

Volume 133/Number 10 October 2020

The Postal Record

The monthly journal of the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF LETTER CARRIERS

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What's at stake for letter carriers in the 2020 elections

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DOHERTY & DONELON SCHOLARSHIPS

Deadline: This form must be returned to NALC Headquarters no later than December 31, 2020.

Eligibility

- Applicant must be the son, daughter or legally adopted child of a letter carrier NALC member in good standing—active, retired or deceased. Stepchildren and grandchildren are eligible if they live with the letter carrier in a regular parent-child relationship.
- Applicant's parent must be a member in good standing of NALC for at least one year prior to making application.
- Applicant must be a high school senior when making application and must submit the form provided at right, signed by the NALC member and an officer of the member's NALC branch. This form must be returned to NALC Headquarters by December 31, 2020.

Requirements

- All applicants must take the Scholastic Assessment Test (SAT) or the American College Test (ACT) in either their junior or senior year. A copy of the official scores from the administering organization must be received at NALC Headquarters by midnight, March 31, 2021. (Computer-generated printouts of test scores will not be accepted.)
- All biographical questionnaires and secondary school reports must be received at NALC Headquarters by midnight, March 31, 2021.

Regulations

- Scholarship is to be used toward pursuing undergradu-

ate degree at an accredited college of recipient's choice.

- Winners may accept other college scholarship assistance in addition to the NALC award.

- Any change of schools or course of study must be done only with the permission of the NALC Scholarship Committee.

- A transcript of grades must be forwarded to the committee at the end of each school year.

- If winner suffers certified serious illness, scholarship will be held in abeyance for not more than one year.

- If unusual conditions are going to require an interruption in schooling, recipient must state reason(s) in writing to the Scholarship Committee and request that the scholarship be held in abeyance. Request(s) will be reviewed by the Committee and a decision rendered.

- If the NALC member is suspended by his/her local NALC branch or enters supervision, scholarship will be canceled.

Terms of awards

- The official scholarship judges will award one William C. Doherty Scholarship in each of the five USPS Regions and one John T. Donelon Scholarship. Winners are judged on the basis of secondary school records, personal qualifications and test scores. As in the past, the scholarship judges will consist of experienced persons in the educational field. Decisions of the judges will be final.

- Doherty Scholarship awards will be \$4,000 per year and the Donelon Scholarship award will be \$1,000 per year. Each scholarship is renewable for three consecutive years thereafter providing the winner maintains satisfactory grades. Award money will be deposited annually with the college. It will be credited to the winner's account to be drawn upon under the rules and regulations which the college has established for handling scholarship funds. Award money is to be used for required college fees, including room and board and transportation fees.

- Children of NALC national officers are not eligible.

In honor of NALC's president from 1941 to 1962, the **William C. Doherty Scholarship Fund** will again award five \$4,000 scholarships to children of members in good standing. The **John T. Donelon Scholarship Fund** will award one scholarship in honor of Donelon, longtime NALC assistant to the president. Applicants must be high school seniors and must meet all of the following eligibility criteria to be considered.

SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION

Date _____ (PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY)

Please send instructions as to how I can compete for a scholarship award. I am a senior in the 2020-21 school year.

I am the daughter son active
 *stepdaughter *stepson retired
 *granddaughter *grandson deceased

letter carrier _____

of Branch No. _____ City _____ State _____

My name is _____

My address is _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

Phone No. _____

Signature of branch officer

Signature of NALC parent member
(or spouse if deceased)

Printed name of branch officer

Last 4 digits of Social Security No. _____

Title _____ Date _____

This form must be returned no later than December 31, 2020, to the NALC Scholarship Committee, in care of the National Association of Letter Carriers, 100 Indiana Ave. NW, Washington, DC 20001-2144.

* Stepchildren and grandchildren are eligible if they live with the letter carrier in a regular parent-child relationship.

Voting and the Postal Service are essential



Fredric V. Rolando

Earlier this year, the Harris Poll company released a survey report on the U.S. corporate response to the COVID-19 pandemic. It asked Americans to identify the most valuable and essential companies during the crisis. Ranked No. 1 among the 100 companies deemed *most essential* during the pandemic was the United States Postal Service. That public affirmation of the value of our employer is a testament to the dedication and extraordinary service provided by America's letter carriers and our fellow postal employees. You can and should be very proud of this recognition.

But our work in this pandemic is far from done.

At this moment, the country is turning to us to reaffirm and protect something of immense value to our country—our democracy, the very heart of our national identity. At a time when the coronavirus continues to spread and when voting in person can endanger our health and the safety of our loved ones, voting by mail has emerged as one of the main solutions. It provides a safe and efficient means for exercising our right to choose our leaders in a democratic fashion. Nothing could be more essential than that.

In fact, 83 percent of all U.S. voters will have the option to vote by mail this year. Some 51 million Americans will automatically receive their ballots in the mail from states that are using a full vote-at-home model as a public health measure designed to keep lines short on Election Day. These states include California, Nevada, New Jersey and Vermont, as well as states that adopted Vote at Home before the pandemic (Colorado, Hawaii, Oregon, Utah and Washington). In addition, 44 million citizens were automatically sent applications to vote by mail. And no fewer than 100 million Americans have had the option to request an absentee mail ballot, most of them in states that already had “no excuse” absentee voting but others in states that liberalized the rules because of the coronavirus.

If our experience earlier this year during the primary election season is any guide, up to half of all votes cast in the November election will involve mailed-out ballots. Never in the history of our country have the American people needed us more than they need us right now. As we step up to deliver for

the country once again with integrity and nonpartisan professionalism, we can take tremendous pride in this role.

NALC is certainly doing its part to ensure a smooth election. We proposed, and the postmaster general agreed, to expand the Postal Service's National Election Task Force to include the postal unions and the postal management associations. We've been meeting weekly to coordinate public messaging, training and operational planning for the surge in mail ballots this year. Our goal is to get every ballot delivered on time and counted.

You can help in this effort. In these final weeks of this election, if you notice a problem that might delay or damage political mail or election mail, alert your steward. He or she will be part of local labor-management teams designed to troubleshoot such problems. As always, “if you see something, say something.”

Of course, letter carriers are not just part of the machinery of our democracy—we also are citizen-participants in it. Over the past several months, we have used the pages of *The Postal Record* to give you information about the candidates for president and the contrasting records of the two chambers of Congress as they relate to your jobs, your work life and your employer. On those matters, former Vice President Joe Biden and Sen. Kamala Harris are far and away the best choice for NALC members.

We have used those same workplace metrics to evaluate House and Senate races, and we have used the voluntary contributions of our members to the Letter Carrier Political Fund to support scores of candidates from both parties who have demonstrated their support for letter carriers and our issues. All of the arguments have been made, and I will not repeat them again. What I will repeat is that we fully respect the political diversity of our great union, and we understand that each and every one of you will make your own voting decisions based on the issues most important to you. By respecting that diversity, we ensure the unity we need to pursue our common interests as workers.

The important thing is not how you vote. The important thing is that you vote.

Our country is in real trouble right now. We face a pandemic, a related deep economic downturn, and a racial justice reckoning. But our democracy, with all its evident flaws, is still our best avenue for addressing these problems and making progress. As a former president used to say, there is nothing wrong with America that cannot be fixed with what is right with America.

Among those things that are most right about our country is our right to vote. It's sacred. It should not be squandered. Please vote and urge all your family and friends to do the same. Like the beloved U.S. Postal Service, voting is essential.



National Association of Letter Carriers, AFL-CIO

Since 1889, representing city letter carriers employed by the United States Postal Service.

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Union Plus offers a host of benefits—one of which is free online college courses for union members and their families

The mail, the message(s)



**Philip
Dine**

They say it takes a village. Sometimes, though, it may take a country—or at least a country full of letter carriers.

Delivering the mail, professionally and reliably—*check*. Delivering a bevy of other services, whether assisting residents or helping feed millions of Americans—*check*. Delivering our message and thereby changing the national conversation about the Postal Service—*check*.

And now, when it is needed more than ever—with so many challenges and opportunities—you are taking care of business by delivering the broadest of messages in a variety of ways.

What does the Postal Service need to weather the pandemic and economic shutdown, and to help Ameri-

cans everywhere by bringing them the mail and supplies they need? Will USPS be able to assure people that their voices will be heard in November, with mail ballots handled securely and efficiently?

You are addressing these and many other issues with enthusiasm, creativity and determination.

And, so, we have Amanda Beckley, president of Branch 1412 in Garden City, KS, who was sufficiently compelling in depicting the role of the Postal Service and letter carriers that the *Kansas Reflector* headlined the column, “Dear Kansans—can we at least not fight about the Postal Service?”

The columnist wanted someone who could describe what the mail means to folks in a small town, and Kansas State President Andy Tuttle knew just who could humanize and localize the issue for Kansans. Amanda has an 11-mile walking route in Garden City—which is 200 miles from a city in one direction, 300 miles in the other.

She explained how the post office unites the community, so vital in times like these, leading the columnist to end the piece as follows: “Making sure the U.S. Postal Service is OK is the least we could do in return for its service.”

Reporters speculating beyond their knowledge about recent USPS practices encounter a calm and reasoned voice in Detroit Branch 1 President Sandy Laemmel, who tells them not what they want to hear, but what they need to know, benefiting their audience—and us.

In Kentucky, we have a state president in Bob McNulty who constantly sends our way journalists aiming to tell the postal story—and who fills us in on coverage we may not be aware of, as does fellow Bluegrass State resident Jim Smith, a retired Lexington letter carrier.

From New Bedford, MA, letter carrier Wayne Johnson was part of a virtual national tribute to essential workers on Labor Day,

putting his public speaking and audio production background to good use. Just six years into his postal career, he recently was elected vice president of Southeast Massachusetts Branch 18.

Wayne was brought to our attention by Region 14 National Business Agent Rick DiCecca, who has been invaluable in several such instances. Speaking of NBAs, whether Region 1’s Bryant Almario, Troy Clark in Region 6 or Troy Fredenburg in Region 7, or others recently cited in this space, each and every NBA’s office has provided a major boost to NALC’s communications efforts.

Residents of the San Francisco Bay Area got a lesson in postal finances and legislation from retired letter carrier Ivars Lauersons of Vallejo, whose expansive 477-word letter to the editor fittingly ended: “Keep in mind this information as you read breaking news about the post office.”

We received more calls from journalists in Montana in a single day recently than over the entire past decade; fortunately, we have Montana State President Julie Quilliam to turn to for support, much as we have benefited from the presence in North Dakota of Rachel Freehauf and many other state presidents elsewhere.

If this part ends here, it’s not because the names do, but because the space does.

I’ve never seen a union with so many members in so many positions doing so much to communicate a message. At this point, it goes beyond providing information on finances or legislation; it’s also the reassuring and knowledgeable tone, so needed now in a society that often seems unhinged.

But it doesn’t stop there.

By your words and your actions on the job, your willingness as essential workers to take risks for the greater good, doing so with consistent grace and courage, you’re also sending the broadest of messages—about the value of the Postal Service, its ability to handle the challenges of the election, its competence, its integrity.

That transcends any specific issue; it affects how people think of the United States Postal Service and the letter carriers it employs.

On so many levels, you are sending a profound message to the American people. Before this is all over, it will have resonated in every corner of this country.

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Working safely through the pandemic

Last month, NALC and the Postal Service agreed once again to continue several pandemic-related memorandums of understanding (MOUs). These MOUs, found in NALC's Materials Reference System on the NALC website, include temporary expanded sick leave for dependent care (M-01910), temporary additional paid leave for city carrier assistants (CCAs) (M-01911), temporary use of the 7:01 rule (M-01913), temporary workplace changes to promote social distancing (M-01915), and temporary use of TCAs (M-01916).

NALC and the Postal Service also agreed to another temporary time-limit extension on Step B and arbitration appeals (M-01930), as well as an agreement giving local parties the ability to develop a sign-up process for full-time employees who previously did not, or could not, place their names on either the overtime-desired list or work-assignment list (M-01931).

Each of these MOUs was designed specifically to address issues such as the effects of the pandemic on daily USPS operations, the ability of NALC representatives to deal with the ever-pressing COVID-19 issues while simultaneously meeting specific representational timelines outlined in the National Agreement, and, most importantly, to protect and ensure the safety and health of letter carriers, their families, their co-workers and their customers.

From the beginning of the pandemic, NALC national officers, staff and representatives throughout the country have been in constant communication and negotiation with management officials at every level of the organization regarding supplies, equipment, policies, protocols and work procedures neces-

sary to keep letter carriers safe. For example, early in the pandemic, NALC worked with USPS to establish alternate delivery instructions to eliminate customer contact for mail that requires customer signatures. To reduce health risks associated with this, USPS temporarily modified customer signature capture procedures for the Mobile Delivery Device (MDD) sign-on-glass feature, PS Form 3811 (Domestic Return Receipt), PS Form 3849 (We ReDeliver for You), and any hard-copy receipt items usually signed by customers. These modified procedures continue today and will continue until it is safe to return to the normal processes.

Early on, it also was evident that letter carriers need to socially distance from their co-workers; as a part of that, management needed to minimize the number of carriers being loaned to other offices. As a result, NALC and the Postal Service agreed to implement temporary workplace changes to promote social distancing among city letter carriers (M-01915). The MOU directs the local parties to immediately discuss potential scheduling and office setup changes such as staggered start times, the scheduling of letter carriers to begin tours in groups of 10 or fewer, the manner in which stand-up talks are given as well as the way break locations and times are arranged, and other initiatives to maximize social distancing.

The MOU also committed the parties to limiting individuals to working only in their employing facilities to the extent possible. When not possible, the Postal Service agreed to a few additional precautions in the limited circumstance in which a carrier is sent to another office to work. In these situations, the Postal Service agreed that the following should be done:

1. The supervisor and the steward in the losing office will jointly determine which carrier will go to the gaining office;
2. If there is concern from either the loaned carrier or those in the gaining office about the loaned carrier entering the facility, the mail will be placed on the dock or somewhere outside where it can be loaded without entering the building;
3. If a loaned carrier does not bring a vehicle from the losing office, the gaining office will have appropriate cleaning supplies for the carrier to sanitize the vehicle that he/she will be using.

If any of the social-distancing measures put into place by M-01915 are not being followed, letter carriers should immediately notify their local branch representative or their national business agent.

In many offices throughout the country, USPS is currently conducting counts and inspections of letter carriers' routes. In early June, the Postal Service issued guidelines to its supervisors and managers regarding proper social-distancing protocols that must be followed while conducting a PS Form 3999, when performing a street inspection of a letter carrier's route; and while conducting a PS Form 1838-C, when counting a letter carrier's mail volume and office time. Some of these procedures include examiners always remaining at least 6 feet away from letter carriers at all times, examiners and carriers wearing face coverings in accordance with local ordinances and when social distancing cannot be maintained, using disposable gloves and other personal protective equipment, examiners avoiding direct hand-to-hand contact of the mail or inspection-related documents with the letter carrier, and mail being counted by examiners prior to the letter carrier

reporting for work. In addition, if a vehicle is needed, examiners must always use a separate vehicle.

Copies of the complete guidelines that managers and supervisors must follow if they conduct a PS Form 3999 or PS Form 1838-C on letter carriers have been provided to the NALC national business agents' offices. Additionally, these guidelines have been posted on the COVID-19 page on the NALC website. Letter carriers who are being inspected in the office or on the street should insist that examiners practice proper social-distancing rules.

Letter carriers also should insist on being provided, as well as commit to using, the daily supplies necessary to clean frequently touched items in the office and to clean steering wheels and other frequently touched surfaces in postal vehicles. From the beginning of this pandemic, USPS has committed to providing these types of supplies. Letter carriers also should have sufficient opportunity to wash their hands or be provided and use hand sanitizer, to keep their hands clean all day as they touch the many surfaces on their routes. USPS also should provide nitrile gloves for any employee who requests them.

The Postal Service established a COVID-19 Supplies Command Center to support USPS facilities with ordering and tracking supplies needed to keep employees safe and facilities clean during the coronavirus pandemic. In addition to facilities ordering supplies following standard procedures and using local sources where available, the command center is working closely with supply management and district supply coordinators to centrally fulfill orders for masks, gloves, air and hand sanitizers, cleaning products and other items directly from the USPS Material

Distribution Center in Topeka, KS.

Facilities and employees can contact the center for help tracking orders and for assistance in locating and ordering supplies. Additionally, the center is monitoring field inventories daily to assist districts in identifying facilities that are low on items needed to help prevent the spread of the coronavirus. Employees can call the COVID-19 Supplies Command Center at 844-773-3594, Monday through Friday, from 7 a.m. to 7:30 p.m. Eastern Time.

From the beginning of the pandemic, USPS committed to providing face masks to any employee who wanted to wear one. In April, the Postal Service began requiring employees to wear face coverings in certain situations. At that time, the Postal Service released a mandatory stand-up talk stating that until the COVID-19 pandemic no longer is an issue, employees must wear face coverings or masks when there is a local or state face-covering order or directive in place, or when an employee who does not deal directly with the public cannot achieve or maintain social distancing in the workplace. Since then, cloth face coverings or masks have been made mandatory, consistent with such local or state face-covering directives or orders.

Some letter carriers have certain respiratory conditions that could make them more vulnerable to the effects of the virus. For these individuals, the Postal Service has committed to providing N95 face masks to employees who request them. Some letter carriers, for various reasons, are unable to wear face masks at all. For these individuals, the Postal Service has committed to providing them with clear face shields to protect themselves and others from transmitting the

coronavirus to each other via person-to-person respiratory droplets when they sneeze, cough or talk. If letter carriers are not being accommodated with special requests for N95 masks or clear face shields, they should immediately inform an NALC representative, who should in turn communicate that issue with their national business agent. NALC has been successful in getting these situations corrected.

The requirement that face coverings and masks are mandatory for employees who cannot achieve or maintain social distancing in the workplace should never be misconstrued to mean that social distancing is not as important when you are wearing a mask. Letter carriers should continue to maintain proper social distancing as best they can, even when wearing a mask or face shield.

The national officers, staff and NALC representatives throughout the country will continue communicating to USPS any issues regarding necessary supplies and equipment. NALC also will continue negotiating policies, protocols and work procedures necessary to keep letter carriers safe. Letter carriers should continue to contact their NALC representatives at any level of the organization with any questions, and to report offices that are not being sanitized on a regular basis, that do not have sufficient supplies (hand sanitizer, disinfectant wipes, masks, gloves, etc.), that are not practicing proper social-distancing guidelines, that are not providing daily communication regarding stand-up talks or safety precautions, that expect employees to work without protection or in a less-than-sanitary environment, or that have any other issues that put letter carriers at increased risk to contracting COVID-19. **PR**

What's at stake for letter carriers in the 2020 elections



Letter carriers aren't used being the center of attention in elections.

We do our jobs each day and the American public appreciates what we do, but rarely is the U.S. Postal Service a central issue in political debates. In this crucial election year, that has changed. Congress has debated postal legislation and held emergency hearings on the Postal Service. Americans are holding rallies and protests in support of the Postal Service and its mission. Every day brings new stories in the media about USPS. Both presidential candidates frequently mention USPS and mail delivery. However, their messages about the Postal Service couldn't be more different, and these messages show what is at stake in this election for USPS and for letter carriers.

Along with being a major issue, the Postal Service—and letter carriers—will play an essential electoral role by delivering millions of ballots, as nearly every state has made it easier for its residents to vote by mail, and as many Americans seek to avoid standing in line at polling stations during a pandemic.

With the Postal Service a central political topic, the NALC Executive Council had much to consider when it made a decision on endorsing a presidential ticket. The Executive Council voted unanimously to endorse former Vice President Joe Biden and Sen. Kamala Harris for president and vice president, respectively.

The Executive Council's decision to endorse the Biden-Harris ticket was based on the input of NALC's membership through two types of poll-

ing and responses to our candidate questionnaire. In the postcard poll conducted by distributing preference cards in *The Postal Record* for members to mail back to us, members preferred Biden over President Donald Trump by a ratio greater than 2-1 (58.4 percent versus 26.6 percent). A scientific poll conducted for us by Hart Research found similar results.

“With the Postal Service a central political topic, the NALC Executive Council had much to consider when it made a decision on endorsing a presidential ticket.”

The Council also evaluated the candidates on issues that affect letter carriers and the Postal Service, taking into consideration the candidates' records, statements and responses to the questionnaire we sent to all campaigns. It did not consider unrelated matters such as social issues or foreign policy, nor did it take party affiliation into account.

Using this information, the choice was clear.

Biden is a fierce ally and defender of USPS, letter carriers, and our postal brothers and sisters. NALC's endorsement and our support come down to Biden's steadfast support on postal issues and his unwavering dedication to improving the lives of working people throughout the country.

Since being elected in 2016 to represent California in the Senate, Harris has put letter carriers and working families first. In her role on the Homeland Security and Government Affairs Committee, which has jurisdiction over postal and federal issues, she

has staunchly worked for a healthy, financially stable Postal Service and has consistently acted to ensure that those who run the Postal Service are held to the highest standard.

Biden and Harris exhibit the experience, dedication, thoughtfulness and steady hands that will work to protect letter carriers and working families.

Despite our best efforts and just as it did in 2016, the Trump campaign once again did not respond to our repeated outreach. While the president's campaign showed no interest in engaging NALC members on why we should support him, his actions with regard to the Postal Service and letter carriers clearly demonstrate his views.

A stark choice in trying times

With the Postal Service at center stage this year, both presidential nominees, Democrat Joe Biden and Republican Donald Trump, have shared their views on the Postal Service and its employees, supplying a wealth of factors for letter carriers to use in reaching their decisions.

Trump has shown frequent contempt for the Postal Service, calling it a “loser” and a “joke.” As the COVID-19 pandemic engulfed the country and more states turned to the mail to allow voters to cast their ballots safely, Trump lashed out at the idea. Using outrageous and unsubstantiated claims, Trump angrily denigrated the vote-by-mail process as unreliable and vulnerable to corruption. He often claimed that voting by mail invites widespread fraud; tweeting, for example, “Mail boxes will be robbed,

ballots will be forged & even illegally printed out & fraudulently signed.”

It should be noted that Trump himself applied for a vote-by-mail ballot for this fall’s election.

President Trump also opposed appropriating emergency funds to assist the Postal Service, as Congress has done for many other sectors of the economy to help them survive the impact of the pandemic-related economic shutdown. He threatened to veto legislation that contained postal relief funding.

In sharp contrast, former Vice President Biden repeatedly has defended the Postal Service and its employees, supported additional financial aid for USPS during the pandemic and called out Trump’s “sabotage” of the mail. Biden supports assuring that postal employees have the protective gear they need during the pandemic.

Indeed, the Trump administration’s hostility toward the Postal Service and its workers predates the pandemic. The White House established a postal task force on the future of the Postal Service.

In its report, submitted in December of 2018, the task force’s proposals were couched as a plan to “save” the Postal Service, but the details reflected a bid to dismantle the agency.

Notably, the Trump task force called for eliminating our right to collectively bargain our wages and other terms of employment.

“Yes, brothers and sisters, on the 50th anniversary of the Great Postal Strike of 1970, the president of the United States has called for tak-

ing away our right to negotiate our pay and terms and conditions with postal management,” NALC President Fredric Rolando wrote. “That is an insult to each of us and to the heroes of 1970.”

The task force went on to call for allowing the Postal Service to cut six-day and door delivery, outsourcing some postal jobs to private contractors (likely employing non-union workers and paying lower wages), forcing the Postal Regulatory Commission to dramatically increase the cost of “commercial” mail and shipping, and degrading the Postal Service’s universal service obligation to cover only a narrow band of so-called “essential mail.”

Riddled with flaws from simple errors to faulty assumptions, the task force’s recommendations, if implemented, would result in massive service cuts to customers and in reduced business because of steep price increases, as well as in the likely loss of affordable package delivery in rural areas and economically stressed urban communities. In short, it would make things far worse

“In its report, submitted in December of 2018, the task force’s proposals were couched as a plan to ‘save’ the Postal Service, but the details reflected a bid to dismantle the agency.”

for almost everyone—the Postal Service, its employees and the American people—with the possible exception of some of the Postal Service’s private competitors.

The Trump administration’s hostility to federal workers also was evident in the proposed budgets the president

has sent to Congress during his term. They consistently called for deep cuts to federal workers’ pay and benefits, including some cuts to postal employee benefits. For the most part, Congress rejected those proposals.

A clear difference

In stark contrast to Trump’s attacks on the Postal Service and its employees, Biden not only has made his support for USPS and postal workers clear in his public statements, he also has expressed emphatic backing for a strong USPS and the rights of its employees in the questionnaire NALC sent to the candidates.

In his responses, Biden expressed support for six-day and door delivery, for maintaining the Postal Service’s universal service obligation, for providing financial services through USPS, and for ending the mandate to pre-fund retiree health care costs. “It is essential to remove the pre-funding mandate in order to successfully plan for the future of USPS,” he wrote.

Biden also backed voting by mail: “Voting is the purest, most fundamental act of citizenship,” he wrote. “We must strengthen our democracy by guaranteeing that every American’s vote is protected. We’ve got to make it easier—not harder—for Americans to exercise their right to

vote, regardless of their ZIP code or the color of their skin, and make sure we count every voter’s voice equally.”

Biden also came out strongly for unions and collective bargaining.

“Rebuilding the middle class starts with one word: unions,” Biden wrote. “Strong unions built the great Ameri-

can middle class. Everything that defines what it means to live a good life and know you can take care of your family—the 40-hour work week, paid leave, health care protections, a voice in your workplace—is because of workers who organized unions and fought for worker protections. As president, I’ll encourage union organizing and collective bargaining. And I’ll make sure every American has a fair shot at the American Dream, regardless of race, gender, income, or ZIP code. I believe in our founders’ ideals: ‘We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal....’ We’ve never fully lived up to them, but we’ve never quit trying. And I’m not about to let us quit trying now.”

In her time as a senator, Harris also has been a close ally of letter carriers. As a member of the committee of jurisdiction, she has worked closely with NALC. Harris is a co-sponsor of the Postal Service Emergency Assistance Act, which would provide a \$25 billion appropriation to help the Postal Service weather the pandemic.

The Democratic Party platform for 2020 reflects the Biden-Harris ticket’s strong backing of the Postal Service. On page 53, it states:

The U.S. Postal Service (USPS) is the world’s most efficient mail carrier, and Democrats are wholly committed to supporting a public USPS. We will fight all efforts to privatize the USPS and will work to ensure the USPS is financially sustainable, including by repealing the mandate that the agency “pre-fund” retiree health costs. Democrats will protect

the Postal Service’s universal service obligation as a core American value and maintain six-day and doorstep delivery mail delivery, which is a lifeline for rural Americans. We will also support new revenue streams for

“The endorsement is meant to provide information for members about how the choice will affect their jobs, pay, benefits and working conditions, and about how it will affect the future of the Postal Service and its role in our democracy and our shared future.”

the USPS, including allowing secure shipping of alcoholic beverages by mail and exploring options to enable unbanked and underbanked Americans to access financial services through the Postal Service.

The GOP did not write a new platform this year; the Trump-Pence ticket is running on the same GOP platform it adopted in 2016, word for word. That platform, of course, makes no mention of COVID-19, the economic crisis or the challenges that face the Postal Service this year—it ignores the Postal Service entirely—but it does carry over a call to cut federal employee pay and benefits.

“With so much information about each side pointing in opposite directions, the choice is very clear,” Rolando said.

‘We hold democracy in our hands’

As we have seen so often in the past, elections have consequences.

This election could determine how the Postal Service operates through the COVID-19 pandemic and beyond, and whether its vital role in serving our nation continues.

“We must do everything we can to help the Postal Service thrive, not only for the men and women of the Postal Service, but for the communities and businesses we serve during this critical time,” President Rolando said.

NALC recognizes that our union consists of members holding diverse views and that members take a variety of factors into account in determining their vote. The endorsement is meant to provide information for members about how the choice will affect their jobs, pay, benefits and working conditions, and about how it will affect the future of the Postal Service and its role in our democracy and our shared future.

The stakes have never been higher, and that’s why NALC urges every member of the union to cast a vote in this crucial election. Every vote counts: in the presidential race, in contests for the Senate and the House of Representatives, and in races for state and local offices. In many cases, the margin of votes that decides the winner could be very slim.

“I urge every letter carrier to vote in this fall’s election,” Rolando said. “This year, just by doing our jobs, we quite literally will hold democracy in our hands. We will carry millions of ballots to the homes of American voters, safe at home, and then carry their completed ballots to election officials to be counted. We should all fulfill the promise of democracy by casting our own votes as well.” **PR**

The success of vote-by-mail

As the 2020 presidential election draws ever closer and as we continue to grapple with the COVID-19 pandemic, the ability to vote by mail never has been more important. To stay safe, more Americans than usual are likely to cast ballots using the mail, and states are enacting changes to make that easier. With these changes, 83 percent of American voters are eligible to cast their votes by mail in the general election.

Twenty-one states have made a change this cycle to accommodate voting by mail by either not requiring an excuse in the requesting of a ballot, or by sending a ballot to every registered voter. Twenty-nine states made no changes to their current system; nine of those states (California, Colorado; Hawaii, Montana, Nevada, Oregon, Utah, Vermont and Washington) plus the District of Columbia will send every registered voter a ballot by mail this fall. The other 20 states will continue to allow absentee voting without any “excuse.” Of the states that do require an approved excuse, several have either waived the requirement this year or have permitted concerns about the pandemic as a reason to vote by mail.

The Postal Service’s role in U.S. elections goes far beyond the distribution of mail ballots. The 8,500 election boards that oversee and conduct our elections rely on the Postal Service for the entire process. They use the mail to register voters, certify candidates, provide voter guides, distribute sample ballots, notify citizens of their polling places and to inform voters of their early voting options.

Meanwhile, candidates, parties, civic groups and organizations of

all kinds use the Post Office to disseminate information and campaign literature—a function that has taken on added importance this election cycle, since physical canvassing has been difficult.

And, as America’s 210,000 city letter carriers did during the presidential primaries this year—when about half of all votes cast involved mailed-out ballots—we intend to meet the challenges of serving the country’s voters and election boards during the current public health crisis.

A joint solution

At NALC President Fredric Rolando’s initial meeting with Postmaster General Louis DeJoy, Rolando suggested convening a joint labor-management task force to meet the challenges posed by the COVID-19 virus with regard to the handling of election mail.

Meetings of the joint task force on election mail began the week of Sept. 7. Members have been working to establish messaging and protocols ahead of the Nov. 3 election to ensure that every ballot that is in the possession of the Postal Service on Election Day is counted to assure the public and our election board partners that they can rely on the Postal Service to deliver exceptional service.

Letter carriers deliver

As letter carriers already know, USPS has the capacity to deliver. In 2016, 139 million Americans voted in the general election, with nearly a quarter of those (32 million) voting via mailed-out ballots. This year, total turnout has the potential to surpass 150 million voters, and vote-

by-mail volume could more than double.

Although millions of Americans drop off their ballots in person (in drop boxes, at polling places or at voting centers), millions of others return their ballots by mail. For some, this has raised questions about whether the Postal Service has the capacity to deliver such a high volume of ballots. However, even if every U.S. voter returned his or her ballot by mail, the Postal Service has more than enough capacity to deliver the extra volume.

Consider these facts:

- In 2019, the Postal Service delivered an average of 470 million pieces per day, six days a week—and scaled up to deliver more than 650 million pieces of mail per day during the peak holiday period in December.
- With the current economy depressed by the coronavirus pandemic, USPS is delivering between 350 million and 400 million pieces of mail per day, meaning that it has considerable excess capacity to handle any surge in mail volume.
- There have been neither layoffs nor any kind of downsizing of our processing or delivery networks during the crisis. So, barring any adverse decisions by postal management, the Postal Service can meet any increased demand for political mailings and mail ballots.

Indeed, the Postal Service affirmed its capability in an Aug. 3 statement: “The Postal Service has ample capacity to adjust our nationwide processing and delivery network to meet projected Election and Political Mail volume, including any additional

volume that may result as a response to the COVID-19 pandemic.”

Although the recession and the public health crisis have reduced Postal Service letter mail revenues and raised its costs for personal protective equipment and other safety measures, USPS cash reserves more than suffice to permit uninterrupted services through the election. Meanwhile, Congress is debating proposals to appropriate funds to the Postal Service to help it weather the negative economic impact of the pandemic.

USPS election mail protocols

The Postal Service always has given election mail priority treatment, and USPS has well-established protocols in place for handling election mail.

In addition, USPS has a National Election Mail team based in Washington, DC that oversees a network of state and local election mail coordinators who work with election boards. They help design mailed ballots, aiming to speed delivery by encouraging the use of Intelligent Mail Barcodes and special visual identifiers that improve mailed ballot visibility in the mail stream. This allows election boards as well as voters to identify and track ballots, and they improve the public’s confidence in the vote-by-mail process.

During every election cycle, USPS distributes an official election mail tool kit to election boards and maintains a special website for local and state election officials to report election mail concerns directly to the Postal Service, allowing a rapid response team to resolve such concerns. It also conducts training for employees who come into contract with election mail and monitors its service



performance for election mail, aiming to surpass its normal 96 percent on-time goal for First Class mail delivery.

Earlier this year, the Postal Service affirmed its commitment to deliver any mailed ballot back to its destination election board, even if it does not have proper postage.

Ballot safety and security

Voters can have confidence in vote-by-mail, both in how the Postal Service handles ballots and how election boards manage the process.

Within USPS, protecting the sanctity of the mail, regardless of the type of mail, is the highest priority. Tampering with any piece of mail—including ballots—is strictly prohibited. USPS even polices its commitment to mail security with an internal security workforce, the Postal Inspection Service.

As a result, the Postal Service is among the most trusted companies in the United States when it comes to protecting privacy, and it is by far the public’s favorite agency in the federal government, with an approval rating of 91 percent.

Election boards also have developed methods to reduce the possibility of voter fraud with mail ballots. Such fraud is exceedingly rare, according to data compiled by the Heritage Foundation. In most states, there are more security checks on mail-in votes than on in-person votes.

When it comes to ballot security, there is no discernable difference between “mail-in” ballots and “absentee” ballots. Ballots mailed to all registered voters, like those sent to voters who have applied for absentee ballots, are handled with the same strict security protocols.

A lasting legacy

The United States Postal Service, founded in 1775, is one of America’s greatest public institutions and is indispensable to our democracy. Starting during the Civil War, Americans have used the mail to vote, and the Post Office has been essential to our system of elections ever since. Voters can count on the Postal Service and its employees to honor that heritage in November. **PR**

Extreme weather puts carriers at risk

Disasters can strike anywhere in the United States. No one, including letter carriers, is immune. From wildfires in the western United States to storms in the central and southeastern parts of the country, 2020 already has brought us examples of the destruction natural disasters cause and the impact they have on the lives of those in their path.

The Midwest felt the impact of severe weather in early August when a rare derecho, a severe type of storm that can produce high winds and tornadoes, caused widespread damage centered on Iowa.

Later in August, the first hurricane to hit land this season battered the Gulf Coast. Hurricane Laura, a powerful Category 4 storm when it made landfall on Aug. 26, pummeled Texas and Louisiana. A few weeks later, Hurricane Sally followed, slamming into Alabama and Florida.

While the southeastern United States was drenched, parts of California, Idaho, Oregon and Washington were burning. Massive wildfires have consumed millions of acres of forest



A wildfire burns outside of Los Angeles in California.

and grassland in those states, killing dozens so far and causing hundreds of thousands of people to flee the fires.

Any time disasters unfold, letter carriers' thoughts turn to their brothers and sisters in the affected areas. Whenever and wherever disaster strikes, NALC members across the country step up for their fellow union members in need by donating cash, uniforms and other assistance.

Many branches identified a need to establish a mechanism for donations, supplies and other assistance so that carriers affected by disasters could receive help faster and more effectively. That's why the NALC Disaster Relief Foundation was created.

At the 2018 national convention in Detroit, NALC President Fredric Rolando announced the formation of the

Foundation. Its mission is to quickly provide relief to letter carriers who are victims of natural disasters.

"With the generous support of NALC members, the NALC Disaster Relief Foundation is providing both financial support and immediate help with basic supplies to carriers in need," Rolando said.

The Disaster Relief Foundation accepts donations from individual letter carriers, branches and state associations, as well as from other sources. All donations from letter carriers, branches and state associations go directly to letter carriers who need assistance—no administrative costs are deducted.

With so many disasters affecting our members, contributions to the Foundation are as important as ever. Knowing that you are contributing to something that directly aids our fellow sisters and brothers in their time of crisis and need is extremely rewarding.

The Foundation published a *Member's Guide* to help letter carriers prepare for disasters, to give them information on how to donate to the Foundation and to let them know how

Lake Charles, LA Branch 914 member Kevin Verret retrieves the Postal Service logo that had blown off the front of Drew Station. His son Kevin Verret Jr., a rural carrier, looks on. Photo by Crystal McGee



to request assistance if they are affected by a disaster. The *Member's Guide*, the applications for grants and other information are available on the Foundation's web page at nalc.org/disaster.

Any NALC member who has faced hardship as a result of a natural disaster or wildfire can apply for assistance by completing the Application for Relief Grant. The eligibility requirements are outlined in the application. The Foundation's board of directors will consider the applications and will issue grants on an objective basis to eligible individuals as funds are available. Members do not have to wait for emergency relief or insurance claims to be settled to apply. Applications must be received no later than 120 days after the date when the natural disaster occurred, unless the applicant can provide sufficient reasons for the delay.

"The generosity of letter carriers never ceases to amaze me," President Rolando said. "The Disaster Relief Foundation is an invaluable lifeline for our sisters and brothers in need, in the true spirit of solidarity."

Donations should be sent to NALC Disaster Relief Foundation, 100 Indiana Ave. NW, Washington, DC 20001-2144. The foundation is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, and your contribution may be tax deductible. It is recommended that you seek further advice from your tax advisor. **PR**

Arbitration update

As this magazine was going to press, NALC was preparing to participate in interest arbitration hearings for a new national contract. Information on these hearings will be in the next issue of *The Postal Record*.

President Rolando appoints RAA

NALC President Fredric Rolando has named **Ken Janulewicz of Worcester, MA Branch 12** as a regional administrative assistant (RAA) for Region 14, serving Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island and Vermont. He began in the position on Sept. 14.

Janulewicz started his postal career as a casual in Worcester in 1995. He became a transitional employee (TE) in 1997 before converting to a career carrier as a part-time flexible (PTF) in 1998.

He previously served his branch as a steward, vice president and executive

vice president before being elected branch president in 2015, a position he held until his appointment. Janulewicz served the Massachusetts State Association

as an executive board member and then as state secretary for the past six years. Janulewicz also is an arbitration advocate. He graduated from the NALC Leadership Academy in 2006. **PR**



Janulewicz

Correction

In the August edition of *The Postal Record*, we misidentified **Cie Siyavash Sharp** in the story about carriers sharing the stories of how their lives have changed because of COVID-19. Here is how his story should have read:

For Cie Siyavash Sharp, the pandemic has made it harder for him to care for his mother. "Two weeks after the first case of COVID-19 was recorded in America, my mother became

ill" from an unrelated cause, the Long Island Merged, NY Branch 6000 member said, adding that "in one day, she forgot most of what happened in the past 20 years."

Long Island was home to one of the first and worst outbreaks of COVID-19 in the country, which made it difficult for the second-year carrier to get the help he

needed.

"I could not find her a decent neurologist in a timely fashion because [most] outpatient doctors' appointments were canceled because I live and work in a COVID hot spot," Siyavash Sharp said. "My mother cannot stay alone anymore and needs a home health care aide. The provider and agencies told me they don't have anyone to be my mother's aide because of COVID-19."

Siyavash Sharp was able to use leave through the Family and Medical Leave Act, but only for 10 days.

"I am riddled with anxiety because I cannot simultaneously retain my job and be with my mother since the system failed her," he said. "I have contemplated resigning, but of course for now that would be financial suicide."

"This is an ongoing problem that has no end in sight." **PR**



Install the free NALC Member App for your iPhone or Android smartphone

As technology increases our ability to communicate, NALC must stay ahead of the curve. We've now taken the next step with the NALC Member App for iPhone and Android smartphones. The app was developed with the needs of letter carriers in mind.

The app's features include:

- Workplace resources, including the National Agreement, *JCAM*, MRS and CCA resources
- Instantaneous NALC news with personalized push notifications and social media access
- Interactive Non-Scheduled Days calendar
- Much more
- Legislative tools, including bill tracker, individualized congressional representatives and PAC information

Go to the App Store or Google Play and search for "NALC Member App" to install for free

Stamp Out Hunger Donor Drive raising money locally for food banks

The COVID-19 pandemic hasn't stopped us from carrying the mail, though it did force a change in how we serve our communities, including the postponement of the annual Letter Carriers' Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive that was scheduled for May.

For the past 27 years, letter carriers have collected bags of food donated by postal customers on the second Saturday in May, filling local food pantries. With the pandemic forcing us to suspend this year's Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive, the largest single-day food collection in the nation, food banks faced major shortages. Many food banks declined all food donations from individuals for safety reasons. Meanwhile, the economic crisis caused by the pandemic sent demand for food into overdrive, with some pantries reporting that the number of families requesting food had increased threefold.

Instead of giving up, letter carriers found new ways to help. The pandemic wasn't going to stop us from helping those in need. NALC responded to the food drive postponement by setting up tools for the public to help fill the shelves of local food pantries in a new way—with online donations through the Stamp Out Hunger Donor Drive—along with asking branches to make direct donations. NALC rolled out the donor drive in June.

"As letter carriers deliver in every neighborhood in the country six and seven days a week, we see the need and we cannot wait while food banks struggle, demand grows and people remain hungry," NALC President Fredric Rolando said.

As with the traditional Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive, proceeds from the donor drive stay in the communities

of the donors. Any resident, whether in a big city or suburb, a small town or rural area, can donate funds for a local food pantry to purchase food and replenish its stocks so that local families can put food on their tables.

"Each May, NALC's food drive has filled a gap between holiday food donations and the end of free meals in school during summer break," Rolando said. "This year, the economic crisis and the disruption in food donations have made our support even more important. With the right effort, letter carriers could extend this online food drive to help fulfill the needs of local food banks for many months to come."

NALC Headquarters is providing its members, as well as the general public, with an easy way to participate. By visiting nalc.org/food, donors can find a food bank in their area to support with an online donation. The site links directly to donation pages on each food bank's website. The same list also provides branches with a convenient means of informing donors in their area about how to locate and donate online to their local food banks.

To kick off the campaign, NALC Headquarters pledged to match any donations that branches made directly to the donor drive. By the end of August, branches had donated a total of \$185,800, an amount that was matched by NALC Headquarters. The



total donated by everyone will be announced in a future issue of *The Postal Record*.

"The generous donations by branches give the donor drive effort an immediate boost while branches ramp up their efforts to bring in donations from local citizens and businesses," Rolando said.

New Jersey Merged Branch 38 responded to the urgent need for food donations the quickest way it could.

"We put it before the membership whether we could donate to the food banks in our branch [area]," Branch 38 President **Michael O'Neill** said. With 32 food banks in the area, the branch's donation of \$200 to each pantry, matched dollar for dollar by NALC Headquarters, helped a large number of hungry families. "We received great feedback from the food banks," O'Neill said.

Branch 38 is publicizing the donor drive on social media and in its newsletter, as it does each year for the May

food drive. “We’re pushing it as much as we can,” O’Neill said. “Every chance we get, we mention it.”

The branch also sends a letter each year to the mayors of 65 towns in its area asking for support for the regular food drive, so it sent the same letter this year to publicize the donor drive.

Los Angeles Branch 24 responded to the immediate need with a donation from the branch—it gave \$12,000, matched by NALC Headquarters, to support efforts by Labor Community Services (LCS), a non-profit partner of the Los Angeles County Federation of Labor, to provide food to the hungry.

“There are so many people not working in L.A.,” Branch President **Larry Brown** said. “We couldn’t just not do

something.” Brown also is president of the LCS board.

“You’ve got a big variety of people in need coming through those food lines,” he said. “So many don’t have anything.”

Thanks to the support of donors like Branch 24, “we have had 50 food distributions since March 15,” Labor Community Services Executive Director Armando Olivas said. “We feed thousands and thousands of people [a year].” The food distribution events LCS has held during the pandemic showed how serious the hunger problem has become in Los Angeles—for some, the lines of cars full of people waiting for food stretched for miles.

Springfield, IL Branch 80 gave \$20,000, matched by NALC, to several

area food banks, Branch President **Jon Calloway** said. “Obviously, the food drive is a central part of how we serve the community,” he said. Now, the branch is working to encourage its members, their families and the communities they serve to donate through the donor drive.

“This year, America’s food pantries are burning the candle from both ends because donations are down while requests for food from hungry families is up,” Rolando said. “They need our support more than ever, and letter carriers are stepping up, as they have for 27 years.”

Look for more information about the donor drive in future issues of *The Postal Record*. **PR**

Carriers encouraged to give through CFC

The COVID-19 pandemic, and the economic crisis it caused, have prompted many Americans to pitch in to help charities of all types. As federal employees, letter carriers have a convenient way to give a little at a time to our favorite causes through the world’s largest annual workplace giving program, the Combined Federal Campaign (CFC).

CFC participants make charitable donations via deductions from their paychecks. Letter carriers may sign up during the CFC Open Season, from Sept. 21, 2020, through Jan. 15, 2021, to donate next year through CFC.

Pledges made during the campaign season support eligible non-profit organizations chosen by the donor. Carriers can select the groups they want to support from a list of thousands of eligible charities, and an amount of their choosing will be deducted from

their paychecks each pay period and automatically sent to their selected charities.

“Letter carriers and other federal employees who donate by participating in the CFC through paycheck deduction provide steady, predictable income for the charities they support,” NALC President Fredric Rolando said.

All active letter carriers can participate in the CFC through payroll deduction. The easiest way to sign up is through the CFC Donor Pledging System at cfcgiving.opm.gov. Retired letter carriers may make a one-time or recurring e-check or credit card contribution to the CFC. These one-time and recurring gifts also can be made through the CFC Donor Pledging System.

In a letter, Rolando asked NALC members to contribute through the CFC in addition to the other ways they support the community.

“The pandemic and the economic crisis that came with it have strained the resources of many charitable groups, making your support so much more important,” Rolando wrote. “I am asking for your help in ensuring that this year’s campaign is successful, and I invite you to join me in supporting the Combined Federal Campaign by making a pledge or donation to the charities of your choice.”

NALC is directly involved in three charities eligible for support through the CFC:

The **Muscular Dystrophy Association (MDA)** is NALC’s only official charity. It is the world’s leading non-profit health organization sponsoring research into the causes of, and effective treatments for, neuromuscular diseases. MDA research grants support about 150 research projects worldwide, as well as camps and



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Director, Retired Members

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Chairman

Michael J. Gill

Mack I. Julion

Affiliated with the AFL-CIO & Union Network International

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Each year, letter carriers, along with other postal and federal employees, have the opportunity to donate to charities through the Combined Federal Campaign. This year, the pandemic and the economic crisis that came with it have strained the resources of many charitable groups, making your support so much more important. I am asking for your help in ensuring that this year's campaign is successful, and I invite you to join me in supporting the Combined Federal Campaign by making a pledge or donation to the charities of your choice.

Each day, within the communities where we live and deliver the mail, many of us encounter people who are enduring real-life problems, especially this year. Throughout the year, we help our communities in a number of ways while looking after those who are vulnerable. In addition to what we do each day in the neighborhoods we serve, the Combined Federal Campaign gives us an easy way to contribute money through payroll deductions to the charities we care about.

The NALC is directly involved in three such charities: the Postal Employees' Relief Fund (PERF), the Muscular Dystrophy Association (MDA)—NALC's official charity—and the United Way.

I know that the times we live in continue to challenge us on many fronts. But I also know that when we take action to make a difference and to merge our individual efforts, we improve lives and create better communities.

Thank you for your daily work delivering the mail, and thank you in advance for ensuring that this year's Combined Federal Campaign is successful.

Sincerely and fraternally,

Fredric V. Rolando
President

activities for children who have one of these diseases. For more information, go to mdausa.org.

The **Postal Employees' Relief Fund (PERF)** provides financial support to active and retired postal employees whose primary residence has been completely destroyed or left uninhabitable by a major natural disaster or an isolated house fire. The charity is run by the four postal employee unions and three management organizations, whose members support PERF through voluntary donations. Information and applications for PERF assistance can be found at postalrelief.com.

United Way Worldwide is the leadership and support organization for the network of nearly 1,800 community-based United Way organizations in 40 countries and territories. United Way focuses on creating community-based and community-led solutions that provide the foundation for a good quality of life: education, financial stability and health. For more information, go to unitedway.org. **PR**

November magazine to honor Veterans Group members

In 2015, NALC announced the creation of the NALC Veterans Group to acknowledge and inform the military veterans who served their country and continue to do so by trading their military uniforms for letter carrier uniforms. Veterans of the U.S. Armed Forces comprise almost a quarter of the NALC membership.

The Veterans Group was designed to provide NALC members who are military veterans with access to the information and tools specific to veterans' rights and benefits within the U.S. Postal Service, as well as a sense of camaraderie.

Since that 2015 launch, thousands of members have signed up to be part of the group and received the special pin showing their status.

In the next issue of *The Postal Record*, to celebrate Veterans Day—our national holiday recognizing the service of veterans—NALC will publish the names of all of these Veterans Group members.

Any veteran who wishes to be included, but who has not yet joined the group, can take action now and join at nalc.org/veterans. If you are a member of the group and do not wish to have your name listed, please email your request to veteransgroup@nalc.org. **PR**



Branches find creative solutions to pandemic-related election issues

We are in election season—not just on a political level, but for NALC as well. Starting in September, the Election Notices section of *The Postal Record* will be triple its usual size through the fall, as branches around the country gear up for their own officer and convention delegate election procedures.

As required by the *NALC Constitution* and the *NALC Regulations Governing Branch Election Procedures*, these procedures include an opportunity for all members to nominate candidates and hold a secret ballot election if more than one candidate is nominated for a given position.

However, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, many branches have had to request dispensation to change the way they conduct elections. Nominations typically have been held during branch meetings, but to meet new health and safety standards, a large number of branches have shifted the way they conduct branch meetings. Several branches have developed creative solutions to this challenge.

As many buildings shut down in March, some branches realized that they were not going to be able to meet in person, perhaps for quite some time. “For the first few months of [the pandemic], we were in wait-and-see mode,” Alliance, OH Branch 297 President **Josh Lilly** recounted. After postponing several meetings, he said, “I realized, This isn’t going to go away anytime soon.” Lilly held a phone conference with the other officers, and they decided to move the meetings online. Like many other organizations, they turned to the video-conferencing platform Zoom.

Lilly says that he was apprehensive at first—“I wanted to make sure we

were holding a meeting that felt like a union meeting, with the same level of camaraderie”—but that the Zoom meetings surpassed his expectations. Aside from one technological issue at the beginning, “it’s been so easy,” he said. Attendance has even increased, because members who previously could not attend in person have been able to join the online meetings. So, when the Branch 297 officers had to start thinking about planning their election, they realized that they already had the perfect platform for the nomination process.

Everett Wyllie, president of Waco, TX Branch 404, reached a similar conclusion. In May, Wyllie said, the officers concluded that “this was not going to ease up, so we needed a plan.” Wyllie looked into Zoom, and decided that it would work. After it was approved by the executive board, Wyllie’s election plan passed as a motion at a branch meeting. The online branch meetings have been “very smooth,” according to Wyllie, who said that, as was the case with the Alliance branch, the branch’s Zoom meetings actually have increased attendance.

The Waco branch plans to hold nominations online, with the officers muting themselves when necessary to preserve the integrity of the nomination process. “It’s the first time we’re doing it like this, but we are excited,” Wyllie said. He added that the officers are especially hopeful that retired members will participate in a Zoom election, since those members might be reluctant to attend an in-person meeting given their potentially higher risk for COVID-19.

In Champaign, IL, Branch 671 Secretary/Treasurer **Don Thompson Jr.**

also has moved his branch meetings online, though he is using a different app. “I approached [our] president and said, ‘We have to do something, since we can’t hold our usual meetings,’” Thompson said. For branch meetings and nominations, they decided to use the Webex video-conferencing platform.

All three branches have decided that if an election needs to be held, they will use mail-in ballots as their voting method. “[Mail-in voting] is new territory for us,” Wyllie explained, but said that he believes the election committee would be able to handle any problems that arise. Thompson also was confident. “I’ve run my fair share of elections, and we’ve always done mail-in ballots,” he said.

Modesto, CA Branch 1291 is conducting nominations via Zoom and then mailing out ballots, but the officers decided not to do a mail-in election. “We have a drop-ballot box in the office,” Branch Secretary **Miriam Thomas** noted. The branch decided that “since we were already mailing [ballots] out to the retirees, we could mail out to the other members as well,” Thomas said, but the officers determined that the ballot boxes would be the safest and easiest way to collect the election mail. “The hardest part is doing all the mailing,” Thomas said. She added that the whole process, particularly the Zoom technology, has been a “learning process,” but that she finds it convenient to use. “I like being able to be at home and still be involved [in union business],” she said.

The officers for Hudson Valley Merged, NY Branch 137 also decided to hold branch meetings via Zoom,

but they were concerned about conducting the election online. “We talked to the members, and a lot of the responses we got showed that people weren’t comfortable [with that option],” Branch 137 President **Joseph Destefano** said.

However, an in-person meeting didn’t seem feasible, either. “It got taken out of our hands—because of the restrictions in New York [due to the pandemic], there was no place open” that would have been large enough to host the meeting and properly socially distance, Branch 137 Secretary/Treasurer **Frank Ramus** explained.

So, despite the additional cost of an all-mail election, the branch decided that its nominations and election would be mail-in only. “We feel confident that this is the best way moving forward,” Destefano said. Ramus added that this was a good opportunity to show off the safety and capability of the mail-in voting process.

Ann Arbor, MI Branch 434 is adopting yet another method for its nominations and elections. After writing

to NALC President Fredric Rolando for approval to change their election procedures, the branch members passed a motion. In the motion, “we decided that the nominations [would be] in-person at a large facility” to give plenty of space for social distancing, Branch 434 Secretary **Jane Grant** said. The branch then plans to hold an election, if needed, entirely by mail. Grant said that the officers had been talking to other branches to determine the best election method, given the novelty of the pandemic situation.

All of the branch officers interviewed agreed that one of the challenges of conducting an election under these circumstances was communicating with the members of their branch. Each branch had a different method, or combination of methods, that they used to make sure all members were aware of the procedural changes.

Some branches posted on social media. “We do have a branch Facebook page and email list,” Asheville, NC Branch 248 Secretary **Arkadia Smith** said. But that is only one

possible tool, and it has downsides: “Some people don’t have Facebook, and some don’t look at [social media],” Thomas said.

Gilmore agreed, and added that “some members don’t even have a computer.” Given this limitation, he says, he uses all of his resources to contact members. “We use email lists and physical mail...monthly flyers are sent to area offices to put on the board,” he said.

Other branches also use the mail to alert their members. “We send flyers to the retirees,” Lilly said. The Ann Arbor branch has even gone a step further to make sure that every member sees the election notice. “We got permission to post it on the time clock,” at the post office, Grant said.

No matter what election procedure the branches adopted, all of the branch officers said that they had put a good deal of thought into making sure that their new process was right for their branch and their members. The general attitude of the officers with regard to the NALC elections was summed up by Smith: “I just hope everything goes smoothly.” **PR**

President grants dispensation to postpone branch elections

In accordance with guidance from the Department of Labor, NALC President Fredric Rolando has granted all branches dispensation to postpone regularly scheduled nominations and elections if it is necessary to do so because of the pandemic. Postponed nominations and elections should be rescheduled as expeditiously as possible.

NALC recognizes that the pandemic may prevent some branches from conducting normal elections of officers and delegates for an extended period of time. For example, branches whose bylaws require that nominations and voting take place at scheduled branch meetings will not be able to do so if in-person meetings are postponed indefinitely.

To address this situation, branches should consider

alternative procedures for conducting nominations and elections. For example, nominations may be submitted by mail or through video web conferencing (e.g., Zoom, Webex, etc.). Elections could be conducted by mail ballot or at designated polling places.

Branches may submit to President Rolando requests for dispensation to implement alternative election procedures that otherwise would be inconsistent with their bylaws. Such procedures must comply with the *NALC Constitution* and the *NALC Regulations Governing Branch Election Procedures*. Assistant Secretary-Treasurer Paul Barner may be contacted for advice or assistance in developing alternative election procedures. **PR**

Union Plus offers free online college program

The benefits available to NALC members through the Union Plus program add up to a long list. Did you know that they include free college courses?

Union Plus, a non-profit consumer benefits organization created by the AFL-CIO for members of its constituent unions, offers college courses in dozens of study areas at no charge. Students can even earn an associate degree.

The Free College program is offered through Union Plus academic partner Eastern Gateway Community College (EGCC). EGCC is an accredited, non-profit public institution that is part of the University System of Ohio. Students enroll in the distance-learning program and take classes online, so they can attend no matter where they live. Students with previous college credits may be able to transfer them to EGCC.

Students who apply to EGCC must have completed high school or a GED program. Students must apply for and use available federal student aid grants—a process the Free College program will help them navigate. To cover any tuition or other costs not covered by grants, the Free College program provides a “last dollar” scholarship.

Advising and tutoring services are available. Students can work at their own pace and do not have to take a full course load each term.

The Free College program is available to NALC members and retirees, as well as their spouses, children (or step-children) and grandchildren (or step-grandchildren), domestic partners and financial dependents. Thousands of union members and their family members have taken advantage of this special program, including 95 NALC members or family members to date.



René Armer of Reno, NV Branch 709 is working toward an accounting degree through the Union Plus Free College program. The 22-year NALC member was about to start at a different college when she heard about the Free College program at an Office of Workers’ Compensation Programs training session.

“I was going to pay \$900 or more a credit,” she said. “I was ready to pay and pick classes.”

Instead, she enrolled in the Free College program. “It was just so easy, so smooth, the whole process,” Armer said. “On the way back from the training, I was signing up for college on my phone.”

Armer estimates that she saved \$10,000 with the program. With her associate degree in accounting, Armer plans to work as a tax accountant after she retires from the Postal Service.

The Free College benefit program offers several associate degree programs along with two certificate programs. The degree programs are:

- Accounting
- Associate of Arts
- Business Management—with optional concentrations in: Advertising; Cyber Security; Data Science; Digital and Social Media; Entrepreneurship; Environmental and Conservation Studies; Finance; Hospitality; Food and Beverage Management or Hotel and Event Management; Human Resources; Information Systems/IT Help Desk;

Labor Studies; Marketing; Programming and Development

- Criminal Justice
- Teacher Education (Associate of Arts)
- Healthcare Administration
- Individualized Study
- Paralegal
- Professional Office Management
- Social Work

The two certificate programs are in business management, with an optional concentration in accounting, and patient navigation.

For more information and to apply, go to unionplus.org/freecollege.

The program also offers a low-cost way to complete a bachelor’s degree in certain areas of study. The Bachelor Completion program is a complement to the Union Plus Free College associate degree program. When combined with the free associate degree program, the Bachelor Completion program means that members can earn a four-year bachelor’s degree for \$9,000 or less.

Eligible students who have an associate degree or who have earned 60 or more transferable credits can apply to attend at a highly discounted cost. Eligible students will receive a grant that will reduce their out-of-pocket cost to no more than \$4,500 per year for full-time students (and no more than \$4,000 for students who reside in Ohio).

During the pandemic, however, Union Plus is offering the Bachelor Completion program for free.

For information and to apply for the Bachelor Completion program, go to bachelorsdegree.unionplus.org. **PR**

Executive Order 10988

The 1962 presidential order that led to NALC being recognized and negotiating the first national agreement

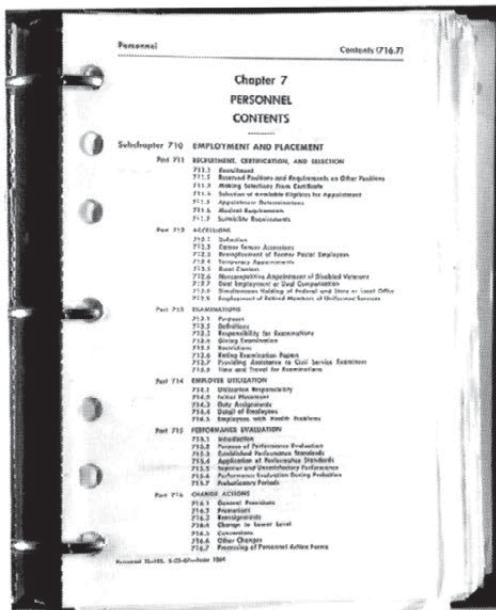
As NALC engages in the current interest arbitration process, even as we continue to negotiate for a new national agreement, this is a good time to reflect on how the first postal national agreement came about, and how it took the act of a president to make it happen.

Although the National Association of Letter Carriers has existed since 1889, letter carriers had few rights in the workplace up until the 1960s. In many ways, it's easier to tell you what rights letter carriers and their union didn't have:

- NALC had no rights on the workroom floor;
- There was no collective-bargaining agreement spelling out the rights of carriers and the responsibilities of management;
- There was no grievance procedure to challenge any of management's actions; and

Letter carriers had no right to union representation, much less a hearing

The Postal Manual



President Kennedy signs Executive Order 10988 with NALC President William Doherty (fourth from l) in attendance.

before an arbitrator. In the workplace, if not on Capitol Hill, letter carriers were on their own.

The only rights that federal workers could claim were from the 1912 Lloyd-LaFollette Act, which required that employees be given notice of any proposed charges, and that they be allowed a reasonable time to file an answer to the charges against them.

The only written document was the *Postal Manual*. In 1961, a branch scribe from Stamford, CT, described the manual in the pages of *The Postal Record*, this way:

- P ... is for porous—full of loopholes*
- O ... is for omnipotence—unlimited power*
- S ... is for sovereign or supreme power*
- T ... is for tease or taunt—they make provisions for you in one paragraph and take them away in the next*
- A ... is for archaic, old-fashioned and antiquated*
- L ... is for latitude—they allow themselves plenty of it*
- M ... is for mobility—you can always move when you are boxed in*

A ... is for authority—it takes the place of justice

N ... is for negotiate—though it very rarely works

U ... is for unilateral or one-sided

A ... is for adjudicate—to determine a case as a court

L ... is for last but not least—It is up to the discretion of the Postmaster. This one line nullifies all the provisions supposedly made for our welfare.

With few on-the-job protections, NALC mainly sought to advance its cause in the halls of Congress. Consequently, battles over employment relations really took place in congressional committees rather than at the negotiating table or on the workroom floor.

This system—or lack of one—came under increasing criticism during the late 1940s and throughout the 1950s, because it lagged behind the advances won by private-sector unions. In 1935, the Wagner Act established the legal right of most workers to organize or join labor unions and to bargain collectively with their employers. However, federal



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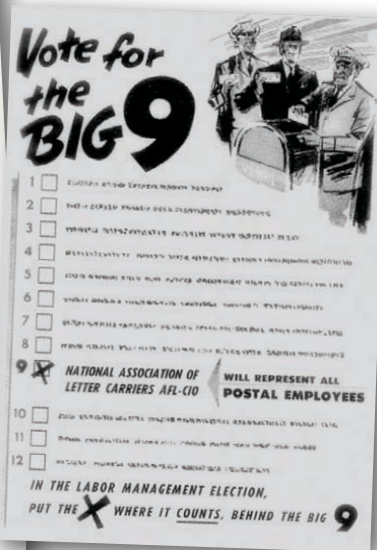
Vote for the BIG 9

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF LETTER CARRIERS AFL-CIO WILL REPRESENT ALL POSTAL EMPLOYEES!



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IN THE LABOR MANAGEMENT ELECTION PUT THE WHERE IT COUNTS



NALC used *The Postal Record* magazine (l) and other advertising (r) to encourage all postal employees to vote for NALC to represent them.

The task force's findings led the president to sign Executive Order 10988 on Jan. 17, 1962. NALC President Bill Doherty called it the "Magna Carta for government workers," after

the English document that established individual rights.

Executive Order 10988 set up an Employee-Management Cooperation Program in the federal government. The program officially recognized the legitimate role of unions in the formulation and implementation of personnel policies. It gave federal employees the right to join, form or assist labor organizations.

It established a three-tiered system of recognition: exclusive representation, formal recognition and informal recognition. For unions designated by a majority of employees in a unit, agencies would be obligated to negotiate over terms and conditions of employment with the exclusive representative, and to allow it to attend formal meetings.

In units without an exclusive representative, the agency would have to accord formal recognition to unions representing more than 10 percent of the unit and to "consult with such organization from time to time in the formulation and implementation of personnel policies and practices, and matters affecting working conditions that are of concern to its members." The agency also would have to informally recognize all unions, regardless of whether another union was the exclusive representative, and allow each union "to present to appropriate officials its views on matters of concern to its members."

From NALC's perspective, the most significant provisions of the order concerned representational rights.

a supporter of union recognition while serving as a senator from Massachusetts, feared that congressional action might foist a labor-relations system on the government that

employees were excluded from the act.

During the 1950s, NALC was joined by the National Federation of Post Office Clerks, the AFL-CIO (which had been formed by a merger in 1955), the American Bar Association, two Hoover Commissions and the National Civil Service League in calling for reform to allow federal workers to organize unions and bargain collectively. In the years since World War II, numerous legislative proposals to improve federal labor relations had been proposed, primarily due to the efforts of NALC and other postal unions, but these bills never were brought to a vote.

By the beginning of President John F. Kennedy's term in 1961, however, NALC's campaign for union recognition legislation was gaining ground. More than 20 union recognition bills were introduced in the House and the Senate early that year, and the Rhodes-Johnston Bill, providing for recognition and collective bargaining for federal employees, was on the verge of enactment.

President Kennedy, who had been

did not comport with his vision of how it should work. So, on June 22, 1961, Kennedy established a task force to study the issue. This effectively stopped any action in Congress.

In his memorandum calling for the creation of the task force, Kennedy wrote, "The participation of employees in the formation and implementation of employee policy and procedures affecting them contributes to the effective conduct of public business." He said that participation should be extended to representatives of employees and employee organizations.

After months of work, the task force issued its report on Nov. 30, 1961, stating, "A continuous history, going back three quarters of a century has established beyond any reasonable doubt that certain categories of federal employees very much want to participate in the formulation of personnel policies and have established large and stable organizations for this purpose. This is not a challenge to be met so much as an opportunity to be embraced."

Kennedy's order provided that a labor organization would gain "national exclusive recognition" once a majority of the employees in the appropriate "bargaining unit" chose the organization as its representative. The organization would then represent employees in grievance discussions and negotiate a national contract with management, though bargaining would exclude wages, hours and fringe benefits.

In compliance with the order, the Post Office Department conducted a nationwide representation election in June 1962. NALC ran a spirited election campaign, urging carriers to vote for the "Big 9"—since the union was randomly placed ninth on the ballot. More than 367,000 postal workers participated, and NALC led the balloting with more than one-third of the total votes cast. On July 1, 1962, six major postal unions were granted national exclusive recognition. For the first time in NALC's history, the union had the right to represent all city delivery carriers in dealings with postal management.

With no experience or background in collective bargaining on either side, NALC and the Post Office Department entered into their first negotiations in mid-October. Since Bill Doherty had retired earlier that year to become the U.S. ambassador to Jamaica, the new NALC president, Jerome J. Keating, led the NALC negotiating team. Five months later, on March 20, 1963, the first National Postal Agreement was signed.

After signing the agreement, Keating said, "Such triumphs are never instantaneous creations. They never spring complete and perfect from the brow of any individual. Years of campaign-

ing on the part of the postal unions preceded the events."

While the executive order was aimed at federal employees, it had tremendous effects for state workers as a model. In the *Journal of American History* in 2008, Joseph McCartin, a Georgetown University professor focused on labor history, wrote, "Over the course of the decade [1962-1972], twenty-two states enacted collective bargaining laws for government workers. These reforms prompted a wave of organizing by unions such as AFSCME and the American Federation of Teachers (AFT)."

NALC adapted swiftly to the demands of the new collective-bargaining environment. Three more national agreements were signed—in 1964, 1965 and 1966. However, during the course of negotiations in 1965 and 1966, a serious flaw in the order became apparent: There was no mechanism to compel the Post Office Department to reach an agreement—or honor one once reached.

The Post Office Department was required to consult and negotiate with NALC, but management retained its final decision-making authority. For example, all arbitration decisions were advisory rather than binding, and there were no provisions for the arbitration of bargaining impasses. In fact, the department could even disregard its prior commitments by claiming an "emergency situation."

Frustrated by this imbalance of power, a carrier in Fort Plain, NY, asked in 1965 in *The Postal Record*, "What good is the national contract when the Department can take away all these supposed rights at their whim? What kind of contract is it where one side does not have to live

up to its agreements if it does not desire?"

In 1967, President Lyndon B. Johnson appointed a committee to review Executive Order 10988 and the changes that had occurred since its signing five years earlier. The committee found that the order had proven beneficial to both agencies and employees. "The new policies have contributed to more democratic management of the workforce and marked improvement in communications between agencies and their employees," the committee reported. "Through labor-management consultation and negotiations, improved personnel policies and working conditions have been achieved in a number of areas."

Not everyone saw Executive Order 10988 as a positive development. Even recently, some conservatives have called for the order to be repealed as a way to reduce the strength of labor unions among federal employees. A letter to the editor of *The Wall Street Journal* published on June 7, 2018, asked, "Why should 2.2 million federal workers enjoy both robust civil-service job protection and union representation?" It called on President Donald Trump to rescind Executive Order 10988 and decertify the federal employee unions.

Despite its obvious limitations for letter carriers, Executive Order 10988 was a major step forward and provided NALC with progress in the exercise of negotiation and collective bargaining. But it would take a wildcat strike in 1970 to give NALC and the other postal unions the right to binding arbitration, which gave teeth to the negotiations for national contracts. That right is being exercised once again in 2020, as NALC bargains with USPS over a new national agreement. **PR**



‘Horse-crazy gal’

“I’ve always been kind of a horse-crazy gal,” Turners Falls, MA Branch 1614 member **Stefanie Sibley** says.

When Sibley’s family moved in 1998 to a home across the street from a woman who bred Morgan horses, the young girl quickly took on a new hobby. The neighbor did all of her own horse training, and Sibley learned from her.

“It started with grooming, then cleaning after them,” Sibley said. The neighbor didn’t have any rideable horses because they were either too young or not yet trained, so she told Sibley, “We’ll have to make one for you.”

Sibley spent 15 years, from middle school into adulthood, training horses with her neighbor. Even after she began her job as a letter carrier, Sibley still rode there nearly every day after work. When Sibley’s friend died, she left the carrier her prized stallion, which was the first horse Sibley owned. She now has three.

“You start with groundwork and ba-

sic handling,” trying to get to a basic comfort level with each other, Sibley said, adding that each horse’s personality is different. She gradually adds equipment, including a bit and saddle, and teaches

the horses skills such as responding to commands and lunging—a way for trainers to help their horses burn off energy without riding them, and also a way to improve communication by teaching verbal cues to move forward and backward.

“I think horses have a great way of grounding you,” she said. “Taking care of them every day can be humbling and therapeutic. It doesn’t feel like work to me.”

The Morgan horse breed originated in New England in the late 18th century and was among the first horse breeds developed in the United States. Known for their beauty and stamina, the horses often are sought for breeding.

“What draws me to [Morgan] horses is that they are a good family horse,” Sibley said, adding that “it’s a horse everyone can enjoy—energetic enough for adults to enjoy and safe enough to take the smallest kids around the ring. The foundation stallion of the breed was known for working the farm, taking the family to church and still having enough energy to race on

the weekends.”

The carrier now has a trio of Morgan horses—their barn names are Fusion, Stella and Rebel. The three horses also have registered names with the American Morgan Horse Association that are used for shows.

Sibley keeps Fusion with her at home, and the other two are boarded at a farm in New Hampshire, just over the state line from Massachusetts.

“I live on a hilly property, not conducive to riding,” she said, adding, “I go over to New Hampshire twice a day to feed and train them and work them.”

Though she has shown all of her horses, the carrier has been focusing on Stella and set a goal of two shows for her this year. Sibley has trained the horse since she was born five years ago, but she’s been under saddle for less than a year. “She’s taken it in stride. I’m very proud of her,” Sibley said.

She also has done some horse breeding, though not in recent years. She started because she wanted a new show horse. “I wanted it to be more personal and more hands-on,” she said.

The carrier now plans to show Stella for a few years, then breed her.

Sibley has carried mail on and off over the past 13 years, first serving as a transitional employee before taking a break and returning as the then-newly created position of city carrier assistant in 2014. She was converted to regular the following year.

She tries to be with her horses whenever she can. “With the Postal Service, it’s hard to get time off,” she said. While some in the sport hire someone else to train their horses

Previous page: Sibley rides her mare, Stella, in competition

Right: The carrier competes with her first Morgan horse, stallion Randallane Genesis

six days a week, the carrier says she enjoys doing all of the work herself.

And practice makes perfect. "I've always had the frame of mind that even though I'm an amateur trainer and shower, I don't want to appear to be an amateur," she said.

Sibley said she's lucky to live near show grounds in New Hampshire. The show season generally begins in April, though due to the COVID-19 pandemic, there have been some major adjustments to the schedule this year.

Some events have been canceled, and the first show she was planning to enter in May in Deerfield, NH, was postponed to July.

"They do have some strict protocols for COVID" in place, Sibley said, including riders and spectators wearing masks all the time (except if riding a horse), everyone keeping at least two seats apart, having no gatherings and canceling exhibitor parties.

"It's definitely been different," she said, but "at the end of the day, we're just trying to get these horses we've worked so hard with, out [there] competing."

Sibley had been waiting to see if she was going to the world championships in Oklahoma City in October, but ultimately the carrier and her travel companions made the decision not to attend. "The travel restrictions for Massachusetts and New Hampshire would have been a little difficult for everyone upon return," she said.

Typically, the shows she competes in through the United Professional Horsemen's Association and the United States Equestrian Federation are a week long, and divisions where horses are shown are spread throughout that time frame.

On Monday, participants usually set up their stalls and let their horses get used to the stables and settle in for a day or so. By Wednesday, Sibley says, there are perhaps two classes, one in the morning and one in the evening. Classes are a series of performances



where horses with similar characteristics compete against one another.

"When you show, you go into preliminary classes," she said, adding, it's "a lot of 'hurry up and wait.'"

Higher classes tend to be scheduled later in the week, and the types of awards to be earned depend on the show. "They pin you per class," Sibley said of how winning competitors receive recognition.

The carrier says that her fellow letter carriers certainly know about her hobby, and some have even tuned in to her horse shows online through live feeds.

"I've always loved competing," Sibley said. "It's a personal drive." Competition can be very stiff, the carrier said, adding that external factors such as judging preferences play a role. Or, she added, "you could simply be having a bad day."

"When you win or place well, it's that much more rewarding," Sibley said.

The carrier clearly loves horses and enjoys the whole process of training and showing them. "I've never been the type of person that gets hung up on the type of ribbon," she said.

Rather, Sibley says, she just wants to "be better than the last ride." **PR**

Sibley with her niece



Customer Connect adds up for USPS

By touching every address in the United States at least six days a week, letter carriers naturally develop special relationships with their customers. Since USPS's Customer Connect program began in 2003, thousands of carriers have successfully leveraged their interactions with business customers to encourage them to use the Postal Service, rather than rely on private delivery and mailing services. Below are some recent stories about Customer Connect leads submitted by letter carriers that have helped USPS earn new revenue.

A simple question seals the deal in South Carolina

Columbia, SC Branch 233 member **Chris Mullen** has found that the simplest way is best when it comes to reaching out to customers for Customer Connect. "If I run into someone [on the route], I tell them about it," the 18-year carrier said. "It" is Mullen's key question: "I ask if they want to see if we can save them money," he explained.

This persuasive line worked perfectly when it came to Carolina Clutches, a store that sells high-quality handbags and accessories. The customer came to Mullen's attention once he saw that she was receiving a lot of deliveries through competitors. "If I see they have a lot of UPS packages, I reach out and ask," he said.

After Mullen discovered that the customer was looking for affordable shipping rates, he offered to connect her with the USPS sales team. A representative followed up with the customer and was able to recommend Priority Mail shipping for her business.

Mullen says that he has seen Carolina Clutches grow from the ground up. "When [the business owner] started, she was working out of her garage," he said. Mullen added that it was not a question of convincing her, but about letting her know about USPS's capabilities. "I didn't

have to say much of anything," he said. "She was looking to expand."

Mullen's willingness to reach out to his customers resulted in \$50,830 in new annualized revenue for the Postal Service.

Texas carrier receives Million Dollar Lead award

On Sept. 9, Dallas, TX Branch 132 member **Kathy Brown** received a certificate signed by NALC President Fredric Rolando in recognition of her extraordinary feat. Brown, a 32-year letter carrier, had secured a sales lead that generated more than \$1 million for the Postal Service.

Brown said that when she saw a FedEx trailer parked in a company's lot, it piqued her interest. The business was a logistics company that she regularly delivered to on her route. "I saw the trailer, and I inquired, 'Can we get some of that business?'" Brown recalled.

The carrier knew one of the sales representatives, so after getting the company's information, she made sure to follow up on the lead. The sales representative met with the owners, and was able to convince them to switch some of their shipping. "[USPS] got their business for the smaller packages," Brown said. "We have better prices."

Though Brown has since left her business route for a residential route, the carrier said that her ability to generate leads was mainly based around the instincts she has built up over her years on the job.



Kathy Brown (l) holds her award alongside Branch 132 President Kim Lewis.

"It's an acquired ability," she said.

But she believes her personal connection also helps when it comes to convincing her customers to hear her sales pitch. "I show that I'm concerned, that I deliver," she added. "You have to show that you can walk the walk."

In California, a carrier comes through for his customer

Flair Boutique clothing store owner Starr Donati faced a problem. Due to the pandemic-caused shutdown in her state, she was having difficulty getting her packages out to her customers. Her letter carrier, Stockton, CA Branch 213 member **Richard Valles**, saw an opportunity.

"I always try to grab people when I see them switching [delivery services]," Valles said. "I tell them that [USPS] is more dependable than other services." The 34-year carrier took the lead back to the office. A sales representative spoke to Donati and informed her about the better surcharge rate and lower shipping prices. Donati ended up switching not only her regular mail business to USPS, but her website shipping as well.

Valles says that his ability to connect with his customers does not come from his own persuasive ability, but from his long-standing connection with the people at those businesses. "They know me for so long," he explained. "You build up trust, you build up a comfort level." He said that this comfort level allows him to approach his customers with ease to ask them about their shipping needs.

Valles said that he thinks of the Customer Connect program as achieving a win-win scenario. "I can see both sides," he said. "It's good for the future of the Post Office, but I really believe that it's also best for the customer."

The carrier's readiness to go the extra mile for his customers paid off: His lead resulted in \$50,000 in new revenue. **PR**



Making deposits for military service

As planning for retirement is on the minds of many of our members, we're reprinting this article, originally published in May 2019, about how to make deposits toward retirement for time spent in military service.

The law that permits certain veterans to make deposits for prior military service for time to count toward Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS) or Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS) retirement (eligibility and amount of annuity) requires the employee to completely pay the full amount of the deposit prior to separation for retirement. However, the law provides an exception: If a veteran did not make deposit prior to separation due to administrative error by the employing agency, the former employee may have the opportunity to make or complete a military deposit after separation.

This column begins with a general introduction to making a deposit for military service, follows with discussion of the Postal Service's obligation to provide accurate and complete counseling regarding deposits for military service, and ends with a review of the exception to the general rule that military deposits must be completed prior to separation.

Under the CSRS and the FERS, an individual's "years of service" is a determining factor to establish eligibility to retire and to calculate the amount of the retirement pension. Generally, years of service is computed for a retiring employee by measuring the elapsed time between the start date of career service and the date of separation for retirement.

Military veterans can, in most cases, increase their years of service by making a deposit for their time in the military. Many veterans will find this advantageous because doing so may enable them to retire earlier and receive a higher pension. The amount of the deposit depends on which retirement system a veteran is in, how much they earned in the military and when the deposit is made.

The Office of Personnel Management (OPM) is the federal agency that has authority over CSRS and FERS retirement matters. OPM regulations require that deposits for military service be paid in full prior to the date of retirement. The deposit must be made to the employing agency (in our case, the Postal Service). The amount of the deposit is 7 percent of basic military pay under CSRS, or 3 percent of basic military pay under FERS. If deposit is made more than two or three years after beginning career employment at the Postal Service, interest is charged.

OPM regulates federal employers, including the Postal Service, when it comes to retirement matters. OPM provides the following guidance in a Benefits Administration Letter dated Jan. 27, 2017:

- *Each federal employing agency... must have the capacity to counsel, calculate, collect and to post all payments related to employees' deposits for military service...*
- *Agencies are required to provide accurate and complete counseling to all employees who seek to make post-1956 military deposit; this includes counseling as to the effect of paying or not paying the deposit(s) as well as the proper calculation of the deposit(s).*
- *Agencies are responsible for including accurate information about the accrual of interest on military deposits and to accurately determine and apply the Interest Accrual Date in any given request to make deposit for a period of military service.*
- *In general, an (agency) administrative error occurs when in response to an employee's inquiry, the employing agency provides material misinformation concerning the deposit and the consequences of not making the deposit prior to separation... In addition, if an employee, at the time of election, affirmatively asks for information regarding the amount of the military deposit or the consequences of failing to make a deposit, the gov-*

ernment commits administrative error if its response either misrepresents the dollar amounts in question, or is so indirect, inaccurate, or incomplete as to confuse the employee as to the amount of the deposit or the effect of any failure to make the deposit on the annuity recalculation.

It is clear from the above that the Postal Service is required to provide accurate and complete counseling regarding making deposit for military service to any employee requesting such counseling. There have, however, been instances where the Postal Service provided inaccurate and incomplete advice about making deposit for military time.

If a veteran does not make deposit for military service prior to retirement because of a Postal Service administrative error or incorrect advice, he or she can write to OPM and request belated deposit. OPM will investigate and make a decision allowing or disallowing the request. Adverse decisions by OPM on such a request can be appealed to the Merit Systems Protection Board.

Veterans can access the above-quoted OPM Benefits Administration Letter at opm.gov/retirement-services/publications-forms/benefits-administration-letters/2017/17-101.pdf.

Alternatively, you may contact the NALC Retirement Department at 202-393-4695 or 800-424-4695 (Monday, Wednesday or Thursday) to request a mailed copy.

To begin the military deposit process, contact the Human Resources Shared Services Center (HRSSC) at 877-477-3273, Option 5, or TTD/TTY at 866-260-7507.

Join the NALC Veterans Group

If you are interested in joining the group, complete the sign-up card at nalc.org/veterans.

The election that defines the future for letter carriers



**Brian
Renfro**

We are living in a pivotal moment in our nation's history. The election that is right in front of us has become the most polarizing one in memory. There are a wide range of issues that will be decided by the results of the presidential and congressional elections. Many of these issues have divided the people of this country. Among letter carriers, the issues of the future of the Postal Service and our jobs is not divisive, but it is a crucial fork in the proverbial road.

We must start by recognizing that not only will the presidential administration shape our future this January, but so will the new Congress. The best indication of

the future is the past—more specifically, the recent past. Let's look at the current administration and the two houses of Congress.

“Please educate yourself and others [about the election], but most importantly, vote!”

The Trump administration has been openly hostile toward the Postal Service, postal employees and unions. The White House task force on USPS recommended drastic changes, including draconian changes or cuts, such as ending our right to collectively bargain over wages and aligning our pay increases with those of other federal employees.

Prior to 1970, postal employees received pay increases only when authorized by Congress and the president. Thousands of brave men and women walked off the job illegally in 1970 because they were fed up with that scenario. Their courageous actions resulted in full collective-bargaining rights, including the right to bargain for our wages. This administration has proposed to return letter carriers to the pre-1970 world. We reject such proposals in the strongest possible terms.

More recently, we analyzed what would have happened over the last several years if we had gotten the same raises as other federal employees rather than what NALC has negotiated in our collective-bargaining agreements. If over the last 10 years this had been the case, a letter carrier at Step O would be making roughly \$7,000 less per year. We have no interest in returning to the “collective

begging” days that our brothers and sisters fought and defeated 50 years ago.

Conversely, former Vice President Joe Biden and Sen. Kamala Harris have track records of support for letter carriers. They both strongly support a universal Postal Service, sensible postal reform that addresses the mandate to pre-fund future retiree health benefits, and our right to collectively bargain.

Every American votes based on where candidates stand on the issues that are most important to them. For most letter carriers, their job is at or near the top of that list. When the NALC Executive Council unanimously voted to endorse Vice President Biden, it was based solely on how the candidate would support letter carriers and our jobs.

Over the last two years, the House of Representatives has supported letter carriers in a bipartisan way. Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi has remained a champion for letter carriers. Our friends on both sides of the aisle have shown support by co-sponsoring our service resolutions, passing a bill to repeal the pre-funding mandate and, most recently, passing a bill to provide COVID-19 relief funding for USPS. NALC is proud to support our friends in both parties in their re-election efforts, and we are confident that we will maintain an overwhelming majority of pro-letter carrier members of the House.

Unfortunately, the exact opposite of what took place in the House has taken place in the Senate. Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell has refused to bring any of the postal legislation to the Senate floor for a vote or even engage on any of the bills. Under his leadership, the Senate has done absolutely nothing for letter carriers, despite bipartisan support for our issues. The leadership in the Senate needs to change for letter carriers to achieve what we need to achieve in the next Congress. Competitive Senate races in Arizona, Colorado, Georgia, Iowa, Maine, Montana and North Carolina give us the opportunity to do just that.

NALC has created a Voter Resource Center page on the NALC website. You can find information about your voter registration status, specifics about your state and virtual volunteer opportunities. In a world full of cable news and social media clickbait spun one way or the other to the left and the right, it is important that everyone be educated on the facts surrounding the issues that are important to them. This month's issue of *The Postal Record* and the information on nalc.org provide facts about our jobs and this election. Please educate yourself and others, but most importantly, *vote!*

A time to remember



**Lew
Drass**

Some of you will already have voted by the time you read this. Others already have made up their mind about whom they plan to vote for this election season, and there is nothing anyone could say to change that. That is just fine with me. I believe in everybody's right to their political opinion. I learned that best in the decades I spent on the workroom floor. Politics are argued nearly every day at work, along with religion, sports and a host of other issues.

I have always voted based on my job. Maybe that is wrong to some of you, but I always have believed that it was in the best interests of my family, which includes every member of NALC and their families. This year is no different for me. My decision is easy, and here is why.

The current administration has submitted White House budgets to Congress each year since Donald Trump has taken office as president. Each year, they have proposed several provisions that would hurt each one of us and cause us to:

- **Pay more**—Increase pension contributions to the tune of about \$3,700 per year for anyone hired before Jan. 1, 2014, which boils down to around a \$1.75 per hour pay cut for most of you.
- **Work longer**—Eliminate the Social Security Annuity Supplement. This would eliminate the annuity supplement that covers the gap for employees who retire under the Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS) before they qualify for Social Security benefits at age 62.
- **Earn less when you retire**—Reduce Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS) and FERS pension benefits for new retirees by basing annuities on workers' highest average yearly salary over five years (high-5) instead of over the highest three years (high-3). This will naturally reduce the amount that you will draw each month in retirement.
- **Earn less while you work**—Reduce the Thrift Savings Plan (TSP) G Fund interest rate. The new rate would be tied to the interest rate on 90-day Treasury bills instead of an average of medium- and long-term Treasury bond rates. This would have translated into a \$1.4 billion annual loss for TSP participants last year alone.
- **Lose more money after retirement**—Eliminate or reduce cost-of-living adjustments (COLAs). For current and future retirees under FERS (which covers any employee hired after 1984), COLAs would be entirely eliminated. For those retirees under CSRS, COLAs would be reduced by 0.5 percent each year.

The most recent two White House budget proposals also included:

- **Pay higher health benefit premiums**—Reduce the percent-

age that the federal government is required to contribute to the Federal Employees Health Benefits (FEHB) Program, so that federal employees pay more into the program. It is estimated that this change would cost an average retiree around \$1,400 per year. This change would not affect active letter carriers immediately because the percentage the USPS pays for our health benefit premiums is set by the terms of our collective-bargaining agreement.

The 2019 White House budget proposal also called for \$44.49 billion in vaguely defined service cuts and revenue changes over a decade, including reducing service days and making door delivery a thing of the past.

President Trump established a task force to evaluate the operations and finances of the USPS and develop recommendations for administrative and legislative reforms for the Postal Service when he signed Executive Order 13829 on April 12, 2018.

The task force report was released on Dec. 4, 2018. It was titled "United States Postal Service: A Sustainable Path Forward." Here are a few recommendation excerpts from the report:

Align USPS employee rights with other federal employee rights by eliminating collective bargaining over compensation for USPS employees.

Pursue reforms to USPS employee wages consistent with those proposed for the broader federal workforce in the President's Management Agenda.

The Task Force recommends that the USPS explore franchising the mailbox as a means of generating revenue. This could be done by retaining the mailbox monopoly and allowing regulated access, for a fee, to certified private companies. These "franchisees" would be granted access to the mailbox for the delivery of mail and small parcels.

Pursue reform of the Federal Employee Retirement System that would increase employee contributions and move toward a defined contribution system.

There is much more. The report should have been titled "A Recipe to Dismantle the USPS."

The USPS Fairness Act (H.R. 2382) passed in the House on Feb. 5 this year by a vote of 309-106. This bill would repeal the unfair requirement that the Postal Service pre-fund retiree health benefit premiums. This is a burden that no other business in the federal or private sector is required to carry, and accounts for 92 percent of the reported USPS losses from 2007 to 2018. Additionally, the Delivering for America Act (H.R. 8015) passed in the House of Representatives on Aug. 22 by a vote of 257-150. This bill provides \$25 billion in direct financial relief to the Postal Service and would ensure that no changes in service can be made that would result in delays during the pandemic. These bills would go a long way to provide the relief we need.

In the end, you will have to make up your own mind, but whatever you do, please remember to vote.

More important reminders



**Nicole
Rhine**

Open Season for choosing a health benefit plan is Nov. 9 through Dec. 14, and I encourage all NALC members to consider enrolling in the NALC Health Benefit Plan, NALC's own union-run health plan. NALC health benefit representatives and branch officers are reminded that any USPS employee, regardless of bargaining or non-bargaining status, must be a full dues-paying member of NALC to enroll in the NALC Health Benefit Plan.

Under Article 22 of the *NALC Constitution*, a Health Benefit Plan membership (often referred to as an "Associate Membership") applies only to retirees who did not main-

tain their membership in NALC upon retirement, as well as all non-postal federal employees. These enrollees of the NALC Health Benefit Plan pay yearly dues of \$36, which are billed directly from Headquarters in the early part of the year.

“Please note that it is the responsibility of the branch to notify Headquarters when a member reaches a milestone.”

Dues rosters—As a reminder, monthly dues rosters for state associations are currently available to state presidents, state secretaries and state treasurers by selecting the “State Dues Roster” button in the Members Only portal. Branch presidents, secretaries and treasurers also have access to their branch biweekly dues rosters through the Members Only portal by selecting the “Bi-weekly Dues Roster” button. Additionally, the quarterly retiree dues information was made available to branches and state associations in September.

Changes of officers—Branches and state associations are asked to notify the office of the secretary-treasurer in writing as soon as possible after a change of officers. This can be done via a letter or, for branches, by filling out a “Branch Information Record” card. New officers will not begin to receive their mail from Headquarters until NALC is notified of their names, titles and addresses. NALC's membership database stores the names of branch and state

presidents, secretaries and treasurers, and the information in the database is used for mailings and for access to dues roster information on the Members Only portal.

Membership pins and gold cards—All requests for membership pins and gold cards must be made in writing by the branch secretary. The written request should include the name of the member, what milestone the member has reached and the member's NALC membership ID number. Pins for milestones under 50 years of membership are readily available and are mailed out shortly after we receive the request. Gold card requests, however, take longer, as they are engraved and have to be specially ordered. Please send in requests for gold cards at least four to six weeks in advance of when the branch needs to receive them. Advance notice is also needed for any requests for 70- and 75-year members. Please note that it is the responsibility of the branch to notify Headquarters when a member reaches a milestone, as per Article 2 of the *NALC Constitution*.

Membership rosters—All requests for membership rosters for branches or state associations must be made in writing under signature of an officer. Requests for a branch election roster also must be made in writing. There is no charge for a branch or state association to request a paper roster. However, for any branch or state association that would like an electronic roster, there is a \$50 fee; payment should be included with the written request. An electronic roster is sent on a thumb drive with the information in Excel format. The rosters can be processed in various ways, including with active and retired members comingled or separated out, and with the member's NALC membership date—which would assist branches with requests for pins and gold cards. Please specify in the written request what information the branch or state association would like included.

CCAs—A city carrier assistant's break in service should not trigger a permanent cancellation of dues withholding. Per the agreement with the USPS, a CCA's dues deductions are to automatically restart when the CCA returns from a break in service. Branch secretaries should review the bi-weekly roster and notify the NALC Membership Department if the dues withholding of a CCA returning from a break in service does not restart after one pay period and/or the CCA is noted as “CAN” (canceled). A CCA on a break in service should be noted on the roster as “SEP” (separated).

And finally, please remember to vote in November!

The rules and rights of voting



**Paul
Barner**

A fundamental concept in any democracy is the right to have your voice heard. This ensures that governing is based on the will of the people. As such, the importance of one's right to vote cannot be overstated. There are many slogans used to highlight and bring awareness to the importance of voting. Your vote, your voice; if you don't vote, you can't complain; elections have consequences.... The list goes on and on.

Incorporated within the NALC Constitution are several provisions that require the will of the members to direct specific activities or changes.

Article 15 of the *Constitution* directs the means and method by which branch or state association bylaws may be amended by vote of the membership:

Each Branch or State Association may make, alter, or rescind such by-laws, rules, and regulations from time to time as may be deemed most expedient, providing they do not in any way conflict with this Constitution. By-laws of branches may be amended at any regular meeting of the branch, provided the amendment has been submitted in writing at the last previous regular branch meeting, and suitable notification to members shall be made at least ten (10) days before the regular meeting at which the vote is to be taken. By-laws and amendments thereto, fixing the amount of initiation fees, dues, and reinstatement fees, or the time and place of meetings, shall become effective at the time determined by the Branch or State Association. All other by-laws must be submitted in duplicate to the Chairperson of the Committee of Laws and shall not become effective until approved by the Committee of Laws as provided in Article 11, Sec. 3, of this Constitution.

Article 5, Section 3 of the *Constitution for the Government of Subordinate and Federal Branches (CGSFB)* addresses branch elections in part:

All regular members shall be entitled to one vote for each office or position to be filled.

However, station delegates, representatives, or shop stewards may be elected only by the regular members within the station or area they represent. Branch stewards and any other persons who are members of the Branch Executive Board or similar body must be elected by the entire branch, not just by the station or area they represent.

Article 7, Section 2 of the *CGSFB* addresses fees, dues, fines and assessments in part:

The rates of dues and initiation fees may be increased only by majority vote by secret ballot of the regular members in good standing at a special or regular meeting after reasonable notice has been given that this question will be before the meeting, except that a Branch may provide in its by-laws that such majority vote may be had by secret ballot referendum. The same rules of procedure shall apply to the levy of a special or general assessment and to the imposition of fines upon members found guilty of charges preferred against them, except that such assessment or fines must be approved by a two-thirds vote. Branch by-law provisions requiring a vote greater than a majority of the regular members in good standing at the special or regular meeting to amend the Branch by-laws do not apply to proposals to increase the rates of dues or initiation fees.

Article 10, Section 1 of the *CGSFB* addresses charges in part:

Any member of the Branch who shall violate the Constitution or By-laws of the Association or Branch may have charges preferred against him/her, and if such charges are proved shall be fined, reprimanded, suspended or expelled as the laws may direct or the Branch determine. Any officer of the Branch who shall fail or neglect to discharge the duties of his/her office, or who may be guilty of gross misconduct, may be removed from office. These determinations shall be made by the members present and voting at the next regular Branch meeting after which said charges were read to the Branch. The vote regarding any of the above matters may be continued once, by motion, to the following regular Branch meeting.

Article 12, Section 3 of the *CGSFB* addresses funds in part:

All funds shall be devoted to such uses as the Branch may determine; provided, that no appropriation shall be made except when ordered by a majority vote of the members present and voting at a regular meeting; provided further, that Branches may make provision in their by-laws allowing officers to spend a certain sum of money between Branch meetings in cases of emergency.

The above is meant to illustrate the importance of the vote in establishing the will of the membership, and is not inclusive of every circumstance in which a branch vote is required or necessary.

Of similar importance to voting on NALC matters is the importance of exercising one's right to voice his or her opinions and vote in the election of those who will be making decisions at our local, state and federal levels of government. Your vote is your voice on those issues affecting you and your family. It goes without saying that careful consideration is of paramount importance when deciding among candidates, but one must exercise the right to vote to be heard at all.

USPS delivery initiatives updates



Christopher Jackson

In recent months, USPS has introduced several new delivery initiatives that have created concern for many city letter carriers. Each of these delivery initiatives was implemented unilaterally by the Postal Service without NALC participation. The National Agreement provides a mechanism for NALC and USPS to jointly discuss and consider testing of new delivery initiatives through the City Delivery Task Force; however, USPS Delivery Operations chose to begin several new tests without agreement by the task force. I want to use this month's article to update you on the status of these tests.

Expedited Street/Afternoon Sortation (ESAS)

The ESAS pilot test required carriers to clock in, attend any service or safety talk, perform vehicle inspections, obtain accountable items, set up their scanners, retrieve the parcel hamper, line up the SPRs, and retrieve the mail cased and pulled down the previous afternoon. Under the test, no mail was to be cased in the morning. Carriers were to withdraw hot case preferential flats and route them in order of delivery on the street. Instead of casing their SPRs, carriers would line them up in delivery order prior to pulling their hot case mail, and then immediately clock to the street to load their vehicle and begin delivery. Upon returning to the office in the afternoon, carriers would complete the normal return-to-office duties. After completion of these duties, carriers would then case and pull down all mail distributed to the route in preparation for the next day's delivery. This test, as described, while similar to the long-standing Expedited Preferential Mail (EPM) Delivery Program, did not fully comply

“I am happy to report that NALC and the Postal Service have... agreed that the ESAS pilot test would be terminated.”

with the requirements of *Handbook M-39, Management of Delivery Services*, and *Handbook M-41, City Delivery Carriers Duties and Responsibilities*.

NALC filed a national-level grievance disputing the unilateral implementation of this test. I am happy to report that NALC and the Postal Service have settled this grievance and agreed that the ESAS pilot test would be terminated as of Aug. 19. The settlement also states that any future modifications or al-

ternate applications to EPM, as outlined in USPS handbooks, would be subject to discussion through the City Delivery Task Force. This settlement, M-01927, can be found in NALC's Materials Reference System (MRS) on the NALC website.

Post Office Sortation Equipment Reconciliation (SER)

On July 31, USPS notified NALC of a new delivery initiative titled the Post Office Sortation Equipment Rationalization (SER). In the original correspondence, SER was characterized as a “review” that would solicit “feedback” from employees regarding potential consolidation of casing and sortation equipment. However, USPS subsequently released a stand-up talk that revealed that the Postal Service had instructed local management to reduce casing equipment and cell sizes, causing widespread violations of the handbooks and manuals while making casing more difficult and less efficient.

On Aug. 17, NALC filed a national-level grievance on the Postal Service's unilateral implementation of SER. As of the date of this writing, the SER initiative has been halted pending our discussions with the Postal Service on the program.

Article 34 office activities study

On April 19, 2019, USPS notified NALC of its intent to conduct a study of letter carrier office activities. According to the Postal Service, this data will be collected by a third-party contractor, Deloitte, and the information may be used in collective bargaining. USPS also stated that the information may be used to evaluate and, if necessary, create new office standards. This test was supposed to begin in early 2020; however, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, it was postponed.

On July 31, NALC received the data collection schedule and a list of the routes identified for the study. NALC was informed that data collectors would be counting the mail and observing the regular carrier perform office and loading/unloading duties in the morning and the afternoon on the selected routes. The data collection began on Aug. 3 and continued through September. NALC representatives visited each test site prior to the study to explain the process. These representatives then returned to the sites after data collection was complete to obtain feedback from the carriers involved in the study. To date, USPS is still awaiting the results of the study from the third-party contractor. NALC Headquarters will be monitoring any action that USPS may implement resulting from this study and will exercise its rights as necessary in accordance with Article 34 of the National Agreement.

For more information on these and other initiatives affect-ing city letter carriers, please visit my City Delivery page on nalc.org. This year has presented many challenges for city carriers, but you have succeeded in overcoming adversity. Thank you for your continued strength, bravery and perseverance.

Be a hero



Manuel L. Peralta Jr.

You can be a hero. How? Protect others, not just yourself. We are a union, and unions protect the collective rights of the many. So quit thinking about yourself and ask: How do your actions affect your brothers and sisters on the workroom floor, and how does your behavior affect your community and your family? COVID-19 is not a joke, and it is not a hoax.

The world we live in is under attack by a virus of epic proportions. The magnitude of this pandemic has not been experienced since the early 1900s, and lessons learned then should have been the starting point to better our chances for survival. Instead, the mouth that roars manipulates each and every aspect of how

the United States responds and acts. Moving the economy forward was more important than saving lives.

As I draft this month's column, the Johns Hopkins University COVID-19 Dashboard shows more than 28 million global cases and more than 900,000 global deaths. The United States shows more than 6.4 million cases and 191,500 deaths. This is not the common flu, as some have suggested, and this will not go away by magic.

Scientists, medical professionals, infectious disease experts and the collective body of truth related to COVID-19 will find a solution with time. Until then, it is up to you to do your part.

In a recent conversation with Tony Bossi, a letter carrier from Massachusetts Northeast Merged Branch 25, he shared some thoughts on the subject of Spartacus:

Asked why it was dishonorable to return without a shield and not without a helmet, the Spartan king Demaratus (510 491) is said to have replied: 'Because the latter they put on for their own protection, but the shield for the common good of all.'

The Spartans battled in a formation called a phalanx. The key to the phalanx success was the shield. Soldiers would advance in tight formation with their shields on their left arm. The shield would protect not only the soldier carrying it, but also the soldier to their left. Spartans understood that one individual soldier could not win a battle alone. It took the entire army to defeat their enemy. Many enemies were defeated while employing this cooperative technique.

Today, we are faced with the threat of the COVID-19 pandemic. Without a cure or a vaccine, we are left with few weapons to fend off this threat. We do have our own modern day phalanx, and that is maintaining social distancing. Our shields are not

made of wood and bronze, instead they are made of cloth. They are not carried on our left arm, but worn over our mouths and noses. They are face masks, scarves and gaiters. Although some may debate the personal freedom they claim to be surrendering by wearing a mask, science makes clear that wearing a mask for the common good



Kirk Douglas as Spartacus in the 1960 film of the same name

is the honorable thing to do.

Thank you, Tony.

Earlier this week, news broke on the subject of a series of 18 interviews of President Trump, by journalist and author Bob Woodward.

We have been hearing the president downplaying the pandemic while hospitals were strained beyond their safe capacity. We heard him mock the precautions that were recommended from medical professionals, and we saw him bench Dr. Anthony Fauci. Why? It is clear that POTUS wants business to grow and continue so that he can pat himself on the back while putting you, your family and your community at risk.

President Trump specifically answered the following to a question from Woodward during a Feb. 7 interview:

It goes through air, Bob. That's always tougher than the touch. You know, the touch, you don't have to touch things. Right? But the air, you just breathe the air and that's how it's passed... This is more deadly. This is 5 percent versus 1 percent. So this is deadly stuff.

The president has known all along that COVID-19 is spread through the air. He has refused to issue any orders that would require the wearing of a face covering. He has belittled those who wear face coverings. His actions put you, your family and your community at risk.

Earlier this year, I wrote about the silence and inaction of the U.S. Department of Labor with regard to enforcing federal regulations relating to infectious diseases, in spite of its mission, which includes responsibility for occupational safety. The current administration's team of agency leaders is not interested in protecting you as an employee in a work force. They are protecting employers.

It's time to protect employees. Put on your shields. Draw your pen, as it is mightier than the sword, and vote in November. We need representatives at every level who will protect employees from unsafe working conditions.

A brief history of CSRS and FERS



Dan
Toth

With the founding of the NALC in 1889, a fight was started. In particular, a fight for a pension. At the time, older carriers were sometimes referred to as superannuated carriers (which means obsolete through age). It was clear that retirement was a necessary benefit and worth fighting for.

In 1920, the Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS) was born. Participants had an employee contribution, but did not contribute to Social Security. CSRS is a defined benefit plan, which is when an annuity is predetermined by a formula—in this case, based on the years of service and the high-3 average salary. This provided a known benefit that would

allow employees to plan for and have a dependable retirement, regardless of how the stock market performed.

The Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS) was created in 1987, but applied to those hired on or after Jan. 1, 1984. It was at this point that there were no new CSRS participants. FERS differed from CSRS in that it took advantage of Social Security and also added a third benefit, the Thrift Savings Plan (TSP). The FERS basic benefit was still a defined benefit plan, but it was reduced to compensate for Social Security and the TSP.

“If the fund is projected to grow, why are our elected officials again proposing to increase the cost to federal employees while simultaneously decreasing benefits?”

Employee contributions for FERS started at 0.8 percent of basic pay. So, if you were a FERS employee prior to Jan. 1, 2013, you automatically contribute 0.8 percent of your basic pay. This contribution is not voluntary. For today’s top-step carriers earning \$65,037 per year, that amounts to approximately \$520 in annual contributions. That’s a pretty good deal for a pension, especially when you consider that some retirees collect an annuity for longer than they worked.

The employee contributions for FERS have changed over time. Effective Jan. 1, 2013, the category FERS-Revised Annuity Employee (or FERS-RAE) was created and applied only to new

career employees. FERS-RAE changed employee contributions to 3.1 percent. It turned out that FERS-RAE was short-lived.

Effective Jan. 1, 2014, another new category, FERS-Further Revised Annuity Employee (FERS-FRAE) changed employee contributions for new career employees to 4.4 percent. That means that new career employees pay an additional 3.6 percent of their base pay for the same benefits as those prior to 2013. At the top step of \$65,037 per year, this additional 3.6 percent represents an increase of approximately \$2,341 per year in employee contributions. Surely a substantial increase. I would still point out that even for FERS-FRAE employees, it is my opinion that the pension remains a great benefit.

Why would one increase the employee contributions in 2013 and again in 2014? Was the pension fund failing? Was the fund paying out more than it was taking in? What was going on? Based on a 2016 report by the Office of Personnel Management (OPM), we can get a glimpse at the fund’s history. Looking at the fund—technically, it’s the Civil Service Disability Retirement Fund (CSDRF)—we can see from that from at least 1987 to 2014 (all the data available at the time the report was written), the fund increased year over year. By the end of 2012, the fund’s net assets were a mere \$829,100,000,000 (that is \$829.1 billion). The report by OPM also makes projections of the future. From 2015 to 2090, OPM projected that the end-of-year net assets would continue to increase year after year. The fund’s net assets were projected by 2090 to be \$12.5 trillion!

This leads to my next question. If the fund is projected to continue to grow and grow and grow, why are our elected representatives again proposing to increase the cost to federal employees while simultaneously decreasing benefits? The White House 2021 budget proposal aims to reduce CSRS cost-of-living adjustments (COLAs) by 0.5 percent, eliminate FERS COLAs, eliminate the Special Retirement Supplement (which helps those retiring before age 62 to bridge the gap until they can start collecting Social Security), change the high-3 to a high-5 average salary and even reduce the G-fund interest rate within the TSP.

The question remains: Why should we pay more and receive less, when the system is working so well? Elections are around the corner. If you are retired or would like to retire someday, I encourage you to stay engaged in politics and consider casting your vote for the politicians who support unions, the middle class and especially federal employees. Remember that the party doesn’t matter. We have politicians who support us on both sides of the aisle. Let’s make sure that the individuals we vote for have a good track record when it comes to supporting America’s dedicated federal workforce. Let’s make sure the billions of dollars we’ve paid into the fund end up back in our pockets, so that we can age with dignity.

Help with your Hospital Plus claim



**James W.
“Jim” Yates**

In July, I wrote about one of the Mutual Benefit Association (MBA)'s most popular products offered to NALC members and their families: our Hospital Plus Plan. This plan covers NALC members, their spouses and dependent children. With an MBA Hospital Plus Plan, a daily cash benefit is paid for each day that you or a covered family member is hospitalized due to illness or injury. The plan offers a daily benefit paid directly to the member. Benefit amounts are \$30, \$50, \$75 or \$100 per day. The daily benefit is the same amount for the NALC member (the insured) and the spouse. A covered child's daily benefit amount is 60 percent of the

insured's daily benefit.

A covered child means an insured's unmarried legal child who is: a) under 19 years of age and living with the insured, or b) between 19 and 23 years of age and a full-time student at a regular educational institution. A covered child may include an adopted child or a step-child of the insured.

Since this is one of MBA's most-popular plans, this article is dedicated to helping members who own a Hospital Plus Plan understand how to complete their Hospital Plus Insurance Claim form. Completing this information properly assists the MBA analyst in processing the member's claim as expeditiously as possible. This means that the member can quickly enjoy the benefits of his or her plan.

An informational instruction sheet is included with every Hospital Confinement Insurance Claim form. There are six specific questions that must be fully completed to avoid delays:

1. The general information, which includes the member's name, address, policy number, Social Security number, branch number and best phone number.
2. The patient information, including the birthday and the relationship to the member; if the member is the patient, this should be indicated in the relationship area on the form.
3. The treating hospital information. This area must be completed with the name and address of the hospital where the individual was admitted; the admission date(s) and the actual discharge date should be entered on the claim form. Verification of the hospital stay must be included with the claim form

when mailed back to MBA. Note: Overnight stays in a Skilled Nursing Facility (SNF) are not covered by the Hospital Plus Plan.

Proof of hospitalization must be in the form of one of the following:

- An itemized bill on the hospital's letterhead;
 - A letter from the hospital (on the hospital's letterhead) including the admission and discharge dates, along with the signature and title of the hospital's representative;
 - A UB-92, HCFA-14 50 or UB-04 hospital statement;
 - An NALC Health Benefit Plan Explanation of Benefits (EOB) form.
4. The name, address and telephone number of the physician ordering the hospital stay. (This includes orders from an emergency room physician.)
 5. The diagnosed nature of the illness. The Hospital Plus policy will pay the daily benefit to an insured for up to 365 days for any one confinement due to each illness or injury.
 6. Information about any previous treating physician(s) of the diagnosed condition.

“With an MBA Hospital Plus plan, a daily cash benefit is paid for each day that you or a covered family member is hospitalized due to illness or injury.”

The signature area of this form can be confusing. The member must sign and date in the designated area. Also, if the member is the patient, he or she must sign and date the patient information. Otherwise, the required information is clear. The NALC member must sign for any minor children. If the patient is a spouse or a child who is no longer a minor, the patient should sign for himself or herself.

For more information regarding the MBA Hospital Plus Plan, please call the MBA office toll-free at 800-424-5184, Tuesdays and Thursdays, 8 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., or call 202-638-4318, Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Eastern time. You also may visit our website at nalc.org/mba.

Please note: Currently, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the MBA phone lines are open only on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 8 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Eastern Time.

FEHB Open Season



Stephanie Stewart

The Federal Employees Health Benefits Program Open Season begins Monday, Nov. 9, and runs through Monday, Dec. 14. During this period, you will have the opportunity to review the 2021 rates and benefits and decide whether you want to make changes to your health care coverage.

If you missed my last *Postal Record* article, I encourage you to go to nalc.org and access the NALC *Postal Record* archives. Under the “News and Research” tab, select *The Postal Record* hyperlink, click on the 2020 archives, and then choose the September edition. Once you have reached this landing page, scroll down, and choose the

“Director, Health Benefits” article. Here you will be able to review the basics of choosing the right health plan. This month, I want to talk about why you should consider the NALC Health Benefit Plan, and what sets us apart.

First, the Plan is owned and operated by the National Association of Letter Carriers. Our membership elects the national officer, the director of health benefits, whose role is to administer the Plan; additionally, the Plan employs men and women represented by Office and Professional International Union, Local 2, AFL-CIO. I believe this is a significant point to consider in this era of those who would diminish the status of unions and their importance.

Next, the Plan was created more than 70 years ago, when the NALC recognized the need for letter carriers to have some form of health coverage. We have come a long way since then, but our mission has remained the same: to provide our members with accessibility to quality medical care while maintaining a comprehensive benefit package.

Also worth noting: We are a not-for-profit health insurer, which means that our only focus is on the health of our members. As your current director, I firmly believe that our mission, experience and competitive benefit package are a force to be reckoned with. Letter carriers deliver, and our Health Benefit Plan is no exception.

Open Season material

Our primary goal is to make sure that information is easily accessible, so we are doing things a little different this year. Every NALC letter carrier will be mailed information about the NALC Health Benefit Plan, and each NALC branch will receive a small, prorated number of plan booklets they can distribute to post offices across the country. The quantity automatically scheduled to ship to each branch

will be based on branch size and will range from one to 50 booklets; however, additional material will be supplied upon request. Branches should contact the Plan’s Customer Service Department to request additional material or brochures. You also can view our benefits in an electronic format at nalcchbp.org.

New to our website this year is a PowerPoint presentation. Whether you are choosing a plan for yourself, helping another person with the decision or hosting a training session, I am confident this will be a helpful tool.

If you are not currently a member of the Plan, I hope you will take some time to review the 2021 Health Benefit Plan material. If you have any questions, our customer service representatives are waiting to assist you at 888-636-NALC (6252).

How to join

Eligible, active postal employees have four ways to enroll in the NALC Health Benefit Plan:

- Use your home computer, tablet or smartphone to go to liteblue.usps.gov. You must have your employee ID number. This number is located on your earnings statement, above the words “Employee ID,” and is eight digits. You also will need your USPS PIN. This would be the same number you use to access PostalEASE.
- The Blue Page (Intranet) at work.
- Employee Self-Service Kiosks, located at some USPS facilities.
- PostalEASE by telephone. You can call 877-4PS-EASE or 877-477-3273 and enter Option 1.

Eligible annuitants and retirees can enroll by calling Employee Express at 800-332-9798, by going to OPM’s Open Season website at retirefehb.opm.gov or by submitting a Standard 2809 to your retirement office.

Active federal employees of agencies that participate in Employee Express may enroll during the Open Season by going to employeeexpress.gov or calling 478-757-3030. Employees of non-participating agencies should contact their employing office for enrollment instructions.

Health benefit plan representative mailing

Recently, a letter was sent to all NALC branches that currently do not have an elected Health Benefit Plan representative (HBR). If your branch received this letter, I hope you have taken some time to review it and will assist us in this endeavor.

I cannot emphasize enough the importance an HBR provides, not only throughout the course of the year, but especially during the weeks of Open Season.

Remember, this is your union Health Benefit Plan.

Contract Administration Unit

Brian Renfroe, Executive Vice President
Lew Drass, Vice President
Christopher Jackson, Director of City Delivery
Manuel L. Peralta Jr., Director of Safety and Health
Dan Toth, Director of Retired Members
Jim Yates, Director of Life Insurance

Leave provisions

The COVID-19 pandemic has had many effects on city letter carriers. One has been on annual leave. Many letter carriers had choice leave scheduled and then canceled their leave because vacations and events were rescheduled as a result of the pandemic. On Sept. 3, NALC and USPS agreed to Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) Re: Annual Leave Carryover for Leave Year 2021, M-01928 in NALC's Materials Reference System (MRS), which aims to alleviate this problem. This month's Contract Talk will explain the annual leave provisions, annual leave carryover and the agreed-upon provisions of M-01928.

Article 10 of the National Agreement covers general leave provisions such as choice of vacation period, vacation planning and sick leave. Article 10, Section 2 specifically incorporates *Employee and Labor Relations Manual (ELM)*, Section 510, which contains all the rules and procedures related to the Postal Service leave program. Section 512.32 of the *ELM* below contains the provision regarding annual leave carryover.

512.32 Maximum Carryover

512.321 Maximum Carryover Amounts

The maximum carryover amount, i.e., the maximum amount of previously accumulated annual leave with which an employee may be credited at the beginning of a year, is as follows:

a. Bargaining Unit Employees. The maximum leave carryover for bargaining unit employees is 55 days (440 hours).

Normally, the maximum carryover amount is 440 hours, as explained in the *ELM*. Accumulated annual leave in excess of 440 hours at the end of the leave year is not carried or rolled over into the next year.

M-01928 temporarily raises the maximum carryover to 520 hours from leave year 2020 to leave year 2021.

M-01928 states:

The parties agree that for leave year 2021, regular work force career employees covered by the USPS-NALC Agreement may carry over 520 hours of accumulated annual leave from leave year 2020 to leave year 2021.

In all other respects, the *ELM* provisions for payment of accumulated leave are not changed because of this Memorandum.

This MOU will expire December 31, 2021.

Article 10, Section 3 establishes a nationwide program for vacation planning for employees in the regular work force with emphasis on the choice vacation period(s) or variations thereof. The duration of the choice vacation period(s) is to be determined pursuant to local implementation procedures. Section 3.b states:

B. Care shall be exercised to assure that no employee is required to forfeit any part of such employee's annual leave.

Article 10, Section 4 sets out the procedure for vacation planning. Each year, the installation head shall meet

with the representatives of the union to review local service needs as soon after Jan. 1 as practical. The installation head shall then:

1. Determine the amount of annual leave accrued to each employee's credit including that for the current year and the amount he/she expects to take in the current year.
2. Determine a final date for submission of applications for vacation period(s) of the employee's choice during the choice vacation period(s).
3. Provide official notice to each employee of the vacation schedule approved for each employee.

In accordance with Article 10, during vacation planning, the local parties should determine the amount of annual leave accrued to each employee's credit, including that for the current year and the amount he/she expects to take in the current year. As the carryover maximum will return to 440 hours from the 2021 leave year to the 2022 leave year, care should be taken to ensure that no employee be required to forfeit any part of his/her annual leave.

M-01928 does not affect other leave provisions, such as terminal leave payments. Terminal leave payments are made to separating employees for their balance of accrued annual leave. These payments are still limited to a maximum of 440 hours. *ELM*, Section 512.732.b states in part:

Bargaining Unit Employee. Bargaining unit employees may receive a lump sum leave payment:

(1) If separating other than under the Voluntary Early Retirement Authority (VERA), for accumulated annual leave carried over from the previous year; accrued annual leave for the year in which they separate, up to the carryover maximum for their bargaining unit (see 512.32); any unused donated leave; and for full-time and part-time regular employees, holidays that fall within the terminal leave period. Any part of the unused annual leave earned during the leave year of separation that is in excess of the maximum carryover amount is granted prior to separation rather than paid out in the form of a lump sum payment. No payment is made for unused leave that the employee would have been required to forfeit at the end of the leave year.

Additional leave provisions have been temporarily implemented as a result of the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA), which was passed by Congress in response to the pandemic. Emergency Paid Sick Leave (EPSL) and the Emergency Family Medical Leave Act Expansion (EFMLAE) provide paid leave in addition to earned sick and annual leave balances. Under the current rules of the act, FFCRA leave expires Dec. 31, and any unused EPSL or EFMLAE will not carry over into 2021. More information regarding FFCRA leave and other COVID-19-related materials can be found at nalc.org/news/covid-19.

MDA fundraising telethon returns



Christina Vela Davidson



The MDA Telethon is back! The original MDA Labor Day Telethon was hosted by iconic comedian, actor, singer and filmmaker Jerry Lewis from its 1966 inception until 2010. The annual event would raise money for the Muscular Dystrophy Association (MDA). Over the years, the telethon raised \$2.5 billion for MDA.

The telethon is coming back after a five-year break, and actor and comedian Kevin Hart will help relaunch what had been a Labor Day tradition starring Jerry Lewis for more than four decades.

The MDA Kevin Hart Kids Telethon will be a two-hour special, airing globally on Saturday, Oct. 24, at 8 p.m. Eastern Time, giving audiences the opportunity to support the essential work of the association. Hart will be joined by celebrity guests, including Jack Black, Usain Bolt, Josh Gad, Michael B. Jordan, Eva Longoria and Jillian Mercado.

The iconic telethon will be modernized for a can't-miss evening of entertainment, aimed to drive mass awareness and charitable contributions to help transform the lives of disadvantaged children with disabilities.

"This is an incredible opportunity to bring the work of Jerry Lewis and the Muscular Dystrophy Association forward," Hart said, adding, "I'm honored to collaborate with MDA and my organization to educate and entertain

the public about the need to support people with disabilities and disadvantages, because we are all in this together. I can't wait to have an incredible night for two critically important causes that are in urgent need of funding and hope."

Join in the fun early with MDA Let's Play for a Cure. In the weeks leading up to the telethon, MDA will be hosting live gaming and e-sports events. MDA is an active member of the gaming community on a year-round basis each week through the Let's Play gaming platform. Every Saturday, starting on Sept. 12, MDA will host the live gaming events, with a final live gaming stream occurring on Oct. 24. Each week will feature top gaming influencers and showcase the most popular game titles, from Fortnite to Minecraft.

Tune in Oct. 24, and follow MDA's Telethon news and progress at mda.org/telethon. If you have any questions, please send an email to nalc@mda.org or mda@nalc.org.



MDA Kids Telethon host Kevin Hart

THE MDA
KEVIN HART
KIDS TELETHON

The politics of workers' compensation



Assistant to the President
for Workers' Compensation
Kevin Card

Providing compensation to workers injured on the job is a political decision, with roots that go back to some of the earliest civilizations. The Code of Ur-Nammu, written between 2100 and 2000 B.C., is one of the earliest known texts related to compensation for a workplace injury—it prescribed specific amounts to be paid based on the anatomic location of an injury.

The Code of Hammurabi, a Babylonian code of law of ancient Mesopotamia that dates to about 1754 B.C., ordered injury compensation

based on the type and severity of an injury. Both ancient codes were political decisions by powerful rulers. Neither was perfect. There were different compensation rates for nobles, workers and slaves.

In the 16th century, buccaneers at sea developed pirate codes that established compensation based on the severity and anatomic location of crew members' injuries. Pirate codes varied from one captain to another, and commonly had provisions for discipline, specifications for each crewmate's share of treasure and compensation for the injured.

In 1881, Prussian Chancellor Otto von Bismarck established the Workers' Accident Insurance system with the passage of the Sickness and Accident Laws, which often are cited as a model for workers' compensation systems in Europe and later the United States. Bismarck was a skilled diplomat who unified Germany and forged peace among competing European nations. By the same manner, providing compensation to injured workers bought peace between employers and workers.

Workers' compensation coverage in the United States was established piecemeal, as various state legislatures debated how to provide compensation to injured workers. The first statewide workers' compensation law was passed in New York in 1898, with a handful of states adopting similar laws the following decade.

At the national level, Congress debated over uniform nationwide standards for workers' compensation. The competing interests between employers and workers became a political battle, with employers successfully stopping legislation that was deemed too worker-friendly.

Out of that stalemate, Congress passed the Federal Employees' Compensation Act (FECA) in 1916, which provided a federal model for other states to follow. It took decades to get every state on board, but by 1949, every state had enacted a workers' compensation program.

Ultimately, the decision to offer workers compensation for workplace injuries is a political decision, which means

that those who control the levers of political power can have long-lasting impact on whether, when and how workers are protected by the law.

Recent workers' compensation laws at the state level have been heavily influenced by big business and insurers. Across the country, workers' compensation benefits have been slashed, making it more difficult for injured workers to get sufficient benefits. At the same time, employers are paying the lowest rates for workers' comp. insurance since the 1970s.

Many of the injured workers subject to state laws have seen caps on their benefits and often are forced onto Social Security disability. This shifts the cost from the employer to the federal treasury. Such cost shifting might reduce any incentives to provide safe workplaces and reduce injuries.

During the current pandemic, big business has called for an exemption from liability for workers exposed to COVID-19 in the workplace. The Postal Service has joined in the fray by challenging almost every COVID-19 claim filed by letter carriers. NALC is actively responding to those challenges.

FECA is not immune from politics. Over the years, FECA has been amended, usually for the benefit of injured workers. FECA claims have generally taken a good deal of time to adjudicate, and injured workers often wait weeks or months for a claim to be accepted. In 1974, Congress amended FECA, and created "Continuation of Pay" for the first 45 days of disability. The 1974 amendments also released claimants to see their physician of choice, created civil service retention rights for injured workers and credited time on compensation toward years of service and other benefits.

Earlier this year, the Trump administration introduced the Federal Employees' Compensation Reform Act of 2020. See the May issue of *The Postal Record* for details.

The Government Accountability Office (GAO) recently released a report on the proposal, which concluded that the Trump administration's proposal punishes injured workers with families by reducing benefits. Additionally, the GAO found that modifying benefit design can have unforeseen consequences, and that the Department of Labor has not provided any modeling or analysis to Congress to assure that no disabled worker would be economically worse off as a result of being injured.

Decisions regarding the future of FECA are political decisions, guided by those who control Capitol Hill and the White House. While NALC continues to fight against detrimental changes to FECA, the best protection for injured workers is electing a worker-friendly president and worker-friendly lawmakers. Use your vote wisely.

California

Many of you watched the House and Senate hearings in which the postmaster general took questions and didn't look impressive. And, of course, the general reaction from letter carriers and political activists, especially after the allegations that he gave money to his employees a few years back that they turned around and gave to Republican politicians in the form of straw contributions, is that he should resign. And Louis DeJoy stepping down as PMG will supposedly solve all our problems.

If you ignore the importance of electing letter carrier-friendly politicians, well, guess what? We're going to end up with someone else who's just as bad!

Remember James Miller III? He directed the Office of Management and Budget during Ronald Reagan's second term and he made it his mission in life to privatize the Postal Service. He later became a member of the postal Board of Governors under Bush 43 and didn't let up. When Darrell Issa ran the House committee with jurisdiction over our futures, he would trot Miller out and have him testify about things like how collective bargaining makes the USPS impossible to be profitable. Do you want someone like that to take Louis DeJoy's place?

If we don't take the time to do things like voting and encouraging others to vote, we'll end up with another anti-union Trump puppet. Does that politician you vote for support things like collective bargaining, getting rid of pre-funding, and aid for the USPS to get us through the pandemic? If he or she does not, why would you vote for that person, whatever office he or she holds or is running for? I hope that when you get done venting at the PMG, you realize a second term for Donald Trump means a non-stop attack on your job and benefits.

Eric Ellis

Florida

The major news for the state of Florida is the COVID-19 pandemic. Unfortunately, Florida seems to be leading the nation in the number of daily positive cases and deaths due to the coronavirus. Certainly, it has severely affected our carriers and other postal employees. We have had numerous carriers, active and retired, who caught COVID-19. While most recovered, some after hospitalization, we have sadly lost some to the disease.

During the past two months, our state association, working with branch leaders, Central Labor Councils and other organizations has been doing media blitzes to make sure our citizens understand what is happening to the Postal Service and the need for funding under the HEROES Act.

There have been press conferences, automobile parades, billboard postings, etc. One of the parades in the Orlando area had several hundred cars with signs, streamers, etc. and did a post office drive-by along with a press conference. In St. Petersburg, a press conference was held at the historic Open Air Post Office. Reps. Crist and Castor, along with FSALC President Al Friedman, Florida Rural Letter Carriers' Association President Patterson and Tampa Ameri-

can Postal Workers Union President Searle, all spoke, noting the history and importance of the Postal Service. There has also been an effort to get city councils and county commissions to adopt a resolution acknowledging the importance of the Postal Service and asking our congressional leaders to support the HEROES Act. Several cities have taken up the resolution and adopted it.

I'm sure that during the last week of August, many of us were thinking that, if not for the pandemic, we would have been gathering with our brother and sister carriers in Honolulu dealing with the many issues facing our union and enjoying the opportunity to see old friends. With God's help, we will once again have that opportunity in Chicago in 2022.

O.D. Elliot

Kentucky

KYSALC has always urged our members to engage in legislation and politics (out of uniform and off the clock), to vote (in person, early voting, absentee ballot), and to "Take Action" via NALC, friends and family through heroesdelivering.com to contact senators and representatives.

This year shows just how important to the Postal Service that the legislative process has become. The president said he would veto any stimulus package that includes funds for the Post Office. President Rolando's white paper called for \$25 billion to assist USPS through the COVID-19 pandemic.

Our senators have shown no support for USPS financially, while the majority leader allowed the Senate to recess without addressing legislation passed by the House—the HEROES Act, for a stimulus that include \$25 billion for USPS. The House also passed a stand-alone bill that included \$25 billion for the Postal Service, as well as a \$10 billion loan from the U.S. Treasury that is favorable to our employer. It was never addressed in the Senate.

President Rolando has said, "Elections have consequences." If we cannot get our legislation passed through this Senate, then we must change the makeup of this body of Congress through the orderly process the framers of the Constitution established, U.S. elections.

Nobody is unbeatable. Even the great thoroughbred, Man o' War, was beaten once by a horse named Upset! So vote, and urge family and friends to turn out the vote like never before. The fate of the U.S. Mail, and maybe our whole democracy, could be at risk.

Thanks to branch presidents and members who emphasize legislation and politics at branch meetings and through communications. Thanks to NALC President Rolando and EVP Renfro for having plans to deal with Congress and the president, as well as for always putting an emphasis on NALC legislation and politics.

Bob McNulty

Michigan

Greetings again from the Michigan State Association.

As you read this, the election is just around

the corner. I've observed that politics can be a hot topic.

Letter carriers are normal people who have different beliefs and priorities, and they can be quite passionate about their beliefs. These passions can often lead to arguments and bad feelings.

Now, more than ever, we must be sure we are abiding by the Hatch Act. In simplest terms, the Hatch Act mandates that we cannot push our political beliefs at work. We can't hand out flyers endorsing or supporting our favorite candidates while on postal property or in uniform. We can't wear campaign buttons on our uniforms. We can't try to convince our co-workers to vote a certain way while at work. Violating these rules can get a carrier into serious trouble. You should also be careful on social media. If you have any questions about what's allowed under the Hatch Act, you should visit nalc.org or contact your NBA office or regional legislative coordinator.

Having said all that, I would like to remind everybody that voting is an important right and responsibility. Look at the candidates and their position on issues that will support and protect your job and your future. It's your right, so please vote!

Tom Minshall

New Jersey

In less than one month, on Nov. 3, each registered voter in New Jersey will be able to exercise their right to vote in the 2020 general election. We will be electing a president and vice president. There also are 435 House of Representative seats and 35 U.S. Senate seats up for grabs. It is critical that letter carriers, their families, their friends and their co-workers get out to vote. We must have our voices heard, regardless of who we support.

President Rolando wrote in his August President's Message, "Given the public health crisis and the serious recession our country now faces, the 2020 election is shaping up to be the most consequential election in our lifetimes.... The vital thing is that you vote—and that you vote in the safest way possible."

This year, New Jersey voters have a choice to vote at polling locations or to vote by mail. The mail-in votes must be postmarked no later than Nov. 3, and be received by Nov. 10. Please return your vote early. The state of New Jersey also has a voter information and assistance helpline set up 877-NJVOTER (877-658-6837). Calling the helpline directs you to county election officials, and you also will be able to track your mail-in vote. The New Jersey state website has more information on voting and registering to vote, and can be viewed at nj.gov/state/elections/index.shtml. The deadline to register to vote in New Jersey is Oct. 13, 21 days prior to the election.

Whether you vote in favor of the candidates endorsed by the NALC, or support others for your own personal reasons, please take your obligation as an American citizen seriously and vote on Nov. 3. Vote by either a mail-in ballot, or safely in person.

Christine Strasser

Wisconsin

This will be my final summary for *The Postal Record* as president of the WSALC. I chose to not run again, and our next president will have the honor to be the official state scribe.

It has been my humble privilege to represent the carriers of Wisconsin since May of 2010. I have worked with outstanding executive board members, our LCCLs, branch presidents, regional office staff, national officers and fellow state presidents. Most importantly, it has been my greatest honor to meet rank-and-file members and get to know what is important to them.

We have a terrific state association grounded in doing what is best for WSALC members. We continue the great tradition of fighting for our rights in the political arena, while training on the issues of the work floor affecting our members every day. It has been a feature of our conventions and seminars to expand the focus and understanding of our attendees beyond the confines of a daily route to the larger issues that face our craft. This tradition will continue with the next board and leadership chosen by the membership. While it may have been much easier to have had the election in the traditional manner at the canceled May convention, it is

a testament to the resolve of the WSALC to be creative in the face of the 2020 pandemic restraints.

My hope going forward is to have all members of the WSALC find a way to be more involved in their future. Please find the time to attend meetings, run for steward or branch officer, and educate yourself. Give to LCPF. Create a relationship with your representative. Realize the pride of following in the footsteps of the many who have gone before you.

Thank you for the opportunity to serve you all.

Scott A. Van Derven

Honor Roll

NALC recognizes its brothers and sisters for their long-term membership

NALC members who have completed 50 years of membership in NALC are awarded a Life Membership Gold Card that entitles them to all privileges of membership in NALC without payment of dues. To receive a gold card and 50-year lapel pin, the branch secretary must write to the NALC secretary-treasurer and request the award for the member. This is in accordance with Article 2, Section 5 (a) of the *NALC Constitution*.



Additionally, the national secretary-treasurer's office handles

branch requests for lapel pins. Accordingly, the secretary-treasurer's office can only provide suitable lapel pins "when receiving proper notification by the Branch Secretary" in the year when a member is to complete the following number of years as a member: 25 years, 30 years, 35 years, 40 years, 45 years, 50 years, 55 years, 60 years and 65 years. Special plaques are available for members who complete 70 years and 75 years. This is also per Article 2 of the *NALC Constitution*.



All requests must come from the branch secretary. Longtime members are encouraged to inform their branches when they reach a longevity benchmark.

Below is a list of those NALC members who have received an award in the past month:

75-year pins

Edward L. Filar	Chicago, IL	Br. 11
Michael A. Osifcin	Chicago, IL	Br. 11
Clarence Hoover	Winchester, VA	Br. 694

70-year pins

Edward F. Blalock Jr.	Santa Clara, CA	Br. 1427
Samuel F. Teresi Sr.	Santa Clara, CA	Br. 1427
David V. Matusz	Chicago, IL	Br. 11
Horace W. Parrish	Raleigh, NC	Br. 459
Roger A. Watkins	Raleigh, NC	Br. 459
Everett A. Evans	Hudson Valley Mgd., NY	Br. 137
John A. Keahon	Hudson Valley Mgd., NY	Br. 137
William D. Schneberger	Dayton, OH	Br. 182

65-year pins

George M. Riquidez	Phoenix, AZ	Br. 576
Ralph C. Perrotti	San Jose, CA	Br. 193
David A. Meier	West Coast Florida	Br. 1477
Ernest A. Byloff	Chicago, IL	Br. 11
Louis B. Hoffman	Chicago, IL	Br. 11
Raymond F. Lackage	Chicago, IL	Br. 11
Charles F. Schroeder Jr.	Chicago, IL	Br. 11
Donald R. Wilder	Chicago, IL	Br. 11
Floyd T. Williams	Chicago, IL	Br. 11
George B. Schuerman	Northern Kentucky	Br. 374
Joseph A. Goble	Lenoir, NC	Br. 1852
Horace W. Parrish	Raleigh, NC	Br. 459
Roger A. Watkins	Raleigh, NC	Br. 459
Soo K. Won	Raleigh, NC	Br. 459
Anthony V. Caniano	Flushing, NY	Br. 294
Charles V. Eichar	Mansfield, OH	Br. 118

Gerald A. Hawk	Mansfield, OH	Br. 118
Richard H. Hartman	Reading, PA	Br. 258

60-year pins

Alfred M. Carelock	Hot Springs, AR	Br. 543
James E. McDougall	Santa Clara, CA	Br. 1427
John R. Novotny	Santa Clara, CA	Br. 1427
Clayton S. Loss	Watsonville, CA	Br. 857
Warren E. Earle	West Coast Florida	Br. 1477
Robert R. Sweet	West Coast Florida	Br. 1477
Allan J. Ambrose	Chicago, IL	Br. 11
Frank E. Deneweth	Chicago, IL	Br. 11
Grover J. Hartig	Chicago, IL	Br. 11
Willie H. Horton	Chicago, IL	Br. 11
H. G. Johnson	Chicago, IL	Br. 11
Joel Kohler	Chicago, IL	Br. 11
Jerry B. Krug	Chicago, IL	Br. 11
Henry J. Mazur	Chicago, IL	Br. 11
John W. McElroy	Chicago, IL	Br. 11
Darryl J. Moore	Chicago, IL	Br. 11
Joseph H. Saelens	Chicago, IL	Br. 11
Dominick J. Salemi	Chicago, IL	Br. 11
Ronald J. Szekeley	Chicago, IL	Br. 11
Henry M. Wawrusiewicz	Chicago, IL	Br. 11
James L. Williams	Chicago, IL	Br. 11
James H. Ballou	Ottawa, IL	Br. 316
David Purdy	Pittsburg, KS	Br. 695
James A. Berling	Northern Kentucky	Br. 374
Joseph A. Goble	Lenoir, NC	Br. 1852
Soo K. Won	Raleigh, NC	Br. 459
Anthony V. Caniano	Flushing, NY	Br. 294
Anthony J. Baptiste Jr.	Hudson Valley Mgd., NY	Br. 137
Robert Ryder	Hudson Valley Mgd., NY	Br. 137

Robert L. Berning	Dayton, OH	Br. 182
Louis N. Bruns	Dayton, OH	Br. 182
Theodore Gates Jr.	Dayton, OH	Br. 182
Thomas E. Hyder	Dayton, OH	Br. 182
Eddie Mack	Mansfield, OH	Br. 118
John L. Mauger	Bux-Mont, PA	Br. 920
Philip C. Bickel	Pittsburgh, PA	Br. 84
Howard W. Brandt Jr.	Pittsburgh, PA	Br. 84
James W. Connors	Pittsburgh, PA	Br. 84
Brian C. Conroy	Pittsburgh, PA	Br. 84
Ralph D. Deer	Pittsburgh, PA	Br. 84
Philip G. Demmel	Pittsburgh, PA	Br. 84
Clarence Hill	Pittsburgh, PA	Br. 84
John D. Hoelle	Pittsburgh, PA	Br. 84
Ronald P. Hoffman	Pittsburgh, PA	Br. 84
Walter L. Jackson	Pittsburgh, PA	Br. 84
Russell G. Jones	Pittsburgh, PA	Br. 84
A. H. Keebler	Pittsburgh, PA	Br. 84
W. J. Kerelitch	Pittsburgh, PA	Br. 84
Gerald G. Logue	Pittsburgh, PA	Br. 84
Edward H. Madey	Pittsburgh, PA	Br. 84
John W. Mejasic	Pittsburgh, PA	Br. 84
R. S. Piskurich	Pittsburgh, PA	Br. 84
Guy Priano	Pittsburgh, PA	Br. 84
Paul F. Rosenberger	Pittsburgh, PA	Br. 84
David J. Rusch	Pittsburgh, PA	Br. 84
F. W. Stinebiser	Pittsburgh, PA	Br. 84
Vaughn P. Swatsworth	Pittsburgh, PA	Br. 84
James B. Tuscano	Pittsburgh, PA	Br. 84
John A. Yelich	Pittsburgh, PA	Br. 84
James A. Brown	Columbia, SC	Br. 233
Louie L. Smith	Columbia, SC	Br. 233
Fred W. Cox	Spartanburg, SC	Br. 628

Below is a list of those NALC members who have received an award in the past month:

Richard L. Smith	Frostburg, MD	Br. 638	Robert E. Lysiak	HudsonValleyMgd.,NY	Br. 137	Eugene Kasper	Reading, PA	Br. 258
Charles W. Brown	Havre De Grace, MD	Br. 1749	John P. Martinko	HudsonValleyMgd.,NY	Br. 137	F. I. Readinger	Reading, PA	Br. 258
Paul L. Nichols	Havre De Grace, MD	Br. 1749	Robert R. Petersen	HudsonValleyMgd.,NY	Br. 137	Larry R. Truckermiller	Reading, PA	Br. 258
Salvatore A. Ranieri	Havre De Grace, MD	Br. 1749	Art Russell	HudsonValleyMgd.,NY	Br. 137	Agustin F. Ayala	San Juan, PR	Br. 869
Ralph C. Ballard	Niles, MI	Br. 775	Robert Ryder	HudsonValleyMgd.,NY	Br. 137	C. J. Berrios	San Juan, PR	Br. 869
James W. Carter	Niles, MI	Br. 775	Gerald R. Taggart	HudsonValleyMgd.,NY	Br. 137	Gil R. Bravo	San Juan, PR	Br. 869
Robert J. Jacobs	Niles, MI	Br. 775	John L. Truglio	HudsonValleyMgd.,NY	Br. 137	C. L. Castro	San Juan, PR	Br. 869
Steven L. Kiger	Niles, MI	Br. 775	Lewis M. Wallace	HudsonValleyMgd.,NY	Br. 137	Miguel A. Castro	San Juan, PR	Br. 869
Gary P. Mansfield	Niles, MI	Br. 775	Allan Zubowicz	HudsonValleyMgd.,NY	Br. 137	R. Claudio	San Juan, PR	Br. 869
Gerald B. Marsh	Niles, MI	Br. 775	Louis J. Adams	Jamaica, NY	Br. 562	R. Colon	San Juan, PR	Br. 869
William E. Shaffer	Niles, MI	Br. 775	Jack Banker	Jamaica, NY	Br. 562	J. R. Crespo	San Juan, PR	Br. 869
Donald C. Wallsten	Niles, MI	Br. 775	William J. Mauro	Jamaica, NY	Br. 562	Carlos M. Cruz	San Juan, PR	Br. 869
Frank C. Wesolowski	Niles, MI	Br. 775	Rafael Morales	Jamaica, NY	Br. 562	F. R. Dejesus	San Juan, PR	Br. 869
William E. Atkins	Sault Ste Marie, MI	Br. 707	Raymond Salerno	Jamaica, NY	Br. 562	E. Diaz	San Juan, PR	Br. 869
Geraldine B. Ragan	Lenoir, NC	Br. 1852	Peter N. Cianfrocco	Utica, NY	Br. 375	R. Diaz	San Juan, PR	Br. 869
Larry G. Jump	Lenoir, NC	Br. 1852	Marvin E. Chism	Bellefontaine, OH	Br. 465	R. Figueroa	San Juan, PR	Br. 869
Earl R. Woods	Lenoir, NC	Br. 1852	Clayton W. Hill	Bellefontaine, OH	Br. 465	P. Garcia	San Juan, PR	Br. 869
Charles B. Hight	Oxford, NC	Br. 1510	John W. Fox	Coshocton, OH	Br. 647	Sigfrido T. Garcia	San Juan, PR	Br. 869
Theodore R. Artis	Raleigh, NC	Br. 459	Edward Lukander Jr.	Coshocton, OH	Br. 647	Armando P. Hernandez	San Juan, PR	Br. 869
Joel L. Barbour	Raleigh, NC	Br. 459	Cletus C. Thobe	Dayton, OH	Br. 182	Rafael A. Lopez	San Juan, PR	Br. 869
Massey B. Blackmon	Raleigh, NC	Br. 459	Jack L. Yantis	Dayton, OH	Br. 182	Alberto E. Luciano	San Juan, PR	Br. 869
Winston Brooks	Raleigh, NC	Br. 459	Alfred E. Dessecker	Dover, OH	Br. 898	Luis A. Maxwell	San Juan, PR	Br. 869
Fred W. Brown	Raleigh, NC	Br. 459	Jerry D. Haas	Dover, OH	Br. 898	Armando Medina Colon	San Juan, PR	Br. 869
Gerald D. Catlette	Raleigh, NC	Br. 459	William C. Kaser	Dover, OH	Br. 898	Publio Melendez Jr.	San Juan, PR	Br. 869
William R. Creighton	Raleigh, NC	Br. 459	Richard L. Hawk	Mansfield, OH	Br. 118	Victor L. Miranda	San Juan, PR	Br. 869
Nelson H. Daubenmeyer	Raleigh, NC	Br. 459	Donald E. Lemon	Mansfield, OH	Br. 118	Jose L. Muller	San Juan, PR	Br. 869
Gene A. Deters	Raleigh, NC	Br. 459	John A. Voelp	Mansfield, OH	Br. 118	Jaime E. Negron	San Juan, PR	Br. 869
James M. Eason	Raleigh, NC	Br. 459	Paul E. Wertz	Mansfield, OH	Br. 118	J. E. Ortiz	San Juan, PR	Br. 869
Charles C. Evans	Raleigh, NC	Br. 459	James L. Bushatz	Marion, OH	Br. 280	Rafael Ortiz	San Juan, PR	Br. 869
Warren F. Evans	Raleigh, NC	Br. 459	Gary B. Derr	Marion, OH	Br. 280	Pablo A. Ortiz-Frau	San Juan, PR	Br. 869
Larry G. Garner	Raleigh, NC	Br. 459	Daniel L. Jeffers	Marion, OH	Br. 280	Jaime C. Otero	San Juan, PR	Br. 869
Floyd E. Graham	Raleigh, NC	Br. 459	Jay R. McComas	Marion, OH	Br. 280	I. Otero-Ferrer	San Juan, PR	Br. 869
Jon L. Hughes	Raleigh, NC	Br. 459	George F. Miller	Marion, OH	Br. 280	P. P. Pagan	San Juan, PR	Br. 869
Paul R. Jessup	Raleigh, NC	Br. 459	Joanna L. Sanders	Marion, OH	Br. 280	E. D. Perez	San Juan, PR	Br. 869
William P. Leonard	Raleigh, NC	Br. 459	Richard E. Stineman	Marion, OH	Br. 280	Angel L. Pol	San Juan, PR	Br. 869
Allan R. Morton	Raleigh, NC	Br. 459	Levi J. Jones	McAlester, OK	Br. 1166	J. L. Ramos	San Juan, PR	Br. 869
Robert L. Norris	Raleigh, NC	Br. 459	John F. Shields	McAlester, OK	Br. 1166	J. Rivera	San Juan, PR	Br. 869
Leslie L. Parnell	Raleigh, NC	Br. 459	Frankie Whittington	McAlester, OK	Br. 1166	Angel Roman	San Juan, PR	Br. 869
Vance B. Parrish	Raleigh, NC	Br. 459	George L. Williamson	McAlester, OK	Br. 1166	G. A. Santi	San Juan, PR	Br. 869
Bobby R. Raper	Raleigh, NC	Br. 459	Donald O. Bryan	Astoria, OR	Br. 295	Francisco L. Suarez	San Juan, PR	Br. 869
David F. Rea	Raleigh, NC	Br. 459	Gordon R. Inman	Astoria, OR	Br. 295	Jose A. Tebar	San Juan, PR	Br. 869
Kenneth E. Ridley	Raleigh, NC	Br. 459	Frank Roshay	Astoria, OR	Br. 295	Raul Torres	San Juan, PR	Br. 869
Daniel B. Ritchie	Raleigh, NC	Br. 459	Arthur A. Allen	Corvallis, OR	Br. 1274	S. H. Vazquez	San Juan, PR	Br. 869
Charles G. Smith	Raleigh, NC	Br. 459	Robert J. Blancher	Corvallis, OR	Br. 1274	Arthur Cordeiro Jr.	Newport, RI	Br. 57
Yessic C. Spencer Jr.	Raleigh, NC	Br. 459	Tommy J. Freeman	Corvallis, OR	Br. 1274	James Dias	Newport, RI	Br. 57
M. J. Strickland	Raleigh, NC	Br. 459	Michael H. Hawley	Corvallis, OR	Br. 1274	Larry L. Branham	Columbia, SC	Br. 233
Logan H. Teachey	Raleigh, NC	Br. 459	David L. Lowe	Corvallis, OR	Br. 1274	Charles R. Driver	Columbia, SC	Br. 233
Carl E. Thompson	Raleigh, NC	Br. 459	Gary K. Neville	Corvallis, OR	Br. 1274	Gary L. Bailey	Spartanburg, SC	Br. 628
Charles R. Wall	Raleigh, NC	Br. 459	David M. Smith	Corvallis, OR	Br. 1274	Harrison G. Boone	Spartanburg, SC	Br. 628
Jackie E. Waters	Raleigh, NC	Br. 459	Cecil M. Stark	Corvallis, OR	Br. 1274	David D. Hatchette	Spartanburg, SC	Br. 628
Johnny M. Wilson	Raleigh, NC	Br. 459	Raymond L. Weathers	Corvallis, OR	Br. 1274	Modest Keenan Jr.	Spartanburg, SC	Br. 628
Norland W. Carr	Broken Bow, NE	Br. 1483	Larry W. Whitener	Corvallis, OR	Br. 1274	Grover L. Thompson Jr.	Spartanburg, SC	Br. 628
Lloyd F. Bindle	Falls City, NE	Br. 1582	George W. Young	Corvallis, OR	Br. 1274	Bob G. Isbell	Cisco, TX	Br. 1966
James F. Titus	Falls City, NE	Br. 1582	Ralph D. Baird	Pendleton, OR	Br. 909	Edward E. Wende	Cisco, TX	Br. 1966
Paul J. Brodzinski	Rochester, NH	Br. 990	Robert E. Nyce	Bux-Mont, PA	Br. 920	Gloria D. Fucuals	Dallas, TX	Br. 132
James F. Ellison	Freehold, NJ	Br. 924	William J. Ryan Jr.	Bux-Mont, PA	Br. 920	Mariano D. Garcia Jr.	El Paso, TX	Br. 505
John A. Shanahan	Freehold, NJ	Br. 924	Charles H. Bingle	Pittsburgh, PA	Br. 84	Hugo Silex	El Paso, TX	Br. 505
Charles Burnett	New Jersey Mgd.	Br. 38	George R. Cametti	Pittsburgh, PA	Br. 84	Martin V. Taliferro	Newport News, VA	Br. 609
James F. Mancuso	New Jersey Mgd.	Br. 38	Steven J. Fabry	Pittsburgh, PA	Br. 84	Michael A. Marson	Port Townsend, WA	Br. 1515
Danny P. Biangasso Jr.	Flushing, NY	Br. 294	John C. Frasca	Pittsburgh, PA	Br. 84	Elmer B. Stanton Jr.	Port Townsend, WA	Br. 1515
Mark S. Blaho	Flushing, NY	Br. 294	Ronald R. Grech	Pittsburgh, PA	Br. 84	Peter L. Baker	Pullman, WA	Br. 1296
James Bullock	Flushing, NY	Br. 294	E. J. Grimm	Pittsburgh, PA	Br. 84	Albert T. Leguis	Pullman, WA	Br. 1296
Peter A. Kluska	Flushing, NY	Br. 294	Bruce R. Hammerle	Pittsburgh, PA	Br. 84	Larry A. McChesney	Pullman, WA	Br. 1296
Joseph J. Lampasona	Flushing, NY	Br. 294	John E. Koch	Pittsburgh, PA	Br. 84	Glen M. Smith	Pullman, WA	Br. 1296
Vito Venezia	Flushing, NY	Br. 294	Robert J. Kraynak	Pittsburgh, PA	Br. 84	Raymond P. Wapnowski	Pullman, WA	Br. 1296
Anthony J. Baptiste Jr.	HudsonValleyMgd.,NY	Br. 137	Charles C. McClelland	Pittsburgh, PA	Br. 84	Richard K. Braem	Marshfield, WI	Br. 978
Allen Bodack	HudsonValleyMgd.,NY	Br. 137	Joseph F. Punturi	Pittsburgh, PA	Br. 84	James J. Brusky	Marshfield, WI	Br. 978
William T. Hagadorn	HudsonValleyMgd.,NY	Br. 137	John A. Quattro	Pittsburgh, PA	Br. 84	Eugene R. Greenwald	Marshfield, WI	Br. 978
William F. Hogsett	HudsonValleyMgd.,NY	Br. 137	Charles W. Schramm	Pittsburgh, PA	Br. 84	George A. Konieczny	Marshfield, WI	Br. 978
George C. Hoye Jr.	HudsonValleyMgd.,NY	Br. 137	Langston V. Smith Jr.	Pittsburgh, PA	Br. 84	Richard E. Scheibe	Marshfield, WI	Br. 978
Lawrence D. Johnson	HudsonValleyMgd.,NY	Br. 137	David C. Wenzel	Pittsburgh, PA	Br. 84	Karl F. Lange	Mayville, WI	Br. 2186

Retiree Reports

Hartford, Connecticut

Our September Branch 86 meeting was canceled. I am wondering if our September retirement party will go off as scheduled.

Many of the local school systems are still doing classes online. Hopefully society will return to normal as soon as possible.

We could use that pre-funding money at the Post Office right about now—the \$5 billion a year for 14 years taken from the post office annually. That would be \$70 billion by now. Why was that money not put into an escrow account with a lockbox for us to use? Where is that money, exactly? That, and the franked mailings for Congress to their voters, \$15 billion worth for 30 years, could come in handy now that revenue and mail volume have declined.

Cutbacks in service have continued at the Post Office for decades now. When I started on Route Three in Naugatuck, there were about six or seven blue collection boxes on my route. When I retired 22 years later in 2009, I had only one blue collection box that remained. Low mail volume for outgoing mail then, as now, was the reason given for the six mailboxes' removal. So sad, for they generated usage and indirectly increased revenue from stamp sales. Plus, it was looked upon favorably by my neighborhood patrons.

Lastly, I started at the P.O. in May of 1979. Every four years, we were asked who we wanted for president in the national primary season with a return ballot enclosed. This went on from 1980 through the 2016 presidential primary. Many retirees tell me that none of them received anything in this primary season of 2020. What happened to the NALC hierarchy polling our re-

tirees and active carriers in advance?

Ed Mulrenan, Branch 86

New Orleans, Louisiana

“What do you have to lose?” —45th President Donald Trump

Nov. 3 can't come fast enough to right the ship of state. At the end of the day, people vote their pocketbook and then issues that they care about. Quite a few carriers vote against their own self-interest—a phenomenon I don't understand; it's why the word “inexplicable” is in the dictionary.

As the majority of retirees in this branch are in the at-risk category, and the country is also at risk, it is wise to plan how to cast your vote in the upcoming election. Absentee is the safest option. In Louisiana, if you've voted absentee before, you should not have a problem. Voting early, in person, is the option I prefer. Go to geauxvote.com to see where your polling location is. To make sure you're registered to vote, check with the Orleans Registrar of Voters, 1300 Perdido St., #1W24, New Orleans, LA 70112-2127. The phone number is 504-658-8300.

The upcoming flu season is going to be a factor in the ongoing pandemic. Consult with your health care provider as to how to proceed to protect yourself and your family. We've gone through a lot in 2020; be vigilant and prepared, as hurricane season is still with us. Keep the members of Lake Charles and the areas affected by Hurricane Laura in your prayers and thoughts.

Failure to vote is not an option in these trying times. Encourage your family and friends to exercise

that most fundamental right. Keep in mind, in 1933, Hitler was voted into office. It can happen again!

Tentatively, we have AARP scheduled for our Oct. 14 meeting. Watch for information in the *Branch Mailbag*. Stay safe, register to vote, and contribute what you can to the Letter Carrier Political Fund. It's your insurance for your hard-earned benefits. Make America better again!

Stanley Taylor, Branch 124

Paterson, New Jersey

By the time this article comes into print, union meetings *may* be back to normal, and social gatherings (with limits) may be back into place. We could only hope that this actually takes place.

In New Jersey, Gov. Phil Murphy sides with caution when allowing people to gather. This does come at a cost, as New Jersey tends to place a priority on the safety and health of people than actually worrying about economics and making money. This is a very difficult decision due to the complexity of the state and also the density of the population.

The practical solution in getting back to as normal as possible would be to develop a vaccine for the COVID-19 virus, then resuming normal operations. This is a time-consuming process, and patience is needed when dealing with this option.

We hope that our great nation puts together a team of experienced scientists who can deal with this virus and hope that we can talk about this as an item of the past, so that our union continues to work on one of its best strengths: solidarity.

Joseph Murone, Branch 120

In Memoriam

NALC offers deepest sympathies to the families and friends of departed brothers and sisters

Michael A. Thrower	Br. 462	Huntsville, AL
Alva M. Bunting Jr.	Br. 1902	Arizona Mgd.
Gerard G. McBride	Br. 1902	Arizona Mgd.
Raymond S. Randazzo	Br. 1902	Arizona Mgd.
John Sakmary	Br. 1902	Arizona Mgd.
Dale Vanderaa	Br. 1902	Arizona Mgd.
Robert G. Soto	Br. 6156	Sun City, Arizona
Charles R. Jones	Br. 1100	Garden Grove, CA
William H. Shearer	Br. 24	Los Angeles, CA
Birdie Deadwiler	Br. 70	San Diego, CA
Louis E. Henschel	Br. 2902	Tri-Valley, CA
Jordan Wright	Br. 214	San Francisco, CA
Benjamin J. Burzota	Br. 193	San Jose, CA
Jack R. Lamar	Br. 193	San Jose, CA
Glenn P. Asoy	Br. 1280	San Mateo, CA
Hector De La Riva	Br. 737	Santa Ana, CA
William M. Getts	Br. 229	Pueblo, CO
Robert F. Connelly Jr.	Br. 86	Hartford, CT
Vincent J. Deleon III	Br. 147	Norwalk, CT
Louise R. Franklin	Br. 142	Washington, DC
Tony D. Pulliam Jr.	Br. 142	Washington, DC
Joseph Hayes	Br. 2148	Sarasota, FL
Keiondra L. Richardson	Br. 1071	South Florida
Glenn Lumme	Br. 2689	Spacecoast Florida
Nile A. Barner	Br. 11	Chicago, IL
Arthur F. Matillano	Br. 11	Chicago, IL
Martin Perez	Br. 11	Chicago, IL
Hugh E. Wagner III	Br. 825	Oak Brook, IL
Jack A. Kettering	Br. 292	Rock Island, IL
Russell J. Wignall	Br. 292	Rock Island, IL
Paul O. Bevers	Br. 80	Springfield, IL
Joseph L. Zaremba	Br. 116	Fort Wayne, IN
Kolton B. Gonnerman	Br. 1268	Albia, IA
Boyd L. Kale	Br. 352	Central Iowa Mgd.

Eugene G. Lipovac	Br. 352	Central Iowa Mgd.
Donald L. Swift	Br. 352	Central Iowa Mgd.
Carl K. Grigsby	Br. 766	Coffeyville, KS
James A. Melton	Br. 201	Wichita, KS
Donald R. Duplessis	Br. 92	Maine Mgd.
Dorothy E. Bolas	Br. 25	MA Northeast Mgd.
Ernest E. Lacroix	Br. 12	Worcester, MA
Thomas A. Ontko	Br. 1	Detroit, MI
Dennis P. Fitzpatrick	Br. 246	Kalamazoo, MI
William Bauman	Br. 2184	Western Wayne Co., MI
Charles E. Minthorn	Br. 2184	Western Wayne Co., MI
Lewis H. Robinson	Br. 2184	Western Wayne Co., MI
Ronald C. Thorson	Br. 5	Omaha, NE
Robert A. Forbes	Br. 2502	Las Vegas, NV
Eugene J. Arao	Br. 709	Reno, NV
Maurice A. Vaillancourt	Br. 230	Nashua, NH
Gary P. Matala	Br. 38	New Jersey Mgd.
William D. Morgan	Br. 38	New Jersey Mgd.
William A. Roberts Jr.	Br. 38	New Jersey Mgd.
Anthony F. Natoli	Br. 120	Paterson, NJ
Anthony C. Pelosi	Br. 120	Paterson, NJ
William J. Yarcich	Br. 120	Paterson, NJ
Michael J. Martinez	Br. 504	Albuquerque, NM
James W. Caulford	Br. 41	Brooklyn, NY
Irving L. Shapiro	Br. 41	Brooklyn, NY
James C. Gaglione	Br. 3	Buffalo-Western NY
Charles J. Giarrizzo	Br. 3	Buffalo-Western NY
William W. Grankowski	Br. 3	Buffalo-Western NY
George F. Baranovics	Br. 294	Flushing, NY
Augusto T. Chiok	Br. 357	Long Island City, NY
Anthony M. Defendis	Br. 6000	Long Island Mgd., NY
Joseph P. Decharo	Br. 36	New York, NY
Doreen Provenza	Br. 36	New York, NY
Ruben Santiago	Br. 36	New York, NY

Joel H. Scatliffe	Br. 36	New York, NY
Joseph R. Jehrio	Br. 661	N. Tonawanda, NY
David N. Richards	Br. 661	N. Tonawanda, NY
Caesar J. De Lorenzo	Br. 210	Rochester, NY
Daniel E. Straub	Br. 2613	Chapel Hill, NC
Jammie Jones	Br. 1512	Gastonia, NC
Donald E. Wright Sr.	Br. 3331	Roanoke Rapids, NC
Robert S. Gray	Br. 238	Canton, OH
Russell G. Malcuit Jr.	Br. 238	Canton, OH
Charles Rata	Br. 238	Canton, OH
Jack W. Shanower	Br. 238	Canton, OH
Howard D. Stansburger	Br. 238	Canton, OH
Paul R. Vearil	Br. 43	Cincinnati, OH
Herman J. Lubertazza	Br. 40	Cleveland, OH
Paul J. Anderson	Br. 82	Portland, OR
Robert D. Modesitt	Br. 82	Portland, OR
William E. Robinson	Br. 347	Salem, OR
Joseph C. Kistler	Br. 274	Lehigh Valley, PA
Richard R. Hemphill	Br. 84	Pittsburgh, PA
George C. Mihailoff	Br. 84	Pittsburgh, PA
Teresa A. Dixon-Wicker	Br. 181	Austin, TX
James P. Ashley Jr.	Br. 226	Fort Worth, TX
Timothea L. Canady	Br. 226	Fort Worth, TX
James W. Desormeaux	Br. 283	Houston, TX
Dale E. Thompson	Br. 1227	Wichita Falls, TX
Jeremy F. Cruz	Br. 3520	Northern Virginia
George F. Condon	Br. 79	Seattle, WA
George W. Michael	Br. 852	Yakima, WA
John C. Parsons	Br. 481	Parkersburg, WV
Richard H. Weisbach	Br. 125	Fond Du Lac, WI
Richard W. Welch	Br. 125	Fond Du Lac, WI
Daniel K. Schmidt	Br. 700	Neenah, WI

Election Notices

Aiea-Pearl City, Hawaii

This is to serve as official notice to the members of Branch 4682 that nominations and election of all branch officers for the 2021-2023 term will be postponed until further notice due to the COVID-19 pandemic and as per the assistant secretary-treasurer's report in the August 2020 *Postal Record*.

Ramona Andow-Azumi, Sec., Br. 4682

Alexandria, Louisiana

This is notice to all members of Branch 932 that nominations for the next two-year terms for the following offices will be held on Tuesday, Nov. 10, at the union hall, located at 2052 Rapides Ave., Alexandria, at the regular meeting time of 7 p.m.: president, vice president, secretary, treasurer, sergeant-at-arms, health benefits representative and board of trustees.

Election will be held on Tuesday, Dec. 8, at 7 p.m. at the union hall, at 2052 Rapides Ave., Alexandria, by secret ballot.

Al Mathews, Sec., Br. 932

Alliance, Ohio

This is to serve as notice to all members of Branch 297 that nominations for the following offices will take place at the regular meeting, to be held on Tuesday, Nov. 3, at 7 p.m.: president, vice president, secretary, treasurer, health benefits coordinator and three trustee positions. The meeting will no longer be held at its normal meeting place at Polinori's, located at 1441 South Liberty Ave., Alliance, due to the COVID-19 crisis. Those who wish to be nominated must be present at the virtual meeting (see emailed information with Zoom meeting link), or should give the secretary a written letter prior to the meeting stating his or her acceptance of nomination. The term of office will be for the 2021-2022 election cycle; the election will be conducted by mail-in ballot.

Joshua Lilly, Pres., Br. 297

Annapolis, Maryland

Nominations for the election of officers of Branch 651 shall take place at the regular branch meeting on Nov. 4 at 7 p.m. at the American Legion in Crownsville. Nominations will be made for the following offices: president, vice president, recording secretary, treasurer, sergeant-at-arms, health benefits representative and three trustees.

All regular members shall be eligible for officer and delegate positions, except for any regular member who, voluntarily or otherwise, holds, accepts or applies for a supervisory position in the Postal Career Service for any period of time; they shall immediately vacate any office held and shall be ineligible to run for any office or to be a delegate to any convention for a period of two years after termination of such supervisory status.

Election of officers will be by written ballot and shall take place at the regular meeting on Dec. 2, and at each station before work on Nov. 30 and Dec. 1.

Balloting will take place at the regular branch meeting and shall be for the first hour and a half of the meeting on Dec. 2. The results of the election will be announced at the same meeting in December.

By their election to office, pursuant to the NALC election regulations, the president, vice president, secretary and

treasurer shall be delegates to national and state conventions.

LaNicole Kelly, Sec., Br. 651

Asheville, North Carolina

In accordance with Article 5 of the *NALC Constitution* and the branch bylaws, this is official notice to all members of Branch 248 that branch elections will be held on Nov. 24 at 7 p.m. via Zoom. Contact the branch at P.O. Box 25072, Asheville, NC 28813 with your email address so that meeting login info can be provided. You must be a member in good standing to participate.

Nominations will take place on Oct. 27 at 7 p.m. via Zoom.

Candidates must be present or signify their willingness to accept the nomination in writing to the branch secretary prior to the starting time of the Oct. 27 meeting. Voting will be by secret ballot.

Officers to be nominated and elected to a one-year term are president, vice president, recording secretary, financial secretary-treasurer, sergeant-at-arms and health benefits officer. One trustee will be selected for a three-year term. All stewards for all zones and associate offices will be elected for a one-year term. Chief stewards are to be appointed by the elected president.

Arkadia Smith, Sec., Br. 248

Billings, Montana

This is official notice to all members of Branch 815 that nominations for president, vice president, secretary, treasurer, sergeant-at-arms, health benefits representative, director of retirees, three-year trustee and state convention delegates will be held at the regular branch meeting on Nov. 18. Elections will take place at the regular branch meeting on Dec. 16 at the Labor Hall, located at 530 S. 27th St., Billings.

Deb Senn, Pres., Br. 815

Boston, Massachusetts

This is an official notice to all members of Branch 34 that nominations for the election of delegates to the 2021 Massachusetts State Letter Carriers Association (MSLCA) convention will take place on Dec. 8 at the regular Branch 34 meeting.

Nominations will be taken from the floor, and there will be no nomination papers necessary to run in this election. Any potential nominees who cannot be in attendance must submit a letter of acceptance at the time of nominations. The names of all the nominees will be read off by the close of the meeting.

If necessary, the election will take place at the January meeting. All delegates must be elected by a plurality vote. The vote shall be counted and tabulated at that time.

Delegates to the MSLCA convention will not receive financial assistance unless they attend 16 to 24 meetings in the prior two years. Alternates will not be entitled to financial assistance unless they become delegates. The sergeant-at-arms will validate proof of attendance with the regular monthly meeting signature book.

Michael Murray, Sec.-Treas., Br. 34

Burlington, Vermont

This is official notification to all members of Branch 521 that nominations for branch officers will take place at the regu-

lar meeting on Nov. 10.

The nominations will be for the offices of president, vice president and secretary/treasurer. There will also be nominations for a sergeant-in-arms, three trustees and a health benefits representative.

The meeting will take place at 7 p.m. at the VFW at 6 Maple St., Winooski.

Eric Spencer, Pres., Br. 521

Cape Girardeau, Missouri

This is an official election notice to all members of Branch 1015. Nominations for officers will be held on Oct. 22 during our monthly union meeting. The election for officers will be held on Nov. 19. Both will be held at our regular meeting place at 6 p.m., located at Cape VFW, 1049 N. Kingshighway St., Cape Girardeau. The offices up for the next two-year term are as follows: president, vice president, treasurer, secretary, health benefit representative and three trustee positions. Any questions, please contact a current union officer.

Cheryl Powell, Sec., Br. 1015

Carmel, Indiana

This is official notice to all members of Branch 888 that nominations for delegates to the 2021 state convention will be held at the regular membership meeting on Nov. 5 at the Carmel American Legion at 852 West Main St., Carmel, in accordance with Article 5 of the *NALC Constitution* and the branch bylaws. The date and location of the 2021 Indiana state convention is unknown at this time due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The president and vice president, by virtue of their office, are delegates to all state and national conventions during their terms of office. All candidates are required to be present at the meeting when nominated, or signify in writing their willingness to serve if elected. Nominees must signify that they have not applied for, accepted or served in any supervisory capacity in the Postal Service for a period of 24 months prior to nomination.

The election, if necessary, will be conducted by secret ballot mailed to the most current home address of record for all members. Ballots must be returned to the election committee prior to the regular branch meeting at 7 p.m. on Dec. 3. The election will be at the regular branch meeting at 7 p.m. on Dec. 3.

Ken Johnson, Sec., Br. 888

Columbus, Ohio

In accordance with Article 5 of the *NALC Constitution* and Branch 78 bylaws, nominations for all officers, including president, vice president, recording secretary, assistant secretary/editor, financial secretary/treasurer, safety officer, sergeant-at-arms, director of retirees, MBA health representative, five trustees, and delegates to the national and Ohio State Association conventions. Nominations will be conducted at the regular branch meeting, scheduled for Oct. 14 at 6:30 p.m. at 1029 Harrisburg Pike, Columbus. The nominations will be for a three-year term beginning on or about Jan. 1, 2021.

The election will be conducted by secret ballot, mailed to the member's last known address. Results of the election will be announced at the regular Decem-

ber branch meeting on Dec. 9.

Trevor Payne, Rec. Sec., Br. 78

Duluth, Minnesota

This is official notice to all Branch 114 members that nominations for state convention delegates will be accepted at the special Oct. 12 and Nov. 9 meetings. Those wishing to be nominated who are unable to attend must submit their willingness to be nominated in writing to the branch secretary prior to the special Oct. 12 meeting.

Due to COVID-19, the union meetings will be held online beginning at 7 p.m. Those who wish to vote for state convention delegates who are unable to attend the branch meetings will be sent a ballot by request only. The ballots must be sent back and received by the election committee no later than Nov. 30 to be acceptable for voting.

Elections will be held by secret ballot during the Dec. 14 regular branch meeting, beginning at 7 p.m. This meeting will also be online. If the state convention is held in 2021, the date and time will be determined by the Minnesota State Association of Letter Carriers sometime in 2021. As per the bylaws of Branch 114, the number of delegates and the amount to compensate them will be decided before nominations begin. All active and retired members of Branch 114 may be nominated and elected as delegates. In order to be financially compensated by the branch, you must have attended eight out of the 12 regular branch meetings prior to the beginning of nominations.

Dave Mayou, Sec., Br. 114

Erie, Pennsylvania

Notification is hereby given to all Branch 284 members that nominations will be held on Tuesday, Nov. 10, at 7:30 p.m. at Siebenbuegger Club for officers, trustees, and delegates and alternates to the state convention, which will be held April 14-16, 2021. If you cannot be present to accept the nomination, a written letter of acceptance must be in the possession of the secretary before the meeting.

Elections, if necessary, will take place on Tuesday, Dec. 8, between 4 p.m. and 8 p.m. at the Siebenbuegger Club. You can request an election ballot with your name, address and telephone number from: Branch 284 Election Committee, P.O. Box 11345, Erie, PA 16514, before Tuesday, Nov. 14; the completed ballot must be received before Dec. 8.

Because of COVID-19 regulations, only 25 percent of the room (or 25 members capacity) may be in play at those meetings, meaning that voters may only be allowed to come after a member has left the meeting or voting place. If the regulations change, more may be able to come into the meeting. We will make every effort to accommodate the influx of traffic in and out for the voting process.

Bernard J. Wisniewski, Sec., Br. 284

Florence, Alabama

In accordance with Article 5 of the *NALC Constitution* and the branch bylaws, this is an official notice to all members in good standing of Branch 892. The nominations for the following positions will be held during the regular branch meeting on Nov. 5, beginning at 7 p.m.: president, vice president, secretary, treasurer, one head trustee, three regular

Election Notices

trustees, and delegates to the 2021 state convention.

The election of officers and delegates will be by secret ballot during the regular branch meeting on Dec. 3, beginning at 7 p.m. at 2208 2nd St., Muscle Shoals. The election results will be announced on this day as well. The election for shop stewards will be held at the regular union meeting on Jan. 7, 2021.

Social distancing will be practiced, and masks will be required.

Lisa Jones, Sec., Br. 892

Fort Smith, Arkansas

This is official notice to all members of Branch 399 that nominations for branch officers and three trustees will take place at the regular meeting to be held on Tuesday, Nov. 10, at 7 p.m. held at 5500 S. 28th St., Fort Smith.

Those who wish to be nominated must be present or give the secretary a written letter prior to the meeting stating his or her acceptance of nomination. The term of office will be for the 2021-2022 election cycle.

Elections, if necessary, will be held at the Dec. 1 union meeting. In the event that more than one member is nominated for an officer's position, or more than three trustees, ballots will be sent to members. To be counted, ballots must be in the hands of the chairman of the election committee at the December meeting. An election committee of three will be appointed to handle election procedures and count the ballots.

Robert Roy, Sec., Br. 399

Galveston, Texas

This is official notice to the members of Branch 23 that nominations of officers and delegates to the state and national conventions will be held at our meeting on Nov. 12 at 7:30 p.m., located at Happy Buddha Restaurant, 2827 61st St., Galveston.

By virtue of their offices, the president, secretary and treasurer are automatic delegates to the state and national conventions.

The election will be held at our meeting on Dec. 12 at 7 p.m., at the same location.

Linda Palomo, Sec., Br. 23

Great Falls, Montana

This is official notice to all members of Branch 650 that nominations of all branch officers, three-year trustees and state convention delegates will be held at the regular November meeting. Elections will take place at the regular December branch meeting at the Labor Temple, 1117 7th St. S., Great Falls, at 7:45 p.m.

Nick Liston, Sec., Br. 650

Greeley, Colorado

This is official notice to all members in good standing of Branch 324 that nominations for all branch officers and delegates to the 2021 Colorado state convention will be held at the regular branch meetings on Oct. 1 and Nov. 5. The meetings will be held at the Branch 324 union office at 2525 16th St., Greeley. Any member who wishes to be considered for nomination must be present at the meeting or submit, in writing, their acceptance to the branch secretary prior to the October and November meetings.

Elections will take place by secret ballot at the regular meeting on Dec. 3 at the union office at 2525 16th St., Greeley.

Richard Byrne, Pres., Br. 324

Hazelwood, Missouri

This is official notice to members of Branch 5847 that nominations will be taken for the offices of vice president, treasurer, sergeant-at-arms, shop stewards, alternate shop stewards and one trustee. Nominations will be taken at the regular meeting on Thursday, Nov. 5, at 6 p.m. at the Bridgeton Community Center at 4201 Fee Fee Road, Bridgeton. Elections for these offices, if necessary, will take place at the December meeting.

Donna Stenshoel, Sec., Br. 5847

Hot Springs Natl. Park, Arkansas

This is official notice to all Branch 543 members about nominations for Trustee 2 for 2021-2023. Those who wish to be nominated must be present at the October meeting or should give the secretary a letter in writing stating acceptance of nomination before the October meeting. The terms of office will be till December 2023.

Johnny R. Johnston, Sec., Br. 543

Hudson Valley Mgd., New York

This will serve as an official notice to all active and retired members of Branch 137 that nominations for the positions of two trustees will be open through Oct. 31. These positions will be for terms of one and two years.

Due to the COVID-19 crisis and the current restrictions placed on indoor gatherings in New York, the nominations that would normally take place at the Oct. 21 meeting cannot be held, as this meeting has been canceled. Self-nominations can be made in writing and mailed to Hudson Valley Merged Branch 137, P.O. Box 10666, Newburgh, NY 12552.

Upon nomination, the candidate must verify that they have not served in a supervisory capacity for the 24 months prior to the nomination.

If an election is necessary, it shall be conducted by secret mail ballot. The election committee, which will be appointed by the president immediately following the close of nominations, shall then mail a ballot to each member in good standing to their last known address at least 20 days prior to the Dec. 16 regular branch meeting. The deadline for returning marked ballots shall be 5 p.m. on Dec. 16. All election results will be announced at this time.

Frank Ramus, Sec.-Treas., Br. 137

Huntington, West Virginia

This is official notice that nomination of officers will take place at the November meeting; the election will be by mail ballot, with the results announced at the December meeting.

The offices up for nomination are as follows: president, vice president, secretary, treasurer, health benefits/MBA/NSBA representative, three trustees, sergeant-at-arms and delegates to the West Virginia state and national conventions. By virtue of their office, the positions of president, vice president, secretary and treasurer will be delegates to the state and national conventions.

Alan Atteberry, Sec., Br. 539

Jackson, Michigan

This is to serve as official notice to all members of Branch 232 that nominations for branch officers—president, vice

president, secretary, treasurer, sergeant-at-arms, health benefits representative, legislative liaison, safety and one trustee position, as well as nomination for delegates to the state convention—will be held at the regular branch meeting on Nov. 5 at the Falcons.

All eligible branch members must be in good standing. If you are not able to attend the scheduled meeting and would like to be considered for a position, it must be put in writing prior to the meeting. The election will be held at the Dec. 3 meeting.

Kimberly Neal, Sec., Br. 232

Johnson City, Tennessee

Nominations for officers from Branch 1110 will be held at the branch meeting on Oct. 15. The election will be held on Nov. 10.

Scotty Jones, Sec.-Treas., Br. 1110

Lafayette, Indiana

This is official notice to all members of Branch 466 that we will be voting on bylaw changes and taking nominations for one three-year trustee, as well as all other office positions and delegates to the 2021 state convention, at the November meeting.

The election will be conducted by secret mail ballot. All positions except the trustee position are two-year terms. Ballots are to be received before the regular meeting in December; therefore, results will be announced at that time.

Dwana L. Hairston, Sec., Br. 466

Lake Jackson, Texas

This is the official notice to all members of Branch 4723 that nominations for all officers will take place at the Oct. 15 meeting at Dunbar Park, Lake Jackson. If an election is warranted, ballots will be sent to members in good standing, which they will return; the ballots will be counted at the monthly meeting on Nov. 19.

Robert Gilliam, Sec., Br. 4723

Longview, Washington

This is an official notice to all members of Branch 2214 that nominations for all branch officers and convention delegates will take place at our regular October meeting and our regular November meeting. Elections will be by secret ballot and will be held on the day of our December meeting.

Any member unable to vote during the regular December meeting may request in writing an absentee ballot. Absentee ballots must be requested after nominations have been opened, but at least three weeks before the elections.

The polls will be open during the regular December meeting, and the ballots will be counted immediately following the regular meeting in December.

Wesley Manning, Rec. Sec., Br. 2214

Melrose Park, Illinois

This shall serve as official notice to all members of Branch 2183 that nominations for officers of Branch 2183 and delegates to the 2021 Illinois state convention will take place at the regularly scheduled union meeting on Oct. 21 at the American Legion Hall, located at 9757 Pacific Ave., Franklin Park, at 6:15 p.m.

The election will be conducted by secret mail ballot. Ballots with instructions will be mailed to the home addresses (of record/on file) of eligible members in good standing. Ballots must be received by the election committee at the desig-

nated address by 3 p.m. on Nov. 18.

Results will be announced at the Nov. 18 meeting.

Valerie Henry, Rec. Sec., Br. 2183

New Castle, Delaware

This is official notice to all members of Branch 4015 that nominations for all officers and delegates to the 2021 state convention will be accepted at the branch's regularly scheduled meeting on Wednesday, Nov. 18, at 6:30 p.m. at the Weston Senior Center, 1 Bassett Ave., New Castle.

Any member in good standing is eligible for nomination and must be present or signify in writing through the branch office prior to the meeting their willingness to serve as an officer or delegate if elected. The positions open for election are president, vice president, secretary-treasurer, sergeant-at-arms, three trustees and delegates to the state convention.

An election, if necessary, will be conducted by secret ballot at the regularly scheduled union meeting on Wednesday, Dec. 9, at 6:30 p.m.

Jeff Kowalskie, Sec.-Treas., Br. 4015

New Haven, Connecticut

On Aug. 31, a motion was made and approved by the executive council to dispense the nominations and elections for Branch 19 officers and delegates to the state convention at the November 2020 monthly meeting; the reason being that Connecticut Gov. Lamont has not started Phase 3 of the opening of Connecticut and therefore we cannot have large groups of people in one place due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Also, there have been errors by NALC Headquarters regarding our membership lists that have to be corrected. Our goal will be to reschedule this process as "expeditiously as possible," as stated by President Rolando in his written communications on March 11, March 18, and more specifically to Branch 19's inquiry on Aug. 24.

MaryAnne DeRevere, Rec. Sec., Br. 19

North Little Rock, Arkansas

This is official notice to all members of Branch 3745. Nomination for Trustee 2 will be held at October's regular monthly union meeting. This will be for a three-year term. The October meeting will be held at American Pie Pizza, located at 4830 N. Hills Blvd., North Little Rock, at 6 p.m. on Thursday, Oct. 8. If necessary, an election vote will be held at the Thursday, Nov. 12 meeting, also at American Pie Pizza. Voting will open at 6 p.m. and end at 9 p.m.

Todd D. Schroeder, Rec. Sec., Br. 3745

Oak Brook, Illinois

This is official notice to all Branch 825 members that nominations for convention delegates will be accepted until the close of business on Oct. 15. Term of office is one year.

Any eligible member in good standing whose name is properly placed in nomination during the nomination period shall be declared a convention delegate by the president, as long as the number of nominees does not exceed 5 percent of the total membership of the branch. If an election is necessary, a mail-in ballot election for convention delegates will be held in the 30-day period immediately following

the close of nominations. Delegates will be announced at the Nov. 30 branch meeting.

To obtain a nominating petition, see your shop steward or call the branch office at 630-571-4167. Any branch member who has served in or applied for a managerial position in the past two years is ineligible to run, according to the *NALC Constitution*.

Mark Dowdle, Sec., Br. 825

Oshkosh, Wisconsin

This is official notification to inform members of Branch 173 that nominations for president, vice president, secretary, treasurer, sergeant-at-arms and trustees will be held on Nov. 3 at 5 p.m. during our regular meeting. The results will be announced on Dec. 1 during the regular meeting.

Scott Krause, Sec., Br. 173

Palatine, Illinois

In accordance with Article 5 of the *NALC Constitution* and the branch bylaws, this is official notice to all members of Branch 4268 that nominations for the offices of executive vice president, recording secretary and trustee will be held at the Oct. 21 meeting.

The voting will take place by mail-in voting, according to the bylaws. Voting results will be determined at the November meeting.

Latoyia Shuford, Sec., Br. 4268

Parkersburg, West Virginia

This is official notification to all members of Branch 481 that nominations will be accepted for president, vice president, secretary and treasurer, as well as nominations for one trustee for a three-year term, at the Nov. 13 meeting. Nominations will also be accepted for delegates to the 2021 West Virginia state convention. The election will be held one hour prior to the 7 p.m. meeting on Dec. 11.

Shelly Elschlager, Sec., Br. 481

Roanoke, Virginia

In accordance with Article 5 of the *NALC Constitution* and the bylaws of Branch 524, this is an official notice to all members of Branch 524 of nominations for delegates to the NALC 2021 Virginia state convention. All nominees must have attended 75 percent of all Branch 524 meetings from December 2019 through November 2020. Nominations will take place at the Nov. 10 regular meeting.

If necessary, the election of delegates will take place on Dec. 8, beginning at 7 p.m. at the regular Branch 524 meeting. The Branch 524 meetings are held at the union hall, located at 1015 Georgia Ave. NE, Roanoke.

Jack Green, Sec., Br. 524

Rochester, New Hampshire

This is the official notice to all members of Branch 990 that nominations for officers will take place at the regular November branch meeting, with elections to follow at the December meeting at Gonic Fire Station, Gonic.

Mike Lancelier, V.P.-Sec., Br. 990

St. Joseph, Missouri

This is an official notice to all mem-

bers of Branch 195 that nominations for all branch officer positions will be held at the regular monthly meeting on Nov. 4. Election of the nominees for these positions will be held at the regular monthly meeting on Dec. 2.

Steve Drozd, Sec., Br. 195

Salem, Oregon

This is official notice to all members of Branch 347 who meet the criteria of our branch bylaws that nominations will be open for delegates to the Oregon state convention for 2021. Nominations will be held at the regular branch meeting at 345 River St. NE on Wednesday, Oct. 14, at 6:30 p.m. All members who want to be delegates must be present at the meeting or signify in writing to the branch recording/financial secretary prior to the meeting their willingness to be nominated.

The election shall be by secret ballot by mail or in person at the regular branch meeting on Wednesday, Dec. 9. Balloting shall be open from 5 p.m. until the start of the regular branch meeting. Ballots shall be mailed out no later than 21 days after the close of nominations. Mailed-in ballots must be received by the election committee by 12 p.m. on Election Day.

Harry C. Scott, Rec. Sec., Br. 347

San Juan, Puerto Rico

This is the official notification of elections to all members of Branch 869. Nomination for the following positions will be made in writing, but must be received by the election committee not later than Nov. 15: president, vice president, recording secretary, financial secretary, treasurer, sergeant-at-arms, health benefit representative and a board of trustees composed of three members and a newspaper editor.

Elections will be conducted by mail. The ballot will be mailed to each eligible member's last-known home address on Nov. 23. Ballots must be mailed back to the Election Committee, P.O. Box 367241, San Juan, PR 00936-7421, and must be received by 3 p.m. on Dec. 15. At that time, the election committee will collect the ballots, bring them to the union hall and begin the tally. All officers shall be elected for a term of three years. Each candidate for office or delegate must signify in writing his/her willingness to serve if elected.

Angel Roman, Rec. Sec., Br. 869

Somerville, New Jersey

Nominations for the election of all officers of Branch 768 will be held at the regular branch meetings on Oct. 6 and Nov. 3 at 7:30 p.m., located at the American Legion, 232 Union Ave., Somerville. Nominations will be held for the following branch offices: president, vice president, secretary treasurer, recording secretary, sergeant-at-arms, three trustees, area representative, shop stewards, health benefits officer and political liaison. The terms of the officers will be two years, beginning Jan. 1, 2021. Elections will take place at the Dec. 1 meeting.

Dominique Taylor, Sec.-Treas., Br. 768

Southern Delaware

In accordance with Article 5 of the *NALC Constitution* and Branch 906 bylaws, nominations for all elective

branch officers shall be made at the regular meeting at 7:30 p.m. on Nov. 18 at the branch hall, 701 N. Walnut St., Milford. Officers to be elected at the Jan. 13, 2021, regular meeting at 7:30 p.m. are the positions of president, vice president, recording secretary, financial treasurer, sergeant-at-arms, director of retirees, health benefits representative and three board of trustees.

If a nominee—a member in good standing—is absent from the nomination meeting, a letter of intent to accept or decline nomination must be received at the branch no later than one day prior to the meeting.

Norberto Aviles, Rec. Sec., Br. 906

Southwest Missouri

This is to serve as official notice to all members of Branch 366 that nominations for all branch officers will take place at the regular meeting in November. Elections, if necessary, will be held at the regular meeting in December.

Randy Graham, Sec., Br. 366

Tuscaloosa, Alabama

Branch 1096 will be taking nominations for branch officers, as well as for Alabama state convention delegates, at the October and November meetings. Members will vote during the December meeting. Union meetings are held on the first Thursday of each month at 7 p.m. at the union hall.

Kimberly Taylor, Sec., Br. 1096

Walterboro, South Carolina

This is official notice to all members of Branch 6123 that nominations for officers, trustees and sergeant-at-arms will be held at the regularly scheduled meeting at 4:30 p.m. on Nov. 12 at 333 East Washington St. The office term is three years.

The election results will be announced at the regular meeting on Dec. 10.

Jeffery Musgrave, Sec.-Treas., Br. 6123

Watsonville, California

This is an official notice to the members of Branch 857 that nominations will be accepted on Nov. 19 at the regular branch meeting.

The nomination and election will be conducted in accordance with the rules and regulations specified by Article 1 of the Branch 857 bylaws.

Jovita U. Quezada, Sec., Br. 857

West Palm Beach, Florida

NALC Branch 1690 is unable to have a regular branch meeting on Wednesday, Oct. 21, due to COVID-19 and the CDC guidelines. The Branch 1690 officers and Florida State Convention nomination contingency plan will be as follows:

In accordance with Article 5 of the *NALC Constitution*, Article 8 of Branch 1690 bylaws and President Fred Rolando's dispensation, this is an official notice to all Branch 1690 members. All nominations will be accepted via mail and must be received no later than Wednesday, Oct. 21, at 11:59 p.m. at the address listed below.

All candidates must accept nominations in writing indicating their willingness to accept if elected. Upon nomi-

nation, every nominee must certify in writing that they have not served or applied to be a supervisor in the 24 months prior to being nominated.

Nominations for branch officers will be for a three-year term (Jan. 1, 2021–Dec. 31, 2023) for the following positions: president, vice president, recording/financial secretary, treasurer, health benefit representative, sergeant-at-arms, three trustees and delegates for the 2021 Florida state convention Aug. 13–15, 2021, in Orlando, FL. The president and vice president of Branch 1690, by virtue of his/her office, shall be an automatic delegate to all state and national conventions and/or assemblies, including the option of attending the state AFL-CIO convention.

There will be a secret mail-out ballot sent to each member who is in good standing's last-known address. All ballots must be returned no later than 11:59 p.m. on Dec. 5 at the mailing address on the return envelope. All ballots will be counted on the first Sunday, Dec. 6, at 9 a.m. at the Doyle Adair union hall at 1840 Alice Ave., W. Palm Beach, FL.

No person shall accept nomination for more than one office.

The address is: NALC Branch 1690, Attention: Recording/Financial Secretary, P.O. Box 19766, West Palm Beach, FL 33416.

Veronica Flores-Osborne, Pres., Br. 1690

Westchester Mgd., New York

This is an official notice to all Branch 693 members, in accordance with the *NALC Constitution* and the Branch 693 bylaws, that nominations for delegates to the 2021 New York state convention will be held at the regular branch meeting on Nov. 10. Please contact the union office at 914-736-6300 for additional information. The 64th biennial state convention will be held in Schenectady July 24–26, 2021.

Richard Montesarchio, Pres., Br. 693

Williamsport, Pennsylvania

This will serve as official notice to all members of Branch 50, in accordance with Article 5 of the *NALC Constitution* and Article 4 of the Branch 50 bylaws, that nominations for the following positions will be held at the regular meeting on Nov. 3 at 6 p.m.: president, vice president, secretary-treasurer, sergeant-at-arms, MBA representative, health benefits representative and one trustee for a three-year term.

All members in good standing must be present or have a letter to the branch prior to the meeting of their intent of running for an office. Elections will take place at the regular monthly meeting on Dec. 1.

Jared Bowes, Pres., Br. 50

Wisconsin Rapids, Wisconsin

This is to serve as official notice to members of Branch 1083 that nominations for branch officers will be held in October and election of officers in November. Both will be at our regularly scheduled meeting on the third Wednesday of the month. Meetings are held at Jammers, 2810 Eagle Road, Wisconsin Rapids.

John Daven, Sec.-Treas., Br. 1083

Branch Items

Albany, New York

The branch offers our condolences to the families of our departed brothers Leo Cosgrave, Dennis McCarty and Matt Dugan.

Leo was a 59-year member of Branch 29, worked 37 years at the USPS and was an Army veteran.

I had the pleasure of working with Dennis at Academy Station in the late 1980s. Dennis lived in Florida for many years and almost always traveled home for our annual retiree brunch.

Matt Dugan was a 64-year member of Branch 29, worked 38 years at the USPS and served many years as our HBR and branch chaplain. Matt was a Navy veteran.

May you all rest in peace.

Jay Jackson, Branch 29

Anchorage, Alaska

Well, it was inevitable given the pandemic. We've had our first few positive tests of the coronavirus. Our very first carrier has been severely affected and has been on a ventilator for many weeks. The doctors say he won't be able to return to work for months. And then we had another single case in another unit and then two, three and up to four in another. Then we have the carriers in those units who worked with these individuals take time off to be tested to ensure that they are not positive and expose their families.

Even though protocols were in place, carriers still ended up testing positive for coronavirus. We must still be vigilant and take the necessary precautions by wearing masks, washing hands, and not touching our faces. Fortunately, carriers have access to the COVID-19 leave to help them financially get through most of this.

The additional leave provided (COVID-19 leave) is an unexpected cost to the Postal Service. Add in the personal protective equipment that is being provided on a daily basis and the cleaning required, and the cost is in the millions and approaching billions. The Postal Service has been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic and should receive direct funding, just as many other businesses have. Why is there such a fight to not provide funding to the Postal Service? The public believes, by a more than 90 percent margin, that the Postal Service should receive funding from the effects of COVID-19. We recently held a rally out in front of our senator's office to encourage the senator to support legislation providing direct funding. It was impressive to see nearly a dozen other unions come out to support us. This was solidarity at its finest and a sure sign that the labor movement is alive and well.

Jim Raymond, Branch 4319

Appleton, Wisconsin

Hello, Branch 822 members! What a year we've been having.

The most important part is that we are celebrating our 70-year member Donald Hildeman. He was supposed to be honored this past spring, and, well, we all know why that didn't happen—damn virus. Michael Hodges and John Marx are 50-year members this year. Our branch

officers are trying to get a personal visit set up to drop by and congratulate these members, along with last year's retirees Mark Hauser, Kevin Spears, Mike Wettstein and Dan Emery.



Don Hildeman was honored for his 70 years of NALC membership by Appleton, WI Br. 822 President Jeff Leeman and Secretary Jeanine Griesbach.

And speaking of retirees: wowzer, has our branch seen a rush out the door to that great place they call retirement. The 2020 retiree list is growing monthly, with numerous others hoping to follow in the next few months.

Our New London, Menasha, Kimberly and Appleton carriers have all been dealing with different stress factors affecting their workdays. COVID-19, Amazon, ESAS, case reduction, large building complex, lack of staff, change of managers, media reports—well, I could fill the page. Let's just say it's very challenging to go through the door these days.

Remember, management or mismanagement at the office has created all of our problems, especially with staffing. Ever notice how fast a vacant supervisor position is filled, but we have to file a grievance to get a route posted?

Remember our customers—the reason you took this job, and try to go home safely and sanely at the end of the day.

Kay Hanke, Branch 822

Boston, Massachusetts

The Postal Service initiates programs such as Consolidated Casing, ESAS, SER and limiting park points, and rushes to change carrier work methods in an attempt to "Save the Postal Service." The only thing it is accomplishing is sending the Postal Service further into debt. Now the new postmaster general is making every attempt to tarnish our reputation by doing everything possible to slow down and delay the delivery of the mail.

All the Postal Service has to do is get the mail to us, and we will get it delivered! We have a long running history of this during every pandemic this country has faced, during September 2001, when all you had to do was look out your window to see that the country was still in operation, and during the anthrax threats that soon followed. During the development of the Postal Plan, letter carriers were to be the method through which a vaccine would be delivered to all big-city residents in case this country faced a chemical or biological terrorist attack. Deliv-

ering the mail the day after a natural disaster passes...I could go on and on about how letter carriers go above and beyond on a daily basis. We get it done. So, get out of the way and let us do our jobs!

Changing gears, I would like to congratulate and welcome the 18 CCAs who were recently converted to full-time employees. Congratulations also go out to our recent retirees: Dave Maguire, Lawrence Atkinson, John "Jay" Princiotta and Kevin Pinkham. Enjoy your well-deserved golden years.

The branch sends out our heartfelt condolences to the family and friends of active carrier James Wu, who passed in the line of duty, and retired letter carriers Bruce McCormack and Sheldon Tutin. Rest in peace, my brothers.

Jerry McCarthy, Branch 34

Brick Town, New Jersey

It's been nearly two decades since Steve Leeds asked me to fill in as a shop steward "just for two weeks." I felt, "Why me?" I had never read our contract and didn't know the first thing about filing a grievance...but I learned with the help of many. Well, those two weeks turned into later being elected as your vice president. During my term as VP, then-President Ed Decker mentored me. Ed put a lot on me during that term, preparing me for what was to come. At our next election, Ed himself nominated me for president, and you elected me.

After many terms as your president, I am excited for the next chapter in the history of our branch. We will have a new president soon, one I'm confident will continue to grow and take our branch to new heights. Of course, that choice will ultimately be yours during elections.

We are in unprecedented times in both the world and the Postal Service. I urge everyone to remain strong and united. I also urge you to get behind our next president with your support, solidarity and your help. You might be like I was, thinking, "How can I help?" You, too, may have never read the contract. If you have a desire to become involved, we will be more than happy to train you.

It has truly been a blessing to have served you, and to continue to serve you through the remainder of my term. I will always be here for the brothers and sisters of this union. Thank you for the privilege.

Philip W. Cornell, Branch 5420

Carmel, Indiana

A steward is one of the most important positions in a local union and, unfortunately, Branch 888 is in severe need for people to become stewards. I believe the local steward is the most important position in the branch. The wheels of justice continue to pay dividends in Branch 888, but we need more people to step up to learn how to enforce our contractual provisions. It takes several people to run a branch of our size, and the opportunity to get involved is up to you. All you have to do is be willing to step up and try to make a difference!

It is really simple what we need to become a stronger local union. We need people to step up

to become stewards in our offices. I need a few people who will help me enforce our contract and learn to file grievances. The answer can't always be for someone else to come in and fix an issue. The Postal Service gets off easy when a branch doesn't have a steward in an installation, because that means that they don't have to provide paid steward time to investigate and file grievances. A branch of our size has to have more than three stewards other than me to file grievances in our nine associate offices.

Who is going to step up in Carmel, Fishers, Fortville, Lebanon, Sheridan, Thorntown and Zionsville? Things will never be great unless we have stewards in every office. There is an excellent training opportunity called School of Stewards that will be offered again as soon as it is safe to do so. This is an excellent opportunity to learn from some of the best in Region 6. There is no time like the present to step up and make a difference for your brothers and sisters.

Knowledge is power!

Ronnie Roush, Branch 888

Charlotte, North Carolina

Here at Branch 545, management has kept our union members quite busy, from a station being a test site for caser routes to another five stations being slated for the ESAS program, while dealing with the heat of summer and the issues of COVID-19 throughout it all. The carriers have managed the constant changing situations quite well and delivered their routes like the trained professionals that they are.

The ESAS program that postal management has tried to implement has been nothing more than management's old tricks in a new bag and direct violations of the *M-41* and Article 8. They promised that start times would remain the same, that it would reduce carrier overtime, earlier return times and would be more efficient. Well, what we got was quite the opposite. They moved our start times back immediately, earlier return times didn't really materialize, and it was anything but efficient. The mail that was delayed from the morning usually ended up getting cased by the first carriers back, regardless of the ODL, that is, if a member of management had not already cased it all up themselves. So it ended up being just a whole lot of confusion about what was to be carried, or delayed to the next day, and yet no significant overtime was really saved if any at all.

With all that has been going on, the branch would like to acknowledge our members who have recently begun their retirements: Mary Evans-Campbell, David Jones, Phadonia Anthony and Josephine Keels. We thank you for your service and commitment to the union and wish you all well.

Justin Fraley, Branch 545

Cincinnati, Ohio

Branch 43 recently began training on the new right-side-drive vehicles. The limited amount of those being trained have been CCAs and junior carriers. In fact, when questioned, management stated that they were trying to keep the mileage low on the new vehicles by

initially giving them to routes with limited driving, ignoring the fact that we have carriers old enough to have driven a floorboard-less Jeep.

Senior carriers haven't experienced what an air-conditioned right-side-drive vehicle could mean for their safety, sanctity, or sanity. Especially as Cincinnati struggles to shake the last vestiges of summer. Instead, the Grumman's continue to chug along, running on the last of their cat-like nine lives and being piloted by carriers who have enough sweat equity to cash in for a cooling respite during the dusk of their careers.

Route inspections are still scheduled and will be in full swing by the time this is published. In one of the most unprecedented and pivotal periods in USPS history and a time where reorganization at the highest levels are taking place, not to mention a national pandemic, management believes that allowing more people into the offices is a safe move. They believe using a modified or at times blind observance of our duties will accurately allow them to adjust routes. What will management base their intended cuts on? The always divisive and maligned numbers.

Thursday, Oct. 8 at 7 p.m., Branch 43 will have a membership meeting. This is the last



South Suburban Mgd., IL Br. 4016 member Wendy Jeter received the Dave Bybee Award for leadership and service from the Illinois State Association. Pictured (l to r) are Region 3 NBA Michael Caref, Branch Vice President Patrice O'Banner, Jeter, Joaquin Williams (who nominated Jeter) and Branch President Dan Smith.

month to sign up for delegate nomination to the 2021 state convention and the 2022 national convention. If you are unable to attend the meeting, sign up sheets will be made available at your office.

Jacob Bingham, Branch 43

East Lansing, Michigan

We should resent being exploited as pawns in Trump's scheme to use the Postal Service to help him steal the election. I have no doubt that he and his boy DeJoy plan to delay mail to create "lost ballots" in Democratic districts that will arrive too late to be counted. I see no other reasonable explanation for the removal of sorting machines and the cutting of overtime and delivery hours in Democratic areas that rely on mail-in voting. No doubt Trump expects a re-

peat of what happened in the 2016 election in Pennsylvania and other "swing states," where he won narrowly after thousands of ballots were rejected as late due to "mail issues" in Democratic cities such as Philadelphia.

Here in Michigan, Trump stopped a bipartisan effort to make sure early votes received before Election Day were processed early. Now, these ballots will have to wait until Election Day to be processed. And then, after uncounted ballots pile up, he will undoubtedly complain about a problem he caused and will loudly claim the delay as evidence of "voter fraud," which some people will choose to believe. Not me; I'm not stupid. If you want to cheat, at least don't insult my intelligence with phony excuses while you're doing it.

And please don't give me that crap about both sides doing it. What Republicans are condoning is just another form of voter suppression that they've become quite expert at. But this is only what we should expect from Trump and his unvetted stooge DeJoy, who now stands accused of illegally reimbursing former employees for political contributions in violation of state and federal law. We don't need an accused felon as our PMG; he should resign immediately or he should be tossed out before he can do more harm.

Mark Woodbury, Branch 2555

Emerald Coast, Florida

With all that is going on within the Postal Service and the local offices, we as employees continue to put mission first and deliver the mail. We are constantly meeting obstacles. Sometimes the *biggest* obstacles are our own selves.

The job we have is especially important to the nation. We often hear people tell us that we are only putting "a piece of paper in a box": well, that piece of paper is important to so many people here in this nation. Therefore, we all should take pride in our work and work together as a team for this nation to continue receiving important documents, medicine, birthday cards from loved ones, etc. I know that we will continue to strive to provide the public with the type of service this great institution has been providing for more than 200 years.

Another thing I want to address is the attitude of entitlement. When we all started working for USPS, we were not promised anything other than: if you get past your 90 days probation, the future will look bright for you. That did not mean that once you got past your probation, you were free and clear. I see more and more each day where the CCAs feel that they are entitled to something. If you are on a hold-down, you are entitled to the hours of that route and the day off, if possible. That is the only entitlement you have based on your relative standing with the Service. Your entitlement is the ability to earn a decent living if you hold up your end of the bargain. Think about it!

I wanted to wish Neil Wilkening good luck on his retirement, and I will miss working beside him for all these years.

Percy Smith Jr., Branch 4559

Branch Items

Fargo-West Fargo, North Dakota

We are coming into a trying time at the Post Office. The flu season, the common cold and the coronavirus are all coming together to make the next few months very unpredictable. With packages still at an all-time high and the abundance of political mailings, I would think we are looking at a lot of long delivery days.

For many years it has been deemed unsafe or a hazard to pick stuff up off the floor due to possible back injuries. Now with it faster and more convenient for distribution clerks to toss bundles of magazines and newspapers on the floor, management is not concerned. What changed?

The last few months, we have been told to make coronavirus adjustments in many of our procedures. Please do not take shortcuts or use them as an excuse to skip crucial steps. When you need a signature on your scanner, make sure you ask the recipient if they accept the certified or other pieces of mail. If you sign it with your initials, route number and C-19, that does not mean the customer accepted and received it. Some signature receipts are used in the court of law as proof they received it.

Our monthly branch meetings are taking place again at the Biltmore.

Congratulations to Andrew Odegard on recently converting to regular. Never too late, but welcome to our transfer from California, Oscar Marin, who came to Fargo earlier this summer.

Brian Prisinzano, Branch 205

Greensboro, North Carolina

Who is this postmaster general from Greensboro?!

For more than three decades as the CEO of New Breed Logistics, Louis DeJoy masterfully used the public Postal Service as a profit-generating machine to amass a great private corporate fortune. He and his wife have “donated” a few million dollars to the Trump dynasty in just the past few years.

With DeJoy’s appointment as PMG in June, he was primed to make billions more by being in charge of Trump’s projected “piecemeal privatization” of the public post office on the road to outright privatization.

But President Trump slipped up, admitting he planned to starve the USPS so it wouldn’t be fit to carry out the November presidential election in COVID-19 conditions. Accordingly, the new PMG, with no prior postal experience, and with no prior consultation with postal unions or other public postal stakeholders, almost immediately began a rapid and radical dismantling of this venerable institution.

What we hadn’t known was that DeJoy, as corporate CEO, had been a habitual criminal violating federal and North Carolina election laws. He has no shame carrying out Trump’s effort to sabotage the election, including through smashing the Post Office.

We did know, however, that 91 percent of the Republican- and Democratic-leaning postal public admire and appreciate their Post Office (Pew survey). The public pushed back against DeJoy and Trump.

When House Speaker Nancy Pelosi held the successful House vote granting \$25 billion to

the USPS, 26 House Republicans voted with Pelosi and against Trump.

Democratic leaders in the Senate should get behind the bipartisan bill co-sponsored by Democratic Sen. Dianne Feinstein and Republican Sen. Susan Collins. Every U.S. senator should be held accountable not only for their vote, but for their role in achieving a successful result.



Letter carriers joined rallies to support USPS. Above: A demonstration with Buffalo-Western New York Br. 3 members. Below: Garden Grove, CA Br. 1100 members rallied for the Postal Service.



The defense of the USPS is a defense of the presidential election of 2020.

Richard A. Koritz, Branch 630

Hagerstown, Maryland

Our new postmaster general has not been with us for very long, but he has already made a name for himself. As different charges seem to surface almost every day, the pressure is starting to be applied to him. At the writing of this article, it seems even President Trump is starting to distance himself from him. The changes DeJoy is attempting to implement will only damage an institution the American public has long revered. People love the Post Office, and it seems they are finally starting to notice us.

There are three fronts that we need to work on to ensure the health and future of the Postal Service. None of them include running your route like a madman. First, if you do not already contribute to the Letter Carrier Political Fund, consider it good job insurance. If you already do, consider increasing your contribution. Like it or not, members of Congress respond to political action committees, and we need all the friends we can get.

Second, when issues arise with the Postal Service, contact your representatives and let

them know how you feel. We are their constituents, and we should exercise that power. They really do respond to letters and phone calls.

And third, treat your customers like they deserve to be treated. Give them the best service you can. Don’t skimp or cut corners and justify doing so by saying that somehow you are going to save the Post Office. Poor service will kill us. Our customers are voters. They also have the power as constituents over Congress. We need to have them on our side. As federal workers, we live at the whim of Congress. But we also have the great power of Congress to work for us.

Larry Wellborn, Branch 443

Hopkins, Minnesota

As it took but a few weeks for Branch 4319 President Jim Raymond to submit another yarn about the Northland Step B Team. It appears there is literally nothing more important in the mind of Mr. Raymond than the Northland Step B Team.

Prior to my retirement in March, I was a member of the Northland Step B Team for nearly 12 years. In my tenure, my fellow NALC Step B Team members and I were the subject of Mr. Raymond’s ire on many occasions. Subsequent to several of Mr. Raymond’s rants, I reached out and challenged him to contact our office directly regarding questions on Step B decisions rather than continuing to use *The Postal Record* to push his slanted agenda. The only contact Mr. Raymond ever made directly with me or any of my colleagues was at a national rap session, where he and two other officers from Branch 4319 surrounded me and began berating me in public. Mr. Raymond has never communicated with any member of the Northland Step B Team regarding any of the issues that have led him to publish his screed in *The Postal Record*. The members of the Northland Step B Team have until now had no means to respond to Mr. Raymond, and he has used this advantage to push his agenda on the national membership.

The time is long overdue for Mr. Raymond to take a long, hard look in the mirror. There is an old proverb that states, “People who live in glass houses should not throw stones.” Be careful where you throw the stones, Mr. Raymond. Your house of glass is already filled with holes, and the cold weather is coming to Alaska soon.

Warren Wehmas, Branch 2942

Jackson, Michigan

Donny baby has appointed another criminal; you know birds of a feather flock together. Mr. NoJoy doesn’t take orders well. His main task is to put the United States Postal Service out of business. The fact that he forced his workers to contribute to tRUMP’s campaign, made more than 283,000,000 smackers doing with, you guessed it correctly, the USPS.

What kind of manager goes into a processing center, takes out machinery required to do the job and removes carrier cases to slow the carriers down? Carriers ordered to *cut* and *roll*, no OT, just eight and skate. Rep. Debbie Wasserman Shulz was denied admission to the plant. Next time she appears, she will be given per-

mission to enter, or there will be some furniture moving.

I know it been said many times that “this election is the most important election this year.” If you don’t vote, you don’t count.

Spending time in Kevin Korner. Missing him bad. Promised him to control my emotions; I lied, Kev. Everyone tells me, “God had plans for him.” How could I see the plans through the tears?

Always in my heart, always on my mind, love you now, always and forever.

Bob Czartoryski, Branch 232

Kansas City, Missouri

At one time in my illustrious letter carrier career, my ultimate nightmare was beginning my deliveries at midnight. That nightmare has since been superseded by presidential lackey Postmaster General William NoJoy. I have been told, “every piece, every day,” by letter carrier and postal management alike since I was a PTF. But to see the head man; *numero uno*; the Big Cheese, single-handedly attempt to flush centuries of public service down the drain is (insert your own word here). Did he take an oath of office like every other postal employee? Photographs from offices around the nation showing disassembled/removed sorting machines, stacks of removed collection boxes, or reports of trucks leaving empty resulting in massive delays he ordered suggest not.

Members of NALC must step up and accept the challenge to disprove what many say cannot be done. The NALC/USPS didn’t get a 91 percent favorability rating by being slouches, did we? The Christmas holiday season remains our time to shine and prove our capabilities. However, with things being as they are now, we have to rise to the occasion each and every day to the 10th power. It would be shameful to give up now after the actions those brave letter carriers took in the 1970 Great Postal Strike. Look deep inside yourself and ask if the sacrifices they made so that you can enjoy your lifestyle today were for nothing.

It really comes down to this.

Do we as the NALC, when faced with the greatest challenge of our existence, fold under pressure?

Hell no.

Vote.

Calvin Davis, Branch 30

Knoxville, Tennessee

Hello, sisters and brothers!

Grievances are won with documentation and lost with a lack of documentation. Requests for Information (RFIs) are for the good of the union because they help to win a grievance and make management think twice about violating the contract. Due to COVID-19, every branch in the country has been swamped with overtime, 12/60 hour grievances and letters of warning, which means that management will put a steward off on providing clock rings, DOIS data and time to obtain statements because of down routes and heavy parcels.

Supervisors do not determine whether a matter may be investigated by the union. This is a decision that is made by the steward. Article 17, Section 2.B, of the National Agreement gives the union steward the right to investigate a specific problem to determine whether to file a grievance within the Informal Step A, 14-day period. National Step 4 Decision M00671 states that management “may not determine in advance how much time a steward reasonably needs to investigate a grievance.” Likewise, National Step 4 Decision M00303 states that “an employee must be given time to consult with his/her steward, and *such reasonable time may not be measured by a predetermined factor.*” Article 31.3 states that management will make available to the union all relevant information necessary for the enforcement of the National Agreement, including information necessary to determine whether to file or continue the processing of a grievance. The first thing a steward has to do is request time from the immediate supervisor to conduct an initial interview with the person who brought the situation to the steward’s attention, say five to 10 minutes, to determine if it is just a gripe or whether it is a matter requiring further investigation.

Tony Rodriguez, Branch 419

Louisville, Kentucky

No need to downplay COVID-19; we know firsthand the effects it has had on us as a business. The question is: How much longer can we survive this? The Senate still hasn’t advanced the much-needed help, but election time is right around the corner! Absentee ballots, anyone?

Although we’re having a hard time, and the order from the PMG has come back down to go back the way we were, it seems some stations are having a problem interpreting that. CCAs still being sent out, carriers working more than 12 hours, and we’re still confined to these masks. To top things off, now supervisors are finding it extremely difficult to settle grievances. I know what you’re thinking, some other excuse to not do their job, well, exactly! Its bad enough that the carriers must obey the instructions that are given, but then the supervisors are stalling the process of getting the carrier paid what they deserve in the grievance process.

Through all of this, we still must stick together and be safe. The number of COVID-19 cases in the stations have risen. Please make sure you’re taking all of the necessary precautions to stay safe, and not just for you, but for your families. Remember: Knowledge is power!

Adriane Shanklin, Branch 14

Minneapolis, Minnesota

Due to the overwhelming generosity of our NALC brothers and sisters across the U.S., we have restocked the uniforms lost in the recent fires and loss of our branch office and two of our stations. We cannot say thank you enough for your incredible display of union solidarity.

We have always been in the fabric of everyday life across our nation. We are the face of the Postal Service, and everyone recognizes us

by our profession because of our uniforms. We take them for granted. They make life easy. They eliminate indecision of what to wear to work. It feels great to put on a crisp new uniform, but it doesn’t take long for it to be “broken in.” The shirts quickly stain, and our pant pockets fray. It is easy to overlook their condition because our co-worker’s uniforms have the same wear and tear.

We are under incredible scrutiny now. It’s our time to shine, and we’re up to the challenge. As essential workers, the American public can continue to depend upon us. But does the condition of our uniforms reflect the image we want to project, the pride we take in a job well done, and the professionalism with which we deliver?

We interact with our customers all day, every day. Look in the mirror from the perspective of a customer. Does your uniform project that you do not care about your appearance or your job, even if that’s not the case?

Do not believe for one second that our appearance does not matter. If your shirt and/or pants look like you have been under your car doing an oil change, it’s time to throw them out! We are professionals. It’s more important now than ever that we look the part—USPS letter carrier and NALC proud.

In solidarity—

JoAnn Gilbaugh, Branch 9

Norristown, Pennsylvania

Greetings, essential workers. Just wanted to give a shout-out to my fellow scribes! We are the news reporters for NALC, and I enjoy reading every one of them. With all that we are going through with COVID-19 and the Tangerine Toddler and now our (a guy with zero experience of Postal Service) new Postmaster General DeJoy, we are in a war within ourselves. PMG said, “I didn’t think that letting trucks leave empty and leaving mail would slow down service.” You can tell that he was appointed for one reason, and he did it. Now he is being investigated for making his employees at XPO contribute to the Republican Party and repaying them with large bonuses. Uh, this is illegal, but what do you expect from a Tangerine Toddler appointee? He said he would drain the swamp...the only way the people get out is being fired by the TT or arrested by the police. And he just refilled with more toads that will croak on command.

If you enjoy the job you have and like the style of life you have, you better remember in November. The TT wants to privatize us and sell off our real estate and leave the people in rural areas without a cheap, reliable service. He has a vendetta against the real news that is being reported by *The Washington Post*, and his one way at getting to them is taking away 600,000 good-paying jobs. Because they tell the truth in his lies. Amazon and the *Post* are owned by Jeff Bezos, so TT wants to attack him by using you as his ammo!

Hey Doug, thanks for working on getting our union hall back to normal from the flood. 2020 is a year we will never forget!

Joel Stimmler, Branch 542

Branch Items

Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

As the pandemic continues, letter carriers and postal employees remain on the front lines doing their due diligence as they always have, and always will. The election is nearing and there are a lot of issues and problems facing our nation, and letter carriers in particular. The Postal Service is facing assaults from both inside the and outside. The issue of a fair election and vote-by-mail places letter carriers and postal employees right in the middle. Despite misinformation to the contrary, voting by absentee ballot is and always has been the safest and most secure way to cast one's ballot in any election. This election is only different in that voting by mail has become the most likely way to vote.

Letter carriers will deliver the ballots and clerks and other postal employees will process the ballots as timely and as efficiently as they are allowed to. Letter carriers know what is at stake, and they will continue to do their jobs with the usual dispatch they always have.

The issues confronting workers, letter carriers and their families in this election make what we do and who we are of tantamount importance, perhaps more so than ever before. We as voters must be aware of what the issues are and vote accordingly. We need to vote for candidates who support our issues and candidates who care about working men and women and their families. It does not amount to a hill of beans what party they belong to. The latest polls show that 65 percent of America support unions and 91 percent support the Post Office. If our vote is to have any meaning, we as letter carriers need to keep that in mind.

Bob Bearden, Branch 458

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

The 2020 presidential election will be the most consequential election in our lifetime. Voting is the surest path to achieve the changes we seek. Our future and the future of the United States Postal Service rests with you and the power of your vote.

So, how do you plan on voting? Pennsylvanians have three ways to vote: vote by mail, vote by mail early in person and voting on Election Day. Remember the adage, "Failure to plan is planning to fail." Therefore, you need to decide how you intend to cast your ballot.

To vote by mail, go to votespa.com and print a vote-by-mail application. The technical deadline to request a mail-in ballot is 5 p.m. on Tuesday, Oct. 27. I strongly encourage everyone to apply to vote well before the deadline. You can do it today! Your county elections office must receive your ballot by 8 p.m. on Tuesday, Nov. 3, or your ballot will not count. Remember, when we all vote, we take our power back.

The Philadelphia AFL-CIO held its virtual Labor Day parade. Branch 157 presented a video, which you can check out at our website, nalckeystonebranch157.org.

In transitioning, I have one special request to all of the members of Branch 157. Please consider making a financial donation to the letter carriers' virtual food drive. Forty million people are out of work in the United States. These families are unable to feed their children. Most depend

on the school system to provide a nutritious breakfast and lunch. But, with most schools being conducted online, many children will go hungry.

The United States is the richest nation on the planet. We simply cannot allow our children to go hungry. It is against what we stand for. It is against our values as Americans. It is against who we are as a people.

God bless and stay safe! And don't forget to vote!

Joe Rodgers, Branch 157



Winchester, VA Br. 694 President Todd Welzel presented Clarence Hoover with a 75-year membership pin and plaque.

Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

Do you feel that in the pit of your stomach? It's the existential dread that the entire 2020 election will likely be entirely pinned on letter carriers as the face of the business. Oh, just wait.

Personally, I think that the mail-in ballot arguments are convenient. If the mail is indeed being slowed, I'm not sure that's the reason. Customers who fervently support the president have blindsided me on the street and, before explaining that it is illegal for me to have an opinion whilst in my uniform, the common thread I hear is the belief that there's no way he can lose. It's almost an afterthought, which indicates ballots aren't the ultimate goal.

It was, is and always will be about the privatization of the service. That's where the real money is. Remember the Treasury Department getting access to our private-sector contracts? Well, if you slow the mail to make the product 100 percent worse, then Mnuchin leans on the Postal Regulatory Commission to "renegotiate" them, how many partners would pay two to three times more for less effective service? Just wait...none.

That would leave the United States Postal Service as a lifeless husk, unable to produce any meaningful revenue. It would still be guaranteed by the Constitution, but all traces of profitability would have been chased right to these politicians' personal financial interests... and it's not here.

With no ability to turn a profit, the result would be lost jobs, concessions (the cost is your union card) and route consolidations with cluster boxes on every street corner. Then, "they" repeal the pre-funding for a bonus payday. If you think morale sucks now, just wait. If you think new CCA retention stinks now, just wait. Or, re-

quest your mail-in ballot, carry mail contractually, fight the internal dread and *don't* just wait for the Walmart-ization to occur.

John Conger II, Branch 84

Portland, Oregon

In the last issue, I wrote that Portland is not on fire (regardless of what you may have seen on the news about protests). Now, horribly, Portland is one of the few places not on fire, yet. As the West Coast burns, smoke and flames are choking the blue out of our sky. Our governor warned us today that there will be much loss of land and even lives. By the time this reaches you, I sincerely hope that she was proven wrong.

It is with great sadness that I must report a terrible loss for one of our members. Lance Cpl. Chase Sweetwood, son of Piedmont Station carrier Christiana Sweetwood, lost his life in a naval accident in Southern California on July 30. The accident occurred during a training exercise involving an AVV, assault amphibious vehicle (sea tank). This young Marine would have been 19 on July 31. Instead of being able to wish her son a happy birthday, she was notified of his death. Christiana, our hearts break for your unimaginable loss. As our veterans representative Bruce Hall said, let us remember our own in these tragic times. He was not killed by our enemies, but he was training to defend our great nation. *Semper fi.*

Amidst election chaos, long hours, bad staffing, lost days off and even fires burning, please remember that people are working and dying to preserve freedom and democracy in our country. Let us be mindful and grateful of their sacrifice.

Please, be safe out there.

Suzanne Miller, Branch 82

Racine, Wisconsin

You see it, don't you? You see what happened in just a couple months to a national treasure. It took two months for the PMG to erode confidence in the USPS. Two months to lose parcel business. Two months to engineer an all assault on the USPS. If you don't see it, then you choose not to see it.

USPS has lost its way in the never-ending pursuit of efficiency. It is frustrating and exhausting as we bear witness to the continued evolution of failed time saving practices. Automation took a left turn as start times keep getting later and later. Our unsuccessful test is officially canceled at 4-Mile. So the next obvious question asked was when we go back to our original start times. Our answer was: We won't be. They would like to start us earlier; however, there are bugs that need to be worked out. Baloney. I've been around long enough to know a con when I hear one. Stick around awhile and you'll hear them all. We won't be going back to our original start times.

Recently, two of our supervisors transferred to other USPS locations, shockingly looking for greener pastures. There's an old saying: "Supervisors come and go, but carriers are here to stay." Something like that; I'm close. It's true in the sense that carrier friendships forged over the years are more meaningful than a supervisor who maybe gave you a hard time over something petty.

Every postal employee should be outraged with the dismantling of automated equipment. Those flatbeds carting away our blue mailboxes could very well be our jobs. Think about it. Vote like your job depends on it. Because it does. Stay positive; stay focused.

Congratulations, Tom Kuiper, on your retirement! Enjoy; you earned it!

Chris Paige, Branch 436

St. Louis, Missouri

While I know I am bound by the Hatch Act not to endorse any political candidate or party, I urge you to think about the consequences on the United States Postal Service if things remain the same.

Each one of us has our own set of values and beliefs shaped by family, faith and life experiences that we bring to the table when we exercise our right to vote. There is no politician or political party with all the answers to all of our problems, and therefore we all need to evaluate the best intentions that we hope will benefit all the citizens of this great country. That's why in this election, it's imperative to vote your pocketbook.

There has never been a greater threat to the Postal Service since the appointment of Louis DeJoy as the postmaster general. With surgical precision, he has managed to "kneecap" the Service in three short months by delaying mail, compromising delivery standards, eliminating sorting equipment and reducing overtime. Consequences have already affected rural areas of the country where the delivery of desperately needed medicines are being delayed and, now, even the integrity of the Service is being questioned with allegations of mail-in voter fraud.

The irony of Mr. DeJoy, who owns millions of dollars in stock in Amazon and UPS, being appointed as head of the U.S. Postal Service is beyond belief. It's like owning the Dallas Cowboys and being appointed general manager of the San Francisco 49ers. Can anyone see a conflict of interest?

One political party has been trying for years to privatize the Postal Service. There is little doubt of the intentions of this appointment. If you care about your career and your pension, you need to vote accordingly on Nov. 3.

Tom Schulte, Branch 343

San Antonio, Texas

Greetings, brothers and sisters.

We are still living with the COVID-19 pandemic like everyone else. June and July were pretty bad as far as staffing goes due to the aftermath of the Memorial and Independence Day holidays. Numerous carriers were out sick due to exposure to the virus, and it made for some long days, especially for our CCAs. Like many other individuals around the country, we learned that this virus always must be taken seriously, both on and off duty. Wear your protective gear, wash your hands frequently and maintain social distancing, because we need you, and so do your families and friends.

Recently, we got the good news that the Postal Service came to its senses and stopped the Expedited Street/Afternoon Sortation program. Thank you, President Rolando and national officers, for filing the grievance to rescind this process. The Sortation Equipment Rationalization (SER) program bit the dust, too.

On the political front, I am happy to say that the branch has a fresh face on the scene in Raul Reyes as our Letter Carrier Political Fund coordinator. Look for him to be contacting all of you about contributing to the fund, contacting Congress about stimulus relief for the Postal Service, and registering to vote. Request a mail-in ballot now if you can. Do not let politics get in the way of your right to vote.

Remember and keep in your thoughts and prayers deceased carrier Mary Granados of Northeast Station in Odessa. It was a little over a year ago that Mary was killed in a senseless act of violence while performing a job she loved. This was a tragic loss of someone whose career was just beginning.

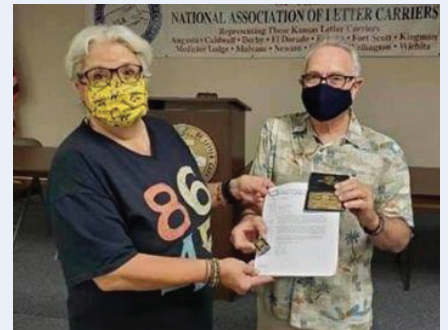
To all the carriers working every day, keep it pushing and stay safe.

Tony Boyd, Branch 421

Seattle, Washington

"Hear ye! Hear ye! By declaration of His Majesty." USPS now has "fresh thinking" brought to the American public by the Honorable Louis DeJoy, the donor who hath filled His Majesty's coffers. The policymakers now know that GOP donor-class PMG Louis DeJoy has exactly what USPS needs because he's being heralded as a great new add-on to the Postal Service, and anointed as a "fresh thinker" by Paul Steidler (a senior advisor of the GOP think tank, The Lexington Institute.) This GOP message is broadcast to all policymakers on WFED radio, which is owned and operated by Stanley S. Hubbard. Hubbard, who is on the advisory board of Great America PAC—which was formerly known as TRUMPAC. Smells fresh? Or just smells?

You can almost see Jim Jones whipping things up in the back, only this Kool-Aid is coming from Hubbard, who is straining it through the GOP, who is filtering it through WFED radio, and spooning it out for public consumption, using (GOP think tank operative Paul Steidler's comments) on "fresh thinking" to attack the unions for protesting piss-poor managerial ideas that are spewing from the newly appointed, GOP donor-class postmaster general, Louis DeJoy. Mmmm—tasty. Fair and balanced? More donor-class cronyism brewed fresh and presented daily to the public forum.



Wichita, KS Br. 201 Treasurer Catherine Lamb presented a 50-year gold card to past Branch President and 2010 NALC Humanitarian of the Year Larry Gunkel.

Where's their skin in the game? Privatization fellas, which means union-busting, lower wages and health benefit cuts for the workers—higher profits for the 1 percent—and the 99ers can just go hang themselves. So what, WFED network is a Republican-owned news source, providing Republican think tank talk (Steidler comments) that disparages the union's reaction to a Republican, donor-class (PMG Louis DeJoy) appointee's hare-brained ideas on mail delivery. Color-code this news red. WFED reeks of Republican, union-busting blather. Vote appropriately.

Don Nokes, Branch 79

Silver Spring, Maryland

Greetings from the La La Land of retirement bliss! Please don't think for one second I haven't been paying attention to the obvious dismantling and outright sabotage of my former employer, and my former co-workers' and friends' plight. I am truly saddened and frustrated by what carriers currently have to endure, and it's messing with my joy. My only solace comes from the fact that my retirement came just in time, but the fact remains that you all have to still deal with the current craziest of situations.

The *Washington Post* summed up the dilemma with the headline: "Everyone's clueless: Cost-cutting uncertainty mires Postal Service in more delays." Postal management cannot give

COLA: Cost-of-living adjustment

- ▶ Following the release of the July 2019 consumer price index (CPI), the cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) under the 2016-2019 National Agreement is **\$624 annually**. This COLA is based on the change in the CPI from the base index month to July 2019, with the previous six COLAs subtracted.
- ▶ The 2021 projected COLAs for CSRS and FERS, which are based on the CPI's increase between the third quarter of 2019 and third quarter of 2020, is **1.4 percent** and will be finalized

with the publication of the September 2020 CPI in October 2020.

- ▶ The 2021 COLA under the Federal Employees' Compensation Act (FECA) is projected to be **1.3 percent** following the release of the August CPI. This COLA is based on the change in the CPI between December 2019 and December 2020 and will be finalized with the release of the December 2020 CPI in January 2021.

Visit nalc.org for the latest updates.

Branch Items

a straight answer regarding directives and are in an obvious state of CYA lockdown. A workforce simply cannot be successful in such an environment, which results in off-the-charts stress and anxiety.

PMG DeJoy should immediately resign or be removed. His shady shenanigans have resulted in more USPS bad press than I have seen in my entire career cumulatively. He snuck into the job outside of the official screening process and has committed perjury before Congress regarding his conflicts of interest for starters. DeJoy is only one of a number of crooks holding high positions in the current administration, many of which are headed to jail. Recent numerous Hatch Act violations pale in comparison to the other illegalities occurring as corporatists attempt to fill their coffers at the expense of the working class.

Please don't assume the attack on you and your co-workers will end nicely. Support each other more than ever by being long-suffering and caring in the workplace. Don't subscribe to the selfish norm; dedicate appropriate time and resources to aid the right side of this fight. We can only prevail with a joint effort!

Lee Taylor, Branch 2611

Southeast Pennsylvania Merged

We are enduring unprecedented times in the Post Office. NALC has spent millions of dollars and so many hours trying to bring awareness to our issues. Then we get a new postmaster general (and all the political ramifications), and voilà, we are the news. Our plight was the No. 1 story nightly. But all of our hard work did not fall on deaf ears. When the politicians talked, they knew our issues from all of our lobbying efforts. Every customer wants to know our story and blame anything that happens to us on the current administration in the White House.

NALC has asked us to not say negative things about the company online and on camera like our sister unions. We are still in negotiations for a new contract. NALC chooses to keep those words in-house. And with our union set to go to arbitration for our next contract, we must be strategic. So please be careful to not get roped into an uncomfortable interview.

Our problem has been staffing. Once the pandemic hit, we were not able to fill positions lost through resignations, removals and retire-

ments. All the while, we started our prime-time vacation period. When we "opened" the country back up, we had to start training in a social-distancing setting (16 CCAs). But the training teams fell victim to retirements and COVID-19 as well. That left only a few teams to train the new classes. Now, more teams have been trained. We should slowly get our staffing back.

In the meantime, we have been challenged by 12-hour days (or more). And routes not going out for days. But we will get past this. What doesn't kill us will make us stronger; that is if we don't kill each other first (LOL).

#StayUnified

Eric Jackson, Branch 725

Springfield, Ohio

Please take a minute to read the "Honor Roll" in this magazine to see the names of Branch 45 members who have been a part of the NALC for 50 to 55 years.

Think about it. Fifty-five years. These carriers are the last link to our past that has given us our present.

1965 (55 years ago). There was no binding arbitration. The Post Office Department, as it was then called, could simply ignore grievance settlements. In fact, it could ignore anything it had previously agreed to.

1966. Cost-cutting measures included severely curtailing overtime. Sound familiar? This resulted in 10 million pieces of mail piling up just in Chicago.

1967. Letter carrier pay was so low that many carriers were eligible for food stamps.

1970. Wildcat strike swept the country. The government ordered the military to deliver the mail with disastrous results.

1971. Post Office Department replaced with USPS. USPS told to "break even" by becoming self-sufficient. Of course, this led to harassing carriers to go faster and over-supervision. Sound familiar? NALC gets binding arbitration in exchange for not allowed to strike.

2020. Today we enjoy better pay and working conditions. Sick leave, annual leave, paid holidays, FMLA, etc. And none of it would have been possible without these letter carriers.

We all should be forever grateful to these carriers who had the courage and audacity to fight for a better way of life for themselves, their families, and yes, even for us.

Interested in learning more? Your branch has copies of *Carriers in a Common Cause, A history of letter carriers and the NALC*.

Branch meetings are the second Thursday of each month in Room 221. Pizza at 6:15 p.m. Meeting at 6:30. Show up. Listen. Ask questions. Knowledge is power.

Brian Gourilis, Branch 45

Toledo, Ohio

Never can I remember the Postal Service being in the news more than now. Thanks to PMG Louis "delay deny" DeJoy, we are a hot topic, and for good reason. Mail processing and delivery are atrocious! It was so bad in Northwest Ohio that one of our congressmen, Bob Latta, wrote to the PMG demanding mail from Northwest Ohio be processed in-state instead of going to the Pontiac Metroplex in Michigan. There is no evidence that the change has been implemented yet.

I still believe in the Postal Service, so I pay any bills I can by mail. I have had to start mailing my payment the day after receiving my bill in

order for it to arrive by the due date. Do they not want people to use the mail?

Then enter our new PMG and his cost-cutting fiasco. Partial route delivery, or none at all, for days! What is going on!? He could save a bundle if his managers and supervisors could follow the rules. If they followed the rules, there would be fewer grievances and the Postal Service could save some money. If his Formal A people were allowed to settle grievances at the lowest level, when it's obvious they were in violation, they could save even more money. We've had two grievances settled recently in the six-figure range. Both could have been resolved for much less, but higher-ups wouldn't agree.

Right now it doesn't look good for them. From the beginning of the year to May 31, we filed 619 grievances. That number had doubled by Aug. 16, 78 days later. Maybe tell your people to follow the rules, Louie!

Ray Bricker, Branch 100

Worcester, Massachusetts

Saturday, Aug. 29, marked the first day of a well-deserved retirement for Clinton letter carrier Paul Chase.



Paul Chase

Brother Chase began his postal career in 1985 after serving in the armed forces. During his more than 35-year career with USPS, he was always the proud example of a professional letter carrier and faithful supporter of NALC. It's a bittersweet day to see a gentleman like Paul retire because, on the one hand, you're very happy for him, but on the other, you know what the office is losing with his retirement.

Brother Chase also served as the union steward in the Clinton office for more than 20 years. Those of us who have been stewards know how thankless and difficult a job it can be, but Paul was always there to help his fellow brother and sister letter carriers. If he didn't know the answer to something, he'd jump right on the phone to call the union office to get the answer. He was a dedicated representative, to say the least.

On behalf of Branch 12, I want to wish Brother Chase a very long, safe, healthy and happy retirement. You've earned it, brother!

Ken Janulewicz, Branch 12

Yakima, Washington

Aug. 29, 8:30 a.m. EDT for the last time. What an awesome feeling. Thanks to all of the friends and family who came to hear my farewell speech. Not a bad turnout, considering the current situation.

Once again, too late for me, but good job by our national officers to get the vacation leave rollover increased to 520 hours. I believe everyone should take some time off each year to keep from going crazy. However, if you use it wisely over the course of your career, you should be able to retire with one last fat paycheck.

The insanity continues in Yakima concerning O.T. and mandates. Hopefully enough new carriers have been hired to get trained before the holiday and weather add to an already heavy work load. Not going to miss it!

Next month will be my last submission. I will be spending my winters at Nalcrest.

Peace.

J.S. Bohlinger, Branch 852

How to submit items

Branch presidents or their designated scribes may submit Branch Items to *The Postal Record* by mail at 100 Indiana Ave. NW, Washington, DC 20001-2144; email at postalrecord@nalc.org; or fax at 202-737-1540. The deadline is the 10th of the preceding month, or if it falls on a weekend or holiday, 9 a.m. E.T. the first business day after. For the November issue, the deadline is 9 a.m. on Monday, Oct. 12. The *NALC Constitution* limits items to 300 words. Photos should be in color; photos sent by email should be at least 150 dpi resolution. Please identify every person in the photo. *The Postal Record* reserves the right not to print every photo received. Hard-copy photos will not be returned.



Cythensis Lang
President

National Auxiliary Board

News and updates from the officers



Cynthia Martinez
Vice President



Crystal Bragg
Secretary



Linda Davis
Asst. Secretary



Pam Fore
Treasurer

From the President

Union brothers and sisters: Below you will read a letter sent to me by Ann Borowski, president of the Milwaukee Auxiliary.

Read and understand that this is the state of the Auxiliary!

Hello Cythensis,

I have just reread your article in the latest Postal Record, and I appreciate the position you're in regarding the future of the Auxiliary. I feel I am in the same position regarding the Milwaukee Auxiliary. The way our meeting schedule is set up, our first meeting was scheduled for the last Monday in March. That, of course, was canceled, as has been our June and upcoming September meetings. As you can guess, most of our members are elderly (70 and well into 80s and some approaching 90). They are not in a hurry to participate in group gatherings. I have

also found that we have practically no business to tend to, even had we had those meetings. We have 27 members, with approximately 14 active, but not necessarily physically able, so our activities are limited. Our gatherings are mostly social. As to new members, it looks like the well is dry. The new young carriers don't even attend letter carriers meetings and, of course, show no interest in the Auxiliary. Also, young families these days have so much on their plates that joining any outside activity is nearly impossible, except to participate in their children's activities.

I guess what I'm asking is there real discussions on ending the National Auxiliary? Also, I know you're getting lip service support from the NALC, but how much financial support can you expect. Looking at the financial reports, I don't know how the Auxiliary could financially send and pay expenses for you and your officers had there been a national convention. Also, I'm just wondering how many Auxiliary members had notified Nation-

al that they would be attending the convention.

Please don't think I don't support the Auxiliary, but I just feel like we have gone as far as we can, and due to the ages of many of the members, our membership will just keep going down. I also believe that if there are auxiliaries like Milwaukee, we would most likely continue to meet socially, but continue to be available to our branch should they need our help.

Again, I appreciate the position you're in, and I wish you and your officers the very best as you continue to make some very hard decisions in the upcoming months.

I wish you all the wisdom you will need. Please have a good day and continue to stay safe.

Sincerely,
Ann Borowski
President, Milwaukee Auxiliary

Cythensis Lang

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sdprfore@aol.com

NALC Member App

Available for free in the Apple App Store and the Google Play Store



Include me in the fight for letter carrier rights

Sign me up as an Auxiliary member!

Branch No. _____ Branch City _____ Auxiliary No. _____

Name _____ Phone No. (____) _____

Address _____

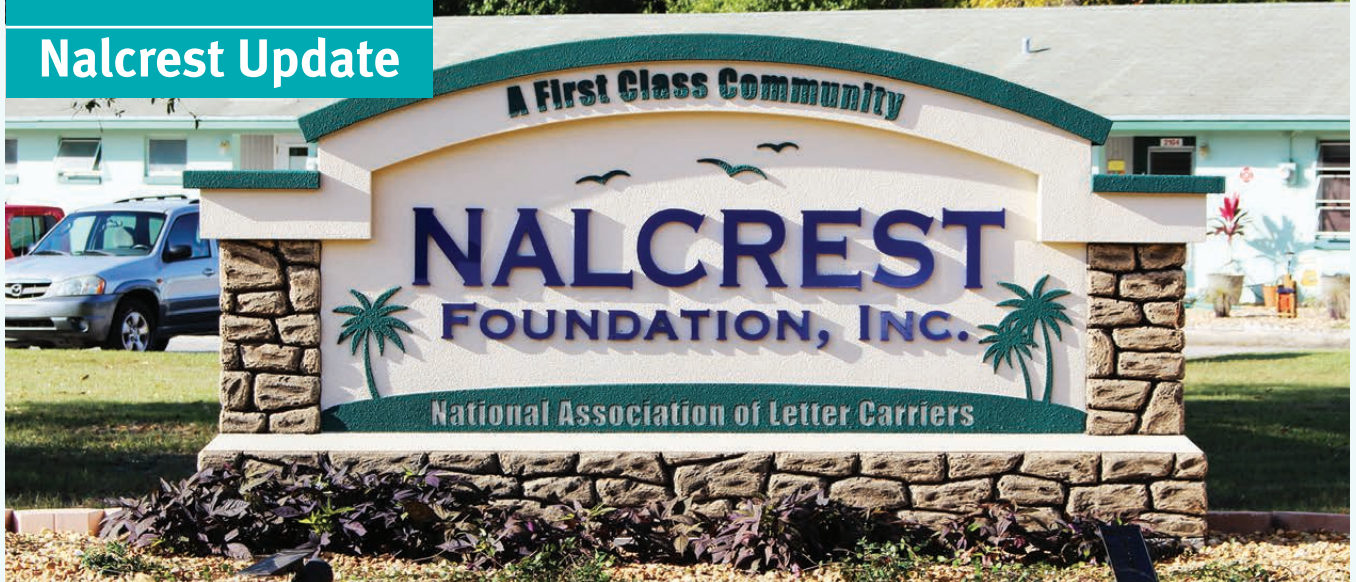
City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

I am a family member of NALC member _____ of Branch _____

Return form with membership fee of \$20 to a local Auxiliary member or mail to:

NALC Auxiliary
Crystal Bragg, Secretary
835 Westland Drive
Mt. Zion, IL 62549

Nalcrest Update



From the Trustees

Guys, I'm looking for feedback, suggestions. Labor Day and the end of summer—well, actually, fall—arrived on Sept. 22, but we won't quibble.

As has become the custom, the Nalcrest trustees sponsored our annual Labor Day picnic for our residents.

However, this was a picnic 2020-style, with attention to virus concerns. With the help of some wonderful resident volunteers, all the appropriate safety protocols were observed. So this year's "picnic" was a socially distanced, mask-wearing production, conducted "drive-through" style, with hot dogs, hamburgers and all the fixings.

As usual with Nalcrest residents, a great time was had by all. With safety in mind, perhaps a brief mention of another Nalcrest amenity is in order.

With the creation of Nalcrest more than 50 years ago, the residents felt the need to establish a volunteer fire department. For many years, that service was maintained at our community.

However, with the growth of Polk County (the home of Nalcrest), the county fire department placed a unit right across the road from "Downtown Nalcrest." In addition, just down the road is a paramedic/EMT unit.

So, as you contemplate moving to Nalcrest, there is an added measure of safety and security for our residents.

With moving in mind, there are now more than 180 letter carriers on the waiting list for an apartment. Therefore, as you can consider retirement, it is not too early to submit your application to make Nalcrest your home.

Happy fall, y'all.

Tom Young

Apply to live at Nalcrest

For an application to live at Nalcrest, visit nalc.org/nalcrest, or call 863-696-1121.

Nalcrest Trustees

NALC President Fredric Rolando

NALC Secretary-Treasurer Nicole Rhine

NALC Director of Retired Members Dan Toth

NALC Trustee Mike Gill

Nalcrest Trustees President Matty Rose

Nalcrest Trustees Vice President Tom Young

Nalcrest Trustees Vice President Don Southern



Polk County in Florida recently added a fire rescue unit across the street from Nalcrest.

Mutual Exchanges

CA: Sacramento (6/07) to Columbus, OH or surrounding area. Nine bidding stations. One hour, 45 minutes to San Francisco and one hour, 45 minutes to Tahoe. Sunshine year-round, no snow. Relocating to be with my family; must move ASAP. Travis, 916-541-3919.

FL: Ft. Lauderdale (6/93) to Michigan City, LaPorte, Alquina, Chesterton, IN. Large office with OT. John, 561-329-0944 or jetorres01@yahoo.com.

FL: Ft. Myers (3/20) to Charlotte, NC. Beaches and sunshine, plenty of OT and five bidding stations. Ray, 786-431-8352 or rayalfalla@gmail.com.

FL: Seminole (10/14) to Sebring, FL (Avon Park area). 15 minutes from beaches, awesome office, awesome people. Friendly. Lots to love out here. Lots of OT. Judy, 863-273-4087 or gidget6868@yahoo.com.

IL: Chicago (8/98) to the Northwest, West or MN (open to other areas). Uptown Northside station. Great area. Citywide bidding available. Scott, 612-298-2245.

MN: Minneapolis (4/07) to Seattle, WA. Family reasons. Regulars only. Patrick, 651-644-3361 (call, text or voice message) or thoresenpat@hotmail.com.

NV: Las Vegas (11/15) to Southwest Riverside County, CA. No state tax. Plenty of

OT. 13 bidding stations. Jianhong, 702-336-9043 or jianhong.an@yahoo.com.

NV: Las Vegas (8/00) to Spokane, WA; Boise, ID or surrounding areas. Mild winters. Family reasons. Regulars only, please. 14 bidding stations. Lots of OT. Mike, mzahm1701@cox.net.

TX: Garland (3/17) to Griswold, CT or surrounding areas. Mary, 214-476-3307 or marymartin03@yahoo.com.

How to place a Mutual Exchange ad

The cost of Mutual Exchange ads is \$15 for up to 30 words and \$25 for 31-50 words per month.

Ads must be received by the 5th of the month preceding the month in which the ad will appear, e.g., October's deadline is for the November publication. Mail ad with check (payable to NALC) to: Mutual Exchange Ads, *Postal Record*, 100 Indiana Ave. NW, Washington, DC 20001-2144.

Ads are published for NALC members only. A branch officer or steward must endorse the ad to certify membership. Ads without endorsements

will be returned.

Include your name, address and branch number. Ads must be received in the same format and wording as they will appear in the magazine. Begin each ad with your state abbreviation, city and seniority date.

Ads should be typed in upper/lower case (or, if this is not possible, printed clearly) on a full sheet of 8.5 x 11" paper. Make certain the numerals 0 (zero) and 1 (one) can be distinguished from the letters O and I in e-mail addresses.

Note: Specific route information or mention of three-way transfers will not be published, nor any wording that offers cash or property to facilitate an exchange. Mutual exchanges must be approved by both postmasters involved. Seniority of carriers involved shall be governed by Article 41, Sec. 2E of the National Agreement. Carriers may not exchange assignments, since vacated positions must be posted for bids in accordance with local and national agreements.



MISSING

HELP BRING ME HOME

NCMEC: 1400111

Katiya Hunt



Missing Since: Aug 31, 2020
Missing From: New London, OH
DOB: Jan 26, 2005
Age Now: 15
Sex: Female
Race: White
Hair Color: Brown
Eye Color: Hazel
Height: 5'3"
Weight: 110 lbs

Katiya was last seen on August 31, 2020. She may travel to St. Johns, Florida. Katiya may be traveling in a 2014 black Chevrolet Cruz sedan with Ohio license plate number HRJ 2183.

DON'T HESITATE!

ANYONE HAVING INFORMATION SHOULD CONTACT

CALL 911 OR

1-800-8435678 (1-800-THE-LOST®)
New London Police Department (Ohio) 1-419-929-3504



MISSING

HELP BRING ME HOME

NCMEC: 1399166

Zymarion Hinson



Missing Since: Aug 18, 2020
Missing From: Cocoa, FL
DOB: Jun 8, 2008
Age Now: 12
Sex: Male
Race: Black
Hair Color: Brown
Eye Color: Brown
Height: 4'9"
Weight: 80 lbs

Zymarion may still be in the local area. He may use the alternate date of birth June 2, 2008.

DON'T HESITATE!

ANYONE HAVING INFORMATION SHOULD CONTACT

CALL 911 OR

1-800-8435678 (1-800-THE-LOST®)
Cocoa Police Department (Florida) 1-321-639-7620

Help your NALC family affected by natural disasters

The **NALC Disaster Relief Foundation** provides hands-on relief for carriers affected by natural disasters, such as wildfires, hurricanes, floods and tornados. It receives donations to be used to assist regular NALC members affected by natural disasters.

NALC response teams throughout the country are activated to go to disaster locations and offer assistance to NALC members and their families who live in the same household. Basic supplies, including uniforms and food, are available for those who need assistance.

Financial support may be available depending on the availability of funding and qualifying criterias. Any regular member of NALC who has faced hardship as a result of a natural disaster will be able to apply for assistance.



Make a donation by sending a check or money order to:

**NALC Disaster Relief Foundation
100 Indiana Ave. NW
Washington, DC 20001-2144**

The foundation is a 501(c)(3). Your contribution to the NALC Disaster Relief Foundation may be eligible for a tax deduction. It is recommended you seek further advice from your tax advisor.



**NALC
Disaster
Relief
Foundation**