



The Centennial Sentinel February 2024

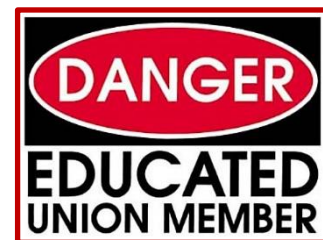
Sisters & Brothers of the COSALC,

Great News!

After having discussion concerning this publication with the COSALC Executive Board last month, it was decided to continue the Centennial Sentinel for another year. We've had commitments from many on the executive board to supply articles so they can be distributed to all of you and help to continue to educate the members across Colorado.

2024 Colorado Steward's College

The Colorado Steward's College was a huge success. Many new stewards showed up to the first day of training because they saw a need in their local offices for representation and determined it was their turn to step up to represent. Thank you for doing that! We even had more stewards show up on the second and third days of training to get involved in the case study which contained a grievance on the Joint Statement on Violence and Behavior in the Workplace. It was a difficult case study for some of the new ones, but it was a great experience since this is currently what carriers are dealing with on the workroom floor. Thank you to everyone at the NBA's Office for their work on the training and COSALC President Richard Byrne and COSALC Director of Education Se Min Kil for being at the training and assisting as needed.



Will there be OWCP training at the convention?



There will be a full day of OWCP training on April 16th, 2024, prior to the kick-off of the state convention. Please stay updated on what's happening with the convention by following us on Facebook. You can find us listed as '**Colorado Letter Carriers**' or also through '**Coffee with COSALC**' on Facebook. Get with your branch president if interested in going to the OWCP training.



Article 8.5.D - Mandatory Overtime. One purpose of the ODL is to excuse full-time carriers not wishing to work overtime from having to work overtime. Before requiring a non-ODL carrier to work overtime on a non-scheduled day or off his/her own assignment on a regularly scheduled

day, management must seek to use a carrier from the ODL, even if the ODL carrier would be working penalty overtime. However, if the ODL does not provide sufficient qualified full-time regulars for required overtime, Article 8.5.D permits management to move off the list and require non-ODL carriers to work overtime on a rotating basis starting with the junior employee. This rotation begins with the junior employee at the beginning of each calendar quarter. Absent an LMOU provision to the contrary, employees who are absent on a regularly scheduled day (e.g. sick leave or annual leave) when it is necessary to use non-ODL employees on overtime will be passed over in the rotation until the next time their name comes up in the regular rotation. Management may seek non-ODL volunteers rather than selecting non-volunteers on the basis of juniority. Normally, carriers not on the ODL may not grieve the fact that they were not selected to work overtime.

Union stewards have a limited time to file grievances based on the date of the violation. If you believe there is a contractual violation that occurred, report it to your steward immediately so they can begin to investigate. While this is only a small section of Article 8, this is a good place to start for education since improper mandating regularly happens in many offices across Colorado.

Leadership Roundtable

The topic of hosting a leadership roundtable for branch leaders was brought up at the executive board meeting. We have sent out inquiries to many branches and the feedback was positive. We are looking into this further and will keep everyone updated when we have something scheduled. Thank you for the feedback and we look forward to getting some classes set up hopefully in time for the state convention. If you are a leader in your branch, be sure to reach out to COSALC President Richard Byrne so you can stay connected. His email is richardbyrne@cosalc.org.

Do you have uniform questions?

Good day to you all!

I recently had several carriers ask me which uniform company offers the best quality and prices. Well, in the interest of full disclosure, I am currently a uniform salesperson with AMES. However, I was also a letter carrier for 33+ years and in that time; I purchased a lot of uniforms. Quality can mean different things to different people, so I will offer a quick insight and give my opinion. Are you looking for quality fabric? The fabric is regulated by the post office and cannot be changed.

So, no matter what manufacturer assembles the uniform, the fabric won't change unless the Post Office changes it. It you want quality in the actual assembly of the product that will vary from company to company. The manufacturers control the assembly and the availability of stock. Those manufacturers ship the items to the company for sales. Galls is one of the largest sales companies and they own several of the smaller sales companies. AMES, Brookfield, Wasserman, etc. These companies have salespeople that come to the stations. Then there are the online companies. Some offer free shipping, no return fees, while some offer bonuses, and other incentives. The prices can vary from company to company as well, but be mindful that with the

lower price, make sure you are not paying extra for hemming, alterations, tall or larger sizes, shipping or returns. AMES offers a guarantee on their fabric assembly and will alter items for the life of the garment. I am sure that Brookfield offers their version of these things. The benefit of using a local salesperson is the individual service you will get. We come to the stations for face-to-face visits, measure, offer help with sizes and fit. We make returning items easier as we handle all the postage and can track the return through the process. If something goes wrong, we can speak directly with warehouse staff to have issues resolved quickly. Galls is a big company, and they are not without their issues. I am sure the other salespeople in Colorado can cite an episode of frustration with them, but overall, I find the people who work their keen to help and fix issues. So please consider using one of the local salespeople. They are all retired Letter Carriers and always love the chance to chat with other carriers and postal employees.

Respectfully submitted,

Jacqueline Skene

The salespeople in Colorado are AMES Rich Pottenger 303-956-4783, AMES Jacqueline Skene 303-819-2251, AMES Marcy Zakrewski 303-418-7638; Brookfield Mary McDowell 719-459-1813

- Jacqueline Skene is also the Director of Retirees for the COSALC

Stamp Out Hunger

The annual Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive comes at a critical time for food pantries. Donations slow down after the winter holidays, while free or reduced-cost meals at schools that many children rely on are not available during the summer months. On May 11th, letter carriers, with the help of postal employees in other crafts, managers, family, friends, and volunteers, collected bags of non-perishable food placed near their mailboxes by residents. The NALC is committed to the fight to end hunger within our communities and one way we work toward that is with our annual Letter Carrier Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive.

Supporting your local food bank by participating in the Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive is simple! On Saturday, May 11, ask your customers to leave a food donation at their mailbox. Letter carriers will take care of the rest. So, it's time to mark your calendars for the annual Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive.

Millions of Americans, including children, senior citizens, and veterans, are unsure where their next meal will come from. By supporting the Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive on Saturday, May 11th, 2024, you can help relieve shortages that food pantries experience in the spring and summer months after holiday donations have been depleted.

Save the date for Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive so you can join us for the largest one-day food drive in the country.

2023 Participating Colorado Branch totals:

Denver Branch 47 - 276,073
Colorado Springs Branch 204 - 107,040
Pueblo Branch 229 - 27,000
Greeley Branch 324 - 39,304
Flatirons Branch 642 - 28,479
Fort Collins Branch 849 - 46,673
Longmont Branch 1105 - 11,193
Northeast Colorado Merged Branch 3631 - 200
Craig Branch 5236 - 3,659
Centennial Branch 5996 - 172,617

(Totals received from the 2023 July NALC Postal Record)

“It’s always been done that way...”

I would like to use this space to encourage each of you to take a moment and look at the way things are done in your office, in your installation, even in your local branch, and do something that is surprisingly difficult: Question Everything, especially things that have just, “always been done that way.” You might notice things in your office that management has gotten away with doing for a long time because no one ever bothered to address it. You might notice things that management is allowing carriers to do – yes, even things that seem to benefit the carriers or that the carriers like – but are contrary to what the National Agreement or the various handbooks and manuals allow. You might even notice things in your branch which aren’t quite in line with the NALC Constitution or your branch’s bylaws. These things could range from management making side deals with carriers, to allowing carriers to case their DPS in the office or work off the clock, to the way your branch notifies its members about important things like elections or proposed changes to their bylaws.

You might think, “it’s ok, everybody is cool with this, it’s never been an issue before and it’s just easier this way...” Ok, but hear me out: there are reasons for everything that has been negotiated, bargained for, or voted on. Verbal agreements and side deals won’t hold if there is a change in management or if they decide to change their mind one day and not honor the deal they made. Work done off the clock is money taken out of someone’s pocket. Casing DPS, even though it might ‘seem easier’ to carry it all in one bundle, will come back to bite you in the form of disallowed time during a route inspection, which could result in the loss of full-time assignments in the office. And if something is done in your branch that is contrary to the NALC Constitution or your branch’s bylaws, it could potentially have major legal or financial ramifications.

Sometimes when a change needs to be made to correct things that, “have always been done this way,” people (whether management, carriers, or members) get frustrated or upset. This happens especially when that person may have been benefiting from whatever was happening, and often times they will say that Past Practice should allow them to continue as they were. However, Article 5 of our National Agreement covers the national parties’ general agreement on the subject of past practice, and it specifically states:

“The Employer will not take any actions affecting wages, hours and other terms and conditions of employment as defined in Section 8(d) of the National Labor Relations Act which violate the terms of this Agreement or are otherwise inconsistent with its obligations under law.”

The Joint Contract Administration Manual (JCAM) goes on to state on page 5-3, that the functions of past practice are to 1) Implement contract language, 2) Clarify ambiguous language, or 3) Implement separate conditions of employment, concerning issues where the contract is silent. No function of past practice makes provision to change or alter what is clearly and unambiguously spelled out in the contract or the handbooks and manuals. It is our job as union representatives to ensure our carriers are protected, and the best way to do this is to make sure, wherever possible, that things are done in line with what has been negotiated, and that they have been documented appropriately. This requires tenacity, an objective viewpoint, and doing everything you can to educate yourself and your members. Sometimes you might not even realize there’s an issue until you stumble across language in the ELM or the National Agreement – because we don’t always know what we don’t know! Be humble enough to accept and learn from this new knowledge, take a moment to explain to the carrier(s) or management why the language you found requires a change in procedure, file a grievance if needed, and do what you can to make sure it is done correctly moving forward.

Remember – knowledge is power! Don’t be afraid to get out there, ask questions, and learn something new.

- ***Jenilee Jackson, President of Branch 849, Fort Collins, CO***



COLORADO STATE CONVENTION

APRIL 17,18 -2024

DOUBLE TREE 7801 E ORCHARD ROAD

GREENWOOD VILLAGE

303-779-6161

More details and hotel links can be found on the ‘Training Dates’ tab at

www.cosalc.org