Who would ever think in America, the greatest and richest country in the world, people are going hungry every day? Poverty is a serious problem in America, and people are hurting.

The NALC Carrier’s food drive is Saturday, May, 13 2017. It is the largest one day food drive in the nation, and it only comes around one time a year! If you are a new employee, and you are unfamiliar with the Houston Food Bank; jump on board because you are about to make a difference in someone’s life by participating in the largest One Day Food Drive!

It is sad that 17.2% of Texas households were found to have gone hungry or engaged in coping with mechanism to avoid it, significantly higher than the national rate of 14.3%.

The Houston Food Bank is a huge hub with a total of 600 partner hunger relief charities, feeding 800,000 people each year. On a typical day in the 18 southeast Texas counties served by the Houston Food Bank, 66,200 people are hungry, and can’t afford to buy food. Of that number, 5,000 are children!

The Houston Food Bank also has a weekend program called the Back Pack Program which provides meals for students and their families. The schools will discreetly call the student into the office where they are signed up to receive the food in the back pack. The school tries to make it as discreet as possible so other kids don’t make fun of them. It will feed a family of four for 2½ days. We all know how kids look forward to summer time. We have to realize summer time might be fun for some kids but for others it means going without food. Kids can’t help themselves and they need our help. Imagine $1.00 provides 3 meals, and a donation $30 monthly gift will provide 3 meals a day-every month- to neighbors struggling with hunger. You ask how the Letter Carriers can make a difference.

WE can start by doing our part. It takes EVERYONE TO DELIVER THE FOOD DRIVE CARDS!!! If this is not you then “thank you for doing your part”. It is so sad to report that some carriers are not delivering their food drive cards. These cards are to be treated as First Class Mail! We are so blessed to have a job, and to be able to provide food for our families. It is a blessing when you know your family will not go to bed hungry!

You don’t always know what may have transpired in someone’s life that put them in the situation they are currently in, and it doesn’t matter! Just knowing there are children, and senior citizens who are on a fixed income, and do without in-order to pay bills go to bed hungry every day.

This alone should inspire you to do your part. Let’s work together! Let’s make this the BEST ONE DAY FOOD DRIVE for the year, and PLEASE! PLEASE! DO YOUR PART AND DELIVER YOUR FOOD DRIVE CARDS, and be sure to PICK UP THE FOOD that is left at your mail boxes, apartments, schools, and at your businesses, throughout the FOOD DRIVE WEEK. If your customer wishes to donate their contribution by check, they can make their checks out to the Houston Food Bank. PLEASE DO NOT LEAVE ANY FOOD BEHIND!!
HEALTH BENEFITS REPORT

CCA’s

The following paragraphs come from the requirements’ for CCA for Health insurance. Basically, this is the only option CCA have, and it has not changed since 2014. CCAs are not eligible for the high option plan or for the NALC insurance until they become career employees. At this time the best option would be to get into the NALC High option plan. The NALC High option plan is the best plan for letter carriers, and more and more career carriers are getting into our plan! It is a great Health plan and it has served many of our fellow brothers and sisters well. If you have any questions please feel free to call me with any of your concerns.

Hector Salinas
Branch 283, Health Benefit Rep.

Before you assume.
learn the facts.
Before you judge.
understand why.
Before you hurt someone.
feel.
Before you speak.
think.

Anon
DO’S

1.) Give 8 hours work for 8 hours pay.
2.) Come to work on time. If a problem should arise in the a.m. and you are unable to report to work on time, you are to call the station, and notify management as soon as possible.
3.) Other than for safety and health reasons you are to follow your orders. If you are not on the overtime desired list and management instructs you to go back out and carry overtime. You are to follow your instructions, and grieve later.
4.) Notify Management by filling out a PS Form 3996 as soon as you become aware you are unable to complete your assignment within 8 hours or the allotted time authorized. If something happens while you are on the street that causes you to run over you are to call, and notify management as soon as possible. Example: flat tire, problem with a dog, waiting for keys or you had to wait for a vehicle.
5.) Follow your last instructions: If management gives you instructions to be back by a certain time, and you have informed management that you unable to complete your assignment in the allotted time. You are to return to your station in the time management has instructed. Once you have returned to the station inform the p.m. supervisor you were instructed to return to the station by a certain time, and what do they want you to do with the mail. Remember follow your last instructions.
6.) Do bring your valid Texas driver’s license with you to work every day.
7.) If YOU receive discipline make sure YOU sign and date the letter of charge (Discipline). When YOU sign YOUR discipline it is not admission of guilt. YOU have simply started the time line in which to file YOUR grievance. YOU have 14 DAYS from the date YOU receive the letter of charge (Discipline) to file YOUR grievance.

DONT’S

1.) Do not wait until the last day (day 14) to turn in a PS Form 13 requesting to meet with YOUR steward. When management gives YOU the letter of charge (Discipline) ask for a PS Form 13 to meet with YOUR steward. Make 3 copies: One for Management, one for your steward, and one for YOURSELF. Remember to get YOUR grievance number. This is YOUR discipline, and if you fail to act on YOUR discipline it will stay in YOUR file for 2 years!!
2.) Do not take the battery out of the back of the scanner.
3.) Do not take it upon yourself to work any overtime that has not been authorized by management. Your overtime is not justified just because you took it upon yourself to fill out a PS Form 3996 in the evening once you have returned from your assignment. This is still considered un-authorized overtime.
4.) Do not take it upon yourself to work unauthorized overtime. If you have been given instructions to return to the station by a certain time, and you are not finished with your assignment you are to follow your instructions and bring the mail back. Remember to be back on time.
5.) Do not deviate off your assignment without permission.
6.) Do not combine your break with your lunch. It is in your best interest to take them separate.
7.) Do not take more than 30 minutes for your lunch. Your lunch starts from the time you leave your route and it will end when you return and start delivering mail again.
8.) Do not fail to report an accident at the time it happens.
9.) Do not deviate from the line of travel when delivering your assignment without permission.
10.) Do not work past your 8 hour’s if your doctor has placed you on an 8 hour restriction.

Know your rights, knowledge is power

Ricky Dueboay, Vice-President, NALC Branch 283
Our National Association of Letter Carriers National Business Agent Kathy Baldwin, will be conducting a retirement seminar. The seminar will be held on Sunday, May 21, 2017 from 10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. at our local Branch 283 at 2414 Broadway Blvd, Houston Texas 77012. The seminar will be held on a Sunday to allow not only eligible employees, who wish to retire, but all employees and their spouses as well.

Just thinking about retiring can be both exciting and terrifying. You have to admit it is a very serious step in one’s life. There are so many important life decisions that have to be made. One might wonder “What happens to my annual?”, “Do I keep my life insurance?”, and “How many years do I have to work if I have military time?” These are just a few things that might have you worried.

You may have received letters in the mail offering a dinner at the local steak house if you attend their retirement seminar. There are so many resources out there; however you must beware of some of them. Some of these other agencies may only be interested in your Thrift Savings Plan balance. The United States Postal Service is a government agency, and it has an entire different set of guidelines compared to other organizations. There will be some decisions that must be made at the time of retirement. You don’t want to make the wrong decision because some of the decisions made are irrevocable.

Elizabeth Godwin will be the guest speaker and she will provide you with all the right resources that will enable you to make the most important choices for your future. You may find all kinds of information out there; internet, in print and by phone but it’s always better when you can speak to someone live. Be prepared, write down some questions you might already have and be prepared to take notes.

LARRY MARTIN would like to thank God for blessings him with a job at the USPS as a letter carrier for the past 41 years, and 6 months. I thank Him for the financial blessing which has enabled me to send my kids to college, and for my home. Most of all I thank Him for the love He has showed me and my family.

I also thank Him for allowing me to serve my patrons with dignity, compassion and respect over the years. For all the memories of the laughter, and jokes before leaving the station! I pray all the memories will live on! Thank you Galena Park station for all the good memories!
ALL DELEGATES TO THE STATE CONVENTION IN EAGLE PASS MUST PICK-UP YOUR CREDENTIAL CARD AND REGISTRATION FORM AT THE UNION HALL NO LATER THAN APRIL 11TH GENERAL MEETING IN ORDER TO EARLY REGISTER BY MAY 1ST. THE REGISTRATION FORM MUST BE POST MARKED NO LATER THAN MAY 1ST.

NALC BRANCH 283 TENTATIVE SCHEDULE FOR THE TSALC CONVENTION JUNE 13-16, 2017 AT: INTERNATIONAL CENTER FOR TRADE CONVENTION CENTER - EAGLE PASS, TEXAS 3295 BOB ROGERS • EAGLE PASS, TEXAS 78852 • PHONE; 830-773-7781

DATELINES: EARLY REGISTRATION - NOW UNTIL MAY 1st.
Mail forms to reach State Secretary by May 1st.
Tuesday, June 13 Registration from 1:00 to 5:00 pm
Wednesday, June 14 Registration from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm
CONVENTION CALL TO ORDER AT 1:00 pm TO 5:00 pm
Family Night 6:30 to 9:30 pm
THURSDAY June 15
Convention call to order at 9:00 am to 5:00 pm
BANQUET FROM 7:00 pm TO 11:00 pm
FRIDAY, JUNE 16 CONVENTION CALL TO ORDER AT 10:00 am TO 3:00 pm
All delegates must be signed in by the beginning of convention call on Thursday and Friday to qualify for pay.

Registration Form
Texas State Association of Letter Carriers Biennial Convention 14-16 June 2017

Delegate Information for each Delegate (please print or type)

Name ______________________________________________________________________________
City and Branch ______________________________________________________________________

Registration (includes entry to Family night and 1 Banquet Ticket):

_____ $55.00 for early registration. Must be post marked no later than May 1, 2017 to receive this rate.
_____ $70.00 for all registrations received after the May 1, 2017 deadline.
_____ $15.00 Retiree/Veteran Breakfast. 7a.m. Friday June 16
_____ $ 20.00 Additional banquet tickets.

Banquet meal is as follows: Beef and Chicken Fajitas, Refried Beans, Mexican Rice, Taco, Enchilada and Guacamole. Chips and Salsa. Iced Tea, Water
Cash Bar, D.J. and Dance

Please include your check or money order with this registration form. Payments should be addressed to:
TSALC 2017 Convention
C/O Katherine McGarity
2302 Kings Hwy.
Wichita Falls, Texas 76301
LOVE THE JOB YOU DO...

The work you do is a reflection of yourself. Work hard to do your best! Provide the best service to your customers that you can. Remember to scan your parcels and make sure that you are delivering to the right address.

When in uniform, City Carriers are like celebrities. A child will point you out in a crowd and shout “MAILMAN”!!! Then, you know you are really good at your job, when your customers recognize you out of uniform. It is a privilege and a blessing to have the job that we do. For the past 18+ years, I have always been thankful that I work for the United States Postal Service.

So, as you proudly make your rounds delivering the mail; remember to smile and greet your customers. Welcome new businesses to your route. Ask their name and submit a lead card so that a USPS representative (that’s me,) can reach out to them.

When customers have questions about goods and services; let them know you’ll have someone contact them. Submit a lead card or contact me directly. Follow the example of these two carriers, whom I caught up with recently. And yes, there are more carrier recognitions to come!

Oscar Z. Herrera, Houston District Customer Connect Coordinator
4600 Aldine Bender Rd • Office: 713-226-3052 • Cell: 832-788-2333

Do you or your child have a substance abuse problem? Sometimes we are blind to the fact it can attack anyone. Substances abuse is not discriminatory, and it can attack families of all colors, and nationalities. It’s always harder to accept reality when it hits close to home.

Did you know the national problem of people addicted to prescription painkillers, heroin, and other illicit drugs is on a rise! The rate of substance abuse among the age of 18 to 25 is rising, and is twice the rate of adults of the age of 26, and older!

Some families will place the blame on themselves, and wonder “where did I go wrong” or “why didn’t I see it earlier!” You may not have been able to stop your love one from going down the wrong road but you can get them the help they need now!

The NALC Health Benefit Plan, Optum offers you behavioral health benefits, and a dedicated telephone line to help you or your child get the right kind of treatment, and support. The support you receive is strictly confidential, and is part of your health plan! This is your family love one, and you can be assured your personal information is keep private in accordance with state, and federal laws.

There are times where a family member won’t know how to talk to their child concerning their substance abuse. You may be in a situation where your child won’t listen to you because they feel you don’t understand. Unfortunately this is why a lot of our love ones end up running away.

The program offers licensed professionals who are highly trained, and who have a deep, real world understanding of substance use. These professionals are also there to provide the family with the guide dance needed in order to help them through their struggles.

Not very substance abuse is the same, and these experience professionals will handle each case according to that individual’s unique situation. You or your family member can be set up with a comprehensive face-to-face evaluation. The clinician in your area will personalize a care strategy usually within 24 hours. You and your family member will be able to receive help from an assigned licensed Care Advocate.

If you signed up with the Health Benefit Plan, and if this is you or your love one don’t hesitate to call!! You can call Substance Use Treatment Helpline at 1-855-780-5955 or go on line, and visit www.liveandworkwell.com/recovery. If you visit this web site you will also find information about substance use disorder, including tips on how you can support your child, as well as explanations of the different methods of treatment. Remember take the first step you are not alone, and there is help!!

FWI CORNER
from the desk of the **Financial Secretary**

**APRIL 2017 - STEWARD MEETING**

**PERLA GARZA**

ALBERT THOMAS - C. Snyder, H. Elmore  
ALMEDA - B. White  
ALVIN - J.P. Massa, J. Haley  
ANSON JONES - T. Sennett  
ASHFORD WEST - A. Aguirre, M. Spikes, G. Fields, S. Johnson  
ASTRODOME - F. Helaire  
BAYTOWN MAIN - L. Rivera, S. Talley  
BEECHNUT - D. Young  
BELLAIRE - J. Butler, D. Briggs  
CLEVELAND -  
CONROE - A. Taylor  
CORNERSTONE - K. Jones, N. Parks  
CROCKETT -  
COLUMBUS - L. Sandifer  
D.S. SCHATZ - K. Ware  
DAYTON -  
DEMOSS - S. Perry, P. de Vera  
DENVER HARBOR -  
DICKINSON - S. Pryor, W. Williams  
EASTWOOD - A. Villanueva  
EL CAMPO -  
FAIRBANKS - J. Bradley, A. Carillo, H. Vega  
FIRST COLONY -  
FLEETWOOD -  
FOSTER PLACE -  
FRIENDSWOOD - J. Evans, D. Torres  
GALENA PARK - D. Hunt  
GIDDINGS - L. Sandifer  
GRANVILLE ELDER - J. Guiterrez, C. Siner, L. Garcia  
GREENBRIAR - K. Phillips  
GREENS NORTH - A. Tea, B. Nwoko, E. Roberts, A. Smith  
HIGHLANDS -  
HEMPSTEAD - L. Sandifer  
HUMBLE - C. Heisner, L. Williams  
HUNTSVILLE -  
JAMES GRIFFITH - T. Abbott, L. Mitchell  
JASPER -  
JENSEN -  
JOHN DUNLOP - M. Barnes, C. Davis  
JULIUS MELCHER -  
KATY (ANNEX) - W. Frazier, L. Sandifer  
KATY PARK ROW -  
KIRBYVILLE -  
KLEIN - R. Bruce  
LAMARQUE - S. Lopez  
LEAGUE CITY - C. McCray, W. Brown  
LIBERTY -  
LIVINGSTON -  
LONG POINT -  

MADISONVILLE -  
MARTIN LUTHER KING - L. Jones, Jr., K. Mays  
MEDICAL CENTER - L.C. Johnson, T. Fields  
MEMORIAL PARK - J. Ferguson, A. Kwanbena, L. Park, C. Tuch  
NORTH SHEPHERD - K. Black, L. Walton  
OAK FOREST - A. Salinas, J. Brown, K. Brady, D. Buchanan  
PALACIOS -  
PANTHER CREEK - M. Garcia  
PARK PLACE - A.G. Ramirez, S. Baker, R. Crook  
RICH HILL - J. Butler, T. Ray, R. Reed, J. Singh  
RICHMOND - J. McCall  
RIVER OAKS - E. Perkins  
ROSENBURG -  
ROY ROYALL - D. Waites  
SAM HOUSTON - S. Blunt, J. Guerrero  
SAM HOUSTON (PTRS) - T. Fleming  
SANTA FE - C. Cobbs  
SCHULENBERG/WEIMAR - L. Sandifer  
SEABROOK - A. Datrice  
SEALY - L. Sandifer  
SILSBEE -  
SMITHVILLE - L. Sandifer  
SOUTH HOUSTON - S. Lopez  
SOUTHMORE -  
SPRING - M. Ross, M. Garcia  
STAFFORD - C. Lemons  
SUGARLAND - C. Jackson, G. Mares  
T.W. HOUSE - R. Gilliam, F. Perez, T. Goosby  
TEXAS CITY - C. Siner, A. Datrice  
TOMBALL - A. Taylor  
UNIVERSITY PLACE - K. Phillips  
WEBSTER - L. Matthews  
WESTBRAE - J. Jones, K. White  
WESTBURY PLACE - J. Clark  
WESTFIELD - E. Ford  
WHARTON -  
WILLIAM RICE - O. Eaglin  
WILLOW PLACE - P. Williams, J. Loredo  
WINDMILL -  
WOODLANDS -  
WOODVILLE -  
OFFICERS - W. Ferguson, R. Dueboay, P. Garza, P. Claiborne  
EXECUTIVE BOARD - H. Sanchez, S. Melchor, K. Green, H. Salinas, T. McGee, R. Brantley  
GUEST MEMBERS - L. Grantham, H.G. Flood, R. Henderson
June 2017

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