



National Association  
of Letter Carriers  
Fredric V. Rolando, President  
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# NALC Bulletin

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Familiar, new faces

## Rolando re-elected



President Rolando

Delegates to the 67th Biennial Convention of the National Association of Letter Carriers on Wednesday overwhelmingly placed their faith in President Fredric V. Rolando and their future in his hands, electing him to the highest office in the union for the next four years.

"Damn!" Rolando said, reacting to the delegates' enthusiastic cheers. "Thank you for your vote of confidence."

The leadership team of Rolando and Timothy C. O'Malley, newly elected executive vice president, will face tremendous challenges, including saving Saturday delivery and renegotiating the National Agreement in the wake of a deep economic downturn and dropping mail volume, but delegates displayed their trust in their union's leadership by electing all 10 resident national officers and three national trustees by acclamation.



Executive Vice President-elect O'Malley

O'Malley, the director of the Health Benefit Plan, was elected executive vice president, also by acclamation. He will replace Gary Mullins, who is retiring at the end of his term in December. Meanwhile, Director of Safety and Health Brian Hellman of New York City Br. 36 was elected by acclamation to take over as health plan director.

Region 1 National Business Agent Manny Peralta of Garden Grove, CA Br. 1100 was elected director of safety and health, while Region 8 NBA Lew Drass of Huntsville, AL Br. 462 was elected director of city delivery to replace the retiring Dale Hart. Both ran unopposed.

Additionally, convention delegates elected by acclamation several resident national officers who will continue in their current roles, including Vice President George C. Mignosi of Brooklyn, NY Br. 41, Secretary-Treasurer Jane E. Broendel of Davenport, IA Br. 506, Assistant Secretary-Treasurer Nicole Rhine of Lincoln, NE Br. 8, Life Insurance Director Myra Warren of Dallas Br. 132, and Retired Members Director Ernest Kirkland of Lexington, KY Br. 361.



Secretary-Treasurer Broendel and Vice President Mignosi

Trustees Chair Larry Brown of Los Angeles Br. 24 and Trustees Randall Keller of Massachusetts Northeast Merged Br. 25 and Mike Gill of South Florida Br. 1071 were all re-elected by acclamation.

Convention delegates elected the following national business agents by acclamation: Christopher Jackson, Garden Grove, CA Br. 1100 (San Francisco Region 1); Paul Price, Portland, OR Br. 82 (Pacific Northwest Region 2); Roger Bledsoe, Oklahoma City Br. 458 (Denver Region 4); Dan Pittman, Kansas City, MO Br. 30 (St. Louis Region 5); Pat Carroll, South Macomb, MI Br. 4374 (K-I-M Region 6); Chris Wittenburg, St. Paul, MN Br. 28 (Minneapolis Region 7); Peter S. Moss, Gulf Coast Mgd., MS Br. 1374 (Memphis Region 8); Judy Willoughby, Tallahassee, FL Br. 1172 (Atlanta Region 9); Kathy Baldwin, Beaumont, TX Br. 842 (Dallas Region 10); and Tim Dowdy, Virginia Beach, VA Br. 2819 (District of Columbia Region 13).

The national business agent positions in five NALC regions are contested:

- Chicago Region 3: between Neal Tisdale of Springfield, IL Br. 80 and Kevin Schaible of Belleville, IL Br. 155.
- Cincinnati Region 11: between Dan Toth of Lorain, OH Br. 583 and Mike Hayden of Toledo Br. 100.
- Philadelphia Region 12: between Bill Lucini of Philadelphia Br. 157 and Michael D. Stanton of Haddonfield, NJ Br. 769.
- New England Region 14: between John J. Casciano of Boston Br. 34 and Michael L. Willadsen of Hartford, CT Br. 86.
- New York Region 15: between Lawrence D. Cirelli of New Jersey Mgd. Br. 38 and Walter Barton of Long Island, NY Mgd. Br. 6000

An election committee appointed by President Rolando and chaired by Joseph DeRossi of Brooklyn, NY Br. 41 will oversee distribution of ballots and recording of results in those elections. Committee members include Pam Donato, Minneapolis Br. 9; Antonia Shields, Birmingham, AL Br. 530; Mack Julian, Chicago Br. 11; and Ricardo Guzman, San Diego Br. 70.

## Final count: 7,253 delegates

The Credentials Committee reported that 28 national officers, 71 at-large delegates, and 7,253 branch delegates had been issued credentials for the convention, for a total of 7,352. Delegates from 621 branches represented all 50 states, the District of Columbia and three territories.

## Convention Wednesday

### Saluting the heroes of 1970

Convention delegates viewed the film "The Strike at 40: Celebrating NALC's Heroes of 1970," featuring several letter carriers who participated in the 1970 postal strike—including one little-known carrier named Vincent Sombrotto, who would go on to serve as NALC president for more than two decades.

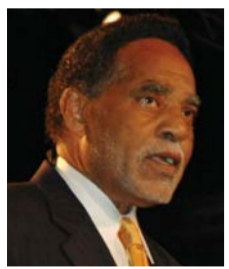
Veterans of the strike described the tough working conditions and low wages—some were eligible for welfare and held second jobs—that sparked the illegal strike, and the tremendous risks they took in walking out.

Few understood at the time how important their brave act would be to the future of the letter carrier profession. Ultimately, their strike won immediate improvements in pay and true collective bargaining for carriers.

After the film, President Rolando asked delegates from around the country who had joined the 1970 strike to stand and be recognized.

## APWU President William Burrus

Addressing the convention Thursday morning, American Postal Workers Union President William Burrus told delegates his union stands with the NALC in opposing Postmaster General John E. Potter's plan to drop Saturday mail delivery.



APWU Pres. Burrus

"We've been in that fight, we oppose it, and we're going to beat him," Burrus said. "Potter's not going to get five-day delivery."

While postal unions don't win every fight, he said, "we have a seat at the table. Management's word is not the last word as it was in 1970," before the Great Postal Strike and the subsequent reorganization that resulted in the creation of the Postal Service.

Not only would it be unwise to lose a day of delivery, Burrus said, the Postal Service owes the American people six days of service on principle. "How can [Potter] have the audacity to tell the American public you can't receive mail on Saturday?"

The result of ending Saturday delivery, Burrus predicted, would be the end of the Postal Service's monopoly on the mailbox and on first class mail, even while the public continues to demand full mail service six days a week.

## Calif. Rep. Susan Davis

President Rolando welcomed to the convention Rep. Susan Davis (D-CA), calling her a "friend of the NALC" since her election in 2000 to represent her state's 53rd Congressional District, which includes San Diego. Davis is the author of H.R. 1604, the Universal Right to Vote By Mail Act, a bill that calls for allowing for the use of 'no excuses' absentee ballots in any federal election.

"Another way to raise revenue is to expand vote-by-mail," Davis said, "which also encourages participation in the electoral process."

"It's no wonder that the American people have more confidence in you than in any other federal workers," she said. "And what you do is truly amazing. You are brave, given the potential dangers—and I know there are a number of them—that you face.

"Congress is listening to you, because you command as much respect in Washington as you do across the country," Davis said. "The five-day proposal became dead on arrival in Congress because of everything you have done."



Rep. Davis

## Convention Thursday

Mini rap session

### Convention discusses approach to next contract

To gather input from the delegates about the upcoming renegotiation of the National Agreement, President Rolando led a mini "rap session" Thursday to discuss a number of strategic ideas. He warned that pressure for concessions will be fierce, and that the political environment could turn negative following the congressional elections this fall.

Rolando presented three options the union's leadership had discussed: waiting until the contract nears expiration next fall to begin talks; bargaining jointly with the American Postal Workers Union and National Rural Letter Carriers' Association, both of which have contracts expiring this year; or beginning negotiations early if postal management engages the NALC as a willing partner. He said the Executive Council was leaning toward the last option. "We can try to seek win-win solutions that take advantage of letter carriers' key role in the Postal Service" he said.

Rolando then opened the floor to comments about these or any other ideas for the best negotiating strategy, and delegates offered a range of suggestions. Some noted that legislation the union is pushing to correct the \$50 to \$75 billion civil service retirement system overpayment by the Postal Service would greatly relieve pressure for concessions, and should be a top priority. Other delegates rejected the joint negotiation option.

The convention adopted a motion from the floor urging the Executive Council to look into the third option of exploring the possibility of early negotiations. Several delegates expressed their trust in the national leadership team's ability to vigorously represent letter carriers in the next round of negotiations.



Postkom's Overland

### Postkom's Odd Christian Overland

Odd Christian Overland, president of Postkom, the union representing letter carriers in Norway, addressed delegates, describing his union's struggle with the pressures of competition and privatization in both Norway and throughout Europe. Calling mail service "a part of the necessary infrastructure of a well-functioning society," Overland said postal services worldwide already face competition from the Internet, so labor unions must prepare for difficult times regardless of the competition they face from other delivery providers.



## Economic Policy Institute's Jeff Faux



EPI's Faux

Rolando introduced to the convention Jeff Faux, a distinguished fellow at the Economic Policy Institute, who described a long-term trend that began three decades before the current economic crisis—the end of the growth in wages that began after World War II.

"It's no accident this happened at the beginning of the 1980s" after the election of President Ronald Reagan, he said, because Reagan's encouragement of cheap overseas production and busting American unions stopped wages in their tracks. If the wage growth trend had continued, said Faux, average wages today would stand at double their current level.

Though unions are a strong backstop against eroding wages, Faux warned that even union members will face pressure to hold down pay. "You people here work for a great institution," he said, "and you've got a great, strong, union, but no one can escape what's happening in the labor force," Faux said.

## CWU-UK's Billy Hayes



CWU's Hayes

Billy Hayes, general secretary of the Communication Workers Union, which represents letter carriers in the United Kingdom, addressed the convention Thursday, telling delegates that his workers face pressure to privatize from governments motivated by extreme ideology. "It's not about reason, it's not about rationality, it's about dogma," he said.

Hayes urged letter carriers and unions worldwide to work together for a united front against efforts to privatize postal agencies or degrade service. "When they say 'profit,' we say 'public.' When they say 'competition,' we say 'community.' And when they say 'five days,' we say 'six days.'"

## 68th Biennial Convention: Minneapolis



Following a video showcasing the attractions that Minneapolis has to offer visitors, President Rolando asked Pam Donato, president of Minneapolis Branch 9, to come to the stage. Accompanied by a recording of the song "1999" performed by Minneapolis native Prince, Donato and a cadre of Branch 9 members made their way to the stage, flinging fake snow onto convention delegates along the way.

On stage, Donato explained the tongue-in-cheek gesture. "It doesn't actually snow all the time in Minnesota," she said. "In fact, today it's sunny and 91 there."

Donato said delegates could find plenty to do in her northern city after a day's convention business is finished—it's the home of several professional sports teams, the famous Mall of America shopping complex, and a new light-rail system to help convention-goers and their families get around. "It's a great, friendly town," she said.