



Branch 11 Headquarters: James E. Worsham Building

CONGRESSMAN BOBBY RUSH CALLS FOR NEW LEADERSHIP IN CHICAGO!

Flanked by aldermen representing some South Side wards, which have seen mail service totally disintegrate, Congressman Bobby Rush called for the immediate resignation or termination of Chicago Postmaster Wanda Prater. Noting an OIG audit that was conducted at his request, the congressman stated that “people who depend on the Postal Service, seniors, families, other people depending on the Postal Service day-in and day-out -- it’s an absolute, epic, total, undeniable failure....” He then called for a total overhaul of Chicago Postal management. The audit, which focused on the Auburn Park, Henry McGee, Charles Hayes, and James E. Worsham stations, found that management routinely under reported delayed mail and did not have the adequate staffing to provide basic service. Branch President Mack Julion says that they could have saved some money on the audit if they had heeded his warnings over the past year. “We have been talking about the poor service due to staffing and mismanagement since the summer of 2019. We didn’t get here overnight and unfortunately it’s not restricted to those offices. Service in Chicago is substandard everywhere, and those in charge should be held accountable!”



POSTAL WORKERS ELIGIBLE FOR VACCINATIONS

As Illinois moved into Phase 1B of the vaccination plan, postal workers and other essential workers (first responders, teachers, and correction workers) and those over the age of 65 are now eligible for vaccination. With 1.3 million people in that are “essential” and 1.9 million over 65, that’s 3.2 million eligible Illinoisans, and they are finding there is not enough vaccine to go around! The Branch



has reached out to the state, the city of Chicago, and a major pharmacy chain in an attempt to set up something primarily for postal workers. A limited number of doses (500) were released to the Chicago District by the state, but they were quickly filled within hours. Branch President Mack Julion has reached out to the City of Chicago who is seeking to set something up for postal workers who are residents of the city. Julion stated, “We will exhaust every avenue and reach out to every source to get our members who want to be vaccinated, vaccinated. In the interim, if you are a veteran, reach out to the V.A., and if you are not, then sign up with the state or local government.” Branch 11 will notify members through their steward, social media, or text message when another opportunity becomes available.

BIDEN/HARRIS HIT THE GROUND RUNNING!

President Biden has set an aggressive agenda for his first 100 days as he prepares to undo the damages done by the failed Trump administration. He immediately began by signing several executive orders and has committed to vaccinating over 100 million Americans in the first 100 days. President Biden has presented Congress with a massive 1.9 trillion stimulus package to address the damage caused by the virus and to get the country back on track. The bill, which is expected to pass the House before the end of the month, will target small businesses and state and local governments that have been hit hard by the pandemic. Along with \$1,400 stimulus checks for everyone, it also extends unemployment insurance; provide additional funding for schools; and money for COVID testing, tracing, and vaccinations. It appears the hazard pay, that has been sought for all federal employees (including Postal employees), will not be a part of this initial bill. There is a plan for another package that would focus on workers and the nation’s infrastructure, that could possibly include hazard pay.



COVID-19 AND 2021 SCHEDULED EVENTS

Although the annual Super Bowl party and MDA Bowl-A-thon were canceled this year, there are high expectations that we will be moving closer to partial re-opening as more people get vaccinated. The Branch will continue to follow the guidelines as set by the city and state for any planned gatherings. This includes any Branch meetings. General membership meetings are limited to capacity based on guidelines and RSVP. The following are the events planned as of this edition of *The Vine* :

Branch Meetings (2nd Thursdays) : Zoom ID - 999 2375 2183 (dial in - 312.626.6799)

May Food Drive - **Postponed/Pending date in the Fall**

2021 MDA - Day at Ball Park - May 30 (Orioles vs. White Sox) - **Pending**

Illinois State Convention, Peoria - June 17-19 **Pending**

Membership Appreciation Night (Carriers Ball) - July 10 or 17

Chateau Del Mar - **Pending**

MDA Crosstown Classic - August 29 (White Sox/Cubs) - **Pending**

Branch 11 Annual Labor Day Family Picnic- Sept. 6 @ Miller’s Meadow - **Pending**

OTIS GRANT COLLINS: BACK TO “NORMAL”

Carriers at the Otis Grant Collins Post Office celebrated after their office was returned to regular casing and carrying duties as they were released from the dreaded “Case Consolidation.” It has been over a year since the carriers in that office were subject to the latest failed Postal experiment. Several carriers retired and some bid to other locations, but for those who endured the chaos- the return to “normal” was a sweet victory. Branch President Julion stated, “I’m just happy for all the carriers in that office. They are the real soldiers and in their steward, Shanaya Walker, they had the right leader at the right time. They stood their ground and fought the good fight!” You can read more on that in the March edition of the *Branch 11 News*. Branch 11 members also were victorious in a class action grievance on “timecard theft.” Every member who was a victim between March 2019 to January 2021 in those offices identified will receive a lump sum payment of \$200-\$300. They will also be compensated for any time stolen.



RATIFICATION BALLOTS DUE BY MARCH 1ST

Members are reminded that the ballots for ratification of the new agreement are due by March 1st, which mean they should be in the mail no later than February 26th to be included in the Branch raffle. The prizes for participation are as follows:

1st - \$750 2nd - \$250 3rd - \$100

Stewards of winners

\$200, \$100, \$50

There will also be ten gift cards of \$25

And.....we will provide donuts and coffee to the offices of highest % of participation by office size.

See your steward for entry.

CONGRATULATIONS BI-PARTISANS!!

Joe Jeron and *Richard O’Conner’s *Bi-Partisans* (Rogers Park Station) is this year’s Fantasy Football League Champion for the second time in five years. Their team also won the traveling trophy in 2016. This year they defeated the “Ace” team managed by fellow Rogers Park carrier and Branch Officer Stephen Stewart for the title. Finishing in Third Place was Branch President Mack Julion (*West Side Swag*) who beat Jerome Tyler (*Headhunter*) of Westchester in the consolation game. The top three teams contribute a portion of their winnings to charity or a PAC and the first-place team receives an additional \$500 cash winnings.

*(Retiree Richard O’Conner, former steward at Rogers Park, died prior to winning the championship).

SISTER COLES STILL MISSING

There has been no new revelations in the search for Branch 11 member Kierra Coles. The Charles Hayes letter carrier has been missing since October 2, 2018. The reward for any information leading to the whereabouts of Sister Coles remains at \$47,500.



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Order your 2021 calendar! Call the Hall for details!