby, and Kevin and all others that we lost in 2023, thank you for your hard work and dedication to your craft. Thank you for your loyal membership, and thank you for sharing your life with us.



Meredith Joyce Enriquez née McReynolds

Meredith Enriquez died on December 14, 2023, after enduring cancer treatments for the previous year. She was the fifth of seven children born to Dale Gerald and Katherine Louise McReynolds on May 21, 1952. Meredith was a lifelong resident of North Portland. She graduated from Jefferson High School and Oregon State University, where she was a member of Alpha Phi.

Meredith derived great satisfaction from always being there for others, especially her family. She believed her greatest accomplishment was ensuring that all five of her children graduated from college. To do that, she poured herself into prioritizing their education and extracurricular interests. She sewed dance costumes, babysat to earn money for piano lessons, transported everyone to scout meetings, and sought opportunities for her children that she'd never had herself. She attended countless recitals, theater performances and sporting events, and took great joy in doing the same for her grandchildren.

Her dedication to her family was also evident in her unbreakable bonds with her sisters and her unwavering love and devotion to Agustin Enriquez IV, her husband of 43 years, especially through his long battle with Alzheimer's disease.

Second only to her family, Meredith's greatest pride was her 26 year career as a letter carrier with the United States Postal Service. She cared for her coworkers with longtime service as a shop steward and union representative for NALC Branch 82. She had routes in St. Johns, Kenton, University and Forest Park, where serving her customers was her passion. She lived the motto, "neither snow nor rain nor gloom of night," delivering mail on the snowiest hills and the hottest days until her retirement at age 66.

Meredith was preceded in death by her husband, parents, and her brother Joseph. She is survived by her children Meredith, Adrienne, Agustin V (Alysson), Andrew (Chenelle) & Alicia (Jeffery Kiske), grandchildren Eliza (Iris) & Miro, Evelyn & Agustin VI, and Oliver, and a large, loving extended family, who always made sure she felt loved.

Memorial contributions can be made to the National Association of Letter Carriers' scholarship fund to honor her commitment to educating her children and dedication to her postal family. Contributions may be sent to Doherty Scholarship Fund, c/o NALC, 100 Indiana Ave. NW, Washington, DC 20001-2144.



**Meredith Enriquez and the delivery sled she fashioned on a snowy day.**



# Happy New Year

- Sammy Smith, Director of Retirees

Farewell 2023 and hello 2024, and the happiest of New Year to one and all. May the year 2024 be a blessing to you and bring unforgettable joy. If you have the good fortune to be retiring this year, it will undoubtedly be a milestone to be remembered hopefully for many years to come.

During 2023 we were fortunate to be able to hold our retiree banquet, and by most accounts it was a success, therefore we are now in the very early phase of planning another to be held in 2024. Of course we will keep you posted.

NALC Branch 82 retiree luncheons are still being held on the third Wednesday of each month at IHOP, 4931 SE 82nd Ave at 12 noon, very informal. The luncheons are usually well-attended, and it has the feel much like chatting and talking with your co-workers and friends in the break room, without any supervisors or manager interfering.

It has been fun to meet with the regular core group of around 12-15 people who know your job and with whom you share a common interest. We have a very good group. We share good food and good conversation, however, it is truly exciting when "newbies" arrive, the newly retired or that retired person's first luncheon. Old acquaintances and friends are able to meet and reconnect and share memorable stories that sometimes go back many years, stories of being PTFs at the same time, 30-40 years ago and now retired.

This is my second term as Director of Retirees, and when I first took this position I had no idea that I would enjoy it as much as I do. I love meeting other letter carriers and learning the story of their journey. My own story began as a PTF in El Toro, California in 1986. Retired happily from Gresham, Oregon Post Office in 2017. What is your retirement story?

It is with joy that I serve as Director of Retirees for NALC Branch 82.

## Retiree Luncheon

January 17  
IHOP  
4931 SE 82nd Avenue  
Portland, OR 97266  
NOON  
(third Wednesday of each month)



Another month, another lunch shared between retired letter carriers and President Norton, antics welcome.



# *Last Punch Bunch*

**Lisa Arboleda, Midway**

**Kathy Cassidy, Rose City Park**

**Tiffany Dailee, West Slope**

**Phuong Du, Parkrose**

**Erwin Marasigan, Evergreen**

**Scott Smith, Aloha**



President Norton congratulates Kathy Cassidy.



Erwin Marasigan

## *Congratulations!!!*



## Branch 82 Officers

President	David Norton	503-493-5903
Vice- President	Betty Nash	503-493-5903
Secretary- Treasurer	Matt Pierce	503-493-5903
Chief Steward	Jon Cabral	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	Ryan Mills	503-493-5903
Veterans Rep	Bruce Hall	503-285-8468
MDA Rep	Abe RedCloud	503-493-5903

### Executive Board At Large

Don Cadwell	971-322-9701
Randall Hoxie	503-493-5903
Janelle Lee	503-493-5903
Abe Redcloud	503-493-5903

### Trustees

Lois Brumfield	503-493-5903
Casey English	503-493-5903
Miranda Layton	503-493-5903
Jennifer McGeorge	503-493-5903
Ryan Mills	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 second Wednesday, 7:00PM

Retiree Luncheon third Wednesday, noon

Stewards Council third Wednesday, 7:00PM

Executive Board fourth Wednesday, 6:30PM

All members are welcome, unless otherwise noted.  
All meetings are held at the NALC Branch 82 Office,

5265 NE 42nd Avenue, 97213.

Retiree Luncheons are held at  
IHOP, 4931 SE 82nd Avenue, 97266.

## INJURED AT WORK?

Call BRANCH 82 OWCP REP

Mike O'Connor

Wednesdays and Thursdays

503 493-5903

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](mailto: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.





# NALC Branch 82 Membership Meeting, December 13, 2023

**Call to Order:** 7:09

**Pledge of Alliance:** Bruce Hall

**Deceased Members:** none

## **Roll Call of Officers**

Officers Absent: Don Cadwell, Ted Lulich, George Wallenstein

## **First Time Members:**

Hank Cattell, Waterfront  
Devon Estes, Piedmont  
Marypat Harris, Waterfront

**Visitors:** Sadria Hensley, Prineville

## **Reading of the Minutes:**

Casey English made a motion to dispense with the reading of the minutes and accept them as printed in the B-Mike. Seconded, Eric Matras. Carried.

## **Communications**

### **Membership Report:**

Regular: 1174, PTF: 165, CCA: 69, Retiree: 513, Gold Card: 83, Management & Other Crafts: 48, New Members: CCA-10, PTF- 25. Total Membership: 2062. Non-Members: 34, Organized: 97.6%

**Retired:** Dennis Blauvelt, Sellwood  
Michael Cannon, Parkrose

Phuong Du, Parkrose

**Canceled:** Melissa Wright, Collections-mgmt; Young Kim, retiree- Beaverton

**Separated:** Kevin Hoy, Multnomah; Arnold Yee, Aloha

### **Secretary-Treasurer's Report:**

Secretary-Treasurer Matt Pierce thanked everyone who attended the last budget meeting. The membership reviewed the proposed 2024 budget as Pierce went through it line by line. Cody Harris made a motion to approve and adopt the proposed 2024 budget. Second, Janelle Lee. Carried.

### **Financial Transaction Report/Review:**

Harris made a motion to pay the bills. Seconded, English. Carried. President Norton thanked Pierce for putting together the 2024 budget and those who showed up to the budget committee meeting.

**Unfinished Business:** President Norton discussed the results of the recent election. He went over the vote count totals of each candidate. He thanked everyone who vol-

unteered to count ballots and Char Bryce for chairing the Election Committee. Norton also discussed the recent health scare of member and steward Sallie Williamson who suffered a stroke in November. Donations to her Venmo are greatly appreciated: @salliemw. Finally, Norton issued a reminder that all delegates planning to attend the national convention in Boston must turn in their \$100 deposit by the January general membership meeting.

**New Business:** Norton announced that the Executive Board has been discussing our building and how we may be outgrowing it. He said there is interest in testing the waters to see how much the building is worth, and the board has been looking at potential properties that may be a good fit for Branch 82 to move to. Jon Cabral made a motion to put the building on the market for the purpose of determining the value of our building and property. Seconded, English. Discussion. Carried.

### **Trustee's Financial Report**

**Resolutions and Bylaws:** Resolutions and Bylaws committee chairperson Jim Falvey read the resolution for a contract campaign submitted by Steven Schmidt and others.

### **Health Benefits and MBA Report:**

Matras asked if anyone had signed up for the NALC plan for the first time. A few members raised their hands. Norton reminded the membership that our branch also gets a little kickback from the NALC for each member enrolled in the NALC health plan.

**Labor Management Report:** Norton mentioned that Branch 82 has had another record high number of grievances filed this year, and he thanked those stewards who are filing them. He talked about how we are converting 11 PTFs to full-time on the 30th of this month, and PTFs are converting in about seven months. We are still hiring at a very quick rate and unlike other Carrier Academies that are closing in December, we are moving right though and have had full classes every week. Norton spoke on the steward elections happening in each office, and added that mgmt is still trying to send carriers to other installations to work due to their short staffing. The Postmaster of Bozeman, where everyone

is being sent to, is the same person who was in charge of the terrible Piedmont adjustment. Norton is denying all requests from management to send our carriers to these other installations.

### **Health and Safety Report:**

Norton said it is time for winter preparedness. Anyone on their station's safety committee should make sure their office is prepared for the snow, dark, and other inclement weather.

**Legislation Report:** Cabral made a motion for Branch 82 to endorse the candidates that will be or have been endorsed by the Oregon State AFL-CIO for the 2024 election cycle. Second, Woody Buxton. Discussion. Jamie Partridge made a friendly amendment to add the NWOLC endorsements to the motion as well. Cabral declined. Carried. Partridge made a motion for Branch 82 to endorse the candidates that will be or have been endorsed by the NWOLC for the 2024 election cycle. Second, Woody Buxton. Discussion. Carried.

**Retiree's Report:** Smith reminded the membership that the retiree luncheon is held every third Wednesday at noon at the IHOP on 82nd. Retired and active carriers are welcome.

**Veteran's Report:** Hall said he has food boxes that he can give to those in need. They start with veterans, but they can go to anyone who needs them, so if anyone is aware of someone in need, let him know so he can get that food to them.

**Labor Solidarity Report:** Norton and Partridge discussed recent strikes including Portland teachers, Kaiser, Starbucks, Burgerville and New Seasons.

**Good of the Association:** Norton thanked Janet Barlow and Lois Brumfield for making dinner.

**Kitty Award:** Jennifer McGeorge, Sellwood, won \$96.

**Jackpot:** \$595 went unclaimed by Nicole Conley, Sellwood

**Treasure Chest:** \$120 went unclaimed by Timothy Ouska, Holladay Park

**Adjourned:** 8:53

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



**B·Mike**

Non-Profit  
U.S. Postage Paid  
Portland , Oregon  
Permit No. 4  
ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



The next General Membership meetings  
will be held Wednesday, January 10 and  
Wednesday, February 14, both at 7pm.  
Dinner will be served prior to each meeting.

MEET

# S.P.O.T.

- SPECIAL
- POSTAL
- OPERATIONS
- TECHNICIAN

Who's a good boy? That's right! SPOT! In a brilliant move by the masterminds of our organization a pilot project is being conducted in select cities across the country to actually assist we rank & file. In light of massive increases in parcel volumes, SPOT and his attendant package drones are expected to aid carriers substantially. And yes, SPOT has his own scanner! Note: our drones are armed to protect the sanctity of the mail should one of those Amazon aerobots meddle.

