

# GATE CITY NEWS



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MAY 2008

ISSUE 05

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



NALC BRANCH 5  
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**Treasurer** – Laura Jacobberger – 451-2643  
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**Comp. Officer** – Ed Vandenberg – 551-0222;  
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**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** – Steve Demaray – 339-4438  
**Pierce** – Garry Thorne – 348-2544  
**Plattsmouth** – Donna Whitmarsh – 345-0424  
**Ralston** – Brandon Jordan – 331-5739  
**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 10<sup>th</sup> 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.

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

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

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**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

### PRESIDENT'S LEAVE RECORD As Of April 11, 2008

Hours Available	Hours Used
A/L 136	A/L 72
S/L 32	S/L 0

## 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

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## **PRESIDENT'S STATION VISITS MAY 2008**

- 6 - Ames / Florence
  - 8 - Benson / Northwest
  - 13 - Saddle Creek / Elmwood
  - 15 - West Omaha / Boystown
  - 20 - Stoneyridge / Millard
  - 22 - Pierce / South Omaha
  - 28 - Papillion / Ralston
  - 29 - Ashland / Plattsmouth
- 

## **PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

As I start to write this, the fallout of the doom and gloom of the meetings management held last week has been hitting the stations. I have been hearing that the auxiliary routes are going to be done away with by making the routes around them absorb them, that routes are going to be collapsed and absorbed by the routes around them, etc. I have been hearing of conversations taking place between stewards and managers about how they can accomplish this. Let me state this loud and clear, at the present time we have a minor agreement in Omaha and that is the only way adjustments will be made. Of course management can always force a full blown count and inspection on any zone, but right now the National levels are working on developing a system for inspecting routes that I have heard is similar to what our minor process is.

Our State Convention will be held in Norfolk in a few days. Hopefully some of these issues will be addressed there. We always have some pretty intensive training on the latest issues.

Also our Labor-Management meeting will be held this week and hopefully we will hear first-hand what management is proposing. We will not accept

any modifications to our minor agreement to the detriment of the carriers.

Another hot topic has been the issuing of discipline for unacceptable attendance. Yes, our sick leave is a benefit that has been negotiated but the abuse of it brings to light that management has a right to expect us to be regular in attendance. Arbitrators do not rule in our favor when sick leave usage is abused. Now, I am not saying not to use your sick leave if you are sick – that is exactly what it is intended for. But be prepared to support it with medical documentation. If you have a condition that requires you to frequently call in sick, you really need to be protected by FMLA. The Union has a simplified form that your doctor can fill out. Ask your steward for a form if you have the need.

I attended the informational meeting on the roll out of Phase 2 of the National Reassessment Process (NRP) given by the Western Area. This process has been rolled out in our District. An update has been done to list employees who have reached MMI and the non-MMI employees on limited duty. Once the Local Commuting Area (LCA) has been determined for the installation, every reasonable effort must be made to identify potential rehabilitation modified positions for all MMI less than one-year employees within the LCA (within the district boundaries) following the ELM 546.142 procedures. Following that, the same procedure will occur for all MMI greater than one-year employees within the LCA.

I want to remind everyone that is on limited duty that when any interactive interviews are conducted, you can have union representation. I would strongly suggest that you notify the union immediately if you receive any correspondence about a rehabilitation offer.

The Volleyball Tournament was a success. Members and their guests played volleyball, games and cards. It really was a relaxing and enjoyable evening, at least for those of us who didn't play volleyball! From what I've heard, there were quite a few volleyball players that were a little sore the next day! There will be pictures from that evening on Branch 5's web site shortly.  
(President's Report Cont'd)

One of the teams from Northwest prevailed when they ousted Benson in the last match. The members of the winning team were Jill Meister,

Jerrad Buller, Jeanne and Joe Tourek, and Dan and Nicki Lapour. Congratulations Northwest!

Have you checked out Branch 5's web site? Whether you are newly hired or a long time steward, this should be the first place to go for answers to your questions. All of the handbooks and manuals are available. All grievance forms are available. There is a direct link to the National web site. Branch 5's web site address is [www.nalcbranch5.com](http://www.nalcbranch5.com).

Don't forget, the annual NALC Food Drive will be May 10. We need volunteers to help at the Food Bank. A sign-up sheet will be available at the next General meeting or you can call the office. For those of you that have not helped at the Food Bank, you will find the work quite rewarding. We all come together for a few hours to help so many people. We are counting on *you* to help this year.

I always try to attend the retiree's breakfast and was pleased to see some new faces there this month. If you are retired, try to join them for their breakfast at Petrow's. It is really a good way to keep in contact and share some stories about the good ole' days!

Happy Spring!

**Donna Whitmarsh**  
**President, Branch 5**

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## **VICE PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

The State Convention in Norfolk, Nebraska is upon us. I hope to see many of you there. This is a time for all the members of our Association to gather and reaffirm our direction and goals. We usually hear from political candidates and hold training that benefits our membership.

This year we have a heavy schedule of candidates due to the election cycle. Our National Officer this year will be George Mignosi, Assistant Secretary Treasurer of the National Association of Letter Carriers.

I am asking again, for those of you interested in politics to volunteer for the Carrier Corps. This is a group of volunteers I will call on when the campaigns begin to heat up. I will have them man phone banks, distribute leaflets, go door to door, or help to distribute signs. There are many duties we

can put a volunteer to do something they do not wish to do, and I want it to be a fun experience.

I also want to stress again the importance of COLCPE, our political fund. Hard as it may be for many of you to embrace this fact, many in Washington carry influence on what happens with the Postal Service. I have personally seen this in action on the Hill. An example of this was when I called Senator Nelson's office to follow up on a recent lobby trip I had returned from. His legislative assistant told me that Postmaster Potter had been in his office the day before. What was he talking to our Senator about? Outsourcing! This debate took place in regard to Senator Harkins bill S1457 to prohibit outsourcing. That's right, I had been in that same office a few days before pushing for the Senator to support that bill, and the Postmaster of the United States literally almost walked in behind me to refute what I had stated in support of that bill.

It's a bitter pill for many of us, but it's all about the politics, and the members of Congress must be influenced, and that influence is enhanced by our COLCPE fund. Your dues do not go for this purpose, this is a separate fund, an important tool for the NALC to have that influence on the Hill. We recently had a generous Contract ratified, while at the same time, members of this same community stand on picket lines, locked out, without paychecks, while their company attempts to break their union. Griffin Pipe, right across the river. It's real, and I do not think a dollar or two is asking for too much to protect the more than ample benefits you enjoy. Those benefits were not given to the NALC on a platter; they were fought for.

As far as the Postal Service? They want to outsource your job. HR282, a House resolution to stand against outsourcing got the attention of the Board of Governors and the Postmaster. Senate Bill 1457 scared them back to the bargaining table, and a signed Contract followed.

It's all about the Politics. Please contribute to COLCPE.

Simper Fi  
**Billy Ray Stevens**  
**Vice President, Branch 5**

## **COMPENSATION OFFICER REPORT**

I want to remind everyone how important it is to keep copies of all records in your claims. We usually need copies of CA-17's and CA-2's the most. We have recently had success on three appeals and one claim that we didn't need to appeal.

When the district office writes to you and requests additional information, make sure you respond immediately. Sometimes they will give you a number of days to respond. If you do not respond or you respond to late, your claim will be denied. Once again, keep copies of all correspondence you have with the district office. We have won appeals and claims because we were able to fax copies of claims that were dated within the time limits specified.

The longer it takes to adjudicate your claim, the more likely it is your claim will be approved. Never discard any information from your file. You may think your OWCP file is not important anymore if you win. If you intend to request a scheduled award and/or LWOP or leave buy back, you will need all of your documentation. I have worked on files that go back to 1998 recently. We have some good documentation that we are looking at. Please remember to keep copies of everything.

It also helps to keep information in an order of sequence. Start with the date of the incident and keep records in order from that date.

**Ed Vandenberg**  
**OWCP Officer, Branch 5**

**Have you checked out  
Branch 5's web site???**  
**[www.nalcbranch5.com](http://www.nalcbranch5.com)**

## **HEALTH BENEFITS REPRESENTATIVE REPORT**

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

This month I would like to talk to you about "staying well."

Low thyroid activity can lead to heart problems. By some estimates, 10 to 15 percent of middle aged and older individuals have "sub-clinical" hypothyroidism. Over all age groups, 4% of the U.S. population is affected. The term sub-clinical means that there are no obvious symptoms, though

some people may have fatigue, depression, dry skin, cold intolerance, weight gain, memory loss, and other hypothyroidism symptoms.

Two new studies published in the "Archives of Internal Medicine" show that people with low thyroid activity, even at the sub-clinical level, are at a higher risk for heart disease. This is another reason to have a thyroid test, especially if you are older and even more so if you are a woman. A simple blood test can show the thyroid activity level.

Three days before I had my heart attack, I had a problem when I went to make a parcel delivery. The next morning I woke up with the worst case of heartburn that I ever had; but the pain was in my back, not my chest. As it turned out, it was the artery in the back of my heart that was 90% clogged. So, don't ever think that it is just a little heartburn. It could be the beginning of a full "Big Boy" heart attack.

Be careful!

(Some information taken from the NALC Health Benefits Report)

**Tom Galus**  
**Health Benefits Representative, Branch 5**

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## **RECOGNIZING A STROKE**

Thank God for the sense to remember the "3" steps, **STR**. Read and Learn!

Sometimes symptoms of a stroke are difficult to identify. Unfortunately, the lack of awareness spells disaster. The stroke victim may suffer severe brain damage when people nearby fail to recognize the symptoms of a stroke.

Now doctors say a bystander can recognize a stroke by asking three simple questions:

**S** – Ask the individual to **SMILE**.

**T** – Ask the person to **TALK and SPEAK A SIMPLE SENTENCE** (Coherently, i.e., It is sunny out today.)

**R** – Ask him or her to **RAISE BOTH ARMS**.

If he or she has trouble with **ANY ONE** of these tasks, call 911 immediately and describe the symptoms to the dispatcher.

Another 'sign' of a stroke is this: Ask the person to 'stick' out his tongue. If the tongue is (Recognizing a Stroke Cont'd) 'crooked'; if it goes to one side or the other - that is also an indication of a stroke.

This article was sent to me from a friend and I thought it was worth repeating here.

**Donna Whitmarsh**  
**President, Branch 5**

## NEW RETIREE

Congratulations to **Roy McCoy**, Elmwood, upon his recent retirement.

## DIRECTOR OF RETIREES

### FERS Employees:

What survivor benefits do eligible spouses or former spouses of deceased employees receive under FERS?

In 2006, eligible spouses or former spouses received:

- A lump-sum payment of the higher of: ½ the deceased employee’s annual basic salary or ½ the deceased employee’s “high 3” average salary; plus
- A lump-sum payment of the higher of: ½ the Deceased employee’s annual basic salary or ½ the deceased employee’s “high 3” average salary; plus
- Any Social Security and Thrift Savings Plan survivor benefits that may be payable.

In addition, if the deceased employee had at least 10 years of creditable civilian service, the surviving spouse will also qualify for:

- A survivor annuity worth 50 percent of the employee’s accrued FERS annuity benefit.

### CSRS Employees:

Here is a question for you.

- How many types of annuities are there? (See answer on page 14.)

The Post Office conceives too many odd inventions for getting things done but it can think of nothing to do once it gets there.

Remember, some people only know what their superiors tell them, and that is their only alibi for ignorance.

**Dave Looman**  
**Director of Retirees, Branch 5**

## LEGISLATIVE REPORT

Brothers and Sisters of Branch 5,

I am asking for your help. If you are interested in working full time for a Campaign in the upcoming election, please let me know. This process is called a release. You would be given a job in a particular Campaign, which will be assigned for a period of one month or possibly two, or three if necessary. You will be compensated weekly from the NALC COLPE fund, not from union dues. You may be given on a leave without pay status, but still be compensated for your time and efforts by the NALC, it is possible that some campaigns may require over 40 hours per week however you will only be paid for the 40 hours that you devote. Overtime will not be compensated for these assignments. Currently, there are no new political updates to report on. I will keep you informed on these developments as they occur.

Respectfully,

**R.J. Riggs**  
**CDL, Legislative District**

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## COLCPE

Listed below is a list of excuses on why not to give to COLCPE, followed by the rebuttals on why to give. Hopefully, this will help educate more members on why they should give versus why they shouldn’t. Remember, COLCPE is here to protect our jobs from the very people that are trying to get rid of them, and I’m not just talking about management.

1. **I already have my 2 allotments taken out of my paycheck.** Remember, with our new contract, we are allowed a third allotment.
2. **The NALC only supports Democrats.** This is completely false! The NALC contributes to candidates that support issues that relate to the NALC’s favor, whether they are Republican, Democrat, or Independent.
3. **COLCPE is ineffective and the money isn’t put to use in ways that affect me.** Wrong again! The NALC has conquered many schemes that would privatize the Postal Service. They have also stopped different methods of contracting out our jobs. (COLCPE Cont’d)
4. **How do I know that my money isn’t being sent to candidates who don’t support other issues?**

Again, COLCPE is only used to support NALC issues (our jobs). No other issues are taken into consideration.

**5. I already pay union dues, why don't they just take them out of that?** While this would work great, it is ILLEGAL. Unions cannot use dues money to pay for political support.

**6. I can't afford to give enough money to make a difference.** This is a horrible excuse. Without the union, how much do you think the USPS would be paying you? Remember, we receive 2 COLA increases a year and a contractual increase every year. It's not like you'll even notice a couple of dollars out of every paycheck.

Also, I will be running a COLCPE kiosk at the Nebraska State Convention. If you aren't already a contributor, please stop by and get signed up. I will have all of your information at hand and be more than willing to help with the process.

Yours in Unionism,

**Jeremy Liebsack**  
**COLCPE Coordinator**

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## **NBA REPORT**

At the Executive Council meeting last month, we discussed and debated numerous issues of importance to all of us as letter carriers and working men and women. One issue, in particular, which drives the confrontational atmosphere on the workroom floor, is the proper evaluation and adjustment of our routes. I am pleased to report that progress has been made on this front at the test sites under the auspices of the Alternate Route Evaluation Process Memorandum of Understanding. The National Task Force is now looking for additional pilot sites to further develop and refine a process which would be less stressful, less expensive and fairer to all parties concerned than current M-39 procedures. Of course, it is much too early to be breaking out the champagne. This is a difficult issue, and it will take a considerable period of time to achieve an acceptable resolution; but, at least, it is a step in the right direction.

As I am sure you are aware, the economy is not very healthy, and appears to be heading toward a recession. (If it isn't already there!) That fact has been wreaking havoc on two of NALC's main goals: strengthening the Postal Service and improving the

financial well being of the middle class. Given the extent of the downturn, many businesses are cutting back on their advertising and mailing budgets. As a result, mail volumes are dropping, and the Postal Service is experiencing an extremely challenging economic and financial situation. In the private sector, workers are being laid off and/or having their wages and benefits cut. In fact, NALC has been unique in our ability to negotiate continuing increases in wages and benefits in the current recessionary cycle.

We will need to redouble our efforts on the legislative front if we hope to successfully weather the storm. DO NOT MAIL initiatives, which would siphon off even more volume, must be derailed; while VOTE BY MAIL legislation, which would raise revenue and empower the citizenry, must be encouraged. Strengthening the middle class requires passage of the Employer Free Choice Act. Results from recent polls show that 59% of American workers would join a union if given the opportunity. Passage of this law would provide them with that chance. This makes it even more imperative that we elect strong, worker-friendly majorities in Congress and a worker-friendly president to achieve those goals. Remember that, when you enter the polling booth in November.

Also, at the recent Council Meeting, Jim Williams, Jim Korolowicz and Ralph Goldstein provided the NBAs some insight into the philosophy and specific lesson plans associated with the Leadership Academy. I was very impressed with the quality of the program, and the character and caliber of the instructors. The Academy represents a sincere and amazingly successful effort to prepare the next generation for leadership roles in the NALC, at the local, state and national levels. Not only do the students learn the skills to handle grievances, OWCP issues, fiduciary responsibilities and other technical aspects of the job; but they are also exposed to less tangible qualities of leadership: perspective, compassion, commitment, understanding and integrity. I know, from personal experience, the impact that the Academy can have on its students. The graduates in Region 5 have already taken on additional responsibilities and leadership roles in their respective branches, to the benefit of their (NBA Report Cont'd)

members. Plans are afoot to open up the application process for the 2009 Leadership Academy during this

coming summer. One of the most important roles of any leader is to mentor the next generation, thereby ensuring the continuity of strong, effective representation in the years ahead. The Leadership Academy provides a unique opportunity to accomplish that goal. I strongly recommend that branches encourage their up and coming stewards and activists to apply.

In response to management's abdication of their responsibilities in this area, we have been conducting retirement seminars at the various conventions and training sessions throughout the region. These were so well received that we decided to take the "show" on the road, and give rank and file letter carriers, at various stages in their careers, an opportunity to attend and interact. I want to thank Branch 126 President Cyndi Kusk for hosting one such seminar for several branches in eastern Iowa. And I want to encourage any branch which would like to host such a training session for their members, or in conjunction with the members of other branches as well, to contact the regional office. Retirement planning is a complex issue, under the best of circumstances. The least any employer can do for a 30+year employee is afford them face-to-face counseling, to help them understand their options and give them some peace of mind in the decision-making process. Apparently, the Postal Service no longer feels such an approach is necessary. Given all the problems we are experiencing with Shared Services, in this and every other arena, we do! Give us a call.

**Mike Weir**  
**Region 5 NBA**

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## **STEWARD'S CORNER**

Are you guilty of using "Unauthorized Overtime"? If you are, it can bite you in the butt.

If you are using any overtime without management's approval, management has the right to disapprove the overtime, and in certain cases, not pay you for the overtime. To avoid any problems, read and heed the following and, be safe and professional in your daily duties.

When the supervisor comes around in the morning - that should be the time to determine the days workload. (Estimated overtime needed or available undertime). Although anything can cause a

change to your estimate, you must properly notify management as soon as possible for instructions. If you are on the street, call in for instructions. If you are still in the office, change your 3996 and make sure a supervisor knows it, so he/she can give you instructions.

Remember, the Overtime/Undertime is just an estimate and you, as the carrier on the route, is the only person that has to live by that estimate or change it. The computer is only a tool management uses to make their own estimate of your availability.

NALC does NOT recognize Reference Volume, DOIS, DUVERS, POST or any computer program. NALC does recognize the City Carrier's ability and right to render their own estimate, and if necessary, request a 3996 each day.

Sure, management has a right to challenge your estimate, but they DON'T have a right to intimidate or harass. Give an honest estimate with you doing your assignment in a safe and professional manner. If you have downtime, give it to them. If there's a disagreement over the amount of overtime/undertime, stick to your guns. If you can't settle the disagreement, request your shop steward and make the appropriate notations on your 3996.

Note: If you are on "Own Assignment", or are on no list at all, and are given something to do in undertime, make sure you DO NOT use any overtime that day. If you are not going to make it back in 8 hours, CALL IN for instructions. If you are instructed to keep going and continue into Overtime, you've just been MANDATED and a grievance may exist, so be sure to NOTIFY YOUR SHOP STEWARD as soon as possible.

If your OVERTIME is authorized, "YOU" won't have a problem.

**Donna Whitmarsh**  
**President, Branch 5**



## **TALK WITH A TRUSTEE**

Spring is FINALLY here. I think many carriers, myself included, are glad this long overdue

season is here. The Trustees are meeting together in a couple days and we are going to look over the Jan-March financial books. Also, coming up is the State Convention in Norfolk.

Now on to the long awaited street names.

Lets finish off the letter “B” and start with letter “C”.

**Boyd St.** - Ireland-born James E. Boyd, came to Omaha as a carpenter, but became a leading businessman, politician and patron of the arts. He was an organizer and president of the Omaha and Northwestern Railroad and the Central National Bank. Politically, he was a member of the state constitutional conventions, was twice mayor of Omaha in the 1880s, and was elected governor of Nebraska in 1890. His election as governor was contested on the grounds he was not a citizen, and it took a U.S. Supreme Court decision to resolve the issue in his favor. (Boyd vs. Thayer.) He built two opera houses in Omaha to enrich its cultural life.

**Burdette St.** Robert Burdette, 1880s preacher and lecturer, wrote that “There are two days of the week which I never worry about: one is yesterday and the other is tomorrow.”

**Burt St.** - Newly appointed first territorial governor of Nebraska, Francis Burt, arrived in Bellevue, Nebraska on October 6, 1854. He died a few days later on October 18, 1854, only forty-five years old.

**Caldwell St.** - Smith Samuel Caldwell arrived in Omaha in 1859, going on to become a leading figure in Omaha’s financial affairs. He created a firm that later merged with the United States National Bank, was an incorporator and president of the Southwestern Railroad Company, a participant in the building of the Grand Central Hotel, and a founding member of Omaha’s Circulating Library. He served as mayor in 1871.

**California St.** - California Street is said to have been so named because gold seekers, on their way to California, landed near the foot of this street upon crossing the Missouri River.

**Calhoun St.** National figure John C. Calhoun served as Vice President under both John Quincy Adams and Andrew Jackson. He also served as a Congressman, U.S. Senator, Secretary of War and Secretary of State. Fort Calhoun, Nebraska, is named in his honor

**Capitol St.** - The main approach to the old territorial capitol was a road leading from the

Missouri River to the Capitol building at the top of a hill — thus the name “Capitol Avenue.”

Be Union, Be Proud,

**James Polson  
Trustee, Branch 5**

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## GENERAL MEETING MINUTES April 4, 2008

Meeting called to order at 6:00 p.m. by President Whitmarsh.

Pledge of Allegiance

Moment of silence: George Bang, Jr., Gold Card Member

Roll Call:

Motion to excuse Nancy Waters, taxes, by L Jacobberger/E Vandenberg; Bob Foye, SL, by J Liebsack/S Hayden; Ron Holifield, family function, by T Farrell/S Hufford; all motions passed.

Steward Training:

Motion to excuse Bob Foye, SL, by J Liebsack/RJ Riggs; Ed Vandenberg, SL, by C Walls/J Liebsack; Bill Ruyf, AL, by L Jacobberger/D Graeve; all motions passed.

Customer Connect Business Development Team: Mike Koch, Jeanne Tourek, Debbie Schulz. M Koch, District Coordinator for Customer Connect, asked for carrier support. President Whitmarsh gave input on how the revenue generated by Customer Connect was instrumental in garnering a good contract for us. There was \$75,000 in new business by S Hayden at Boystown. D Schulz spoke about getting the feedback to the carriers. New stations that will begin participating in Customer Connect are South Omaha, Saddle Creek, Benson, and Ames.

Minutes of previous meeting read by: Recording Sec B Martens.

Additions or Deletions: none

Motion to approve by R Lichtenberg/G Krebs; motion passed.

Readings of communications:

1. NE State AFL-CIO Pancake Breakfast, April 27, 2008
2. Conference April 5, 2008, at UNO – Norman Hill, historic civil rights activist, etc.
3. Thank you from Karen Staack for retirement watch.
4. Thank you for bible from David Bandi.

## REPORTS:

OWCP: E Vandenberg expressed surprise about how well the telephone Oral Hearings went. OWCP allowed up to 30 more days to submit more documentation and he expressed the importance of gathering as much documentation as possible. He also spoke about the disappearance of light duty jobs. HBR: T Galus said that Rescue Squads go to the nearest hospital when transporting patients. Be prepared to pay around 20% of the cost incurred.

ACTIVITIES: B Martens spoke about trying to get as many members as possible to attend the volleyball tournament even if they don't have a full team. K Staack spoke about playing card games.

LEGISLATION: RJ Riggs spoke on recruiting people for working on legislative jobs, most likely in Nebraska. They will be paid from COLCPE money.

COLCPE: J Liebsack attended the AFL-CIO COPE Convention. The State Convention will be actively pushing COLCPE.

OFOL: President Whitmarsh and B. Martens attended the meeting, which mostly covered OFOL endorsement of candidates.

MINOR ROUTE ADJUSTMENTS: C Walls reported that there were no new adjustments at this time.

WEB SITE: C Walls is working on updating and putting new documentation and all Branch 5 forms on the website (nalbranch5.com)

AUDIT: The audit is scheduled for Tuesday, April 15, 2008 at 6:00 p.m.

## NEW BUSINESS:

1. 2008 Septemberfest Labor Day Parade, Monday Sept. 1, 2008 – Motion to participate in the parade was made by B Stevens/J Liebsack; motion passed. Motion by K Staack/J Bass to spend the same amount for candy as was spent in 2007; motion passed.

2. Branch 8 Golf Tournament – Motion by C Walls/S Hayden to sponsor a Hole at Hill Crest Country Club for \$360; motion passed.

3. Eleven new members – all TEs: Shawn Miller, Ames; Joseph Leiferman, Benson; John Warsocki, Benson; Tracy Brown, Boystown; Daren Kizlin, Elmwood; Anthony Miranda, Elmwood; Terry Hovorka, Papillion; Richard Finley, Ralston; Brandi Briggs, Ralston; Kelley Bartels, Saddle Creek; Angelique Bailey-Weber, Stoneyridge. Motion by R Lichtenberg/T Langfield to set by-laws aside and

accept their membership on date of application; motion passed.

4. Also two other TEs; one at South Omaha and one at Northwest, that were sent to Lincoln for carrier academy.

5. NRP meeting last Friday at District. Western Area representatives were here to explain the second phase of the reassessment process. Among those attending the Friday meeting were RAA Dan Pittman, President Whitmarsh and State President Stevens.

6. Handout for State Convention – President Whitmarsh and Vice President Stevens spoke on the Training Agenda.

7. Motion by C Walls/D Graeve for approval to pay for training on Friday for the following carriers: J Polson, R Polson, T Farrell, S Hayden, L Mason, J Lange, E Vandenberg, B Martens, J Liebsack, S Hedgecock, and L Jacobberger. Motions passed.

8. Reading of six proposed By-Law changes by Vice President B Stevens. Proposed By-Law change #2 was tabled at the Executive Meeting.

9. Hotel for the National Convention is the Lenox. The nightly fee is \$199.00. President Whitmarsh asked if there were any need for special accommodations such as allergy free rooms or rollaway beds/cots.

10. President Whitmarsh checked to see what delegates will be attending State Convention.

11. Steve Demaray was introduced as the new steward at Papillion.

12. President Whitmarsh addressed the issue of making sure that all stewards and alternate stewards are signed up for DRP training on May 1 and 2.

50/50 Convention Raffle Winner: Shane Hufford for \$36.50. \$73.00 was collected.

## March Financial Reports:

Motions to accept Fin. Sec Report by L Mason/E Vandenberg; to accept Balance Sheet by T Farrell/E Vandenberg; to table Profit and Loss by L Mason/J Liebsack; to accept General Ledger by K Staack/J Liebsack. There was discussion about dues income that is not all reported on the P & L. Motion by D Lee/R Lichtenberg to table the General Ledger since not all dues income was recorded. All motions passed.

(Gen. Meeting Minutes Cont'd)

Motion to adjourn by R Lichtenberg/J Liebsack; motion passed.

Meeting adjourned at 7:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by,  
**Bob Martens**  
**Recording Secretary**

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Our sincere sympathies are extended to **Bill Warren**, Northwest, in the loss of his mother Wilma Warren; to the family of **George Bang, Jr**, retiree, and to the family of **Ronald Walsh**, retiree. We also extend our condolences to **Mike Knoble**, Benson, whose father, Ron, passed away

## **GRIEVANCES SETTLED IN March 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 –  
Dog Bite = Reduced to 6 mos (Foye);  
ART 41.2.B.4 – Grievant Was Not Allowed to Work  
in The Opted Position = Mgm will cease and desist  
moving carriers off their opted assignment. They  
will be allowed to work the assignment as bid  
(Whitmarsh);

ART 8.8.D – TE Scheduled to Work – Upon Arrival,  
Sent Home = Pay grievant 4 hrs at BHR (Whitmarsh)

**BENSON:** ART 8.5 – OTDL Carrier Worked POT  
on a Work Assignment Carrier’s Route When the  
WA Carrier Was Available = Pay the WA carrier .25  
hrs at POT rate (Martens);

ART 8.5 – Q4, 2007 Equitability = Withdrawn  
without prejudice to our position in this or any other  
case (Martens/Martens/Pre-Arbitration);

LOW – Failure to Maintain Regular Attendance =  
LOW will be held in abeyance for 3 mos; if the  
absences during that period is acceptable, the LOW  
will be removed from the Grievant’s file; if not, the  
LOW will remain for 2 yrs (Martens);

ART 17.3 & 15 – Denial and Delaying Union  
Steward’s Request for Steward Time = When mgm  
must deny the request of the steward for union time  
they must jointly determine when the union time will  
be authorized. While in this instant case, mgm states  
the union representative was provided sufficient time  
to process the grievance, mgm should contact Ms.  
Whitmarsh if they believe the union is being  
unreasonable in the amount of time requested. The  
(Settled Grievances Cont’d)

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### **Branch 5 Steward Training March 27, 2008**

**In Attendance:**

**Benson:** Bob Martens

Jeremy Liebsack

**Boystown:** Sam Hayden

Randy Polson

**Elmwood:** Lisa Mason

**Northwest:** Bill Stevens

James Polson

**Papillion:** Steve Demaray

**Pierce Street:** Garry Thorne

**Ralston:** Brandon Jordan

**Saddle Creek:** Eli Lisiecki

**South Omaha:** Chuck Walls

Josh Lange

**Stoneyridge:** Steve Hedgecock

Ron Holifield

**West Omaha:** Mark Magistretti

**President:** Donna Whitmarsh

**Excused:**

**Ames:** Bob Foye, SL

**Elmwood:** Ed Vandenberg, SL

**Florence:** Bill Ruyf, AL

**IN MEMORIAM**

Local parties have held two labor/mgm meetings for the Benson Station addressing how the DRP will be administered and honored.(Martens/Martens/Step B); LOW – Unacceptable Attendance = LOW reduced to 1 yr, however after 6 mos the parties will review the file and if there are no AWOL violations, the LOW will be purged (Martens/Martens);

ART 8.5.G – Simultaneously Scheduled Non-OTDL Carriers to Work Off Their Scheduled Assignments Without First Maximizing the OTDL to 12 hours = Pay carrier (1) 1.7 hrs OT, .30 hrs POT; pay carriers (2, 3, 4, & 5) each .50 hrs at OT rate of pay (Martens)

**FLORENCE:** ART 8 – Carriers Worked Over 12 Hours in a Day = Pay the following carriers 50% of their BHR for the hours listed: carrier (1) .96 hrs; carrier (2) .86 hrs; carrier (3) .08 hrs (Ruyf)

**MILLARD:** LOW – Failure to Follow/Perform Duties in a Safe Manner = reduced to 6 mos (Stevens/Stevens/Step B)

**NORTHWEST:** ART 7 – City Carriers Worked in Rural Craft = Pay Carrier (1) 4.0 hrs BHR, .72 hrs OT; pay Carrier (2) 1.24 hrs OT; pay Carrier (3) 4.0 hrs BHR, 1.0 hrs OT (Stevens);

LOW – Failure to Work in a Safe Manner – Slip, Trip and Fall = Reduced to 3 mos (Stevens);

ART 1 – Supervisor Performing Craft Work – Took Mail to Carriers on the Street = Cease and desist (Stevens)

ART 41 – Supervisor Ordered Carrier to Leave Mail and Perform Auxiliary Assistance in Under-time = Mgm will cease and desist any further violations of a similar nature in the unit (Stevens)

**SADDLECREEK:** LOW – Failure to Perform Duties in a Safe Manner – Vehicle Accident = Reduced to 1 yr from date of accident (Lisiecki)

**SOUTH OMAHA:** LOW – Failure to Follow Instructions/Failure to Immediately Report an Accident/Failure to Work in a Safe Manner – Slip, Trip and Fall = LOW will be rescinded and purged from all personnel files (Walls)

LOW – Failure to Work in a Safe Manner – Slip, Trip and Fall = Reduced to a job discussion (Lange)

**STONEYRIDGE:** LOW – Failure to Work in a Safe Manner – Slip, Trip, and Fall = LOW reduced to job discussion – mgm failed to show safety rule grievant violated (Hedgecock/Walls/Step B);

ART 41 – Mgm Created Under-time on the Grievant’s Route = Mgm will cease and desist altering route adjustments, including bid, opted, assigned, or scheduled assignments (Hedgecock);

LOW – Failure to Work in a Safe Manner – Dog Bite = LOW will be reduced to 1 yr barring any continued animal altercations. Mgm will complete more street observations to help correct any deficiencies (Hedgecock)

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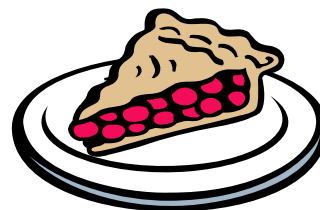
## AUXILIARY #78 NEWS

I had to be out of town during our April meeting so my trusted staff ran the meeting for me. I’m not even necessary, they can do everything without me. We have all been thinking about Ron Walsh, a retired carrier, and his wife Barb, one of our members, during his illness. Our prayers are with them. Also, retired carrier Joe Ricceri and his wife Elinor, also one of our members. We have missed them at our meetings and think of them all the time. I would also like to mention Jackie Branson who was in the hospital recently, we hope she is doing better and will be at our meetings again soon.

We are gearing up for the State Convention and really looking forward to it. Hope to see anyone there that can make it. We always have a great time. Please join us.

We had a great dinner as usual at the last meeting. It seems like everyone loves tacos. Next month we will be having fried chicken. Please join us if you can.

**Melinda Carl**  
President, Auxiliary







## NON-MEMBERS

The following are non-members of the NALC. We wish to extend them an invitation to join Branch 5 in the efforts to preserve and secure the future rights for 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.

We all received the COLA raise of \$458.00 in March. What reason is there not to join now? It was the Union that got us this raise.

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

(Director of Retirees Report Cont'd from pg. 5)

The answer is four types:

- 1) Annuity with survivor benefit to widow or widower;
- 2) Annuity without survivor benefit;
- 3) Annuity with survivor benefit to named person having an insurable interest;
- 4) Annuity to provide a former spouse or combination current/former spouse survivor annuity.

Is this confusing? Read next months article for further explanation

## NEW MEMBERS

We welcome the new members of Branch 5: **Shawn Miller**, Ames; **Joseph Leiferman**, Benson; **John Warsocki**, Benson; **Tracy Brown**, Boystown; **Daren Kizlin**, Elmwood; **Anthony Miranda**, Elmwood; **Terry Hovorka**, Papillion; **Richard Finley**, Ralston; **Brandi Briggs**, Ralston; **Kelley Bartels**, Saddle Creek; **Angelique Bailey-Weber**, Stoneyridge.

## Change of Address:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Old Address: \_\_\_\_\_

New Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Send to: Branch 5, 10342 Ellison Circle,  
Omaha, NE 68134-1024  
or call, 345-0424

## 60 YEAR GOLD CARD MEMBERS

Kielian, John  
Kotlarz, Stanley  
Krecklow, Earl

Morrison, Dean  
Redfield, Gene

## 50 YEAR GOLD CARD MEMBERS

Adam, Ed  
Alvarez, Trino  
Baratta, Anthony  
Becerra, Herbert  
Begley, Daniel  
Beherns, Robert  
Booher, Warren  
Bouc, Donald  
Branson, LeRoy  
Brice, John  
Christensen, Harry  
Christensen, Richard  
Daemon Jr., Alex  
Domayer, Robert  
Eymann, George  
Eymann, Richard  
Goldsborough, Fred  
Halbrook, Paul  
Hilpipre, Donald  
Hula, Carl  
Humphrey, Richard  
Hupka, Gerald  
Incontro, Frank  
Jacobsen, Dean  
Janousek, William

Kaster, Stanley  
Kelly, Franklin  
Kolbus, Ed  
Kolc, Frank  
Kunkle, Eugene  
Leo, Thomas  
Luksa, Robert  
Machian, John  
Magistretti, Albert  
Meloccaro, Albert  
Morris, Bernard  
Norton, Robert  
Novak, William  
Petersen, Charles  
Reynek Richard  
Ritzdorf, Robert  
Roberts, Richard  
Sizemore, Harold  
Staley, Walter  
Stanislaus, Melvin  
Stillmock Robert  
Thorson, Ronald  
Yost, Robert  
Zambuto, Frank  
Zemula, Leo

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

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

**RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED**

## **DATES TO REMEMBER**

<b>April 18-20, 2008</b>	<b>NE State Convention – Norfolk Lodge &amp; Suites, 4200 W. Norfolk Ave, Norfolk, NE - \$60 - \$70 - 1-888-355-0553</b>
<b>April 24, 2008</b>	<b>Steward Training – 5:00 pm – 10342 Ellison Circle</b>
<b>May 2, 2008</b>	<b>Executive Board Meeting – 5:00 pm General Meeting &amp; Auxiliary Meeting – 6:00 pm Great Plains Paralyzed Veterans Assoc. – 7612 Maple Street</b>
<b>May 10, 2008</b>	<b>NALC Food Drive</b>
<b>May 11, 2008</b>	<b>Happy Mothers Day!</b>
<b>May 12, 2008</b>	<b>Retiree’s Breakfast – Petrow’s, 60<sup>th</sup> and Center – 8:00 am</b>
<b>July 21-25, 2008</b>	<b>NALC National Convention – Boston, MA</b>
<b>August 17, 2008</b>	<b>Branch 5 Picnic – Cooper Farms</b>

