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WELLSVILLE PRINTING, INC.

# METRO LETTER CARRIER

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF LONE STAR BRANCH #132, NALC

LINDA BOROUGHS, EDITOR

## FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

KIMETRA LEWIS



Greetings Brothers & Sisters!

As this year is coming to an end, I ponder the following: Did the branch fulfill its purpose? Did we meet our goals for 2019? And what lies ahead for 2020? I would like to think that all went well in 2019. I'm sure that every decision made was not received favorably by everyone; but you can trust that every decision was made with the best interests of the branch in mind. The year 2019 brought many challenges, with our biggest

challenge being the implementation of the Consolidated Casing test. Unfortunately, it appears that this testing will continue into 2020. The new year will be brought in with scheduled route count and inspections at several offices and the implementation of route adjustments in other offices. Hopefully our national officers will reach an agreement on our contract early in the year.

As we move into 2020, we will be moving forward with new expectations. The new year will bring about changes and new policies that will greatly affect the security of the branch. Just as our union hall has taken on a new look so will the branch. It is time to take a serious look at how our branch collectively operates. While it's human nature not to embrace change, change is inevitable. With that said, I am looking forward to 2020 with anticipation.

But before moving ahead to 2020, I would like to thank all the

stewards of Branch 132 who so generously gave of their time and service to represent the membership. I would like to give special thanks to those members who served as Formal A and Step B representatives and to those who served as our arbitration advocates.

The job of a union advocate is a thankless job. The tireless hard work never gets the full acclaim it's entitled to. Your contribution to the strength and welfare of Branch 132 does not go unnoticed. I would also like to give recognition to the Executive Board and our editor for a job well done.

I expected great things at the start of 2019, and I'm expecting great things for 2020! Let's move forward in solidarity, with all of us expecting great things for Branch 132. Let's put the Postal Service on notice that we are a united force prepared to defend our contractual rights! May you have a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

"Our primary mission is to Equip the membership through Education in order to Empower the membership to Excel as an Effective force with a full understanding of their contractual rights!"

### WHAT HAPPENED TO DECEMBER?

Maybe you've noticed that this issue of the Metro Letter Carrier should be the December issue, but it is the January issue. What happened to the December issue? Previously, the newsletters were named for the even months (February, April, etc.), but they will now be named after the odd months (January, March, etc.) The board made this change because the newsletters will now be named after the month that more closely corresponds to the month in which they arrive in the mailboxes. The newsletters usually arrive shortly before the beginning of the odd months, so they will now be named after those months.

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**BRANCH 132 OFFICE**

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Dallas, Texas 75227  
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Fax 214-388-4149

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NALC Branch 132 Longview Office  
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Fax 903-757-6490

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Kimetra Lewis, President  
214-779-4758

Sid Simmons, Executive Vice President  
214-564-7128

Robert Hinson, Vice President  
214-906-3201

Danny Hilliard, Recording Secretary  
214-697-8704

Steve Ellenberg, Treasurer  
Cell: 214-783-6212

Janine Singleton, Financial Secretary  
469-438-0101

Earl Hibbs, Health Benefits, OWCP  
903-456-9136

HOURS – 7:30 A.M. – 3:30 P.M.  
THURSDAYS

Mike Bell, Sergeant-at-Arms  
214-695-8157

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469-765-5259

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214-929-0421

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Richard Inurrigaro 214-557-8193

Eugene Johnson 214-938-4278

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Thomas Vines 214-240-9821

Chris Velasquez 214-274-6984



Stewards meet 7:00 PM the first Thursday of each month in the Branch Office.

Executive Board meets 7:00 PM last Monday of each month.

AFL-CIO Council meets third Thursday of each month.

Branch meeting 7:30 PM first Monday of each month unless deferred by membership vote.

Opinions expressed in this paper are those of the writers, and do not express the opinions of the editor or the Union. All articles for publication must be signed and received by the Editor no later than the 1st of each month. If you wish to run your personal or business ad, rates are available on request and must be received by the 10th of each month to be inserted in the next month's issue. The editor's email address is LABORoughs@gmail.com



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## CASINO NIGHT

The branch held casino night in November at the union hall, and a fun time was had by all! There was blackjack, a roulette table, a margarita machine, and homemade pickled vegetables. Attendees were also treated to an all-you-can-eat spread. You can bet that everyone had a good time!



Gregg Schlemmer and Mike Bell were two of the lucky attendees. Gregg won Mavericks tickets in a raffle, and Mike won Cowboys tickets for winning \$54,000 at the blackjack table! (That's \$54,000 in play money, so don't ask him for a loan!)



Italy Nelson came after working all day, but made more money at the blackjack tables than she did at work.



Members fill up their plates before heading back to the gambling tables.



Kym Grant, Branch President Kim Lewis, and Krista Steele pose with some of the goodie bags given to attendees.

## EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

*Sid Simmons*

I have a suggestion for those of you who want to add some excitement to your otherwise mundane work day. Go to your supervisor and submit a written request for a Special Route Count and Inspection, as per M-39, 271.g. That simple request will reverberate down the halls of the route check managers at the district level, because it is their job to come up with a reason to deny your request.

I do not know a single letter carrier, in recent days, who has been granted a special route count and inspection. Management always comes up with delay tactics and excuses. Prior to the request, the carrier is considered a good employee, but after the request, that same carrier becomes a deadbeat. Management has to find fault with their work performance in order to justify the denial. They can no longer admit that the carrier is a good employee who is working on an overburdened route.

Management knows that they are violating the contract when they unreasonably deny the request for a route inspection. As a matter of fact, some of the smarter managers have actually read the relevant handbooks and manuals, and will concede off the record that an inspection is necessary. Unfortunately, the supervisors and station managers are powerless. They must deny all requests for route inspections, as well as all subsequent grievances related to those requests. Management does not want to give carriers an opportunity to prove that their routes are out of adjustment.

Please do not allow the aforementioned to discourage you from seeking relief. I urge you to submit your request and then challenge their denial, because this local union has your back.

While on the subject of route count and inspections, I would like to take this opportunity to recognize Steve Ellenberg for his extensive knowledge and expertise on this subject matter. No one in this branch has ever won more route count and inspection grievances at arbitration, and no one has been responsible for more money awarded to letter carriers for management's blatant violations. Without a doubt, he has mastered his craft, and everyone in this branch owes him a debt of gratitude.

## RING OF HONOR INDUCTEES

Every year, the branch votes on new members for the Ring of Honor. The Ring of Honor is a line of nameplates at the union hall honoring branch members who have made exceptional contributions to the branch. The nameplates start with Arthur Rockhold, who was the first president of Branch 132, and will now end with our three newest inductees, pictured from left to right: Danny Hilliard, Rita Wilder, and Steve Ellenberg.

Danny Hilliard is currently our Recording Secretary. He started as a clerk with the USPS, and he was the president of the APWU in Denton. He transferred to carrier in Lewisville and worked there for 29 years before retiring in 2007. During his work for the union, he has served as steward, sergeant-at-arms, health benefits representative, and the District 2 Board Member for the Texas State Association of Letter Carriers (TSALC). As recording secretary, he is responsible for certifying stewards, writing the branch correspondence, and addressing membership and building issues. He feels like the union is his second family, and you do what you can for your family. He advises the new stewards to carry a big stick, and recognizes that management has gotten harder to work with.

Rita Wilder is our current District 2 Board Member for the TSALC. She has worked for the union for 16 years, serving as Informal A steward, Formal A steward, trustee, and food drive coordinator. She has coordinated the food drive efforts for Branch 132 for several years. For ten years, she has been an instructor at the Carrier Academy, where she helps train the new carriers coming in. She became a steward because she wanted to learn how to defend herself and others, and she learned how from a previous Ring of Honor member, Susan Clem. Rita is very thankful for this honor, and feels that it is great timing, as it came right after her



retirement as a letter carrier. She advises the new stewards to learn as much as you can, and stay updated by going to classes and reading the news from our national officers.

Steve Ellenberg was surprised to hear his nomination for the Ring of Honor. No one had told him it would be coming. Steve has worked for the union for twenty years, serving as a steward, trustee, editor, sergeant-at-arms, and treasurer. But his biggest contribution came during the years when routes were adjusted under a joint process, known as JAIRAP. Steve served as the lead member for the Dallas District under that process, and he learned the route check process well. He used that knowledge to help the branch file route check grievances which have given the branch some of its best grievance decisions. He advises every carrier to do their route every day as if they are being checked, and provide the best service that they can.

Branch 132 is only as strong as its members, and these three members have shown the rest of us how to keep it strong. The branch thanks each of them and all of our Ring of Honor members for working hard for us and showing us how to succeed.

## NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTION FOR LETTER CARRIERS

- Be on time - Being late could result in discipline, and it burns up your leave.
- Take your lunch and breaks - Carrying mail is physically and mentally demanding, and breaks reduce the likelihood of accidents and injuries.
- Check your postal vehicle every day - You are allowed three minutes every morning to check your vehicle. Make sure the tires aren't flat and make sure it starts.
- Don't work off the clock - Don't check your DPS and get buckets before you punch on, and don't handle mail after you punch off.
- Make good clock rings - Good clock rings increases the chances that you will get paid without any drama. Good clock rings also mean that the proper routes will get credit for the time worked on them.
- Take your comfort stops - Don't carry "one more drag" with a full bladder. We are all human, and we all need comfort stops.
- Fasten your seat belt - You will be following the rules and keeping yourself safe. It's also required by law.
- Lock your postal vehicle - Keep the mail safe. Don't leave your vehicle unlocked if you are not right beside it.
- Drive at a safe speed - Follow the law and give yourself more time to react.
- Fill out your own 3971 - It is your responsibility to fill out your own 3971 anytime you are not working during your tour. Fill it out yourself so that you will know exactly what is on it when you sign it.

## GETTING THEIR GOLD CARDS

How many years of union membership do you have? Did you know that once you have fifty years of union membership, you are entitled to gold card status with the NALC? Gold card status entitles the member to all the privileges of NALC membership without having to pay dues. Recently, two members of Branch 132, Shelton Mayfield and Ray Courtney, were presented with their gold cards.

Shelton Mayfield was presented with his gold card by Vice President Robert Hinson. Shelton worked at Brookhollow Post Office for most of his career, where he was highly regarded as a colorful character who kept the place jumping. He also kept management in line by serving as a steward for thirty years. He once got a grievance award that paid 97 hours of overtime due to a contract violation.

Ray Courtney has 60 years as a union member – he was a member of the railway clerks union before he joined the USPS as a carrier in 1963. He carried in Iowa before transferring to the Dallas area in 1980, where he worked in Lewisville and The Colony. He retired from the USPS in 1992 when the retirees were offered a six-month bonus for retiring. He served as a steward for six years, and served as a Marine.

Congratulations to Shelton and Ray for your gold cards, and thank you for being loyal union members!



Executive Vice President Sid Simmons, Branch President Kim Lewis, Alex Staten, Shelton Mayfield, Vice President Robert Hinson



Branch President Kim Lewis, Recording Secretary Danny Hilliard, Ray Courtney, Treasurer Steve Ellenberg, Executive Vice President Sid Simmons.

### TREASURER REPORT

General Fund	\$261,924.20
Regular Shares	25.00
Money Market	100,072.56
Stewards Fund	124,613.94
Convention Fund	456.00
CPA/Legal Fund	0.00
Building Fund	0.00
Education Fund	0.00
Money Market	{-24,997.38}
MDA Fund	1,847.77
CD 18 Month	103,944.77
CD 18 Month	100,724.02
CD 12 Month	100,679.20
CD 2.550%*	102,287.13*
CD 2.800%*	100,901.00*
Cash	6,791.94
<b>TOTAL \$</b>	<b>\$879,197.59</b>

\* Market Value (\$)

### SICK & WELFARE REPORT

**Carrollton (Rosemeade)** – Andy Alvarado’s cousin passed away.

**Juanita Craft** – Rachael Anderson; Jamaca Potts’ mother passed away.

**Longview (Northwest)** – Scott Eades.

**Northwest** – Wayland Donald retired with over 30 years of service.

**Parkdale** – Kevin Hall; Cheryl Jones; Rita Wilder retired.

**Richland** – Reginald Christian’s mother passed away; Jerald McGee’s brother passed away; Leatrice Miles is ill.

**Seagoville** – Rickie Chandler had surgery; Brenda Hammond.

**University** – Jeannie Beach retired with over 40 years of service.

## **ROUTE CHECKS ARE COMING!**

The following units are scheduled for route inspections during the weeks indicated:

Marshall	75670/72	January 11, 2020
Winnsboro	75494	January 25, 2020
Commerce	75428	January 25, 2010
Dallas Station A	75208	February 1, 2020
Lewisville	75067/57	February 22, 2020
Lewisville	75077	February 29, 2020
Longview Northwest	75605/04	March 7, 2020
Longview	75601/02	March 14, 2020
Ennis	75119	March 28, 2020
Dallas Northwest	75209/20	April 11, 2020
Dallas Prestonwood	75248/52	April 18, 2020
Dallas R. E. Price	75230/51	April 25, 2020

Want to make sure you get full credit for the work on your route? The branch will be holding route check inspection schools, led by Steve Ellenberg. The classes are two hours long, from 10 am - noon, and will be held at the union hall. You will learn everything there is to know about completing a good route inspection from the branch's expert on route inspections. The dates for the route inspection schools are:

January 12

February 9

March 8

April 5

Everyone is welcome to attend the schools, and you can attend whichever one works for your schedule. Getting a good route inspection means that your route will be credited with the time you need to get the work done. Learn how to get a good route inspection, which can help create routes and thereby create jobs!



**JANINE SINGLETON**  
*FINANCIAL SECRETARY*

### **FINANCIAL SECRETARY REPORT**

#### **SEPTEMBER 2019**

National Dues	\$107,800.18
OWCP Dues	642.42
Misc.	823.28
Retiree Dues	0.00
MBA Rebate	0.00
TSALC Rebate	0.00
HB Rebate	0.00
Deposit Dividends	1.89
<b>TOTAL \$</b>	<b>\$109,267.77</b>

#### **OCTOBER 2019**

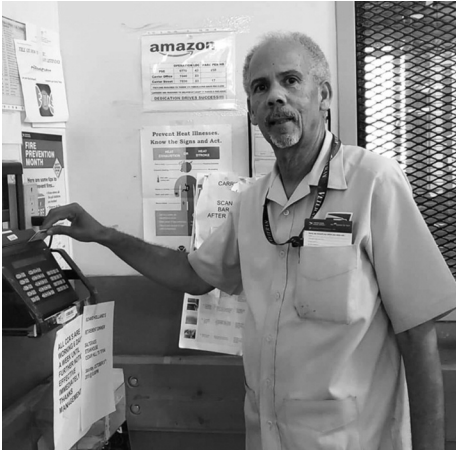
National Dues	\$70,516.28
OWCP Dues	0.00
Misc.	527.88
Retiree Dues	0.00
MBA Rebate	0.00
TSALC Rebate	0.00
HB Rebate	0.00
Deposit Dividends	2.20
<b>TOTAL \$</b>	<b>\$71,046.36</b>

### **ACTIVE MEMBERS REPORT**

	Active	Paying	Gross	Net
PP-01	1962	1933	54510	35303
PP-02	1937	1819	54088	35163
PP-03	1939	1838	54741	35789
PP-04	1944	1843	54775	35786
PP-05	1932	1825	54243	35364
PP-06	1922	1808	53939	35144
PP-07	1925	1810	53990	35176
PP-08	1924	1824	54788	35974
PP-09	1930	1810	53892	35023
PP-10	1918	1809	53870	35111
PP-11	1921	1798	53511	34725
PP-12	1941	1803	53737	34758
PP-13	1941	1825	55235	36274
PP-14	1947	1825	54748	35697
PP-15	1954	1822	54288	35199
PP-16	1976	1841	55025	35716
PP-17	1979	1842	55011	35700
PP-18	1985	1848	55016	35633
PP-19	1985	1858	55841	36468
PP-20	1972	1830	54591	35328
PP-21	1956	1822	54295	35188
PP-22	1943	1811	53763	34750



## LAST PUNCH BUNCH



**RICHARD HOLLAND**  
**44 YEARS**  
**DALLAS - JOE POOL**

Richard worked 39 years as a carrier, 1 year as a mailhandler, and 4 years with the Air Force, which gave him 44 years credit for retirement. He remembers making \$8.75 an hour when he started, and remembers getting Times Herald circulars, before the Morning News circulars. His father, Don I. Holland, was also a carrier, and worked at the old South Oak Cliff Station, which is now the Caesar Clark Station, before retiring from the Downtown Station. Richard is using his free time in retirement to help him take care of his mother. He advises the new carriers to come in with a positive attitude and remember that this job starts out tough, but it gets easier.



**MARK JOHNSON**  
**34 YEARS**  
**DALLAS - LAKE HIGHLANDS**

Now that Mark has retired, he plans to relax, chill out, and think about his next move, which will probably include some traveling. He has seen a lot of changes in his career. When he started in 1985, he had to route flats - up the even, and down the odd. All mail was cased up - there was no DPS. He had to wear a watch, because he didn't have a scanner, and he drove a tiny Jeep, but there were no parcels, so the Jeep was big enough. He always took a quarter in case he had to call back on a payphone. He advises the new carriers to invest in the Thrift Savings Plan, so that they can one day retire like him.



**RITA WILDER**  
**26 YEARS**  
**DALLAS - RICHLAND**

Rita began as a TE at Spring Valley Station. She was then promoted to PTF, and when she converted to regular, she went to Parkdale Station. She then bid to Richland and spent the rest of her career there. Now that she is retired, she is enjoying not having to commute from Grand Prairie to Richland every day. She plans to spend more time with her grandchildren, and plans to do some serious cruising. She wants to do a Transatlantic cruise, and a cruise through the Panama Canal. She tells the new carriers that if they follow the rules, they can make a satisfying career out of their job as a carrier.

## THE CARE AND FEEDING OF A SHOP STEWARD

BY LINDA BOROUGHS

The shop steward is an essential part of any unionized workplace, but the shop steward can also be an elusive beast. Many shop stewards have disappeared due to a lack of proper care, leaving their posts unexpectedly, never to be seen again. Here I shall list the best ways for you to ensure that your shop steward will live a long and healthy life under your care.

**Ask them what they need.** If you want to help stewards with their duties, ask them how you can help. And if they come to you and ask for something, say yes whenever you can.

**Don't disturb their rest.** We all need rest and recreation away from work, and a shop steward is no different. Try not to contact them on their day off or their vacation. If something cannot wait until they come back to work, find another union official who is on the clock and is available to talk to.

**Don't gripe to them.** While shop stewards can take candid feedback, if you only need to vent about the workplace, find a different sympathetic ear. Your shop steward is there to solve problems, and should not be used if you only want to rant.

**Thank them.** Shop stewards require large doses of positive reinforcement, and thanking them for the job they do will keep them healthy.

**Listen to their side.** If you have a disagreement with your shop steward, ask them to tell you their side of the story before you start complaining. Shop stewards can handle honest feedback, but unfair criticism will make a shop steward desert their post even more quickly.

**Talk to management yourself.** A shop steward should be used when needed, but should not be bothered with normal everyday workplace matters. When possible, talk directly to your bosses when you need something from them that does not involve the union.

**Forgive them.** All shop stewards make mistakes. Your shop steward is human. When your shop steward makes a mistake, give them frank feedback about it, but don't hold a grudge.

**Don't blame them for management's actions.** Your shop steward does not run the post office - management does. When the post office is run poorly, don't blame your shop steward. Your shop steward wants the post office to be run well, and is trying to make that happen. Shop stewards can influence management, but they cannot control them.

**Replace them.** If all else fails, step up to the plate and replace them. Any member can become a shop steward, and if you believe you can do a better job than your steward, you should seize the opportunity and take on the job yourself.

Follow these tips, and your shop steward will live a long, healthy life, protecting you and your fellow carriers from violations of the contract for a long time to come!

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## **CALENDAR**

- January 1 - Postal holiday - Happy New Year!
- January 2 - 7:00 pm - Steward training
- January 4 - New leave year begins
- January 6 - 7:30 pm - Branch meeting
- January 12 - 10:00 am - noon - Route inspection class
- January 20 - Postal holiday - Martin Luther King Jr. Day
- January 27 - Executive Board Meeting (Members may address the board by making an appointment.)
- January 31 - Vacation books should be completed
- February 3 - 7:30 pm - Branch meeting
- February 6 - 7:00 pm - Steward training
- February 9 - 10:00 am - Noon - Route inspection class
- February 15-17 - NALC Spring School
- February 17 - Postal holiday - President's Day
- February 24 - Executive Board Meeting (Members may address the board by making an appointment.)