

OREGON STATE ASSOCIATION OF LETTER CARRIERS

SATCHEL

Volume 1 of 2026



2026 OSALC Officer Positions up for Election:

The following positions will be up for election at the 2026 Oregon State Convention in Grand Ronde Oregon at the Spirit Mountain Casino & Convention Center. Any regular member in good standing shall be eligible to any office of this Association. Some information about the responsibilities of the positions is also included.

Executive Board Members: There are five Executive Board Members to elect. The term is for two years. Each executive board member will be assigned a territory consisting of between 7 - 12 stations, which is their visitation territory. They will be required to visit each station and talk to carriers in those stations about the work environment, vehicles, supplies of their station, etc. These visitations must be completed by Nov 1st of each year. After their visitations, they will need to draft a report of their findings at each station and turn that in to the Executive Board Chair within 2 weeks of completion of their visitations. The E-board chair will file those and send a copy of all reports to the Regional Office. Each E-board member will also need to draft an article for each Satchel that is sent out. Since the officers of the state association are spread throughout the state, each Executive Board member also needs to be able to use email and text to communicate, discuss/ vote on topics though the year. There will be two meetings in person that each Executive Board member will need to attend, one at year 1 Steward College and one at the state convention. Each e-board member will have up to 5 days at their current USPS wage teir to be reimbursed for lost time while performing their duties to the state, The Executive Board shall have charge of all property of this Association. They shall approve and hold the Bonds of Bonded Officers. They shall direct the payments of the funds of this Association. They shall designate depositories in which the Secretary-Treasurer shall deposit all funds of this Association received by them. They shall examine all bills, approve the same if found correct, and keep a correct account of all bills audited. In conduction with the President, they shall have general supervision and control of this Association during recess. They shall function as Trustees of this Association and in every way conduct the interests of this Association.

Alternate Delegate-at-Large: There shall be Two (2) Delegate-at-Large positions for the OSALC. One shall be the President, and the second is the Vice President. This election is for the alternate Delegate-at-Large position for both. The duties of the two (2) Delegates-at-Large, shall be to represent this Association and promote its welfare at meetings of the National Association and report back to this Association. So, if the Alternate Delegate-at-Large is going to the National Meeting, they will need to write a report for the next satchel going out after that meeting about all that took place at that meeting.

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OSALC Satchel Editor
Brandon McCabe

For more information about the National Association of Letter Carriers including information about the national contract, congressional legislation, the NALC Health Benefits Plan, the Mutual Benefit Association, and the Letter Carrier Political Fund, log on to NALC.org. To stay up to date with notifications on all these issues and many other informational resources, download the NALC app.



FROM YOUR PRESIDENT

Hello Oregon. I hope you all had Happy Holidays and a safe New Year's Eve! In this edition of The Satchel, we will have articles about workplace rules and guidelines like we did in the last edition. I am going to write a little about opting and uniforms.

Ok first up, **let's talk about opting**. First off, for all those new employees out there, what is opting? Well, when a regular carrier either vacates a route or goes on vacation, this creates a chance to deliver the route until someone wins a route bid and is assigned to the route or while they are on vacation. That's right, no more bouncing around to a lot of different routes all the time! It also locks you into your station while on that opt or sequential back to back opts to where you can't be sent to other stations! When can you start doing this? You can start to opt on routes 60 calendar days from your start date.

What happens if several people opt on an available route? The carrier with the highest seniority/longstanding will get it. Also make sure that you will be happy with the route you opt on, because when you successfully opt, then it is your route until the regular carrier comes back or it is bid on. So, let's say a regular goes on vacation and breaks their leg on vacation. You will be stuck on that opt until they come back to work. Or if it's a vacant route, you will be stuck on it until a carrier is assigned to it.

Once you have successfully received an opt on a route, you will assume the scheduled hours and non-scheduled



**by Abe RedCloud
OSALC President
Branch 82**



day of that route. An important thing to know is that a carrier technician (T-6) routes are higher level assignments and not opts. These vacancies can only be applied for by regulars with bid positions and PTF's and they don't have to stay on them. For opt posting guidelines, read your local memorandum of understanding (LMOU) as this process is governed by that. There are a lot more rules for opting, but I only have one page, so that is the basics. Overall, if you are a new employee, I suggest you start opting as soon

as you can so that you can have some sanity in the beginning of your career.

Now **let's talk about uniforms**. When a CCA has completed ninety working days or has been employed for 120 calendar days, whichever comes first, they will receive a "Letter of Authorization" from local management within 14 days of them becoming eligible. Then the CCA supplies that letter to a USPS authorized vendor to purchase uniforms. Go to Liteblue, under the My HR tab, pay and benefits, uniforms, and then uniform allowance to see a list of authorized uniform vendors and to find your Letter of Authorization. A hard copy of the letter should be given to the CCA as well. Do not lose your paper copy and take a picture of it when you receive it.

CCA's converting to PTF or regular will receive a reusable credit card for uniform purchasing for the rest of their career. A PTF passing their probation will also receive this credit card. This card will be credited on the date that the employee first became eligible for the uniform program. The current credit given for uniform purchase is \$536 a year. Newly eligible employees (including CCA's) entering the uniform program will receive an extra \$125 for a total of \$661 for their first uniform purchase. You may carry over unused credit to the next year but must use it by the end of the next year. And that's the basics about uniforms.

In Unionism and Solidarity,
Abe RedCloud

FROM YOUR VICE PRESIDENT

Requesting leave may seem like a simple task, but doing it correctly is essential for protecting yourself, your job, and your benefits. Whether you're taking a planned vacation, calling out sick, or dealing with an unexpected emergency, following the proper procedures ensures that your leave is accurately recorded and fully supported if questions arise later.

One of the most important tools available to you when you need to miss work is PS Form 3971. This is an official request for Notification of Absence. Understanding when and how to use it can make all the difference in how your attendance record is viewed.

Always Use PS Form 3971, Even for Unscheduled Leave! Life happens. Illnesses, emergencies, and family needs don't always give advance notice. When you need time off, whether it's scheduled or unscheduled, you MUST document it on PS Form 3971.

Even if you call the sick line or submit leave through eLRA on LiteBlue, you should always follow up with a completed PS Form 3971 when you return to the office. The sick line only records that you were absent; it does not explain why. Without proper documentation, your attendance record may appear worse than it actually is. Always make sure you have a supervisor sign and date your form as received, then make yourself a copy. Keep these copies in one location so that you know where to look for them if you need one later.

Management is required to keep a copy of those PS Form 3971's for a pe-



**by Lisa Fair
OSALC Vice President
Branch 1433**



riod of 3 years but guess what! Sometimes they get "misplaced" and the only proof you have is your copy. Your form documents the reason for your absence. A hospital stay is a legitimate, unavoidable use of sick leave—exactly what your earned benefit is intended for. Without that documentation, however, the context is lost. And when context is missing, employees can find themselves facing unnecessary scrutiny or even discipline.

Imagine this scenario: You were hospitalized for five days. Naturally, you called the sick line and requested sick leave for those five days. A few weeks later, your child becomes ill, and you must stay home

for a day to care for them. Now, on paper, it appears you've used six sick days in the same month. To someone in management who only sees numbers on a screen, this may look like a pattern of excessive unscheduled leave. But numbers alone don't tell the story. This is where PS Form 3971 becomes your best defense. Calling the sick line is just putting out another number. Follow it up with documentation.

Sick leave exists to support you when you are unable to perform your job duties due to illness or injury. Because we cannot predict when we will become sick, most sick leave is naturally unscheduled. That's normal. But unscheduled leave can still be questioned if it isn't properly documented. You may not remember every detail of an absence from three months ago—but your PS Form 3971 will. It becomes your written record, your explanation, and your protection.

Taking a few minutes to fill out the form can save you from major headaches later. Protect yourself, protect your benefits, and follow the process. Your future self will thank you.

In sisterly solidarity,
Lisa Fair



FROM YOUR SECRETARY TREASURER

Hi again, everyone! As you can probably tell from the other articles, we decided to focus this issue on Education. Education is important to our Union, as it's really our best tool against management misconduct. If we know our contract, then we know when management has violated it. It's the training programs that the NALC (and specifically Region 2) have developed that give us the edge against management in our grievance process.

Which brings me to my topic: Steward College. Region 2's Steward College is a four-year program that teaches every aspect of the National Agreement and how to defend it against management's violations. It's a program that has been copied in other NALC Regions (to less effect), and I'd be willing to bet its success is what has led National to put on an Informal A training later this year.

The six states in Region 2 (Oregon, Washington, Idaho, Montana, Utah, and Alaska) each hold at least one Steward College training a year, with some of the states (like Oregon) holding more. Each course is for a week and focuses on some part of either the grievance process, or our National Agreement. While the four "years" can be taken in any order, they're really designed to be taken from 1-4.

Year 1 focuses on the first step of our grievance procedure: Informal Step A. It gives a bird's eye overview of the National Agreement and explains how you investigate a possible violation and prepare a grievance. It ends with a mock Informal-A meeting where you are tasked with developing your



by Casey English
OSALC Secretary Treasurer
Branch 82



case and arguments from scratch.

Year 2 takes things a step further and teaches you what you need to prepare for (and meet on) a grievance at the next step: Formal Step A. This is the last step of the process before the grievance leaves your branch and goes to the Dispute Resolution Team, and it's where you can get some important (and creative) settlement language for your branch. As with Year 1, Year 2 ends with a mock case, where you're given a grievance that went unresolved at Informal A and you need to build the file and meet at Formal A.

Year 3 is where things get different. Instead of being focused on the grievance process, Year 3 is focused on one specific facet of our National Agreement: Article 16, or our discipline procedure. It is a week-long deep dive into every aspect of discipline, how to dissect it, how to grieve it, and how to beat it. Understanding Article 16 is vitally important to defending the careers of our members.

Finally, there's **Year 4**. Just as Year 3 takes a deep dive into discipline, Year 4 takes a deep dive into all the other articles of the National Agreement, and that form "Contract" grievances: Issues where we are alleging management violated the National Agreement and we must prove that a violation occurred.

Each of these courses is extremely important to become a knowledgeable and well-rounded steward. To commemorate someone completing all four years, the NBA's office awards stewards with a plaque and an embroidered polo, signifying their accomplishment and designating them as a "Regional Steward": Someone who the NBA's office can rely on to defend carrier's rights anywhere in Region 2.

Hopefully this brief overview of the Region 2 Steward College program has gotten at least some of you to consider asking your branch leadership to send you to these vital trainings.

Until next time,
Casey

FROM YOUR RECORDING SECRETARY

Throughout the years our union has worked diligently to create a safe and harmonious work environment. Our contract is agreed upon rules to govern management action and expectations when working with city carriers. This contract is called the Joint Contract Administration Manual or JCAM. This contract is better put together than all other USPS craft contracts. I recommend cracking it open at some point and empowering yourself with its knowledge. You can find the most current JCAM on our State website OSALC.ORG or on our national website NALC.ORG, both are found under resources.

Most of our local management has not read the JCAM, nor do they plan to. Because of this there are many basic agreements in our JCAM that are overlooked, ignored, or purposefully broken. When this happens, we have an avenue to dispute these (article 15 explains this in detail). The first thing you want to do is have a conversation with your steward regarding what took place. Your steward will know if there is a grievance or just a dispute between a supervisor and a carrier. If there is a contractual break the steward will begin a discussion with the supervisor ASAP. If the steward can make the carrier whole without an official grievance they will do so. It is the steward's responsibility to achieve a remedy at the lowest possible level of grievance. If this cannot be achieved the steward will go on to the next steps.

Stewards have 14 days to file a grievance from the day the violation took place. The steward must specify how the contract was broken and what they will ask for to make the carrier whole. Each contract break can be unique and requires a remedy as unique as the break. The steward may need to interview the grievant and members of management. In my experience when I interview supervisors they are unaware (being honest or not)



**by Brandon McCabe
OSALC Recording Secretary
Branch 82**

of what violation they created. This is always helpful to the steward because ignorance is no good defense for breaking the contract. Once the steward has reviewed all moving parts (clock rings, statements, interviews, pictures, etc...) they will complete their grievance and meet with a member of management at what is called an Informal A meeting.

At an Informal A meeting management usually has a floor supervisor meet with the steward. The steward is usually your shop steward from your office. The steward will explain what the grievance is, when it took place, and why it's a grievance. This will be backed by supporting evidence. After explaining all of it to management the steward asks that management make the carrier whole by a remedy. A remedy can be monetary; however, it can be remedied in other ways as well. Not too surprising but many floor supervisors do not come prepared to meet on these. The steward will tell management ahead of time what they will be meeting on; However, when they come to the table they do not bring any contentions (supporting documentation for why they chose their actions). A diligent steward who is working with less hostile and more rational management may be able to squash

these grievances before they even become an official grievance but when you're working with hostile management who are poorly educated, you will not be able to resolve those grievances at Informal A.

Next it goes up to a Formal A level to be met on. The representatives will go through what the grievance is about and, hopefully, agree to a fair remedy. If they cannot, the next step is to send it to the DRT (Dispute Resolution Team) or Step B. DRT will be a member of NALC and a USPS manager not from the local office. While information, interviews, and other supporting documents may be added throughout both the Informal and Formal A levels, nothing can be added after a file is sent to Step B (DRT). They will only work with what has been presented to them. This is why Informal A and Formal A are so important. If stewards representing the grievant at the first two steps do not add everything relevant that is necessary to win this grievance we will lose this grievance. When we bring a grievance to the table it means the burden of proof is on us as a union. If DRT cannot resolve this grievance the grievance will go to arbitration.

Arbitration consists of a union rep and a USPS rep. Only this time there will be an arbitrator who will make the decision based on what has been presented to them. The arbitrators are approved by both parties and are usually people who have served as a judge in courtroom settings. All aspects of the grievance are presented to the arbitrator then the arbitrator typically has 30 days to review what was provided to them and make a decision.

Dont give up on advocating for yourself and your union siblings!

Hasta el proximo
-Brandon

FROM YOUR DIRECTOR OF RETIREES

Hello All State of Oregon Members of the National Association of Letter Carriers

This is George Wallenstein, the State Director of Retires. We are under attack from the Trump Administration again. Trump just signed an executive order eliminating our rights to Collective Bargaining. He is trying to eliminate our Contract that our Union negotiated with the USPS. This is simply wrong in all sorts of ways. The union was fortunate to have a few members of the Republican Party join all the Democrats to overturn this planned attack on all Federal Workers in the Senate.

He wants to eliminate our benefits and rights for Collective Bargaining that we as a Union have gained over many years of contracts. Our union needs to be vigilant and aggressive towards these attacks and remember who is orchestrating them. It is the current President and the Republicans in Congress, both in the Senate and in the House. The people voted them in office and into power, we can vote them out and make them unemployed!



by George Wallenstein
OSALC Director of Retirees
Branch 82

I am sure there are going to be many protests and demonstrations against these actions. I, as a retiree, can be part of that and not have the consequences as current employees have. Do not under any circumstances wear your uniform or make any statements to the media. You could be fired or suspended. It will be extremely difficult and very costly, and you will not be paid while out of work. As of December 11th, a bipartisan majority in the house of representative voted to pass The Project America's Workforce Act (HR 2550) which will restore our collective bargaining rights. The next step is to get it to pass in The Senate

In Solidarity
George Wallenstein



Outstanding Letter Carrier of the Year Award

Many Letter Carriers go beyond their job of delivering mail to donate their time and energy to their communities. Other Letter Carriers work hard for their union siblings. Some Letter Carriers do both. Do you know any Carriers like this in your office or branch? These Carriers may have been employed for many years or may be CCAs; length of service is not important. Let us know about these amazing Letter Carriers. The NALC Oregon State Association wants to give them the honor and recognition they deserve for going beyond the call of duty. We need your help to make sure that these Letter Carriers are recognized. Send us a letter including all the detail about their: Service and volunteer work in their community, NALC positions and volunteer work, Any other details that make them outstanding Letter Carriers.

Nominees must be NALC members in good standing. Send your letter to the following address. Be sure to include your name and contact information in case the committee has any further questions. This award will be presented at the annual NALC Oregon State Convention. **The Deadline for the 2026 nominations is February 1st.** The nominations are good for five years and must be legible to be considered. Send your nomination letters to:

Abe RedCloud 2114 NE 36th Ave. Portland OR. 97212

FROM YOUR EXECUTIVE BOARD CHAIR

For the last 6 months, there has been a new hiring program implemented and placed in the 2023- 2026 National Agreement, to help retain new carriers and possibly change the culture of the way employees are treated when they first get hired on called the New Employee Experience, Retention and Mentoring Program or NEERMP.

In theory, this program is supposed to minimize the confusion and frustration that most of us experienced when we first started. The new employee gets assigned a mentor to help them navigate questions and concerns they have about the work they are doing. The mentor is agreed upon by both management and union. The mentor is trained on the clock by watching a video and provided with a booklet of the do's and don'ts of being a mentor, which is a volunteered position and is separate from being an OJI or a steward, unless you don't have many volunteers then most likely, the OJI or steward will wear that hat as well. If you would like to be a mentor, reach out to your Branch president or NBA's office.

Some of the highlights for the new employee go as follows:

Weeks 1-8: They are restricted to only working in their home office.



by Val Castillo
OSALC Executive Board Chair
Branch 347

Weeks 1-4: They can only work 8 hours a day, 40 hours a week.
Weeks 5-8: They can only work 10 hours a day, 56 hours a week.

Weeks 9-12: They can only work 11.5 hours a day, 56 hours a week.

All CCA's and PTF's will have a defined work schedule with at least one set day off a week.

The 30, 60, 80-day reviews will be done with the mentor or union present. The union will receive copies of those reviews. M-2010 is a joint question and answer memo about the NEERMP program.

This theory of a program is not going so well in Salem. We have had to file numerous grievances due to the lack of management "not doing their part" of restricting hours, changing the schedule, and not doing reviews to name a few.

There is a Joint Retention Team (JRT) that was created in each District to oversee that compliance with the memo is attained. Our NALC JRT for Oregon (I-M-O District) is Matt Parkin. If you have questions and/or are having problems, reach out to him at 208-716-0627 or parkinlot8@yahoo.com.

Hopefully, it is working in your area and maybe in the New Year and into the next 6 months it will be more favorable for this NEERMP program in my area.

In Sisterly Solidarity,
Valerie Castillo



Seeking Shared Memories

Do you have a great photo of you on your route, in your capacity of carrying mail or NALC memories?

Please share them with us! We'd like to feature you in the next editions of the Satchel!

Please call or text Brandon McCabe at 805-340-6786

FROM YOUR EXECUTIVE BOARD

OJIs and Making CCAs Successful.

Anyone who has worked with USPS long enough to make it a career knows an OJI (On-the-Job Instructor). They bridge the knowledge theory we learn at academy with the practice of the 'School of Hard Knocks.' OJIs reinforce what new CCAs and PTFs can put to use from their time at the Academy, and they correct them when they do something wrong. It's a voluntary role that is thankless, and always, does not pay more. (Sound familiar Stewards?)

These trainers are picked jointly by management and the union. Often seasoned and knowledgeable about their craft, sure, but they often have at least passing knowledge of the Contract and new employee's rights.

"This is when you take a break."

"Don't give away 50 minutes of your day!"

New hires are much more likely to join the union if their trainer can explain the value. They can also scout for member activism and can be a path to leadership.

They are leaders in safety because they are the first example of it many of us see, and anything less can be a disaster. They prevent bad habits from forming by nipping them. They create safe environments for learning, often by pushing back on management's unrealistic timetables or faulty equipment.



by Scott Mezner
OSALC Executive Board
Branch 916

The first step in Employee retention is an OJI. The right OJI can be the difference between what keeps them on the job or what makes them walk away. Most of us know this job isn't for everyone. It's hard to show that process.

So often, education is looked on as a black box. Students come in, successful and unsuccessful students come out. Who? Why? No one is sure, but a lot of educated people have theories. We can look at stats and resumes; we can look at past

performance and time in the academy. Often overlooked is the messy reality of the human experience.

The OJI's 'Black Box' has been slimmed down to a mere three days in most cases. Watch. Help. Do. Three days to prepare someone for this job is a joke. But against all odds, people still work here... So, the OJIs must be doing something right. I hope the new mentor program can really duck the sink-or-swim mentality that has been allowed to exist at USPS for so long with the mentors' longer commitment to transitioning employees. New employees to be successful.

So, what is it that makes CCAs/PTFs successful? Is it their stubborn nature? Their college degrees? I spoke to local OJIs and past OJIs, and they repeatedly said the same thing about what makes a CCA/PTF successful: Asking Questions is the most meaningful thing a CCA/PTF can do to show they will be successful. It is one of the first things I try to tell CCAs/PTFs I've trained as an OJI. Ask Questions. Bobbing your head saying "uh-huh" for 8 hours doesn't translate into active listening or retention. Reflection on the things you do and discuss can help more than the act. It is a very important part of continuing education.

So just to reflect:

- Who was your OJI?
- How did they help you?
- Did you or can you pay it forward?

Thanks
Scott

FROM YOUR EXECUTIVE BOARD

As a city carrier, we have all driven an FFV or LLV with some kind of problem. It can be something minor like the windshield wipers aren't moving correctly, or your seat won't adjust. Other times it can be major problems, like the vehicle shuts off on its own, or you have fluids puddling underneath while you're loading your vehicle for the day. No matter what the issue is, it is important to fix these things.

Each morning, everyone should conduct a vehicle inspection. You need to look at everything to make sure it is working properly. In Handbook M-41 Section 922.51f, it states we have a base minimum allowance of 3 minutes to complete this. The inspection is part of our morning office duties, and you should receive office time credit. If you find any problems with your vehicle during your inspection, Handbook M-41 Section 842.1 states.

"Driver must (a) report all mechanical defects or failures and major body damage on Form 4565, Vehicle Repair Tag (see exhibit 842.1) as soon as noted, and (b) immediately turn in the completed form to a dispatcher or manager. Minor body damage can sometimes await repair until the next regular inspection and



**by Tiffany Miller
OSALC Executive Board
Branch 3750**

need not be reported more than once."

PS Form 4565 should be easily available in your office. If you have never seen one, take the time to look one over and ask other carriers who have completed these forms before if you have any questions.

The forms are surprisingly simple to fill out. You will put the date and time that you are submitting the form, vehicle number and mileage, and a space for you to write what hazard you found. It is a carbon copy form with three sheets. At the bottom of each sheet, it shows who gets each copy, Mechanic/Lessor Copy 1, Driver Copy 2, and Supervisor Copy 3. Take your completed form to your supervisor. They need to sign at the space in the bottom to acknowledge they received the report. Make sure to keep your copy. You may need this in the future. Your vehicle should not be in service until the hazard has been addressed. If management assigns it to another carrier before it is fixed, notify your shop steward to start the grievance process.

If the vehicle is unsafe to drive and management instructs you to drive it anyway, fill out a PS Form 1767 Report of Hazard, Unsafe Work Condition or Practice. You should describe what is unsafe and why you don't feel safe driving it. This is a carbon copy form as well. Keep your copy for future reference and speak with your shop steward. It is important to complete your vehicle inspections every morning. Most of us drive vehicles that have outlived their intended use and are becoming increasingly unsafe to operate. Safety starts with you.

Report any hazards immediately, drive defensively, and return home safely.

In solidarity,
Tiffany Miller

OSALC PodCast Committee Signup

As we endeavor to reach more carriers and create the most optimal transparency for our members we are going to soon go live with making our quarterly editions of The Satchel a podcast as well. I am looking forward to collaborating with a committee to get this up and running and to have other talented dedicated members throughout the state have their voices heard, literally!

A future committee member would be:

Talented voices: Someone who can record (most smart phones work for this) articles.

Background: If you have any history creating or editing a podcast.

Editors: We look forward to recommendations for free (or cheap) editor software that can be shared amongst our editors to make a smooth edition.

Innovative minds: Members with great ideas on how to draw in more listeners.

Please call or text Brandon McCabe at 805-340-6786 if you are interested!

FROM YOUR EXECUTIVE BOARD

Happy new year everyone! This year, my station in Portland processed over two hundred discipline grievances. So, I decided to write about article 16 and provide some basic tips for stewards and hopefully familiarize carriers with what the process is like so they can help their stewards defend them.

Just cause-when you write your issue statement you should start with, "did management have just cause to issue X carrier a letter of warning/suspension etc. for X infraction? If so, what is the remedy?" The whole point of your grievance will be answering this question.

1. Submit your RFI and ask for any and all information management used when administering the discipline. Make sure they sign and date the RFI and copy it.

2. Talk to the carrier-frequently the carriers' version of events varies greatly from managements. Have them write statements if necessary and make sure to closely examine their II.

3. Is there a rule? Was the carrier aware of the rule? Awhile ago my station was obsessed with SPM scans. My managers way of, "educating" carriers was handing out a piece of paper at everyone's case. This doesn't count as instruction, and the carrier should be individually informed or given training. I've had carriers bid into my station and aren't aware of certain rules. My management assumes these rules are written on stone tablets somewhere and "everyone knows that rule."

4. Is the rule equitably enforced? I've had a lot of discipline for attendance this year, so I made sure to RFI every employee's key indicator report and all discipline issued for attendance at my



**by Theresa Dunas
OSALC Executive Board
Branch 82**

station. It was astonishing to see how many carriers with the same number of unscheduled absences were issued discipline vs. the ones who were not. If you see a lack of fairness or equitability compared to other carriers make that one of your contentions.

5. Was any old or purged discipline used in management's decision to administer the discipline? Frequently management will say things like, "well you know they had an accident five years ago." Or "we both know they're not a good carrier because they got an LOW eight years ago." Sometimes management will even refer to old discipline in the charge letter, so make sure to read those carefully.

6. Use arbitrations-the NALC defenses to discipline booklet has hundreds of great arbitrations. I highly recommend taking the time to read them and if they pertain to your grievance write the arbi-

tration number down in your contentions. If you're having trouble thinking of good contentions or how to articulate them, these arbitrations can help you be more creative. Read what the steward wrote for theirs.

7. Does the charge warrant the severity of the discipline? Discipline should be progressive, not punitive. Management will go out of their way to, "teach the carrier a lesson." Or "put them on notice." If you think the charge is excessive make that a contention.

8. Years of service/goodwill bank-How many years has the carrier worked for the post office? Are they good employees who show up and fulfill their duties? This should be taken into consideration when writing your contentions.

9. Settling-talk to your formal A rep and see what they would ask for regarding the settlement. RFI past discipline and see what settlements other carriers got for the same issue. Is this the carrier's first offense? If so, I would ask to purge and rescind and have management conduct an official discussion. Set a deadline for the discussion to be conducted. Management frequently forgets and you can use this to your favor if more discipline is administered down the road. Sometimes the carrier does have current discipline and that can complicate things. Just remember that if you're not sure what to settle for then send it to your formal A. You don't want to set a bad precedent moving forward. Don't let managements flimsy arguments convince you to give up your standards/integrity as a steward.

I hope these tips will help you with your grievances!

Best,
Theresa Dunas

FROM YOUR EXECUTIVE BOARD

People often ask what is expected of someone serving on the Oregon State Association Executive Board. Since this year is an election year for the Executive Board, I thought it would be a good time to explain what the position involves. As stated in the bylaws, Section 2, the objectives of this Association are to assist the National Association of Letter Carriers in maintaining a more perfect organization and improving the Postal Career Service; to organize all letter carriers within the state; to conduct training and education seminars for all members; to guide and direct all activities relating to legislation within the state; and to represent all branches when requested.

An Executive Board position is a two-year term. Board members are required to draft an article for each issue of The Satchel, or as otherwise designated, and to submit an Officer's Report. These reports are published in the Convention Book. The president divides the state into sections and assigns each Executive Board member a group of branches. Once assigned a section, you are responsible for arranging office visits for all branches and offices in that area. I try to reach out to branch officers or members ahead of time and make an effort to meet with the supervisor or postmaster at each location. An office visitation form must be completed for each visit and turned in.



**by T.J. Sanders
OSALC Executive Board
Branch 959**

Executive Board members also assist the host branch with the State Convention. This often includes teaching classes, helping with setup, and assisting with registration. In addition, we are required to attend State Association meetings. Typically, one is held at the beginning

of the State Convention, and another is often scheduled on the first day of a Stewards College. It should also be understood that Executive Board members perform any additional duties assigned by the president. From time to time, regional leadership may reach out for assistance with an office, and if you are qualified, your name may be considered.

Overall, it can be a juggling act to make everything happen. Executive Board members may receive up to five paid days, if needed, to accomplish these responsibilities. Some sections of the state require significant travel, so I often try to schedule visits in conjunction with my days off to make it work.

I hope this information helps give a clearer picture of what serving on the Executive Board involves. While the responsibilities can be demanding at times, I genuinely enjoy being an Executive Board member. It has been a rewarding opportunity to support our branches, work with fellow carriers across the state, and give back to the union that represents us all.

Thanks
TJ Sanders

State Convention Silent Auction

Every year we have a silent auction at our State Convention to raise funds for either a charity or our education fund (for scholarships to trainings for Oregon union members). I am asking for everyone to consider bringing something to donate for our silent auction. It can be homemade or store bought, as long as it is something that you think someone would buy. In the past we have raised over \$1,000 for either charity or the education fund with this silent auction, so please consider bringing something. You can donate something even if you're not going to the State Convention. Just find someone that is going and give the item to them to be brought and donated. Please find any State Board Member at State Convention to donate the item. We appreciate your consideration and generosity.



Bylaw changes and resolution deadlines

Bylaw Changes = Per our bylaws, all bylaw changes must be mailed to the State Secretary no later than 90 days before the state convention to be brought to the floor for discussion and vote. Casey English mailed a Convention Call letter in August to all branches to inform them to have any bylaw changes in via mail and delivered or e-mailed by the deadline January 24th.

Resolutions = Per our bylaws, all resolutions must be mailed to the State Secretary no later than 90 days before the state convention to be added into the State Convention book. This book will be mailed to all branches within 30 days of the convention, and each delegate will receive one upon checking in at the State Convention. Casey English mailed a Convention Call letter in August to all branches to inform them to have any bylaw changes in via mail or e-mail by January 24th.

But it's not too late to submit resolutions. You can bring resolutions to the convention and submit them there, but they must be endorsed by delegates from at least three different branches with at least 10 signatures and presented to the State Secretary no later than the conclusion of the lunch break on the first day of the State Convention.

Making a contribution to the Letter Carrier Political Fund, you are doing so voluntarily with the understanding that your contribution is not a condition of membership in the NALC or of employment by the Postal Service, nor is it part of union dues. You have a right to refuse to contribute without any reprisal. The Letter Carrier Political Fund will use the money it receives to contribute to candidates for federal office and undertake other political spending as permitted by law. Your selection shall remain in full force and effect until canceled. Contributions to the Letter Carrier Political Fund are not deductible for federal income tax purposes. Federal law prohibits the Letter Carrier Political Fund



from soliciting contributions from individuals who are not NALC members, executive and administrative staff or their families. Any contribution received from such an individual will be refunded to that contributor. Federal law requires us to use our best efforts to collect and report the name, mailing address, occupation and name of employer of individuals whose contributions exceed \$200 per calendar year. Any guideline amount is merely a suggestion, and an individual is free to

contribute more or less than the guideline suggests and the Union will not favor or disadvantage anyone by reason of the amount of their contribution or their decision not to contribute.

Oregon State Association of Letter Carriers Revives MDA Raffle at State Convention

The Oregon State Association of Letter Carriers is excited to announce the return of the MDA Raffle at this year's State Convention at Spirit Mountain Casino. For decades, letter carriers have proudly supported the Muscular Dystrophy Association (MDA), raising millions nationwide to fund groundbreaking research, provide medical care, and give children the chance to attend MDA Summer Camp.

This year, delegates and guests will once again have the opportunity to take part in this time-honored fundraiser. One of the Grand Prizes will be a night's stay at Spirit Mountain Casino along with dinner, generously provided as part of our raffle lineup. Additional prizes will also be available — and we're actively working to make the prize pool even bigger.

If any members, branches, or community partners have leads on raffle prize donations, we would greatly appreciate your support.

Please contact T.J. Sanders or Abe RedCloud with your information.

Branches that would like to receive raffle tickets ahead of convention may also reach out directly to T.J. or Abe to arrange distribution.

Importantly, the total raised from the raffle will be added to the host branch's MDA fundraising total, which is published each year in *The Postal Record* magazine. This is a great way for the host branch to display its commitment and leadership in supporting MDA.

Together, we can continue our tradition of standing with MDA, supporting families living with neuromuscular diseases, and showing the strength of letter carriers in action. Let's make this year's raffle one to remember!

Branch members Support for Breast Cancer Awareness Stamp

Just before our branch elections, I had purchased 1,200 Forever Stamps from Costco for mailing ballots when we received exciting news — Noah, one of our window clerks at the Eugene Main Office, had ranked in the top five for sales of the Breast Cancer Awareness stamp in the WESTPAC District.

I told Noah how disappointed I was that I hadn't known sooner, as I would have gladly purchased the Breast Cancer Awareness stamps instead. Although I doubted Costco would accept a return, I decided to try — and to my surprise, they refunded the branch credit card. The Breast Cancer Awareness stamps cost \$0.12 more each, adding \$144 to the total. Without time to seek branch approval, I chose to personally cover the difference, hoping a few members might chip in. Within just a few hours, several mem-

bers kindly donated enough to cover the full amount. Lisa Calloway, who collects and redeems cans and bottles from the office foreemployee events, even offered to use those funds, though the donations had already covered the cost.

Noah was deeply touched by everyone's generosity and volunteered to affix nearly 1,200 stamps to the election envelopes himself — a gesture the election committee deeply appreciated. This experience was a great reminder of the spirit of unity and caring that defines our branch family

Thank you, Colleen Tagwerker, Mark Tagwerker, Tracy Tagwerker, Lisa Calloway, Karla Holdridge, Josh MacAdam, and Joel Stevens, for your donations. Noah finished number 4 in the WESTPAC district and number one in Eugene.



Glenda Whaley
Branch 916



Postal Employees — You're Eligible!

If you work for the U.S. Postal Service and haven't joined Northwest Priority Credit Union yet, now is the perfect time to become part of the credit union created just for you.

Founded in 1928, Northwest Priority Credit Union was built by postal workers to serve postal workers — and that mission is still at the heart of everything we do. We understand the unique needs, schedules, and challenges of postal employees, and we're committed to offering financial solutions that support you through every stage of life.

As a member, you'll enjoy:

- **Competitive loan rates**
- **Convenient savings and checking options**
- **Personalized service from people who truly understand the postal community**

Becoming a member is simple — and once you join, you're a member for life. Northwest Priority Credit Union Proudly serving postal workers since 1928. Join today and experience the credit union built with you in mind.

To join visit our website www.nwprioritycu.org and click JOIN OUR FAMILY.



**NW PRIORITY
CREDIT UNION**

Beaverton | Milwaukie | Portland P&DC | SE Portland | Vancouver

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

NCUA





Oregon State Association
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Salem, OR 97309-2023
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CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

UPCOMING EVENTS FOR NALC

Steward College Year 1
February 8th - 12th 2026
Sky Camp, Fall Creek Lake OR
SPACES STILL AVAILABLE
Contact Abe for Details

Steward College Year 2
March 8th - 12th 2026
Sky Camp, Fall Creek Lake OR
SPACES STILL AVAILABLE
Contact Abe for Details

State Convention 2026
Being held in Grand Ronde OR
at Spirit Mountain Casino
April 24th and 25th 2026

NALC National Convention 2026
Being held in Los Angeles, CA for 2026.
August 3rd through 7th.