



# THE MISSOURI LETTER CARRIER



MISSOURI STATE ASSOCIATION OF LETTER CARRIERS  
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF LETTER CARRIERS AFL-CIO

OCTOBER 2004

VOLUME 8, ISSUE 1

## THE PRESIDENT'S VIEW POINT

By the time this newsletter reaches you, there will only be about three weeks or less until Election Day November 2<sup>nd</sup>. I hope that every letter carrier will take that opportunity to cast their vote for candidates that are going to support the working families of America. Missouri is one of 16 'battle states' that everyone will be watching very closely with the presidential race. Since Missouri is one of the battle states, president Young from NALC headquarters had myself and 7 other letter carriers – Jim Lonergan and Melvin Moore from Br-30 K.C., Mark Sims Br-203 Springfield, Mike Chenot and Tony Jasper Br-343 St. Louis, Gerard Henke, Br-4839 Florissant, and Don Rowlett Br-984 St. Charles – released to work with AFL-CIO getting the message out to vote and get non-registered voters in our union registered before November 2<sup>nd</sup>. We have been helping other unions throughout our area to get the message out to their union members to get out and vote. If any letter carriers are able to volunteer their time to help with phone banks or passing out flyers, please contact one of the individuals I have listed to let them know you are willing to help in anyway you can.

As everyone is aware of there have been different polls about how this presidential race is standing. You will have heard that George W. Bush is ahead by so many points. You will hear that George W. Bush will get the support of married females which has him another two or three points ahead of John Kerry. Then you get on the internet and read that both Party campaign committees' are saying the race is close. Of course it all depends on which poll you have been polled by. So, my question to the letter carriers of Missouri is; have you personally been polled on how you will vote come November 2<sup>nd</sup>? Most of you will answer no, so that means you need to get out on November 2<sup>nd</sup> let your vote count here in Missouri. Take family members or friends with you to the election polls to vote supporting working families of America just like yourself. Remember every vote counts.

Something else to keep in mind is not to have tunnel vision; not just focus on one or two issues when deciding your vote. There are so many issues to look at this election – the war, Health Care or affordable Prescription Drugs, Overtime Pay, shipping jobs over sea, Safety and

Health. If you will read and listen to both candidates about these issues I have mentioned, John Kerry is willing to help and support middle class working Americans like us. I realize that some people focus on one issue that makes their deciding vote. That one issue is bothering them right now and they're not looking down the road. Just because these other debated issues don't affect you now doesn't mean they won't affect you in years to come. One issue I mentioned is Overtime Pay. Some letter carriers look forward to that overtime pay. Just because the cut in overtime didn't affect us in the Postal Service this go around, doesn't mean that it won't in the future. Remember we have a contract that will be coming up in the year 2006; overtime pay could be on the top of list for discussion. You know the old saying "Everything rolls down hill"? Guess who could be at the bottom of that hill. Bottom line; try not to have tunnel vision, when you cast your vote.

Here in Missouri we have a governor race between Claire McCaskill-D and Matt Blunt-R; a Senate race with Nancy Farmer-D and Kit Bond-R; on the western side of state we have the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> congressional district races. In June the Missouri state convention was held in St. Louis and was an election year. I would like to welcome two new executive board members, Kevin Boyer from Br-763 Columbia, as the Vice-President and Kevin Holmes from Br-5050 Ballwin, as the state treasurer for the Missouri Association. They have shown great leadership in their own branches. I'm sure that they will do the same for the letter carriers throughout Missouri. I would also like to thank Branch 343 for all their effort in hosting a great convention. We held our 9<sup>th</sup> annual MDA golf tournament on Friday before the convention; I would like to thank Ken Meyer for planning and over seeing the tournament and all the golfers who participated in the tournament. With everyone's help we were able to raise \$3,024.00 for MDA. Thanks again to all of you.

See everyone at the Rap Session in February.

**REMEMBER TO VOTE NOVEMBER 2<sup>ND</sup>!!!!!!!**

**Lisa Elliott, President**  
**Missouri State Association of Letter Carriers**  
**[llelliottpres@aol.com](mailto:llelliottpres@aol.com)**

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## NATIONAL BUSINESS AGENT'S REPORT

**GET OUT AND VOTE!** Tuesday, November 2nd is Election Day for American Voters. Along with the various local, state and national offices as well as regional issues to be decided, letter carriers and other working men and women will be heading to the polls to cast their ballots for President of the United States. This is my last article prior to the election, and I wanted to take this opportunity to address the members of Region 5 on the pivotal nature of this upcoming election for working men and women, in general, and letter carriers, in particular.

Our Union, the NALC, at the recently concluded National Convention in Honolulu, voted overwhelmingly to endorse Senator John Kerry to be the next President of the United States. When comparing John Kerry's plans for this country versus the programs of George W. Bush, the differences between the two men are clear and dramatic. Whether it is Homeland Security or Social Security, Overtime Pay or the Outsourcing of Jobs, Transportation or Education, Health Care or affordable Prescription Drugs, Safety and Health or Civil and Human Rights, John Kerry's stance on all these issues is stronger and more in line with the interests of working-class Americans. And as far as showing support for our Military Troops serving in Iraq and Afghanistan, I firmly believe that a vote cast for John Kerry is a vote of support for our troops: to mobilize them in accordance with clear objectives and achievable strategies, to provide them with the tools to accomplish the job, and to bring them home with their heads held high and with America's position of leadership and respectability in the world community restored.

While I know that some NALC members will disagree with the endorsement of John Kerry for President, and certainly there are legitimate differences on individual issues; nonetheless, it is also vitally important to keep what is at stake here for letter carriers in perspective. Remember that our contract with the USPS expires in about two years. At that time our wages, benefits and many of our working conditions will again be subject to negotiations. How successful the NALC is in protecting our wages, health benefits, retirement benefits, overtime pay, job security, COLA, and many other items will ABSOLUTELY depend upon who is in the White House and who controls Congress. Take it to the bank! Our economic well-being and our ability to provide for our families and to protect our children's futures will be significantly impacted by the policies of our elected officials over the next four years. Do not be misled by the politics of polarization, the effort to divide us by exploiting our differences over hot-button issues rather than appealing to our common interests and goals, and the bonds that unite us as citizens of this great country.

Dan Pittman, Mike Weir and I urge each and every letter carrier, active and retired, and their families to exercise your right, privilege and responsibility by voting on November 2nd. Vote to protect your families' security

and their future. Vote to ensure that your voice is heard at every level of our government. Vote to make certain the interests and issues of working men and women do not continue to take a backseat to the interests of the corporate and moneyed elite. Vote for the candidates who will represent us and fight for our concerns. Vote to preserve the American Dream for all of us and our fellow citizens. It's your job, your family, your country and your future! VOTE!

I want to mention that we have a number of letter carriers (eleven to be exact) who are temporarily working in conjunction with the AFL-CIO to assist with voter registration and education as well as getting the vote out in November. In Iowa, Mike Birkett (Br# 257, Dubuque), Mark Fallis (Br# 352, Des Moines) and Jeff Case (Br# 222, Burlington) have volunteered their services. Those released in Missouri include: Lisa Elliott (Br# 827, Independence), Melvin Moore and Jim Lonergan (Br# 30, Kansas City), Gerard Henke (Br# 4839, Florissant), Mark Sims (Br# 203, Springfield), Don Rowlett (Br# 984, St. Charles), and Mike Chenot and Tony Jasper (Br# 343, St. Louis). Dan, Mike and I have been in contact with all of these dedicated members on practically a daily basis, and I want to assure everyone that they are doing all they can to ensure that the importance of this Fall's election hits home with letter carriers and their families.

As of this Article's deadline (September 16), progress toward achieving agreements regarding the August 4th MOU (Memorandum of Understanding) on evaluating and adjusting routes has been minimal by both the Postal Service and NALC Branches. However, we are starting to see some positive movement; and, hopefully by the time this particular article is printed, there will be more information available. My office mailed a three page letter to every Branch President and Secretary in Region 5 in late August, emphasizing our position that the local parties are empowered and encouraged to negotiate local route adjustment agreements. We'll be keeping a close eye on this situation and will communicate any updates to Branch leaders as necessary.

### Region 5 Calendar

October 16-17	Nebraska Fall Training
October 24-26	Iowa Fall Training
November 2	VOTE!!
February 26-27, 2005	Regional Rap Session

**Arthur W. Buck, NBA – NALC  
St. Louis - Region 5**

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### VICE PRESIDENT'S VIEWS

We are four weeks out from Election Day 2004, and the mail volume has started to be inundated with more and more full-cover slick pages to deliver, each one hoping to be the deciding piece of information or idea that finally

pulls you in the direction of their candidate. Have you made up your mind yet? Many issues can pull a voter in two directions at once, and making a decision on what you believe oftentimes may conflict with what could be best for your family. My career with the Postal Service and my dedication to this great Union helps with my decision-making. I want candidates who support the Letter Carriers and meaningful Postal Reform to do well in this election; it helps them to believe that they are doing the right thing. I put together a candidate forum for our last Union meeting and invited Democrats, Republicans, Libertarians, Greens, and Independents to come. We had a fish fry and a good crowd, and 11 candidates showed up to give a 5-minute speech and to answer questions. This is relatively easy; it is just a matter of calling the local headquarters of the parties and asking if any candidates would be interested in speaking at your meeting. What worked really well for me was having early confirmations from candidates that way I could call their opponent and tell them that the person they were running against had already committed to come. I had two state senate races and three state representative races with Democrat and Republican both there, and one Republican for Sheriff. It was enlightening to hear on a local level, at least, what each candidate wanted to do was different from his or her opponent. These candidates broke things down to the local level and you could tell by their speech who they were counting on to get them elected and how they truly differed from their opponent. On the national level, many attack ads, mass-mailings, radio commercials, TV ads, sound bites, magazine covers all want you to believe that electing John Kerry will, in no particular order, cause us to be attacked, raise your taxes, lose your guns, make abortion mandatory, take your property, etc. When I talk to my membership about the election, I stress that bargaining rights, overtime rights, healthcare rights, annual leave rights, all of these things are under attack. My Republican members (and believe me, here in the middle of the state there are a bunch) accuse me of using "scare tactics", and that voting for someone solely on how they will preserve my job isn't good enough. What about the unborn children? Well, I believe in a woman's right to choose. Well, what about the right to bear arms? Well, I say go ahead; no one is going to take your gun. How many gun owners lost their guns during 8 years of the Clinton Presidency when LaPierre and the NRA told his members everyday that Clinton was coming to get their guns? None-not one, so I find it odd that they are bringing this topic back up. Do I own a gun or a rifle? No, don't need one. I work sixty hours a week, so I don't have time to hunt. Protection? I live in a decent neighborhood, I have four Bulldogs, and, oh yeah, I am 6'3" 300 lbs. And I fear no man (or woman). I spend what little free time we get on my Harley and another hobby would seriously cut into that time. I'm not against hunters; I believe you should kill as many deer as you can from running across the road in front of me while I am on my bike. The point I am trying to make is that everyone has a reason why they vote the way they do – I

want you to be selfish and vote for your job. Your career makes all those other things you enjoy possible. In Unionism

**Kevin Todd Boyer, Vice President**  
**Missouri State Association of Letter Carriers**  
**President Branch 763 Columbia Merged**  
**[theoriginalmrfun@yahoo.com](mailto:theoriginalmrfun@yahoo.com)**

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## TAKING NOTE

As you might well expect, my column is going to be about the upcoming election. You are probably tired of hearing that "this election is the most important election that we will ever face". Yeah, so am I.

This election is important not only for the president but also for our Senators and Representatives. I see this as a showdown. On one side you have those who wave the flag and fan the flames of fear and hate while quietly eroding our rights, turning back the clock on environmental laws and lining the pockets of themselves and their wealthy friends. On the other side you have a party that, looks out for the interest of working men and women of this country, believes in environmental conservation and sees that we must listen to our friends in other countries before rushing to judgment.

George Bush has made this election about two things, the war in Iraq and John Kerry's service record. Fine. If that is what he is basing his election hopes on then let's look at those issues.

The war in Iraq has killed approximately 1,000 U.S soldiers and uncounted amounts of Iraqis, non-Americans and American contractors. The Iraqi people have not exactly welcomed this "liberation" with open arms (loaded maybe). Polls in Iraq show that we are not trusted by many and hated by others. Our planning has left much to be desired and we seem to be lost as to what we are going to do next. We have a good portion of our military coming from the ranks of the National Guard and our troops are now being taken from other parts of the world to shore up our lack of personnel. We are spending trillions of dollars fighting this war and I for one would like to know where this money is coming from and how we expect to pay off the huge deficits that are being run up.

Is this how we want our country run for another four years?

Oh, and by the way, what ever happened to Osama? Does anyone remember Osama? Wasn't it he (not Saddam) who planned and executed the attack on our country?

And contrary to what the Not-so-Swift Boat Veterans would like you to believe with their lies and distortions,

John Kerry was a decorated soldier during the Viet Nam War while Georgie was flying beer runs in Texas. Bush has tried to hide his military record by attacking veterans with impeccable war records. Remember in 1999 when the Bush forces tried to make John McCain sound like a traitor. Ring any bells. Business as usual for the Bush/Rove team.

Cast your vote for change, cast your vote for jobs, cast your vote for the environment, cast your vote for health care for all, cast your vote for tax relief for those who need it.

**VOTE FOR JOHN KERRY!  
VOTE FOR NANCY FARMER!  
VOTE FOR CLAIRE McCASKILL!**

**John Ortmann, Secretary  
Missouri State Association of Letter Carriers  
[jsortmann@home.com](mailto:jsortmann@home.com)**

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### EAST CENTRAL DISTRICT – MSALC

#### **A FABLE FOR MATURE DUCKS (Loosely translated from an Old Russian folk tale)**

Once upon a time in a land not far away, there lived a farmer named Kon Gress who had a large pond on which he kept a flock of ducks. He took good care of his ducks, protected them from predators and for those ducks who could not forage for themselves for the natural food in the pond because of a broken wing or some other infirmity such as old age, he provided a special feeding of grain. However, to pay for this protection and feed, he regularly gathered up the golden feathers that fell from the ducks backs in molting season and sold them for a good price.

One day he notices that the older ducks were not shedding as many feathers as before but that the feathers on their backs were larger and more golden. So Kon Gress decided that if he could catch the older ducks, he could pick some of their back feathers and get more money. He noticed that the older ducks sort of banded together and he realized that birds of a feather do flock together. He got a large net and cast it over the older ducks so that they could not fly. He then was able to pick some of the best feathers out of their backs. Of course the old ducks did not like being picked on since the feathers did not grow back as fast as the younger ducks and, besides, their backs got cold. One of the smarter old ducks organized the mature ducks and suggested they do something to avoid being singled out for feathers. After much discussion, they decided that when the net settled over them, they would all stick their necks through the net and fly off together. They would fly to the other side of the pond and land among the tall rushes where the net would stay on top of the rushes and they could escape under the net.

So the next time Kon Gress threw the net over them, they all took off together and they did escape the net. However, they were so pleased with how smart they had been, that they became complacent and no longer paid much attention to the farmer. They became so engrossed in pecking at the grain thrown down for them that they did not notice Kon Gress creeping up on them again. When the net settled over their heads, they were so startled that they all flew off in different directions and were caught in the net. Kon Gress had an easy time picking all the best golden feathers off their backs.

There is a moral to this tale. We should all flock together and fly right or we will surely get plucked.

**Charles W. Cook, East Central District  
Missouri State Association of Letter Carriers**

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### WESTERN CENTRAL DISTRICT – MSALC

Dear Brother and Sister Letter Carriers:

I'm writing to you just to remind you of what is ahead of us concerning the 2004 Election. We have some very important elections coming up this year. We need to start looking at the many candidates that are running for the different offices that are open, and, to see what candidate is best qualified to represent the Letter Carriers.

Before we get to the point of worrying about what candidate to vote for, we must be registered to vote. We don't have very much time to get registered. So, if you haven't registered yet, please, PLEASE! do so now.

We are in a dog fight, trying to keep our jobs. But, these jobs are worth fighting for. One way we can fight is to contribute to COLCPE, so our Union leaders can select a candidate and that candidate can help pass legislation that will help the Letter Carriers. I urge you – active and retired Letter Carriers all over the State of Missouri – to get involved so we can make a strong statement and accomplish our mission.

**Earnest Graham, West Central District  
Missouri State Association of Letter Carriers**

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### NORTHEAST DISTRICT – MSALC

As the Nov 2 general elections are fast approaching I hope everyone is registered and ready to vote. We all have the right to vote. We have the obligation to vote right for our futures. Whatever your choice, hit the polls Nov. 2 and VOTE.

Have you signed up yet to be an **E-Activist**; it's your chance to express your opinion on political issues important to our jobs.

What about signing up to contribute to **COLCPE** through payroll deductions. It's easy to do using PostalEase and if every carrier would contribute a few dollars each pay period we can make a huge difference.

I had to reschedule our **fall meeting – new date – Oct 16**, at: Bubba's; 101 Church St; Hannibal Mo. (on the riverfront) **Mark your calendars.**

The NE District is made up mostly of small offices and it is difficult to abide by the rules of our contract. We need to stand together to know how to handle the pressures placed upon us to get the job done. Be proud you are a USPS letter carrier.

Pray for all the hurricane victims and as always keep our troops in your prayers.

**OUR VOTE IS OUR VOICE – SHOUT OUT ON NOV 2**

**Patti Miller, Northeast District Representative  
Missouri State Association of Letter Carriers  
[deanx2@frankford.net](mailto:deanx2@frankford.net)**

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### NORTHWEST DISTRICT – MSALC

Greetings from the great Northwest. We have our district meeting on October 30th in St. Joseph, MO. But more important than our meeting is the national election in November. I strongly encourage everyone to go out and vote. If you think your vote won't matter, just remember what happened in Florida four years ago, period! Your vote does matter! And it does count! And it's our votes that can change the course of our country! So again, please vote. No matter who you vote for just vote.

**Pat Flora, Northwest District Representative  
Missouri State Association of Letter Carriers  
[pf18@msn.com](mailto:pf18@msn.com)**

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### RETIREES' REPORT

I attended the retirees' breakfast at the National Convention. One of the speakers was the Regional Commissioner of the Social Security Administration, Peter Spence. Benefits paid by SS are a half million dollars annually, and 1 out of 4 persons, 20 years old will go on disability. He also touched on the 2 bills of interest to CSRS retirees **GPO** and **WEP**; not much hope for either bill in this session.

Also addressing the retirees was Ron Martinson, Staff Director in the House for Civil Service Sub-Committee on government reform. He said Congress has not addressed Civil Service for years. He also addressed Premium Conversion. This bill must pass out of two house committees; it has passed out of the House Committee for Civil Service, but is stalled in Ways and

Means Committee, because the Chairman doesn't like the bill. Guess the party of the Chairman.

Don Southern, Director of Retirees also stated there will be a new retiree manual, which contains all issues on retirement in one book, and should be available later this year.

President Young stated that retired postal employees will not be eligible for assistance under the Postal Employee's Relief Fund which covers natural disasters or fires. More information can be obtained by writing the Postal Employees' Relief fund. PO Box 34422 Washington, DC. 20043-4422

**Walter Besch, Director of Retirees  
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### HEALTH BENEFITS REPORT

NALC members not currently enrolled in the NALC Health Benefit Plan will have an opportunity to join the Plan during Open Season which will run from November 8 through December 13.

Despite soaring medical costs, active and retired letter carriers can be proud that their union's health plan – the NALC Health Benefit Plan – will retain all of the same high level of benefits for enrollees in 2005, while continuing to offer rates competitive with others in the Federal Employees Health Benefits program (FEHB).

Employee contribution rates effective in January 2005 for active letter carriers and annuitants in the NALC Health Benefit Plan are:

	<u>Self-Only</u>	<u>Self &amp; Family</u>
Active Carriers (biweekly)	\$ 34.65	\$ 52.65
Annuitants (monthly)	\$ 126.34	\$ 230.75

NALC Plan rates for 2005, announced September 13 by the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) includes modest increases in employee contributions similar to those being experienced throughout the FEHB system.

OPM said FEHB enrollees in 2005 plans who have self-only coverage will pay an average \$4.32 more biweekly, while those with family coverage will pay on average \$9.99 more biweekly. NALC's plan cost for active postal employees will increase \$4.89 biweekly for self-only and \$9.90 biweekly for family coverage.

NALC President William H. Young and Director of Health Benefits Thomas H. Young said letter carriers and their families should examine very closely the benefits that the NALC Health Benefit Plan provides, along with the rates, and then compare them with other

plans during Open Season. "We know NALC will hold its own in any comparison," they said. Administered and operated by the union, the NALC Health Benefit Plan provides active letter carriers, annuitants, and other postal employees with top quality benefits that include medical services provided by physicians, inpatient and outpatient hospital services, emergency treatment, mental health and substance abuse treatment, and NALC's prescription drug program.

*This is a summary of some of the features of the NALC Health Benefit Plan. Detailed information on the 2005 NALC Health Benefit Plan can be found in the official brochure. Before making a final decision, please read the Plan's officially approved Brochure (RI71-009). All benefits are subject to the definitions, limitations and exclusions set forth in the official brochure.*

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### THE COMPUTER CORNER

Greetings Brothers & Sisters of the Satchel,

What is spyware? The official definition according to whatis.com follows: "Spyware is any technology that aids in gathering information about a person or organization without their knowledge. On the Internet (where it is sometimes called a spybot or tracking software), spyware is programming that is put in someone's computer to secretly gather information about the user and relay it to advertisers or other interested parties. Spyware can get in a computer as a software virus or as the result of installing a new program.

Data collecting programs that are installed with the user's knowledge are not, properly speaking, spyware, if the user fully understands what data is being collected and with whom it is being shared. However, spyware is often installed without the user's consent, as a drive-by download, or as the result of clicking some option in a deceptive pop-up window. Adware, software designed to serve advertising, can usually be thought of as spyware as well because it almost invariably includes components for tracking and reporting user information.

The cookie is a well-known mechanism for storing information about an Internet user on their own computer. However, the existence of cookies and their use is generally not concealed from users, who can also disallow access to cookie information. Nevertheless, to the extent that a Web site stores information about you in a cookie that you don't know about, the cookie mechanism could be considered a form of spyware. "

Thought provoking isn't it. Considering the daily scrutiny that postal employees are under one would think that

spyware wouldn't bother Letter Carriers to much. We are used to it, right? Since it is not a 'condition of employment' there is something that can be done about spyware on our computers.

If you want to do something about spyware below are a couple of programs that I use and I can recommend for use on your computer. The first is Spy Sweeper by Webroot <http://www.webroot.com>

Depending on the size of your hard drive and the number of files on your computer the time to 'sweep' your computer for spyware will vary. Currently it takes 43 minutes to 'sweep' my computer. Time well spent, IMHO. I recommend this be done daily. In fact, it is a good habit to 'sweep' your computer every morning when you turn it on. Before you turn on your computer, disable or otherwise turn off, your connection to the Internet. Some spyware is so sneaky that at the instant it (the spyware) sees a live connection to the Internet it will go out and download a variation of itself and thereby evade detection of the sweep you are about to perform. (Note: Periodically download new definitions/updates to catch these variants.) So stay off line when booting up your computer until after you perform the sweep.

Another one I use in conjunction with the aforementioned Spy Sweeper and I also recommend for you to use is called Ad-Aware from

<http://www.lavasoftusa.com/software/adaware/>

The same usage guidelines apply to this software as mentioned for Spy Sweeper. I use them both daily. If you do this too, you will be amazed at what you find that has been added to your computer with, or more likely without, your knowledge.

You may view this as to much trouble and not worth your time but think of it as dealing with postal management and their repetitive Contract violations. In other words, if you're going to work for the postal service Contract violations are a way of life. If you are going to be on the Internet, spyware is a way of life. An over used saying comes to mind; "If you want to play, you've got to pay." In this case the cost to you is a little extra time.

There are many other anti-spyware tools available on the Internet. Some are free and some offer additional protections and configuration controls for a fee. For a listing of additional programs do an Internet search for spyware. For your convenience here is one such resource,

<http://www.spychecker.com/software/antispyspy.html>

In closing, I would like to remind you to keep your anti-virus definitions updated. Also, remember to never say something in e-mail that you would not sign your name to or would not say to someone in person. I wish you happy and safe computing.

Yours In Unionism,  
**Gary Mills, Retiree - Branch 343**  
**Rolla, Missouri**  
[mailman@rollanet.org](mailto:mailman@rollanet.org)  
<http://www.mailmanstuff.com>

You are invited to subscribe to my e-mail list, Postal-Bytes. This list is a forum, which shares information, experience, and opinions among its subscribers. You can subscribe via the web site at...  
<http://lists.rollanet.org/mailman/listinfo/postal-bytes>

Or if you prefer, send an e-mail message with your Name, Branch #, City & State, and your E-Mail address to [mailman@rollanet.org](mailto:mailman@rollanet.org)  
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### EDITOR'S EMISSIONS

**VOTE, VOTE, VOTE!** The most important thing you can do on Tuesday November 2, 2004, is vote! It is a sad commentary on our nation that less than 50% of the eligible people ever bother to do so in a Presidential Election – even fewer bother at other times. In the past 35 years, I don't think I have ever missed a General Election, and, very few Special Elections. I hope every one of you will be there at the Polls and make your voice and choice be known.

**POSTAL REFORM!** The USPS is standing on sufficiently solid financial footing for the PMG to announce no rate hikes through 2006. However, that is no reason for us to become complacent. Now is the time to let our representatives and Senators know that it is WRONG to delay Postal Reform. President Bush is opposed to such legislation being brought to the Floor of either the House or Senate even though he is the one who required a Blue Ribbon Panel to make recommendations for such reform. What is wrong with this picture?

**OPEN SEASON!** Yes, it is that time of year again. We need to review our specific needs and make some choices about our health care and our retirement. It is also a way for us to save money on our Income Taxes if we make the right decisions. Health insurance premiums, Flexible Spending Accounts and the Thrift Savings Plan are all tax exempt or deferred earnings. With the changes over the past few years, more of our hard earned dollars can be protected from the "Tax Bite".

**ALPHABET SOUP!** Yes, the Postal Service continues trying to force feed its never-ending supply of Acronyms to us. The latest boondoggle is AM-SOP. I have never seen so much confusion and counterproductive ideas wrapped in a single package. Even the Supervisor and Postmaster haven't a clue about where things are any more. DOIS has replaced POST, but, it is still a sore point. When the computer is programmed with Garbage the best it can produce is GARBAGE. AMS has taken

away our ability to let publishers know when there is a bad address – now the computer is supposed to know every detail – NOT! Soap Box Mode – OFF!

Now that school is back in session the Holiday Season is just around the corner. Work Smart – Work Safe – Work Together.

**Matthew (Matt) J. Sause III, Editor**  
**Missouri Association of Letter Carriers**  
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### MEET THE OFFICERS

The 103<sup>rd</sup> annual Convention of the Missouri State Association was hosted by Saint Louis Branch 343 and held at the Radisson Hotel – Downtown St. Louis, MO. Election of officers took place during this business session. All officers were elected by acclamation and there are 2 new faces on the Executive Board: Kevin Boyer and Kevin Holmes join the ranks replacing Ken Meyer and Doug Winquest, who chose not to run again.

These people will guide the State Association through the next 2 years. Congratulations to each of them and best wishes for their terms of office. There are some difficult waters ahead, but, this crew can keep the course steady.



The National, State and Local Officers that made The 103<sup>rd</sup> Missouri State Letter Carriers Convention a rousing success.

Pictured from L to R Top row:  
Mike Weir, NALC Region 5 - RAA; Fred Rolando, NALC - Director of City Delivery; Gerard Henke, MoSALC - Director of Training; Dan Pittman, NALC Region 5 - RAA; Matt Sause, MoSALC - Editor; John Ortmann, MoSALC - Secretary; Keith Gentry, Branch 343 - President [host city];

Pictured from L to R Bottom row:  
Arthur W. Buck, NALC Region 5 - NBA; Kevin Boyer, MoSALC - V.P. [newly elected]; Lisa Elliott, MoSALC – President; Nikki Prado, Branch 343 - Executive V.P [host city]; Kevin Holmes, MoSALC - Treasurer [newly elected].

# THE MISSOURI LETTER CARRIER

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## **IMPORTANT DATES – MARK YOUR CALENDARS**

**Tuesday, November 2, 2004**  
**October 15 – December 31, 2004**  
**October 24 – 25, 2004**  
**November 8 – December 13, 2004**  
**November \_\_ – December \_\_, 2004**  
**December ??**  
**December 31, 2004**  
**February 26 - 27, 2005**

**Election Day – Get out the VOTE!**  
**Thrift Savings Plan – Open Season**  
**Committee of Presidents Meeting – San Juan, Puerto Rico**  
**Federal Employees Health Benefits – Open Season**  
**Flexible Spending Account – Open Season**  
**Penalty Overtime Exclusion**  
**Charles Coyle Scholarship Application Deadline**  
**Region 5 Rap Session – Saint Louis MO**

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