



New year's resolutions

I'd like to begin by thanking President Rolando for giving me the opportunity to run on his ticket and all of you for electing me to serve in my new role. I'd also like to thank my good friend and brother, Dale Hart, for all the work he's done and for all the advice and assistance he has given while I've been getting ready to serve all of you.

For those who don't know me, I'm going to tell you about myself a little bit at a time over the next several months. I began my career with the Postal Service as a casual letter carrier in Kensington, MD, in the summer of 1977. On my first day on the job, I was sent out with James "Bud" Turner (retired Region 13 national business agent). I remember hearing a letter carrier cutting up,

"I'm ready to defend our customers' right to see us and receive their mail six days a week and every letter carrier's right to expect a fair day's wage for a fair day's work."

saying, "There goes another union man" as we were going out the door. Life's funny, isn't it?

I've never been much for new year's resolutions, but I'm over 50 now, so it's time to live a little. My first resolution is to clear up the lingering disputes regarding the Joint Alternative Route Adjustment Process (JARAP) that have remained unresolved. In the last few days, Dale Hart led the way and we are very close to getting the pending matters resolved. Hopefully, by the time you read this, decisions will have been made to allow everyone to complete his or her work for last year's process. I'm hoping to pick things up where Dale left off, get through the 2010 JARAP with lessons learned, and begin working toward having a joint route adjustment process for this year.

My next resolution is to narrow our Article 12 disputes/issues. I believe that there are areas of the country

where withholding is not legitimate and PTF conversions should be made but aren't. There are also areas of the country—especially where the flat sorting system (FSS) is going to be implemented this year—where appropriate withholding is both righteous and legitimate. The trick is to separate the two and use both the sword and the shield appropriately to protect the interests of the PTF and full-time letter carriers involved in these situations. I plan to help in any way I can to make sure we move forward in this area.

Then there's FSS implementation. We're going to see a lot of it this year and I plan to find a way to give those of you who will be going through this change a taste of what to expect. I also plan to study the past experiences of FSS implementation and follow each site that goes on line this year so we can work to make things better for letter carriers as we go. We'll try to craft an agreement with the Postal Service designed to get routes adjusted to as near to eight hours per day as possible (really, really) at the end of FSS implementation. I'm not saying this has or hasn't happened in the cities that

already have gone through FSS implementation, but maybe there's a way to get there with less disruption to letter carriers than we've seen in some places.

There are several other NALC issues that I'll be working on for you and reporting about. This new year brings many contractual issues that are really connected with tough legislative battles when you think about it. At stake for many of us are our jobs as letter carriers. At stake for all of us is our customers' right to the service they deserve and (maybe more importantly) *already paid for!* I'm ready to defend our customers' right to see us and receive their mail *six* days a week and every letter carrier's right to expect *a fair day's wage for a fair day's work*. How about you?

In closing, I want to wish all of you who are still reading this and your families a very happy and healthy new year. OK, let's go to work! ✉