

GATE CITY NEWS



VOLUME 61

MARCH 2008

ISSUE 03

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF BRANCH 5
AFFILIATE OF NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF LETTER CARRIERS
NEBRASKA ASSOCIATION OF LETTER CARRIERS AFL-CIO



NALC BRANCH 5
10342 ELLISON CIRCLE
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PRESIDENT – DONNA WHITMARSH
www.nalcbranch5.com
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OFFICERS

President – Donna Whitmarsh – 616-2710
Vice President – Billy Ray Stevens – 493-6420
Rec. Secretary – Bob Martens – 551-6670

Fin. Secretary – Jeremy Liebsack – 551-6670
Treasurer – Laura Jacobberger – 451-2643
Sgt-At-Arms – R.J. Riggs – 551-6670
HBR – Tom Galus – 452-3030
Comp. Officer – Ed VandenBerg – 551-0222;
 Home (402) 296-2844; Cell (402) 812-7057
Director of Retirees – Dave Looman – 391-2533
Trustees – Ken Jensen, Dan Graeve,
 Sam Hayden, James Polson, Nancy Waters

Alt, Jeremy Liebsack – 551-6670
Boystown – Sam Hayden;
 Alt, Randy Polson – 496-0908
Elmwood – Ed VandenBerg, Lisa Mason
 Alt, Todd Farrell – 551-0222
Florence – Bill Ruyf – 451-2643
Millard – Billy Ray Stevens – 493-6420
Northwest – Billy Ray Stevens;
 Alt, James Polson – 493-6420
Papillion – Billy Ray Stevens – 493-6420
Pierce – Garry Thorne – 348-2544
Plattsmouth – Donna Whitmarsh – 345-0424
Ralston – Billy Ray Stevens – 493-6420
Saddle Creek – Eli Lisiecki – 551-5158
South Omaha – Chuck Walls;
 Alt, Josh Lange – 733-8929
Stoneyridge – Steve Hedgecock,
 Alt, Ron Holifield - 891-8961
West Omaha - Mark Magistretti – 390-0992
Webmaster – Chuck Walls

The views and opinions expressed in the Gate City News are not necessarily those of NALC Branch 5 or its membership. All union members are encouraged to contribute articles to the newsletter. All articles must be in by the 10th of the month to be considered for the following month's newsletter. The editorial staff reserves the right to edit articles for grammar, spelling, technical inaccuracies and potentially libelous statements. Articles defaming the Union or its membership will not be considered for publication.

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All correspondence and all articles intended for publication in this newsletter should be addressed to:

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 10342 Ellison Circle
 Omaha, NE 68134-1024

**PRESIDENT'S LEAVE RECORD
 AS OF FEBRUARY 4, 2008**

Hours Available	Hours Used
A/L 184	A/L 32
S/L 12	S/L 0

Delegates to the Omaha Federation of Labor:
 Donna Whitmarsh, Bob Martens, Chuck Walls,
 Ed VandenBerg, Jeremy Liebsack, Eli Lisiecki;
 Billy Ray Stevens, alternate for President

AUXILIARY #78 OFFICERS

President – Melinda Carl – 593-6877
Vice President – Mary Lichtenberg – 572-6571
Secretary – Tricia Danielsen – 1-712-323-6764
Treasurer – Bonnie Looman – 391-2533
Sgt-At-Arms – Lou Ann Kriebs – 333-8831
Chaplin – Elinor Ricceri – 556-6762
Fin. Secretary – Judy Polson – 779-2734
3 Yr Trustee – Pryllis Maxwell – 393-8814
2 Yr Trustee – Barb Grage – 572-7431
1 Yr Trustee – Joyce Theiler – 932-3234

STEWARDS

Ames – Bobby Foye – 455-2654
Ashland – Donna Whitmarsh – 345-0424
Benson – Bob Martens;

**NALC HEALTH
 BENEFIT NUMBERS**

Claim Forms 1-888-636-6252
 Durable Medical Equipment 1-888-636-6252

Fraud Hot Line	1-888-636-6252
Health Benefit Plan	1-888-636-6252
24-Hour Nurse Line	1-877-220-6252
Mental Health /Substance Abuse	1-877-468-1016
PPO Locator Service	1-877-220-6252
Pre-certification	1-877-220-6252
Prescription Drug Program	1-800-933-6252
Caremark Specialty Pharmacy	1-800-237-2767

PRESIDENT'S STATION VISITS

March 2008

- 4 - Ames / Florence
- 6 - Benson / Northwest
- 11 - Saddle Creek / Elmwood
- 13 - West Omaha / Boystown
- 18 - Stoneyridge / Millard
- 20 - Pierce / South Omaha
- 25 - Papillion / Ralston
- 27 - Ashland / Plattsmouth

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Groundhogs Day has come and gone—that means spring is on the way, but it's never soon enough after a cold and icy winter like the one we are experiencing. One thing hasn't changed, management is right there with their sharpened pencils, giving out discipline for every slip, trip and fall. Be sure to notify your steward immediately if you receive discipline. It is the Union's position that rarely does a slip, trip and fall warrant discipline. If you have been working safely and call the station immediately if an accident should happen, your steward will vigorously fight on getting the discipline removed from your file.

In case you haven't noticed on your paycheck, your Union dues increased to \$22.84 per pay period. An increase is never good. But if you look at the reason that it happened, it is good. Our dues went up because of the raises we have received this past year. Per the NALC Constitution there is a minimum dues structure equal to two hours base pay for an NALC Grade 1, Step D letter carrier for each member monthly. The Branch 5 By-Laws, Article VI, Section 3.B states dues for active members will be \$2.00 per pay period above the minimum dues structure.

Management has sent notice of intent to revert several positions again. I will send these to the stewards in the stations involved and we must vigorously fight to keep these positions. These were RLC positions. Once the position is vacant, management has 30 days to revert the position or put it on the bid sheet. If they revert, we must file a grievance immediately.

The first of the TEs were hired in January. One quit before starting and two more quit within a couple of days of working in the stations. This is a tough time of the year to start, especially for a temporary position. Hopefully these TEs will become PTFs eventually and become career employees. They are brothers and sisters in our Union also.

The By-Law committee has been formed and will be meeting to discuss any changes to the By-Laws. If you have something that you would like to submit, please give to Vice President Bill Stevens.

Last month we listed in the newsletter several members who have recently been hospitalized or were ill. They have contacted me and said how appreciative they were for the calls and cards they received. They said it was so good to hear from everyone, whether it was someone they hadn't talked to in a long time or whether it was just a greeting from members that they talk to regularly. It is always good to have your day brightened when you are homebound and someone takes the time to say, "Hi, hope you're feeling better." I would like to continue this service for our members but I need for you to call and let us know when someone is ill or hospitalized.

Branch 5 will be hosting the State Convention in 2009. Volunteers are needed. Karen Staack is chairing this committee. Call her at 333-0157 to volunteer or call the office and we will pass on your name to her. We can use lots of volunteers with lots of different talents. If you don't call, we'll be calling you!!!

Don't forget to sign up a team for the Branch 5 volleyball tournament on April 5th. If you don't play volleyball, try to attend anyway. We would like to get a card game or other activity going also as we (President's Report Cont'd)

have room to do this too. Let us know your ideas and if you are interested in participating.

I would like to remind you that when you determine that you have more than eight hours of

work if you deliver all of the mail at your case on any given day that you should immediately fill out a 3996 stating how long it would take you to do so. Also, if management gives you more mail to deliver in what they determine to be “undertime” and you have already told them you do not have “undertime”, fill out a 3996 stating how much “overtime” it will take to deliver your route plus the additional mail they have given you. Keep copies of the 3996. Management must provide you with a copy if you request one. Once you have filled out the 3996, management must fill out their portion and return it to you. Do not argue. Ask to see your steward if there is an issue.

I attended the historic first Nebraska Democratic Party Caucus on February 9th. Everyone was quite amazed at the large turnout. It just goes to show you how unhappy everyone is with the road we have been on. We must all participate in the political process as the politicians have been our friends in fighting the USPS Board of Governors in protecting our jobs and our benefits.

‘Til next month, be safe. Take the time it takes to work safely. It is not true when management says it does not take any longer to deliver mail in the weather conditions we have been experiencing.

Donna Whitmarsh
President, Branch 5

VICE PRESIDENT’S REPORT

Hope you are surviving the winter. I know we have had numerous carriers injured as a result of the ice and snow; please be careful and remember your safety is first. Do not take risks that put you in harms way.

I took part in the Democratic Party Caucus on Saturday. It was enjoyable for me to see first hand a new process for Nebraska. The turnout was unbelievable.

For you carriers who are still being forced to work overtime and do not wish to - please be patient. We are working and filing grievances to stop these violations. Avoid gossip and take my word for this, we are continuing to file overtime grievances in this Branch.

DOIS is still being shoved down our throats, making morning negotiations a miserable start for

most of you. I have been involved in the discipline and grievance system for this city for a number of years. I have yet to see any carrier disciplined for failure to meet the DOIS figures. Do not argue with your Supervisor. First tell them that you do not think you can carry the mail in the time they have determined, ask for instructions, then follow those instructions to the letter. The bottom line is this; call in from the street if need be and request instructions if you cannot make the time they have determined for you. To arbitrarily use unauthorized overtime only places you at risk for discipline. The Service has rules, policies, regulations, and SOP's. If you follow them exactly, you would most likely need to have your route cut. Do not get upset or discouraged by the relentless requests for under time. If you don't have it, just tell them - then follow their rules.

Educate yourself. Attend your Union meetings. Contractual knowledge is like a sledgehammer to a basic floor Supervisor. If they know you have it, they avoid darkening your doorway too often.

Take care, be safe, and Semper Fi.

Billy Ray Stevens
Vice President, Branch 5

HEALTH BENEFITS REPRESENTATIVE REPORT

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Lately, I've been getting questions about the maximum age that dependent children can stay on the NALC health plan. The Plan will cover all unmarried dependent children under age 22, including any foster children or stepchildren your employing or retirement office authorizes coverage for. Under certain circumstances, you may also continue coverage for a disabled child 22 years of age or older who is incapable of self-support.

The employing or retirement office will **not** notify you when a family member is no longer (HBR Report Cont'd)

eligible to receive health benefits, nor will the NALC Health Benefit Plan. It is up to you to immediately tell them when you add or remove family members from your coverage for any reason, including family

members added or who would lose coverage for any reason, including your marriage, divorce, annulment, or when your child turns age 22 or has a change in marital status (divorce or marries).

If you leave Federal service, or if you lose coverage because you no longer qualify as a family member, you may be eligible for Temporary Continuation of Coverage (TCC). For example, you can receive TCC if you are not able to continue your FEHB enrollment after you retire, if you lose your Federal job, if you are a covered dependent child and you turn 22 or marry, etc.

If you leave Federal service, your employing office will notify you of your right to convert. You must apply in writing to NALC FEHB within 31 days after you receive that notice. However, if you are a family member who is losing coverage, the employing or retirement office will **not** notify you. You must apply in writing to NALC within 31 days after you are no longer eligible for coverage. If you convert, it is going to be very expensive because you have to pay the whole premium. Check each plan to see what is the best coverage for your money.

Tom Galus
Health Benefits Representative, Branch 5

DIRECTOR OF RETIREES

Dear Brothers & Sisters,

If you know of a Brother or Sister Union member of Branch 5 who passes away, please notify me or call the Branch office 345-0424. A Brother passed away and it wasn't until some time later that we were informed of it. We would prefer that this not happen again. We have a beautiful bible that we present to the surviving spouse or family member and we would like to be timely with the presentation. Your help in keeping us informed would be greatly appreciated. Also, if a member's spouse, parent or child passes away, we present the member with a bible.

If you have reached the age of 62, the National Park Service has a deal for you! You can purchase a Senior Park Pass for a "one-time fee" of \$10.00 and it is valid for the lifetime of the holder. The Pass allows the Pass owner plus three vehicle passengers (not to exceed four adults) to enter all Federal Parks with no cost at the gate! The National

Park Service issues the Pass here in Omaha at 601 Riverfront Drive. You may also purchase the Pass on line at www.store.usgs.gov/pass.

Dave Looman
Director of Retirees, Branch 5

NEW RETIREE

We would like to congratulate **Bob Miller**, Ralston, on his retirement. Enjoy!!!

RETIREMENT

Wow, retirement time is here! Sometimes the best of plans don't work out. For those that are retiring under **CSRS** and are planning to work - no problem. Make as much as you want. On the other hand, there are some things you need to know if you are retiring under **FERS** and how Social Security is affected.

You can continue to work and still get Social Security retirement benefits. Your earnings in (and after) the month you reach your full retirement age will not affect your Social Security benefits. However, your benefits will be reduced if your earnings exceed certain limits for the months before you reach your full retirement age. (The full retirement age is 65 and 10 months for people born in 1942 and will gradually increase to 67 for persons born in 1960 or later.)

* If you are younger than full retirement age, \$1 in benefits will be deducted for each \$2 in earnings you have above the annual limit (\$12,960 in 2007).

* If in the year you reach your full retirement age, your benefits will be reduced \$1 for every \$3 you earn over a different limit (\$34,440 in 2007) until the month you reach full retirement age. Then you get full Social Security benefit payments, no matter how much you earn.

If you are younger than full retirement age and some of your benefits are withheld because your earnings are more than \$12,960, this is some good (Retirement Cont'd)

news. When you reach full retirement age, your benefits will be increased to take into account those months in which you received no benefits or reduced benefits.

Also, any wages you earn after signing up for Social Security may increase your overall average earnings, and your benefits probably will increase.

Sometimes people who retire in mid-year already have earned more than the yearly earnings limit. That is why there is a special monthly rule that applies to earnings for one year, usually the first year of retirement. Under this rule, you can get full Social Security benefits for any whole month you earn under a certain limit, regardless of your yearly earnings.

In 2007, a person younger than full retirement age (65 and 10 months for people born in 1942) is considered retired if monthly earnings are \$1,080 or less. For example, John Smith retires at age 62 on August 30, 2007. He will make \$45,000 through August. He takes a part-time job beginning in September, earning \$500 per month. Although his earnings for the year substantially exceed the 2007 limit (\$12,960), he will receive full Social Security benefits through December. This is because his earnings in those months are less than \$1,080, the special "first year of retirement" monthly limit for people younger than full retirement age. If Mr. Smith earns more than \$1,080 in any of those months (September through December), he will not receive a benefit for that month. Beginning in 2008, only the yearly limits will apply to him because he will be beyond his first year of retirement and have already used the special monthly rule during that year.

Soon to be Retiree,

Karen Staack

LEGISLATIVE REPORT

Brothers & Sisters of Branch 5,

On February 5th & 6th, the State President, Billy Ray Stevens and the CDLs attended the 22nd annual legislative conference for the Nebraska State AFL-CIO.

We learned about how bills are introduced and passed in the Unicameral. We also had workshops on future bills that are important to labor. We had workshops for the entire day on the 5th and on the 6th we met with the Senators from our legislative districts.

One particular bill that is of great interest to us is the fair share bill. This bill provides for unions to collect funds from non-members for union representation. We will keep a close watch on this bill as it progresses and I will keep you abreast of any new developments.

By the time this newsletter is published, the Democratic Caucus that is scheduled for February 9th will be over. Following the Caucus on the 9th, we will also have the county and state caucuses later this year in June. I hope you all participated in this political process, as it is very important for our labor efforts and for each and every one of you.

Respectfully,

R.J. Riggs
CDL, Legislative District

COLCPE

As told to you last month, the Postal Record was full of names of people who contribute to COLCPE. I want to thank the 30 individuals who are signed up for automatic contribution. I also want to thank the two other members who have signed up since that deadline and one other, who was listed under Branch 314, but has since transferred over to our branch. Finally, I want to thank the Nebraska State Auxiliary for their donation. Without all of us donating, we wouldn't have a worker friendly Congress.

My goal for this year is to sign up at least 12 new members. It doesn't sound like much, but it will make a difference. I've already received two, as mentioned, and one who promised to sign up when I return to work from an injury. So, please help me reach my goal and also to protect your jobs! If you have any questions, contact Pres. Whitmarsh or me.

Yours in solidarity,

Jeremy Liebsack
COLCPE Coordinator

**Have you checked out
Branch 5's web site???**
www.nalcbranch5.com

NBA REPORT

In January, Dan, Nicole and I crisscrossed the region to preside at numerous installations of local

branch officers. In some instances, the branches maintained the same tried and true leaders who have carried their members through difficult challenges and changes over the past several years. But in other branches, the mantle of leadership was passed on to a new generation of activists who have served with distinction in various roles and are fully prepared to take on additional responsibilities on behalf of the membership. I have always been impressed with the knowledge and ability of the branch leaders in the region; and I am pleased to report that the quality of that leadership hasn't diminished one iota with any changes in officers. This certainly bodes well for the continuation of the superior level of representation that letter carriers have come to expect in Region 5. The key to fulfilling those expectations lies in the ongoing partnership between the regional and local offices. With more than 275 local branches in the four-state region, we simply do not have the resources to put out all the fires that are constantly springing up due to management's failed policies and outrageous behavior. We count on the experience and expertise of the branch officers, policing the contract and protecting their members' rights on a daily basis, to carry the load; and it is good to know we can expect that kind of commitment regardless of any changes in the local leadership.

Additionally, I was very gratified by the number of members who attended the installations to show their support for their branch officers. Given the fact that officers and stewards wear so many "hats" these days and give so much of their personal time in order to provide the best possible representation for letter carriers in their respective roles, it is important that they be recognized, honored and appreciated for their efforts. It is equally important that members take an active role toward ensuring the success of the union, whether it be by volunteering for MDA events or the Food Drive, getting involved as an alternate steward or becoming an e-Activist and contributing to COLCPE, particularly through automatic deductions. The union is made up of all of us, not just the officers; and the union is only as strong as the contributions that each of us makes to ensure its success.

As President Young detailed in his January Postal Record message, two of NALC's important long-term goals are to strengthen then Postal Service and rebuild the middle class in America. Addressing these issues requires that we focus not just on the

contractual side of the equation, but also in the legislative and political arenas. Achieving long-term job security is, ultimately, dependent upon changing the priorities in our country from catering to the privileged to caring about the concerns of working men and women. Such a dramatic shift in approach can only be accomplished by changing the leadership in Washington, DC. Each of us can help by signing up for the NALC Carrier Corps and volunteering at least ten hours of our time to ensure the election of candidates who support and will fight for the values and concerns of working families. At this point in the election cycle, I am very excited and encouraged by the enthusiasm and participation of so many of our fellow citizens in the primaries and caucuses. People are disillusioned and determined to change the status quo. I believe we have an historic opportunity to foster real change in our country's direction and policies. But we cannot sit back and expect someone else to carry the load. Each of us must do his or her part by volunteering to knock on doors, make phone calls, help with mailings, put up yard signs, etc. Pick whatever activity you are comfortable doing, and become part of the groundswell of support for taking back our country to ensure good jobs and benefits for working men and women now, and a chance for our children to pursue the American dream in the future. Contact your branch officers or the regional office for information on volunteering for the Carrier Corps.

We are finalizing our agenda for the Regional Rap Session, which will be held on Saturday, February 23, and Sunday, February 24, at the Crowne Plaza Hotel – Downtown St. Louis. The training will include segments on FSS withholding, TE's, DOIS, COR, Intervention, OWCP, DRP and a review of the National Agreement and the associated MOU's. NALC Director of Health Benefits, Tim O'Malley, will be the assigned national officer in attendance. Everyone is welcome, so please join us for two days of intense training and lively interaction.

Mike Weir
Region 5 NBA

STEWARD'S CORNER

Res judicata: a matter finally decided on its merits by a court having competent jurisdiction and not subject to litigation again between the same parties.

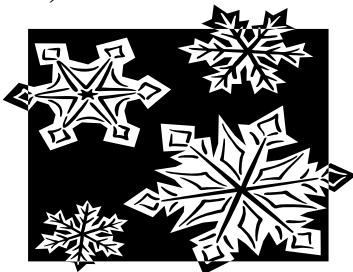
In other words, we grieved this and now they are violating it again. This is an argument we can make in regard to overtime violations and other violations also.

But for now, lets concentrate on Article #8 violations. The Contract remains the same. As you know, we lost a big arbitration in November regarding the Article #8 violations. The Arbitrator in that case ruled that the Service might invoke Article #3 and simultaneously schedule if the following factors were present.

1. It is a Saturday
2. There are more vacancies in a unit than there are carriers on the OTDL.
3. The Service must attempt to change the dispatch (truck) schedule.

These factors must all be present at the same time. The Service however, took this ruling and determined they had won the case and can now arbitrarily continue to violate. File on all violations, and argue *res judicata*. You will argue that the Service violated Article #8 knowing these three factors were not present. Remember, this is only a single argument, you must still argue the other merits of your particular case but you will now ask for an enhanced remedy for the Service's failure to abide by that ruling. If the Service at your unit is willing to settle for the amount violated, then you may want to settle. If the Service argues or denies a violation exists, you may enhance or raise the monetary request of your remedy. Be careful not to be too extreme in your request. This is considered unjust enrichment and may cast a prejudiced eye toward the party requesting it. Be reasonable.

Billy Ray Stevens
Vice President, Branch 5



TALK WITH A TRUSTEE

It's sure been a long winter and we still have a month or so left to go. This column is a new addition to the Newsletter and I would like to make it a little different. I will include more items of human interest and encourage interaction, so if you have ideas, be sure to let me know.

Have you ever wondered about the history behind the names of the streets that you deliver? Here you go!! Let's start with the letter "A".

Abbott Drive – Chris J. Abbott was a supporter of the improvement of the roadway to Eppley Air Field. The goal was to replace an eyesore entryway to Omaha with an attractive and modernized main corridor between the Air Field and Downtown Omaha. It's unofficial name is "String of Pearls," because of the beauty of its illumination.

Ames Avenue – Oakes Ames was a heavy investor in the Union Pacific Railroad and a Congressman from Massachusetts. His involvements with the U.P., the Credit Mobilier, and contracting led to a congressional censure in 1873. He died ten weeks later. At the highest point of the railroad, Sherman Wyoming, a large granite monument was built in his memory.

Arbor Street – Arbor Street was named for the family vineyard by the daughter of Issac Hascal, a pioneer lawyer and politician.

Arcadia Avenue – Arcadia is a region in Peloponnesus in Greece, north of Messina and east of Olympia. King Arcas, the son of Zeus, was made immortal and placed among the constellations as Bear Watchers.

Be Union, Be Proud

James Polson
Trustee, Branch 5

NEW MEMBERS

Let's welcome the new members of Branch 5: **Lawrence Langdon**, Benson; **Shane Gould**, Millard; **Brandi Gaylord**, Northwest; **Charles Post**, Papillion; **Andy Quick** and **Jeremy Wattles**, West Omaha.

A CARRIER'S PERSPECTIVE

Converting Casual Time to Creditable Service

FERS employees can convert casual time (referred to as non-deductible service) that was worked before 1/1/89. A deposit plus interest must be made to make this service creditable for retirement purposes.

The process starts when you phone the Human Services Shared Services Center at 877-477-3273 and select Option 5. When you are connected with the agent, you will be asked for your 8-digit postal ID number and birth date. With that information, the agent identifies you and confirms your eligibility and your current mailing address. A request form will then be sent to you to fill out and return to the Service Center. That form secures a request to our local Human Services District Office so that your personnel file can be sent to the Office of Personnel Management in DC.

It is suggested that you take a look at your personal file to verify that it includes your casual start and termination dates so that there are no hitches. I happen to have my original documents if you need to see the type of form that you are looking for.

The agent will warn you that this process takes time. OPM will give you a printout of the total casual time registered and the amount in lump sum dollars that it will cost you to convert this time to creditable service. You also have the option to make payments.

Hope this helps.

Gene Stone
Carrier, West Omaha

GENERAL MEETING MINUTES

February 1, 2008

Meeting called to order at 6:00 pm by Pres. Whitmarsh.

Pledge of Allegiance

Roll Call: Motion to excuse Lisa Mason, out of town, by T. Farrell/T. Sheets; Chuck Walls, SL, by RJ Riggs/D. Graeve; Bill Ruyf, AL, by J. Liebsack/K. Jensen; all motions passed. Steward Training (Jan 31): Motion to excuse Jeremy

Liebsack, Carrier Academy assignment, training in St. Louis, by RJ Riggs/D. Schulte; motion passed.

Minutes of previous meeting read by B. Martens. No additions or deletions.

Motion to approve by J. Liebsack/D. Schulte; motion passed.

Reading of Communications, Notices, Bills, Etc:

1. Building Trades Union Chili Feed and Cookoff – Saturday, March 8, 4:30-7:30.

2. Senator Tom White – NE Legislature – Fund Raiser.

OWCP – E. Vandenberg: Problems with documentation; the injured employee not getting copy of CA-1. Make sure you document everything.

HBR – T. Galus: Said for carriers not to say, “Galus said not to pay” when calling hospitals or the NALC Health Insurance. Check with NALC for a cheaper medicine than the one that the doctor prescribes.

ACTIVITIES - A. Malena: Branch Family Picnic, August 17 at Cooper Farms. Cost for rental is \$200.00.

LEGISLATION – RJ Riggs: (1) Attending AFL-CIO convention training. (2) Saturday, February 9 is the Democratic Caucus; try to participate in some way. Caucus training February 2 and February 6. Steve Hedgecock spoke about legislation in discussion about some type of reimbursement of sick leave for FERS employees upon retirement.

COLCPE – J. Liebsack: This month is National Recognition month for COLCPE donations in the Postal Record.

Leadership Academy – J. Liebsack: Attended more training in St. Louis. Attended an intervention at a station in St. Louis – learned much.

OFOL: J. Mickeliunas attended; B. Stevens read his notes. OFOL executive board is selecting candidates for endorsement by the membership for Legislative and County offices. B. Stevens spoke on the fair share bill being implemented again this year – LB96.

ROUTE ADJUSTMENTS – D. Whitmarsh: West Omaha – Zone 24 in progress; then Millard.

AUDIT – J. Polson: All reports balanced. Issued a “Thank You” to K. Staack for helping.

NEW BUSINESS:

*New members: Six new TEs: Jeremy Wattles, WO; Brandi Gaylord, NW; Shane Gould, Millard; Robert Bentley, Elmwood; Charles Post, Papillion; Lawrence Langdon, Benson. Motion to set the by-laws aside and accept on date of application by R. Lichtenberg/S. Hayden; motion passed.

(Gen. Meeting Minutes Cont'd)

*There were also three more TEs who started but attended the Carrier Academy in Lincoln this week. They are Christian Fairbanks, SO; John Jones, Ames; Edna McCool, Stoneyridge. Pres. Whitmarsh spoke on what the TE can and cannot do, what their benefits in the contract are; 360 day terms; cannot bid on opts or hold downs, AL only – no SL.

*NE Democratic Caucus – February 9. Mock Caucus Sessions: Saturday, February 2 at 10:00 am and Wednesday, February 6 at 5:00 pm – Both at the IBEW Hall – 89th and L – For Union members and their families only; will last 30-40 minutes. Attendance not required to participate February 9.

*State and National Convention Delegates – Pres. Whitmarsh requested an update of those who will be attending both conventions.

*St. Louis Rap Session – The cutoff for rooms was Jan. 22.

*Compensation for Rap Session – Pres. Whitmarsh spoke on the amount in the training fund and the number of participants this year and the motion to pay \$300.00 and take the difference out of the general fund. The Executive Board recommended this. She spoke on the Board's resolve to enforce the by-laws on those who can attend training in the future. Motion to take the difference out of the general fund by RJ Riggs/B. Foye. Motion passed.

*By-Law Committee: Vice President Stevens, Chairperson; E. Vandenberg; C. Walls; S. Hayden; E. Lisiecki.

*Delegates to OFOL: Pres. Whitmarsh, Recording Secretary Martens, E. Lisiecki, E. Vandenberg, J. Liebsack, C. Walls, VP Stevens as alternate for Pres. Whitmarsh.

*State Convention 2009: Branch 5 Omaha is responsible for hosting this event. K. Staack asked what the budget from the State would be. Volunteers to help were K. Staack, Chair; J. Liebsack; RJ Riggs; J. Bass; T. Sheets; S. Hayden.

*Motion made to pay K. Staack \$25.00 stipend for helping with the audit by B. Stevens/R. Lichtenberg. Motion passed.

*Motion to select the following hotels as Branch 5 preferences for the National Convention: #15 Westin Copley Square, #3 Copley Square Hotel, and #8 Lenox Hotel by K. Staack/J. Polson. Motion passed.

*R. Lichtenberg spoke on the Neighborhood Credit Union – formerly Post Office Credit Union – has

moved from 90th and Bedford to 120th and Blondo February 4, 2008. Ron asked if anyone wanted to volunteer to take an executive position there.

*Motion to allow Boy Scouts to attend the General Meeting to qualify for merit badges by B. Stevens/D. Graeve.

*Pres. Whitmarsh introduced Ron Holifield as the new Alternate Steward at Stoneyridge Station.

*J. Ricceri is extremely ill – keep him in our prayers.

*50/50 Convention Raffle - \$39.50 was collected. Winner was E. Vandenberg.

January Financial Reports:

Motion by RJ Riggs/B. Paulson to accept Fin. Sec. Report; by J. Liebsack/T. Farrell to accept Balance Sheet; by B. Stevens/D. Lee to accept Profit and Loss; by E. Vandenberg/J. Liebsack to accept General Ledger; and motions passed.

*Motion to adjourn by S. Hedgecock/H. Bledsoe; motion passed.

Meeting adjourned at 7:15 pm

Respectfully Submitted by,

**Bob Martens,
Recording Secretary**

GRIEVANCES SETTLED IN January 2008

LOW = Letter of Warning, **OT** = Overtime,
WA = Work Assignment, **OTDL** = Overtime
Desired List,

STATION: Violation or Discipline = Resolution
(Steward / Formal A / Step B / Arbitration)

AMES: LOW – Failure to Work in a Safe Manner –
Slip, Trip and Fall = Reduced to job discussion and
extreme weather walking conditions (Foye);

LOW – Unacceptable Performance – Vehicle
Accident/Late Reporting = Reduced to 6 mos from
the date of accident if no further discipline during
this period (Foye);

7 Day Suspension – Absent Without Leave – AWOL
= Reduced to a 9 mo LOW from date of issue (Foye)

BENSON: ART 41 – Four Carriers Forced Off
Their Bid Assignments = Pay carriers each 50% of
the BHR for 8 hrs each. Cease and desist future
occurrences (Liebsack);

(Settled Grievances Cont'd)

BENSON: ART 41 – Forced Carrier Off His Opted Assignment – Pay carrier 50% of BHR for 8 hrs that he was guaranteed for his opt. Cease and desist future occurrences (Liefsack)

MILLARD: 7 Day Suspension – Unacceptable Performance/Failure to Work in a Safe Manner – Vehicle Accident = Reduced to 1 yr (Ognissanti)

NORTHWEST: LOW – Unacceptable Performance – Vehicle Accident/Late Reporting = Reduced to 1 yr pending no further discipline (Stevens);

ART 11 – Carrier (1) Observing Holiday Was Forced in Prior to Forcing in Carriers on SDO; SDO Carrier (2) Forced to Work After Scheduled Time for Posting = Carrier (1) will be paid an additional 8 hrs at BHR; Carrier (2) will be paid an additional 50% due to being scheduled to work his SDO after the required scheduling time. (Stevens);

ART 7 – City Carriers Cross Craft to Rural on Two Separate Occasions = On first occasion – pay carrier 8 hrs at 50% BHR; on second occasion pay each of two carriers 2hrs at 50% BHR (Stevens);

ART 7 – City Carriers Working in the Rural Craft = Pay the following carriers for the hours listed: carrier (1) .13 hrs at BHR, .79 hrs OT; carrier (2) .25 hrs at BHR, .96 hrs at OT; carrier (3) .23 hrs at BHR, .86 hrs OT; carrier (4) .25 hrs BHR, .91 hrs OT; carrier (5) .17 hrs BHR, .89 hrs OT; carrier (6) .16 hrs BHR, 1.58 hrs OT; carrier (7) .31 hrs BHR, .85 hrs OT; carrier (8) 4.0 hrs BHR, .66 hrs OT; carrier (9) .55 hrs OT; carrier (10) .59 hrs OT, .23 hrs POT; carrier (11) 4.0 hrs OT, .18 hrs POT (Stevens)

Q4, 2007 – OTDL Equitability = Start the following two carriers in Q1, 2008 with the negative hrs listed: carrier (1) –2.81 hrs; carrier (2) –2.62 hrs (Stevens)

PAPILLION: Notice of Removal – Unacceptable Conduct = Reinstated without back pay or benefits, but without loss of seniority (Stevens/Stevens/Dilts)

PIERCE: LOW – Unacceptable Performance – Rear Door on Vehicle Opened – Parcels Fell Out = Reduced to 6 mos (Thorne);

LOW – Failure to Work in a Safe Manner / Failure to Immediately Report and Accident = Reduced to 1 yr (Thorne);

ART8, 41.1.B.4 and ELM 434.6 When Grievant Worked Out of Schedule on a Holiday = No violation

when scheduled to work holiday schedule that was not his normal work schedule (Thorne/Stevens/Step B)

SOUTH OMAHA: 7 Day Suspension – Failure to Work in a Safe Manner – Slip, Trip and Fall = Rescinded and purged from all personnel records due to procedural error (Walls)

STONEYRIDGE: ART 13, LMOU – Failure to Pay Grievant for Guaranteed Hours While on Limited Duty = Pay grievant 18.24 hrs at BHR for hours not scheduled (Hedgecock)

WEST OMAHA: LOW – Unacceptable Performance – Zero Bundle – Failure to Deposit Collection Mail = Reduced to 6 mos from date of decision; if no further disciplinary action initiated during this period (Staack/Stevens/Step B)

IN MEMORIAM

Our sincere sympathies go out to retiree **Frank Zambuto** in the loss of his wife Eleanor, also to the family of **George Weise**, 50-year retiree, who recently passed away.

NON MEMBER LISTING

We wish to extend them an invitation to join Branch 5 in the efforts to preserve and secure the future rights of all letter carriers. It is so very important that we all join together in that fight. We all enjoy the benefits, lets all support each other.

AMES: **Tammy Swanson***, **Carrie Hammers***;
BOYSTOWN: **Shelly Flowers**, **Jolene Manion***;
ELMWOOD: **Don Vokal**, **David Brester**;
NORTHWEST: **Rich Hansen**; PIERCE: **Ron Beber***, **Angela Perez**; PLATTSMOUTH: **George Johnson**; SADDLE CREEK: **Matt Bruce**, **Mike Wertz***, **Dan Greenfield***; SOUTH OMAHA: **Ron Aubrey***, **Jannette Bogler**; WEST OMAHA: **Tim Zabawa***

*Indicates a previously cancelled member

**Branch 5
Volleyball Tournament
Saturday
April 5, 2008
6:00 pm**

at
**Camelot Community Center
9270 Cady Avenue
Omaha, NE 68134**

**Each team shall consist of 6 members
(3 women and 3 men)
Open to Union Members, Family & Friends
(Non-Union Craft Members Excluded)**

**Members – Free
Family & Friends - \$10.00
Join us for pizza, beer & pop!!!**

And
**Have fun playing volleyball or cards!
Sign up your team below:**

AUXILIARY #78 NEWS

I want to thank all the members of Auxiliary 78 for their support during the past few years of my presidency. They elected a rookie who knew nothing about the organization, put up with all my mistakes, helped me to learn the things I should have known, and taught me what a caring group of people they all are. They awarded me a President's Pin at our last meeting, which meant a great deal to me. I will wear it proudly. When I said that I wished that my Father could have seen it, they all assured me that he did. Thank you all so much.

We are really missing Elinor at our meetings, as she is our chapter chaplain, but we imposed on Trevor, Bonnie Looman's grandson, at this meeting and he read our closing prayer. He did a great job for us. Thank you, Trevor!

We decided on the delegates for the State Convention at the meeting, but if anyone else would like to volunteer, let me know. We always need anyone with an interest in the organization.

We had a wonderful dinner, as usual, of pork chops and all the extras that our members bring. If you ever leave hungry from one of our meetings, you were probably at the wrong meeting. Our food is always great!

At the next meeting we will decide on which charitable contributions will be made for the year, so come with your suggestions. Our dinner will be pizza next month and we will be prepared for lent, so don't worry about that. Please, come join us.

**Melinda Carl
President, Auxiliary 78**

**60 YEAR
GOLD CARD MEMBERS**

Kielian, John	Morrison, Dean
Kotlarz, Stanley	Redfield, Gene
Krecklow, Earl	

**50 YEAR
GOLD CARD MEMBERS**

Adam, Ed	Kaster, Stanley
Alvarez, Trino	Kelley, Franklin
Bang Jr., George	Kobus, Ed
Baratta, Anthony	Kolc, Frank
Becerra, Herbert	Kunkle, Eugene
Begley, Daniel	Leo, Thomas
Beherns, Robert	Luksa, Robert
Booher, Warren	Machian, John
Bouc, Donald	Magistretti, Albert
Branson, LeRoy	Melocco, Albert
Brice, John	Morris, Bernard
Christensen, Harry	Norton, Robert
Christensen, Richard	Novak, William
Daemon Jr., Alex	Petersen, Charles
Domayer, Robert	Reyneck, Richard
Eymann, George	Ritzdorf, Robert
Eymann, Richard	Roberts, Richard
Goldsborough, Fred	Sizemore, Harold
Halbrook, Paul	Staley, Walter
Hilpipre, Donald	Stanislaus, Melvin
Hula, Carl	Stillmock, Robert
Humphrey, Richard	Stratton, Glenn
Hupka, Gerald	Thorson, Ronald
Incontro, Frank	Yost, Robert
Jacobsen, Dean	Zambuto, Frank
Janousek, William	Zemula, Leo

**NALC BRANCH 5
10342 ELLISON CIRCLE
OMAHA, NEBRASKA 68134-1024**

**NON PROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
OMAHA, NE.
PERMIT NO. 5**

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

DATES TO REMEMBER

February 18, 2008	President's Day – Holiday
February 23-24, 2008	Region 5 Rap Session – Crowne Plaza St. Louis – Downtown – Reservations – 800-925-1395 / 314-621-8200 - \$93.00 + tax
February 28, 2008	Steward Training – 5:00 pm – 10342 Ellison Circle
March 7, 2008	Executive Board Meeting – 5:00 pm General Meeting & Auxiliary Meeting – 6:00 pm Great Plains Paralyzed Veterans Assoc. – 7612 Maple Street
March 10, 2008	Retiree's Breakfast – Petrow's, 60th and Center – 8:00 am
April 5, 2008	Volleyball Tournament – Camelot Community Center
April 18-20, 2008	NE State Convention – Norfolk Lodge & Suites, 4200 W. Norfolk Ave, Norfolk, NE - \$60 -\$70 - 1-888-355-0553
July 21-25, 2008	NALC National Convention – Boston, MA
August 17, 2008	Branch 5 Picnic – Cooper Farms

