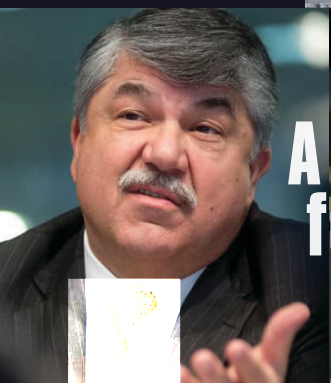


The Postal Record

The monthly journal of the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF LETTER CARRIERS

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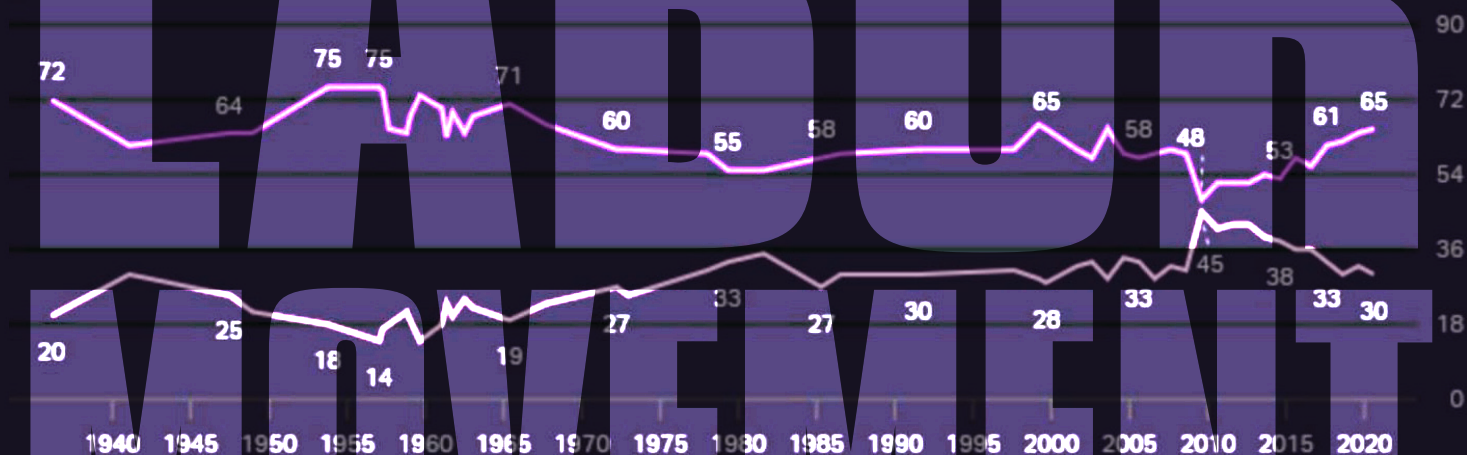


A pivotal time for the U.S.



LABOR MOVEMENT

Do you approve or disapprove of labor unions?



GALLUP



—PAGES 12-15

DOHERTY & DONELON SCHOLARSHIPS

Deadline: This form must be returned to NALC Headquarters no later than December 31, 2021.

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, 2021.

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, 2022. (Computer-generated print-outs of test scores will not be accepted.)
- All biographical questionnaires and secondary school reports must be received at NALC Headquarters by midnight, March 31, 2022.

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 2021-22 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 NALC parent member
(or spouse if deceased)

Last 4 digits of Social Security No. _____

Signature of branch officer

Printed name of branch officer

Title _____ Date _____

This form must be returned no later than December 31, 2021, 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.

Majority rules?



Fredric V. Rolando

Majority rule is the essential concept of our democracy. It decides state ballot initiatives, which bills get approved by the U.S. House of Representatives, and the results of Supreme Court decisions. But increasingly, it does not govern in the U.S. Senate. That's because long-standing Senate rules require 60 votes to take just about any action on legislation—to bring a bill up for debate, to amend it, or to hold a vote on it.

This unique supermajority requirement allows minorities in the Senate to block, or “filibuster,” legislative proposals by refusing to consider them or to end debate on them. For much of the past two decades, the power to filibuster has

been outrageously abused to prevent most non-budget legislation from advancing at all. It didn't used to be that way—between 1917 and 2006, the average number of filibusters was eight per year. Since 2006, the average has been 88 per year. Indeed, the Senate filibuster has been used more in the last 20 years than it was in the prior 80 years. The resulting gridlock has thwarted sensible compromise and undermined Americans' faith in our democracy. I cannot help but believe that this loss of faith has helped fuel the poisonous partisanship that now afflicts American politics.

Defenders of the filibuster argue that it is part of our nation's checks and balances that protect minority rights and promote debate and bipartisan compromise.

But the filibuster is not in the U.S. Constitution. Before 1806, a Senate rule permitted a majority vote to end debate on legislation. That rule was inadvertently dropped, and soon senators discovered that they could block bills from becoming law by refusing to end debate. Eventually a new rule required 67 votes to close debate, which is called “cloture.” In the 1970s, the number was reduced to 60 votes, where it remains today.

For most of its history, filibusters were used sparingly, though most often and most shamefully to deny civil rights to African Americans and women. But over the past six or seven Congresses, they have become routine on all kinds of legislation.

And while filibusters may have promoted compromise and debate in the past, when both parties had many more moderates, that is simply not true anymore. In the last Congress, several hundred bills passed the House only to be ignored in the Senate, blocked by the 60-vote threshold in Senate rules. These days, Senate filibusters do not just prevent our Congress from solving our

country's most pressing problems, they increasingly stop the Senate from even debating them.

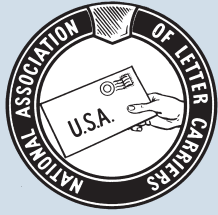
This is precisely what happened recently with the For the People Act, a bill to prohibit partisan gerrymandering of congressional districts and require equal voting rights across the country. On June 22, a Senate majority supported a debate on the bill. But because of the 60-vote rule, the bill was killed by a filibuster. Sadly, even bills that have majority bipartisan support in the Senate are routinely denied an opportunity to be debated, by what is essentially a minority vote.

Without a reform of the filibuster, the same fate awaits the crucially needed Protect the Right to Organize Act (see the May issue of *The Postal Record*) as well as many other popular bills that have bipartisan support of U.S. voters dealing with improving infrastructure, raising the minimum wage and other matters.

Reforming the filibuster is perhaps the best way forward. We could exclude certain kinds of bills from the filibuster—such as those affecting fundamental citizenship and human rights, including the rights to vote, to unionize and to bargain collectively. There is precedent for such “carve-outs” from the filibuster—“budget reconciliation” bills that determine federal budget policy and federal judicial confirmations are examples. Such reconciliation bills and nominations are not subject to filibuster and can be passed with a simple majority. Alternatively, the filibuster could be reformed to serve the values of its strongest supporters—to encourage debate and to promote bipartisanship. At first, 60 senators might be required to end debate, but that number could be gradually reduced to a majority vote after specified periods of additional debate on specific legislation. Or the Senate rules could be amended to replace the filibuster with a requirement that both parties be given the opportunity to offer a certain number of amendments.

There are no filibusters in the House of Representatives; debate can be ended with a majority vote. This allows for majority rule in the House. But legislation must pass both houses of Congress to reach the president's desk and to become law, so the proliferation of Senate filibusters has facilitated the partisan gridlock and congressional dysfunction that so many Americans detest. As currently constructed and deployed by both parties, the Senate's filibuster rules are doing serious damage to our democracy.

Absent a reform of these rules, the opportunity for bipartisan debate (and enactment) of legislation involving the basic rights and needs of the American people will continue to be denied. The failure of a dysfunctional Senate to address these issues simply widens the partisan divide rather than resolving many of the issues at the root of the deep divisions that exist in our country. A good first step toward bringing our country together would be to take a serious look at filibuster reform to ensure that critical legislation with a simple majority of support is considered by the Senate and not thrown by the wayside.



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Carrier valor



Philip
Dine

There's a longstanding journalistic adage about illustrating a theme or trend by offering three examples or anecdotes. Two doesn't really cut it, while four begins to resemble a laundry list. Three just seems to work best.

With that in mind, what follows is a trio of letter carrier tales that exemplify service, courage and compassion.

Retired carrier Glenn Oliver, 94, was an Oklahoma farm boy when the Army sent him to serve in the occupation of Japan after its surrender in World War II. Dramatic as his involvement in that historic period was, it was just a table-setter for what followed.

Called up again for the Korean War, he was captured while scouting for enemy forces, leading to an unimaginable 32 months of captivity in a North Korean prison camp.

One of his jobs: to haul away his comrades after they had succumbed to unbearable conditions, including inadequate nutrition and icy cold. But they couldn't even receive a decent burial because the ground was frozen, so the bodies were simply left on the mountain.

Unsure when his own time would come, he subsisted on maize—the very crop fed to cows on his family's farm. Once an armistice was signed, a prisoner exchange was arranged, and an anxious young soldier finally heard his name called.

Glenn's riveting story was recently told by *Tulsa World* reporter Tim Stanley, whose beat focuses on military veterans. After interviewing 130 local WWII veterans, Tim says, "There've been a number who went on to become mail carriers. That is something that I've noticed."

Returning to Oklahoma in the early 1950s, Glenn was an auto mechanic before joining the postal ranks. "Somebody said they had good benefits," his daughter Sally recounted. From 1954 to 1986, the Tulsa Branch 1358 member wore a second uniform and carried mail in Bartlesville.

Linda Culp, a former shop steward who worked with Glenn toward the end of his career, remembers him well. "He was an excellent carrier, excellent," Linda, a Vietnam-era Marine veteran and postal pioneer during her 28 years as a woman carrying mail in Bartlesville, said. "Just perfection in his work."

A postal customer in Charleston, WV, recently surprised his letter carrier with a poem based on the pivotal role another letter carrier had played three-quarters of a century earlier in the then-4-year-old youngster's life.

Things took a positive turn when the customer's father returned from WWII service with the Army Air Corps in the rough China-Burma-India terrain.

To learn about the original letter carrier's actions—and what necessitated his intervention—read the story on page 21. Suffice it to say that after a challenging 18-month period, the boy, Ralph S. Smith, would have a lengthy career as a psychiatrist practicing through today, along with three decades of military service, starting with a Vietnam-era Air Force stint followed by Air National Guard service and promotion to brigadier general, with his father able to participate in the 1998 pinning ceremony.

I told him that never in my time as a reporter had I been uncertain whether to address someone as General Smith or Dr. Smith.

His response: "Just call me Ralph."

All right, Ralph, thank you for remembering—and memorializing—a compassionate letter carrier 75 years later, and for sharing those memories with your current letter carrier.

That carrier, Charleston Branch 531 Treasurer Greg Busby, whose postal career began in 1995, has in turn been moved by Ralph's writing of the poem.

"I always kind of feel like I'm looking out for my neighborhood," he said, "and the fact that somebody was looking out for us was a good feeling.

"I can't wait to talk to him," Greg added, "after he sees that we published it."

The country lost a true patriot a few weeks ago—and NALC lost a good friend—with the passing of John Warner, 94, former chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee and a Vietnam-era secretary of the Navy, a sailor in WWII and a Marine in Korea.

I was privileged to report both on Congress and the military during part of his 30-year Senate tenure, and soon after arriving at NALC, had a chance encounter on the Capitol Hill grounds with the retired senator from Virginia.

He told me of "a happy period of my life" when he carried mail as a teenager in WWII's early days, helping "keep the [holiday] mail moving" when so many men were off at war—before himself enlisting to join their ranks at age 17.

Decades later, he would periodically help NALC on the Senate floor, attuned to postal issues because, he said, "I think I'm the only man in the chamber who's carried mail."

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News from Washington

NALC weighs in on proposed service standard changes

In comments filed with the Postal Service on June 22 as part of the Postal Regulatory Commission's (PRC) review of USPS's proposed changes in service standards for First-Class Mail and Periodicals, NALC argued against slowing the delivery of such mail. The union noted the overwhelming opposition of the mailing community and the damage the slowdown would have to the Postal Service's brand, particularly at a time when rates are going up to fund investment in the agency's vital networks.

"As a stakeholder in the Postal Service, we are not in favor of the proposed slower service standards for three reasons," NALC said in the comments.

"First, the Postal Service's major customers and the American public have expressed strong opposition to the changes proposed, as measured by the high number of public comments submitted.

"Second, the potential damage to the Postal Service's brand of reducing the quality of service at a time when the agency is using its much-needed expanded authority to raise postage rates, could be significant and could trigger greater volume losses than those suggested by price elasticities calculated many years ago. The Postal Service's high favorability rating with the American public, which exceeded 90 percent across all major demographic categories in 2020, is one [of] the agency's greatest assets. It should not be squandered.

"Third, the operational changes to be implemented under the new service standards will generate, at best, minimal cost savings—just \$169 million annually, which represents a fraction of 1 percent of current operating costs. As a matter of long-term strategy, these

paltry savings do not justify the potential damage to the agency's brand.

"The Postal Service argues that it is impossible to reliably meet its current service standards with its current operational footprint—and that the cost of expanding this footprint to do so is too costly. That may or may not be true. However, it is hard to argue that mailers are better off if 100 percent of their cross-country mail gets slower service than they are currently, when a much smaller percentage of cross-country mail fails to arrive in three days. Adopting more realistic performance targets (to less than 95 percent) for cross-country mail would seem to make more sense for the USPS than downgrading its service standards for First-Class Mail and Periodicals—at least until new ways are developed to reach the higher targets.

"NALC urges the Board of Governors to reconsider these proposed new service standards as it continues to implement the Delivering for America strategic plan. As it seeks to balance service quality and cost considerations going forward, we call on the Board to revisit the 10-year plan and to aim higher for revenue-generating product innovation. It should also look to further public policy reforms to strengthen the Postal Service's finances. Improving the way we invest the Postal Service's \$330 billion in retirement fund assets, now by law invested in low-yielding Treasury securities, would generate far greater reductions in USPS operating expenses (via reduced pension amortization payments and a bolstered Postal Service Retiree Health Benefits Fund) than the proposed service standard changes. NALC supports the main elements of the strategic plan and is working with the Postal Service to

innovate and improve service. But the Postal Service should reconsider these proposed service cuts."

White House releases FY 2022 budget proposal

The Biden administration released its Fiscal Year (FY) 2022 budget proposal on May 28. The \$6 trillion budget proposal is \$1.2 trillion more than the FY 2021 request put forward by the previous administration, and it draws heavily from two initiatives that President Biden released earlier this year, the American Jobs Plan and the American Families Plan. In a major departure from previous budget requests, Biden's proposal does not include any cuts to the Postal Service or measures that attack federal employees' wages or benefits.

For the Postal Service, the budget includes a proposed \$800 million allocation for Fiscal Years 2022, 2023 and 2024 to enable the Postal Service to electrify its vehicle fleet. As letter carriers recall, the Postal Service estimates that it would cost \$8 billion to electrify its fleet and provide charging infrastructure to support those vehicles. The \$800 million per year, spread over 10 years, totals the \$8 billion figure. President Biden has made it a priority to electrify fleets for the 18 federal agencies, including the Postal Service, and his budget request is a clear signal to Congress of this priority.

As it relates to the federal workforce, the budget does not contain proposals aimed at attacking the health and retirement benefits of the federal workforce. Letter carriers may recall that those prior proposals included pay freezes for federal workers, increases in federal employee contributions for health care and retirement, as well as cuts in cost-of-living-adjustments and



Kiran Ahuja

investment returns—all non-starters in Congress over the years. Instead, the administration proposed a 2.7 percent pay increase for federal workers and noted that it would release a management agenda later this year with agency specific guidance. Federal employees have received a total of 10.5 percent in pay increases over the past 10 years.

“NALC appreciates President Biden’s strong support for the federal and postal workforce,” NALC President Fredric Rolando said. “This budget will set a positive tone for Congress. It also demonstrates respect for postal employees, who continue to rank as the most trusted of federal employees, especially on the heels of a pandemic that solidified our role as essential, front-line workers.”

Overall, the budget proposes \$1.5 trillion in discretionary spending, a 16.5 percent increase in non-defense spending and a 1.6 percent increase in defense spending. This includes \$14 billion for agencies and programs to combat climate change, \$133.7 billion for Health and Human Services spending, \$800 billion in new spending and tax cuts for clean energy, \$36.5 billion for high-poverty schools, \$13.2 billion for the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) to enforce collections on corporations and the wealthiest individuals, and increased funding for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the National Institutes of Health.

For the Department of Labor (DOL), the budget also scrapped budget and training cuts and union monitoring funding in favor of a 14 percent increase for the department. Overall, the DOL budget restates the administration’s commitment to “protect workers’ rights, health and safety, and wages; strengthen the Federal-State

unemployment compensation program; support training opportunities that provide pathways to the middle class; fully enforce employment anti-discrimination laws; and more.” Of primary interest to letter carriers, the budget request includes \$183 million for the Office of Workers’ Compensation Programs, which reflects an increase of \$26 million over FY 2021. The request also includes \$664 million for the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, which reflects a \$74 million increase from FY 2021.

NALC will update letter carriers as the House and Senate begin their budget considerations.

Federal Retirement Fairness Act reintroduced in House

On June 30, Reps. Derek Kilmer (D-WA) and Tom Cole (R-OK) reintroduced the Federal Retirement Fairness Act (H.R. 4268). The bill, identical to previous legislation introduced in the 116th Congress, would provide certain federal employees with the opportunity to make catch-up retirement contributions for time spent as temporary employees after Dec. 31, 1988, thus making such time creditable service under the Federal Employees Retirement System, and for other purposes.

Notably, this bill would cover postal employees, such as letter carriers who spent time as casuals, transitional employees and city carrier assistants, making planning for their retirement easier.

“Many federal employees begin their careers in temporary positions before transitioning to permanent status, so we need to have their backs,” Rep. Kilmer said. “This bill will ensure that all federal workers have the opportunity to retire on time, regardless of how they started their careers.”

“Whether first hired under temporary status or not, civil service should be recognized, and these workers should have the option to pay toward retirement credit for the entirety of their employment,” Rep. Cole said. “I am proud to join in re-introducing the Federal Retirement Fairness Act that allows this buy-in benefit to give these civil employees earned time credit toward retirement.”

“Letter carriers who began their careers as non-career employees will benefit from the ability to make catch up contributions toward their retirement,” NALC President Rolando said. “NALC strongly supports the Federal Retirement Fairness Act and appreciates Reps. Kilmer and Cole for continuing to reintroduce this important legislation.”

Ahuja confirmed as OPM director

On June 22, the Senate approved the nomination of Kiran Ahuja to serve as the director of the Office of Personnel Management (OPM). Vice President Harris broke the 50-50 party-line vote to confirm Ahuja.

Ahuja will fill the federal agency’s top position, which has been vacant since March 2020. OPM provides human resources policy and manages health care, life insurance, and retirement benefits for federal employees and retirees. The agency makes decisions that affect letter carriers, including providing policy direction and oversight for human resources systems, and administering many of the benefits for active and retired letter carriers.

Ahuja, a lawyer, served as the chief of staff to the OPM director from 2015 to 2017 and served six years as the director of the White House Initiative on Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders.

News from Washington (continued)

“NALC congratulates Kiran Ahuja on this important confirmation,” NALC President Fredric Rolando said. “After a long vacancy, we are pleased to see a new director confirmed to lead OPM.”

House committee holds hearing on paid family and medical leave for federal employees

On June 24, the House Committee on Oversight and Reform held a hearing on the Comprehensive Paid Leave for Federal Employees Act (H.R. 564). This bill, which Chairwoman Carolyn Maloney (D-NY) introduced in January, would provide up to 12 weeks of paid family and medical leave for federal employees, including Postal Service employees. This paid leave could be used for personal illness, caring for a family member, or time off work needed when a family member is leaving or returning from active military duty. Federal employees are currently entitled to 12 weeks of leave under the Family and Medical Leave Act for such reasons, but it is not guaranteed paid leave.

“This is a policy that is long overdue for the federal workforce and for our nation,” Chairwoman Maloney said in her opening statement. “The federal government has the opportunity to lead the way on paid leave and fostering a family-friendly workplace. While providing access to paid parental leave is critically important and long overdue, it’s just as important to provide access to paid family and medical leave, too.”

The hearing included five witnesses: Lelaine Bigelow, interim vice president for economic justice and congressional relations, National Partnership for Women and Families; Hadley Heath Manning, director of policy, Independent Women’s Forum; Everett Kelley,

national president, American Federation of Government Employees; Vicki Shabo, senior fellow, paid leave policy and strategy, Better Life Lab, on behalf of New America; and Eric Sorkin, co-owner and chief executive officer, Runamok Maple.

The hearing grew tense at times, with numerous Republican representatives expressing opposition to the bill. “Oversight Democrats have called a hearing on enhanced work perks for federal bureaucrats,” Ranking Member James Comer (R-KY) said. “That’s right, more benefits for federal employees who already enjoy job security and a lavish set of benefits not afforded to most American workers.”

Rep. Jody Hice (R-GA) echoed the ranking member’s remarks, emphasizing the unknown costs of such a policy. “We’re looking at ways to get federal employees even more time off on the backs of the American taxpayers,” he said. “Combined with federal holidays and annual leave, federal employees now only have to work about eight months out of the year.”

During questioning, Kelley refuted this claim, stating that it is unlikely that all federal employees would fall into a category allowing them to use the full 12 weeks of paid leave. “Every federal employee would not be able to take four months of leave,” he said. “That’s not what this is all about, and to propose that would be a lie.”

Democratic representatives emphasized that paid medical and family leave policy could help recruit and retain the federal workforce while keeping employees safe. “We don’t want people going to work when they’re sick, and you would have thought COVID-19 would have taught us that,” Rep. Jamie Raskin (D-MD) said.

In response to a question from Rep. Ayanna Pressley (D-MA) regarding why it is important to establish a federal paid leave program that covers diverse needs, Bigelow said, “Comprehensive paid leave improves health outcomes for those who need care and prevents people from having to make impossible choices between being there for their families...and their jobs and income. As the workforce ages, a comprehensive paid leave policy is just smart economics to ensure older workers can continue working and can manage work with caring for an aging parent or loved one.”

The partisan tensions surrounding the bill do not provide it with an easy route through Congress. A mirroring Senate bill, S. 1158, was introduced in April. NALC will continue to monitor this legislation.

Bipartisan bill would allow alcohol shipments through USPS

On May 17, Reps. Jackie Speier (D-CA), Dan Newhouse (R-WA) and 17 other bipartisan co-sponsors introduced the USPS Shipping Equity Act (H.R. 3287). The bill would allow the Postal Service to ship beer, wine and other alcoholic beverages directly from licensed producers and retailers to legal customers. Sen. Jeff Merkley (D-OR) introduced a companion bill in the Senate (S. 1663).

Currently, the Postal Service is barred from shipping alcoholic goods. Private shippers such as FedEx and UPS are not prohibited, and therefore are the only option for wineries, breweries and other producers to have goods delivered directly to customers.

If passed into law, the bill would give USPS two years to develop regulations to ensure that the Postal Service



Julie Su

is prepared to safely deliver alcoholic beverages to adult consumers with appropriate identification checks. The bill also would expand access for direct-to-consumer alcoholic shipments. While USPS delivers to every address in the nation, private carriers do not. The current ban on alcohol shipments limits access to these products for many Americans, especially in rural areas. Additionally, shipping these products would provide a new source of needed revenue for USPS that could generate tens of millions of dollars in the coming years.

“In 2019, California wineries shipped 275.6 million cases of wine, yet consumers and manufacturers are prohibited from using the U.S. Postal Service to ship or deliver these everyday products. In most states, private carriers such as FedEx and UPS are already delivering alcoholic beverages,” Rep. Speier said. “It makes no sense to create a competitive disadvantage for the USPS by barring them from these kinds of shipments, especially given the Postal Service’s dire financial condition.”

“The USPS Shipping Equity Act would give rural producers access to another option for shipping alcoholic beverages, thereby increasing market access and enabling Central Washington businesses to continue to invest in our communities,” Rep. Newhouse said.

“All American businesses deserve the same access to the U.S. Postal Service when it comes to delivering their products to their consumers—and we all have a vested interest in making sure the USPS thrives,” Sen. Merkley said.

“NALC supports the bipartisan USPS Shipping Equity Act,” President Rolando said. “This legislation would allow the Postal Service to expand its service opportunities while providing

much-needed revenue for the agency.”

In addition to lobbying for this legislation, NALC sent a letter to Congress, co-signed by other postal unions and state and national unions and associations that distribute alcohol, in support of the USPS Shipping Equity Act.

FSGG Appropriations bill advances out of committee

The Financial Services and General Government Appropriations bill advanced out of the House Committee on Appropriations on June 29 on a voice vote of 33-24 after a committee markup.

Regarding the Postal Service, the draft bill would continue six-day delivery, increase funding for the PRC and the USPS Office of Inspector General, provide funds for zero-emission electric vehicles for the USPS fleet, and budget for a pilot postal banking program in select areas. In response to recent concerns regarding rates and service, the bill also calls on the PRC to study the potential impact of increased rates and analyze ways to improve service.

Overall, the bill includes \$29.1 billion in funding for FY 2022, an increase of \$4.8 billion from FY 2021. It increases funding to the Small Business Administration and Community Development Financial Institutions and provides funds to rebuild the IRS to enforce collections on corporations and the wealthiest individuals and provide better customer service for Americans navigating the tax system. It also focuses on workers, with increased funding to the Consumer Product Safety Commission and the Federal Trade Commission, and it aims to combat climate change with funding to fully electrify the federal vehicle fleet, including the Postal Service fleet.

“The investments in the Financial Services and General Government bill start putting the government on the side of small business, the middle class, and the vulnerable, not the wealthy and big corporations,” said Appropriations Committee Chairwoman Rosa DeLauro (D-CT).

During the markup, Rep. Steve Womack (R-AR) introduced an amendment that would strike the pilot postal banking program that is included in the bill. Several members spoke in opposition to the amendment, and it did not pass.

This bill is one of many appropriations bills currently moving through Congress that reflect objectives included in Biden’s budget proposal. NALC will continue to monitor the budget and appropriations process.

Julie Su confirmed as deputy secretary of labor

On July 13, the Senate voted 50-47 to approve the nomination of Julie Su to serve as the deputy secretary of labor, the No. 2 position in the Department of Labor after Secretary of Labor Marty Walsh.

Su, a graduate of Stanford University and Harvard Law School, is known for her legal work specializing in civil rights and workers’ rights. She served as the California labor commissioner from 2011 to 2018 and most recently was the secretary for the California Labor and Workforce Development Agency.

Su’s confirmation comes at a critical time as the Department of Labor continues its response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

“NALC congratulates Julie Su on this important confirmation,” NALC President Rolando said. “We look forward to working with her and Secretary Walsh on issues that affect letter carriers and all workers.” **PR**

What's happening on social media

Various news stories and interesting anecdotes that celebrate letter carriers and the mail have been flying around social media. We plan to collect the best ones in this space. If you come across a story you'd like us to consider featuring, send it to social@nalc.org.

A Virginia neighborhood salutes popular carrier's retirement

"Over the years, the neighborhood really got to know Ray as a friend, someone who was really kind, did a good job, cared about their work," a resident on the route of Tidewater, VA Branch 247 member **Raymond Whiteside** told local NBC affiliate WAVY-TV.

After serving in the Army for 22 years, Whiteside served 23 years with the Postal Service; for the past 16 he has been on the same route in the Historic Little England neighborhood, where his customers wanted to send him off with a little fanfare upon his retirement in May.

As the carrier started his normal rounds on his last day of work, he saw blocks of houses with decorated mailboxes, posters and farewell messages written in chalk to congratulate him.

"I wouldn't trade that neighborhood for anything," Whiteside told WAVY-TV. "I just couldn't say enough about those customers out there. They were always so welcoming, so kind."

Whiteside added that he was overcome with emotion when he realized how many people had put in the time and effort to thank him for his years on the job.

"It just became so emotional that I wanted to take pictures of every house," he added. "But I wouldn't have been able to finish my route that day."

6 decades, 2 million miles—and many more to go

Wichita, KS Branch 201 member **Alan Cunningham** was honored in June for his nearly six decades of service, including more than 2 million miles of accident-free driving.

The octogenarian carrier has been delivering mail for 60 years, and he told local NBC affiliate KSNW-TV that the satisfaction of coming to work is what keeps him going.

"I enjoy it, so I do it," Cunningham said.

"He's a true example of a letter carrier [who] comes in and does his job..." USPS representative Ryon Knopik told the TV station.

At a small ceremony at his distribution facility, Cunningham was presented with a service award and a commemorative coin as a token of his long career. During his service, he has accrued more than 5,000 hours of sick leave along with all those miles of safe driving.

"I have no pointers. I just—thankful I'm still able to do it, that's all I am," Cunningham said.

"He has no plans to retire, you know, he is still going strong and he loves serving his customers each and every day," Knopik said.

Cunningham thinks his experience in the military is what helps him along. "You know the physical part of it," he said.

He has seen many changes in the Postal Service over the years, from adhesive stamps to new delivery trucks. "Getting used to this GPS is the biggest thing that I've come across," Cunningham said.

The carrier added that he hopes to be out in the community delivering mail for many more years.



Alvie Ramos received an unexpected retirement celebration from his Bakersfield, CA, patrons.

California neighborhood celebrates beloved letter carrier's retirement

Residents on the route of Bakersfield, CA Branch 782 member **Alvie Ramos** honored him this spring with a special celebration upon his retirement after 37 years of service.

To show their appreciation, customers set up signs in their front yards. On June 4, patrons told local NBC affiliate KGET-TV that Ramos has become a fixture in their community, knows everybody by name and always lends a helping hand when possible.

"He has been an amazing mailman all these years and has been a part of all our families, so I thought it was kind of nice to honor him," resident Sue Thomas told KGET.

Ramos told the station that he's looking forward to spending time with friends and family, relaxing and enjoying his life.

"Oh gosh, I can't wait till I wake up in the morning—I'm not even sure what time it's going to be, 'cause I'm not setting my alarm clock," he said with a laugh. "It's going to be like I'm on vacation—a never-ending vacation."

New Jersey carrier retires after nearly five decades of service

After 48 years on the job, New Jersey Merged Branch 38 member **Donna Rumelhart** is retiring.

“To put the length of her career in perspective,” a June 2 piece in Tap Into Piscataway included in tribute to the carrier, “through the years, Donna delivered [many] miles of letters and flats ... and over a million parcels. Between the old postal Jeeps and the current box-like Grumman LLVs, Donna drove over 50,000 miles (enough to drive around the earth twice!), and probably walked over 20,000 miles.

“Fascinating numbers, and a shining example of an unwavering commitment to the values of work and service—doing all that with unconditional love for her coworkers and customers alike.”

Birthday celebration brightens the day for Ohio carrier

Residents on Cleveland, OH Branch 40 member **Aaron Johnson's** route celebrated his 60th birthday on March 30 in style, with balloons, signs and banners placed around the neighborhood.

Though he's been with the Postal Service since 1987, the carrier has been delivering on the same 8.3-mile walking route in a largely Orthodox Jewish neighborhood for more than 21 years, so his customers know him well. He told the *Cleveland Jewish News* in June that he was “humbled” by the display of affection from his patrons.

“They really surprised me,” Johnson told the newspaper. “I was like, wow, I didn't picture anything like that ... It just blew my mind.”

Customer Teri German told the

paper that Johnson's “got this infectious smile,”

adding, “It brightens your entire day. If you don't see him, you feel like you've missed out.”

She said that when her husband, Dan, told her that Johnson was about to turn 60, she alerted her neighbors and organized a “progressive party” along the route.

“It happened to be during Pesach,” she said, which complicated plans, as many neighbors were out of town. “I called the post office to make sure he would be there.” Still, she wanted to have something for Johnson at each house.

Over the decades on the route, Johnson has been invited to events like weddings, bar and bat mitzvah ceremonies and parties at his patrons' homes. “I consider all of the children in my neighborhood nieces and nephews because everybody is really



Aaron Johnson's patrons celebrated the carrier's 60th birthday.

just amazing,” he told the *Cleveland Jewish News*.

“I love this route and the people,” he added. “I flat out refuse to bid anywhere else.”

The Army veteran said he plans to retire at 62, with retirement being the only reason he'd leave his beloved neighborhood behind.

On his 60th birthday, “I received gift cards, and I received some other gifts. They had all kinds of balloons out and banners saying happy birthday. It was something, I will tell you,” Johnson said.

A special retirement sendoff for Washington carrier on last day

In June, on his final day of delivery of his 21-year career as a letter carrier, Port Angeles, WA Branch 1906 member **Darrell Janni** was surprised by his customers on his route, who provided a warm sendoff, complete with cards and decorated mailboxes.

As reported by local Fox affiliate KCPQ-TV, many neighbors showed their appreciation and shared good wishes by attaching brightly colored mylar balloons to their mailboxes.

As Janni drove down the street for the last time to collect each balloon, neighbors showed up to wish him well, delivering cards and baked goods for him.

Janni told KCPQ-TV that now that his work is done, he and his wife plan on traveling, seeing the sights, and perhaps taking a cruise.

“He will surely be missed,” long-time neighbor Karen Sistek told the TV station. **PR**



Donna Rumelhart was recognized for her career at the time of her retirement.

MDA summer camps return virtually; NALC branches continue to raise money



Newport, RI Branch 57 member Chris Reinmuth helped raise more than \$300 for MDA by running in the Newport 10-Miler road race. Reinmuth, a CCA, hit the ground running—he is the branch’s first MDA coordinator.

Summer camp is a rite of passage for American children, and thanks to the Muscular Dystrophy Association (MDA), NALC’s official charity, children with muscular dystrophy and other neuromuscular diseases are enjoying the experience again this summer. Though the pandemic has for a second year led MDA to cancel in-person summer camps, its virtual camp is keeping campers connected to their peers while building skills, boosting confidence and creating friendships this summer.

NALC’s enduring support for MDA is helping to make the virtual camps possible. In fact, for almost 70 years, letter carriers have devoted their time to raising funds and providing volunteer support for the organization. With our help, MDA has made tremendous advances toward medical treatments for muscular dystrophy to extend and improve lives, and it has developed programs to help people with neuromuscular diseases live life to the fullest.

NALC’s partnership with MDA dates to the early days of the charity, which was founded in 1950. The union named MDA as its official charity in 1952, becoming the first national sponsor of the group. Since then, letter carriers have raised about \$100 million for MDA. Some letter carriers also have supported MDA by volunteering at summer camps.

MDA has offered summer camps since it was founded, but last year, the pandemic caused the organization to switch to a virtual camp format. Using last summer’s lessons, MDA enhanced the virtual camp this summer for children ages 8 to 17 living with muscular dystrophy and related

neuromuscular diseases by adding to the activities offered virtually.

Offered at no cost to families, the virtual camp includes themed programming, accessible activities, STEM programming and virtual connections with fellow campers.

This summer, campers are participating in one-week sessions—and because the participants are enjoying the sessions from home, siblings were also welcomed. Each session has explored themed activities, such as “Journey into the Wild,” “Across America,” “Around the World” and “Time Travel.” Campers are taking part in activities such as arts and crafts, scavenger hunts, STEM assignments and creating special snacks.

In addition to keeping campers safe from the COVID-19 virus, the virtual camps offer something not available with in-person camps—the opportunity to meet other children with neuromuscular diseases from all over the country.

While the children and families MDA serves are eager to resume in-person summer camps, the virtual camp experience is helping to make up for the loss.

“MDA Summer Camp is the best week of my life every year!” MDA National Ambassador Ethan LyBrand said. “I was heartbroken when I heard camp wasn’t going to happen in person, but I am so excited that MDA is making camp available online.”

Stephanie Erbacher, resource coordinator for the national MDA Resource Center, said, “My daughter, Rylie, attended Virtual MDA Summer Camp last year, and she had a great time. I love that my son was able to participate in the activities along with her.”

“I really liked camp last year,” Rylie, 12, said. “It was a little bit different since it was virtual. But I got to talk to kids from all over the country who were just like me. We also did really cool projects.”

Fundraising for camps continues

As MDA shifted to online camps last summer, NALC turned to the internet to continue raising funds to support the charity during the pandemic. Branches were spurred on by some friendly competition through several online Deliver the Cure fundraising challenges issued by NALC Assistant to the President for Community Services Christina Vela Davidson.

“We’re all looking forward to traditional fundraising events for MDA, but we can really make a difference by continuing to use the online fundraising tools we’ve relied on in the pandemic,” Davidson said.

While many branches are returning to in-person fundraising events, there still are opportunities to support MDA virtually, including simply by walking your route.

NALC members can support MDA while participating in a physical activity of their choice through MDA’s Boundless Motion App. The app allows NALC branches and members to engage in and track their physical activity when they

raise money for MDA. You can log miles walking, running or riding—or even while delivering the mail. To get access to the Boundless Motion App, register at the NALC’s MDA fundraising hub at mda.donordrive.com/event/nalc2021.

Other opportunities to support MDA directly online are participating in the Virtual Muscle Walk on Aug. 7 (mda.donordrive.com/team/teamnalcvirtualwalk) and supporting Team NALC in the Oct. 16 Tough Mudder 5K (mda.donordrive.com/participant/teamnalcToughMudder).

“I’m proud of how letter carriers have risen to the challenge of supporting MDA during the pandemic,” NALC President Fredric Rolando said. “As we move forward, I’m confident that we will expand on our commitment to support MDA and the summer camps, whether virtual or in person, that so many children and families enjoy.” **PR**



Michael and Linda Harada hold a self-portrait of their recently deceased daughter Danielle, an MDA ambassador, at the Washington State Association convention. The portrait was auctioned to raise funds for MDA—and the winning branch then presented it as a gift to Danielle’s parents. Washington letter carriers raised \$16,500 for MDA at the convention.

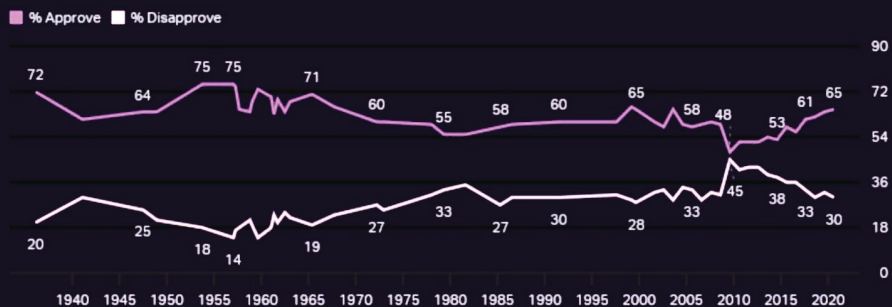


A pivotal time for the U.S.

LABOR MOVEMENT



Do you approve or disapprove of labor unions?



“I want you to know I’m a union guy,” President-elect Joe Biden said in a Nov. 16, 2020, meeting with business CEOs Mary Barra of General Motors, Satya Nadella of Microsoft and Brian Cornell of Target, as well as union presidents Richard Trumka of the AFL-CIO, Mary Kay Henry of the Service Employees International Union and Rory Gamble of the United Auto Workers. “Unions are going to have increased power” in his administration, Biden told them almost two weeks after the presidential election.

The new administration’s promises have been made against the backdrop of a raft of obstacles facing labor, from a decades-long membership decline (with public-employee unions a rare bright spot) to globalization, from employer aggressiveness to a shifting economy. Moreover, as the country gradually emerges from the COVID-19 pandemic, organized labor sees challenges and opportunities that could shape its future.

All of that, and more, make the present time a key juncture for the U.S. labor movement.

Dwindling membership

It’s impossible to talk about the state of organized labor without looking at its massive decrease in numbers. The percentage of workers belonging to a union in the United States peaked in 1954 at almost 35 percent, and the total number of union members peaked in 1979 at about 21 million.

By the 1970s, the increasing flow of imported goods—including automobiles, steel, electronics and clothing—had undercut domestic industries where union density had been strong. By the 1980s, many companies had closed or moved factories to Southern states (where unions were weak). By

1983, the percentage of workers in a union had fallen to 20.1 percent. The trend also reflected the impact of trade deals supported by political leaders of both parties; those pacts helped corporations but hurt American workers, as U.S. employers moved jobs to low-income countries where workers were often restricted from organizing. The American jobs that went overseas were disproportionately union ones.

Fast-forward to 2019 and labor’s share of the workforce had fallen to 10.3 percent, with a microscopic 1 in 16 private-sector workers belonging to a union. But there’s a bright spot—public-employee unions (such as NALC) have in many ways become the dominant part of the labor movement.

Until the 1960s, public-employee union membership remained under 1 million (the result of a relatively small government workforce combined with low union density), before rising rapidly in the 1960s and 1970s and beyond, sparked by President John F. Kennedy’s executive order allowing federal workers to form unions, by the growth of government, and by the organizing of state and municipal workers. By 2010, for the first time, public employees had surpassed private-sector workers as the majority of the labor movement. This surge results from twin factors—the rising unionization rate among government employees and the growth in the size of that sector.

By 2019, 33.6 percent of public employees were in a union, as opposed to only 6.2 of private employees; on a pure numbers basis: 7.2 million public-sector union members as compared to 7.1 million private-sector union workers. Jennifer Klein, Yale University professor of labor history, told *The Postal Record* last year that, “As private-sector unionism has declined, public-sector unions have become the bedrock of organized

labor and have grown in importance throughout the late 20th century and into the early 21st century.”

There have been some small positive signs in the past couple of years, as private-sector union membership rose slightly to 6.3 percent in 2021, up from 6.2 percent in 2019. Meanwhile, public-sector union rates increased to 34.8 percent from 33.6 percent, reflecting the fact that more non-union government workers lost their jobs than unionized employees. The absolute numbers, though, showed a slight decline in labor’s ranks.

Long term, despite the country’s substantial growth over the past four decades, union membership shrunk from 21 million to about 14 million.

Public support

Even as union membership has declined, support for unions has risen. In 2018, researchers at MIT found that approximately 48 percent of non-union workers would join a union if they could—representing some 58 million workers.

The wage gap between union and non-union workers is one reason for this desire to join a union. The Bureau of Labor Statistics reported that, on average, in 2019, union workers earned \$1,095 per week, while non-union workers earned \$892. What that means is that non-union workers made just 81 cents for every dollar that union workers made.

Gallup found that as of 2020, 65 percent of all Americans had a favorable opinion of unions versus 30 percent unfavorable. AFL-CIO President Trumka said that the COVID-19 pandemic might be helping to change minds.

“This pandemic has amplified [public support] even more,” he said. “It showed how helpless workers are without a union. They couldn’t even get [personal protective equipment] and unions were able to get it for them. For years and years and years, people

A pivotal time for the U.S. LABOR MOVEMENT

that we call ‘essential workers’ were invisible. It was as if no one knew they existed. They did their jobs every day to keep the country and the economy going. And then COVID came and everybody was staying home except people they called ‘essential workers,’ people that were driving buses, and delivering food, and taking care of sick people, and making us better.

“Now people see those workers and the dignity that they represent,” he added.

It is worth noting that public favorability toward unions has periodically been high in recent decades, without translating into increased membership, as workers often find themselves dissuaded or even intimidated from forming unions by aggressive employers.

Rep. Mark Pocan (D-WI) agrees that while labor advocates “have strong public support,” the task before union supporters and activists is “to make sure that we actually deliver on some of the things that people want us to deliver on.”

Changing economy

One of the challenges for unions in growing the workforce is embracing new industries.

“Union density has historically been concentrated in manufacturing and the public sector,” Kate Bronfenbrenner, director of labor education research at the ILR School at Cornell University, said. “Those sectors have declined.

“Also, [job] growth has been in the sectors where unions have traditionally not existed. Growth has been in the high-tech sector, in the service sector and in jobs that are not covered by the National Labor Relations Act, like independent contractors and leased workers and domestic workers.”

Results for organized labor haven’t been forthcoming, as seen in the

Amazon warehouse unionizing vote in Alabama in April. Amazon is the second-largest private employer in the country (trailing only Walmart) with more than 800,000 employees.

The voting period saw a massive campaign and celebrity support for the union, along with a strong pushback from the employer via lengthy mandatory information sessions, text messages and large banners telling workers to “Do it without dues.” Ultimately, workers voted against joining the Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union in a final tally of 1,798 to 738.

The retail union has filed a legal challenge to the election and charged Amazon with unfair labor practices. It has requested a hearing by the National Labor Relations Board “to determine if the results of the election should be set aside because conduct by the employer created an atmosphere of confusion, coercion and/or fear of reprisals and thus interfered with the employees’ freedom of choice.”

“We’re really seeing how the balance is always tipped in favor of employers,” Rebecca Givan, a labor studies professor at Rutgers University, said. “Organizing a union under current labor law is extremely challenging—the odds are always stacked against you.”

The ‘whole of government’ approach

And that brings us back to President Biden and the Democrat-controlled Congress. Biden has called for a “whole of government” approach to expanding the way the federal government can support workers. Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris “believe that the decline in union membership is contributing to serious societal and economic problems in our country,” including “economic inequality, stagnant real wages, and the shrinking of

America’s middle class,” they said in a press release.

On April 26, Biden signed the Executive Order on Worker Organizing and Empowerment, which establishes a task force to “identify executive branch policies, practices, and programs that could be used, consistent with applicable law, to promote [the Biden administration]’s policy of support for worker power, worker organizing, and collective bargaining.” The order states that the task force “also shall identify statutory, regulatory, or other changes that may be necessary to make policies, practices, and programs more effective means of supporting worker organizing and collective bargaining.”

The task force has 180 days to submit recommendations “to promote worker organizing and collective bargaining in the public and private sectors, and to increase union density.”

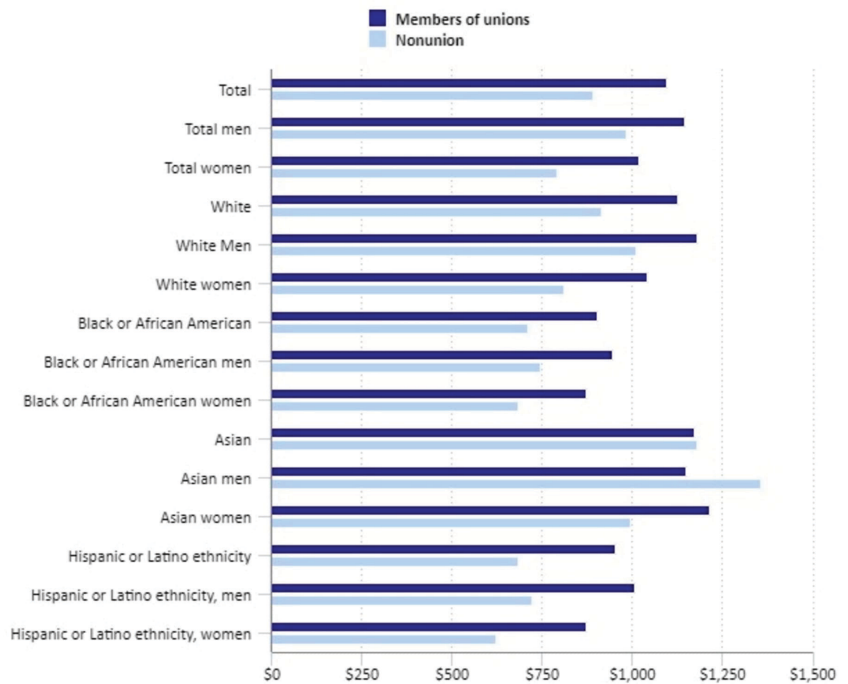
Vice President Harris will lead the 24-member task force, with Labor Secretary Marty Walsh serving as vice chairman.

White House labor advisor Seth Harris noted, “In the past, we’ve had very good-faith efforts by some presidents to do individual things, like executive order and regulatory actions [to help unions]. The question is, what about a whole-of-government approach? We never sit down and think about what it would be like if the whole government was organized around the principle that worker organizing was a good thing and not a bad thing.”

Biden’s proposed \$2.3 trillion infrastructure plan shows how the “whole of government” approach would work. The plan aims to create numerous union jobs in construction, clean energy and other fields, while requiring that companies receiving money under the legislation not oppose unionization efforts.

Some critics have pointed to Biden’s Jan. 20 order that revoked the permit

Median weekly earnings of full-time wage and salary workers, by union affiliation and other characteristics, 2019 annual averages



for the construction of the Keystone XL pipeline as a sign that good-paying union jobs aren't Biden's sole objective. However, how many jobs were lost and how many were to be permanent, full-time jobs remains up for debate, with figures ranging between about 1,000 and 11,000.

PRO Act

Biden also has thrown his support behind the Protecting the Right to Organize (PRO) Act, H.R. 842/S. 420. The PRO Act passed the House of Representatives on March 9 in a bipartisan vote. If approved by the Senate, it would significantly strengthen the ability of workers in the private sector to form unions and engage in collective bargaining for better working conditions and fair wages. If enacted into law, the PRO Act would be among the most comprehensive worker-empowerment measures in a century.

The PRO Act supports workers' right to strike for basic workplace improvements, including higher wages and better working conditions. It would establish a mediation and arbitration process to ensure that corporations and newly formed unions reach a first contract; authorize unions and employers to negotiate agreements that allow unions to collect fair-share fees that cover the costs of representation; and protect the integrity of union elections against coercive "captive audience" meetings. It would streamline the NLRB's procedures to secure worker rights and effectively prevent violations by establishing penalties on corporations that violate workers' rights by combating misclassification of workers as supervisors and independent contractors.

"While NALC is an open shop with more than 93 percent voluntary membership, we do not take our success in

organizing for granted," NALC President Fredric Rolando said in a letter of support to Congress. "To protect our rights, we all know that all workers must enjoy a real right to organize, not just a theoretical right to do so. We stand in solidarity with the millions of workers and their families whom this legislation will benefit."

To progress, the legislation now must be considered by the Senate. Its outlook in the Senate is bleak due to current Senate rules, which require 60 votes for legislation to pass. (See this month's President's Message.) With a Senate split 50-50 between Democrats and Republicans, rounding up 60 votes or, alternatively, changing the Senate rules to allow for a simple majority (51 votes) on legislation continue to challenge the labor movement's progress on pro-worker legislation.

Uncertain future

A major factor that makes 2021 an important moment for the labor movement is that there currently is a pro-union president with both houses of Congress controlled by his party. Given that congressional elections occur every two years, if there is to be effective federal

action to make it easier for workers to form unions, time is of the essence. At the same time, maintaining union jobs and making inroads into new industries remain keys for labor union activists.

But it's also a time to look at ways to make labor less of a partisan issue. That should be achievable, given what unions do for the economy and the country overall, as well as the rising public approval.

AFL-CIO President Trumka said in a recent speech promoting the PRO Act: "The right to freely and fairly organize is a patriotic belief, not a partisan one. Union members vote for both political parties and we live in red and blue states. Unionism transcends ideology, and it transcends any one issue.

"It strengthens civil rights," he continued. "It makes us safer on the job. It creates fairer workplaces. It builds a stronger economy.

"In an era of extreme polarization, nearly two-thirds of Americans approve of labor unions. Seriously, think about how hard it is to find something more than 50 percent—let alone 65 percent—that the country agrees on."

As Trumka put it, "It's clear: Labor unifies America." **PR**



A TIME TO GROW

In the summer of 2020, Amy McCurdy and her family were occupying themselves as many people were during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. “We had been watching a lot of Netflix,” she said.

They discovered a documentary series called “Down to Earth,” in which the hosts travel around the world to find healthy, sustainable ways to live, including planting. It was “really interesting—makes you think a little bit,” McCurdy said.

The Lincoln, NE Branch 8 member and her husband, James, had tried in the past to grow some tomatoes, but their gardening “wasn’t anything serious,” she said.

While quarantining with her family, though, “there was nothing to do. You can’t go anywhere, can’t do anything,” she said. “I’m the type of person who needs to stay busy.”

And so it was the perfect time to try gardening again.

McCurdy started planning by buying some books and by going online to google information and watch YouTube tutorials—“a lot of YouTube,” she said with a laugh.

She bounced ideas off co-workers who had large lots of land and gardened regularly. And she consulted her mother. “My mom has a green thumb. I don’t,” she said. “I asked her a lot of questions.”

By September of last year, the family began by putting together a 6-foot-by-8-foot greenhouse and three raised beds for planting. “My husband used to build houses and had a lot of tools here,” the carrier said. “He was on board and got into building.”

They would “scrounge a lot of stuff,” she said, like wooden pallets from her uncle. With those, her husband built a

couple of trellises, which are architectural structures made to support and display climbing plants. He also added an adapter to the end of the garden hose with two lines and flexible tubing to help McCurdy water her plants more easily.

Winter didn’t slow McCurdy down. Throughout the cold months, she monitored temperatures in the greenhouse. She noted that when it was 13 degrees outside, it was 28 degrees inside and stayed dry. “If we can insulate it, we might be able to keep it above 32,” she said.

She asked her mom to save yogurt cups and egg cartons so she could start growing plants inside, by a sunny window. “I started seeding inside the house and transferred them outside in March and April,” she said.

In the spring, they really got going with the planting. They began to grow

Amy McCurdy
(opposite page)
shows off her
backyard garden
(below).

fruits and vegetables, including strawberries and potatoes in hanging bags and tomatoes and peppers in buckets.

Other crops eventually consisted of squash, carrots, onions, cantaloupe, cucumbers, cabbage, asparagus, cauliflower, watermelon, wheat grass, garlic, kale, sweet potatoes and three kinds of lettuce.

They also have a pollinator garden to attract bees to help their crops, with sunflowers, marigolds and bee balm. They even started a compost pile to provide plants with a balanced source of nutrients.

The carrier wanted to document the process of creating the garden and mark down successes and failures. “I had to keep track,” she said. “At first, I was overwhelmed, but then I got into a routine.

“One gardening book I got had a checklist and journal. It was super helpful,” she added. “It has a lot of scribbling and erasing in it. Maybe next year it won’t.”

Her children, 17-year-old daughter Jaelynn and 12-year-old son Adam, got into the action, too. “It was a fun family project,” McCurdy said. “My kids like to help pick everything, basically. [They’ll] come out and shove strawberries in their mouths. My son has named some of the watermelons.

“It was fun for the kids to see [things grow] from seeds all the way up,” McCurdy said. She described a soup she had just proudly made for dinner almost entirely with ingredients from the garden—zucchini, cabbage, carrots, onions.

Even McCurdy’s dog, Ranger, got into helping. “He would come out and keep me company,” she said. “Now he keeps the squirrels and rabbits away.”

Working at the post office, particu-

larly during a pandemic, is stressful, the six-year carrier and branch trustee said. “It’s easy to come home and keep thinking about work,” she said.

McCurdy loves being outside and having her garden to focus on, and despite her busy postal schedule, she always finds time to tend to her garden, usually going out every day for between 15 minutes and an hour. “It’s a good way to unwind after work,” she said.

Her success at growing has only made her more passionate about her project. “I’m really excited about [my] butternut squash and watermelon,” she said. “People kept telling me, ‘You’ll never be able to grow that.’

“It’s fun, because I didn’t think it was going to work,” the carrier added. It got her thinking, “Maybe I do kind of know what I’m doing.”

And even as the pandemic begins to wane, McCurdy’s hobby is here to stay. “I already have a bunch of ideas for next year,” she said. The carrier wants to build more raised beds to expand the garden, and also hopes to plant more vegetables and raspberry bushes.

Because of the pictures she posts on social media and a May article in the *Lincoln Journal Star*, her co-workers and customers alike are well aware of her pastime and extensive backyard garden.

She’s no longer just

letter carrier Amy McCurdy. “They started calling me ‘Farmer Amy’ at work,” she said.

And the attention she’s received on her walking route because of the newspaper article? “It’s just funny,” she said. “I feel like a celebrity out here. A lot of customers popped their head out the door.”

McCurdy encourages anyone who wants to start a garden to do so—no green thumb required. “Just try it—you’ll be surprised,” she said.

And if your seeds don’t take off, it doesn’t matter, she added, because you tried. “I hope someone reads this and thinks, ‘If she can do this, so can I,’” she said. **PR**



Proud to Serve

Proud to Serve is a semi-regular compilation of heroic stories about letter carriers in their communities. If you know about a hero in your branch, contact us as soon as possible at 202-662-2489 or at postalrecord@nalc.org. We'll follow up with you to obtain news clippings, photos or other information.

Honoring heroic carriers

Heroism, like the mail, comes in many packages—think of police officers or firefighters. But for some citizens in need of assistance, their heroes come in the form of concerned letter carriers.

Letter carriers are members of nearly every community in this nation and know when something is wrong. Spotting fires and injuries, they often are the first to respond. The following stories document their heroism. For them, delivering for America is all in a day's work.

Carrier keeps cool in pool emergency

On May 24, Los Angeles, CA Branch 24 member **Andrei Manea** was delivering mail to a house on his route when he heard shouting coming from the back yard. The seven-year carrier quickly alerted the next-door neighbors about the situation, and then ran behind the house to help.

When he reached the back yard, he witnessed a frightening sight: His customer, Forrest Latimer, was

unconscious in his pool, his head barely held out of the water by his wife. "His wife was screaming for help," Manea recalled—it was her cries that he had heard.

The carrier rushed to the side of the pool and pulled Latimer out of the water. While Manea called 911, one of the neighbors performed CPR on Latimer. He stayed on the phone with the emergency operator until paramedics arrived.

Latimer was taken to the hospital, but was soon able to breathe on his own and is now on the road to recovery. The carrier was praised by both the Latimers and their neighbors, who later said that "[he] had done everything possible to help."

Manea described the situation as "very

intense," but said that he was happy to come to the rescue of a customer. "My route is like family," he said. "I love my job, and we have a big part to play in the community." **PR**



Andrei Manea

Neighborhood watch

"I was turning the corner in my postal vehicle," Metairie, LA Branch 6119 member **Christopher Surla** recalled about a day on his route in September, when he spotted one of his customers sitting down on the sidewalk. "She was bleeding from her face," the 14-year carrier said, "and waving me down." Surla quickly pulled over, parked and got out. Walking toward the woman, "I asked her, 'Is there anything you



Christopher Surla

need?' And she asked me to go to her house and ask her husband to come pick her up," he said. The customer told him that she had fallen while out for a walk in the neighborhood—the blood on her face was coming from a cut on her lip she had received from the fall. The carrier recognized her from his route and knew that her house was close by, so he rushed down the street to alert her husband to the situation.

The woman was then taken home by her spouse, but ended up going to the hospital to receive stitches for her lip. The woman's husband later contacted USPS to praise Surla for his actions. The carrier, however, said he was simply pleased that everything had turned out all right. "I felt really good about helping her out," he added. "I was in the right place at the right time." **PR**

Eye on the elderly

In November, Arlington, TX Branch 2309 member **Lee Gammage** was delivering on a park-and-loop route when he heard a noise “like a cat yowling,” he recalled. After dropping the mail in the door slot, the 16-year carrier realized that the noise might have been someone inside trying to call for help. He went back to the house and called through the slot, and was answered with a yell from the customer. Gammage went around the house to the window, and the woman told him that she had fallen and could not get up. The customer, who had recently been widowed, lived alone and told Gammage that she had been lying on the floor “for a long time,” the carrier said. The woman asked him to get her next-door neighbor, but when the carrier went over to the next house, no one was home. Gammage returned and asked if he could help; when the woman agreed,

he entered through the unlocked back door. After speaking with the woman, “we decided that her hip might be broken, so I gave her my phone to call 911,” the carrier said. Once the woman was in contact with dispatchers, Gammage left to continue his route, but made sure that paramedics had arrived by the time he finished the loop. The customer was taken to the hospital for surgery, and has since made a full recovery. Her grandson later wrote to Gammage, thanking him for saving his grandmother. He said that while his grandmother was in distress, “she was holding out hope that she would catch the letter carrier.” Gammage said, “It’s an aspect of service I don’t think about much, but the public can count on us to be by once a day, and in this case, it saved someone a lot of agony, at the least.”

In September, Long Island Merged, NY Branch 6000 member **Joseph Kerrigan** was delivering mail to the home of an elderly customer when he heard an odd noise coming from the house. When he looked around for the source of the noise, “I saw a hand holding a cane and tapping on the window,” the five-year carrier recalled. Kerrigan went over to the window and looked inside, where he saw his customer lying on the floor. “The man was screaming, ‘Help, help! I can’t get up, call the police!’” Kerrigan said. The man’s neighbors heard the commotion and came running out to help, while the carrier searched for an entry point into the house. As the neighbors called 911, Kerrigan was able to break the back window and open the door. The neighbors went inside the house and were able to get the customer to his feet, but the carrier had cut his



Joseph Kerrigan

hand badly when breaking the glass and remained outside—“I didn’t want to get blood everywhere,” he explained. Shortly thereafter, police and paramedics arrived on the scene. Kerrigan ended up undergoing minor surgery to remove the glass shards from his hand, but has since recovered. Long Island Postmaster John Statkevics praised Kerrigan for his quick thinking, saying, “If Joe had not noticed the customer and acted accordingly, this situation could have had a tragic outcome.” But the carrier was modest about his role in the rescue. “It was kinda crazy,” he said. “I’m just glad the man was all right.” **PR**

Union Plus awards five scholarships to NALC kids

Union Plus is a program founded by the AFL-CIO to provide benefit programs to union members and their families. Since 1992, Union Plus Scholarship awards have been presented annually to union members or members of their families who want to begin or continue their post-secondary education. This year, Union Plus awarded \$250,000 in scholarships to 199 students representing 37 unions.



Daylin Boehmer

and she plans to major in elementary

education. She was part of her high school’s leadership council, a student leadership team that helps to motivate, support and encourage fellow classmates. “NALC has been especially helpful this year by protecting carriers’ well-being during the extra amount of work endured during the 2020 election season amid a pandemic,” Boehmer said. “I am very proud of my dad, his work ethic and his strong

News

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Scholarships (continued)



McKayla Leary

support of NALC.” McKayla Leary of South Berwick, ME, whose mother, **Patricia Leary**, is a retired member of Maine Merged Branch 92, was awarded a \$750 scholarship.

McKayla Leary is an Honors College student at the University of Maine, where she is studying engineering. She is a member of the Society of Women Engineers and Engineers Without Borders, with which she has been working on a project to build up water supply in Ixtupil, Guatemala.

Leary, who said she displays the Maine flag in her dorm because she is inspired by the state motto, *Dirigo* (“I lead”), pointed to a strike last year at Maine’s Bath Iron Works as a testament to the power of solidarity. “Unions are the cornerstone to a balanced economy and labor market,” she said, “and they certainly lead the way to a brighter future for their workers.”

Esther Lee of Brooklyn, NY, daughter of Brooklyn Branch 41 member **Kent Lee**, was awarded a \$2,000 scholarship. Esther Lee was also a 2020 Union Plus Scholarship recipient.



Esther Lee

She is a pharmacy major at St. John’s University Queens Campus in New York. She graduated from high school in 2020, earning an AP Capstone diploma, Advanced Regents diploma and AP Scholar with Distinction honors.

2021 Doherty and Donelon Scholarships selection delayed

Because of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, the announcement of the winners for the 2021 Doherty and Donelon Scholarship winners has been delayed.

The Scholarship Committee, composed of Sandy Laemmel, Detroit, MI Branch 1; Kimetra Lewis, Dallas, TX Branch 132; and Lawrence Kania, Buffalo-Western New York Branch 3, has not yet been able to review the applications to prepare them for the judges, as many applicants are having difficulty obtaining the necessary transcripts and recommendation letters from their schools.

NALC Headquarters is working diligently with the applicants to obtain the outstanding documentation so that the Scholarship Committee and judges can perform their work and announce the winners as soon as they are able. **PR**

Lee’s mother also belongs to a union. Unions have significantly affected her family, Esther Lee said.

“Many of the opportunities that we’ve had are notably due to union aid,” she said. “Because of this, my family’s future is secure financially, socially and emotionally.”

Ryan Sand of Beatrice, NE, daughter of Lincoln, NE Branch 8 member **Jason Sand**, won a \$1,000 scholarship. Ryan Sand will attend Northwest Missouri State University (NMSU) this fall, where she plans to major in education. She is an NMSU Academic Excellence Scholar.



Ryan Sand

She follows in the footsteps of her mother, who teaches Spanish at her high school, Tri County High School in DeWitt, NE. Ryan Sand got a head start in her own teaching career by working as a teacher’s aide at Tri County.

Ryan Sand praised NALC for working to protect the safety of postal employees during the pandemic. “My family and I have benefitted from the labor movement, and we are grateful for the improvement of working conditions and benefits that have been provided through NALC’s efforts,” she said.

McKenna Wofford of Tahlequah, OK, daughter of Muskogee, OK Branch 1042 President **John Wofford**, was

awarded a \$500 scholarship. McKenna Wofford is a student at Connors State College in Warner, OK. She plans to attend nursing school and then join the Army, she said,



McKenna Wofford

“so I can help others who have helped and are helping me every day.” Wofford isn’t waiting to get into the action of the medical field, though—she already works as an assistant in a hospital emergency room.

Wofford commended NALC for providing her father with an opportunity for leadership. “The union has led my dad from being...[a] letter carrier to president of his union—an amazing man who I look up to, and someone who keeps looking forward to aspire to his dreams that one day he will achieve,” she said. Seeing how union members support each other has provided an important life lesson, she said, adding, “The union has taught me how to enjoy the good times, but also to not get down during the tough ones.”

For information about scholarship eligibility and applications, go to unionplus.org/scholarship.

In addition to the scholarship program, Union Plus provides a range of money-saving programs and services for union members and families. Go to nalc.org/member-benefits/benefits-for-members/union-plus for details. **PR**

A patron's poem honors a carrier's friendship



Dad's Letters

© 2021 Ralph S. Smith Jr.

A mistake, is what they said
You never had TB.
You needn't stay abed
Go play and run, run free

A lung spot; fever mild
TB the doctors said
Unto the little child
Eighteen months in bed

Age four he mustn't run
Just dream and think and hope
To move and play for fun
No friend to help him cope

A window by the day cot
Looked out through glass and screen
Until the summer's afterthought
Unveiled the glassless scene

Window, Mom and Mailman
Whose visits made the day
Because the lively Postman
Brought many things to say

He would come by window late
"Hello and here's your mail"
Sometimes from Mom's true mate
Overseas in war's travail

Uniform and cap he wore
From railroad then to us
As home he came from war
To stay with hope and promise

New doctors were consulted
Dad thought it was the best
The prognosis was adjusted
After examining the chest

Go run and play they said
You never had TB
You will not need the bed
Thank Dad you now are free

A letter carrier's daily talks with a young, apparently ailing child left an impression that fostered a lifelong admiration for letter carriers. Many years later, the memory inspired the now-grown man to write a poem about the experience.

In May, Dr. Ralph Smith of Charleston, WV, approached his letter carrier, Charleston Branch 351 Treasurer **Greg Busby**, with a poem that described Smith's childhood memories. Smith and his wife, Teresa, long had been friendly with Busby, but his poem explained just how important letter carriers were to him.

"He felt a special connection to the Postal Service," Busby said, "He had to lie in bed as a child, and the only interaction he had [besides his mother] was with a letter carrier."

Smith describes in his poem "Dad's Letters," which he wrote last year, his experience at age 4. His doctor had diagnosed him with tuberculosis (TB) after seeing a strange spot on the youngster's lung in X-ray images. The doctor ordered him to rest in bed day and night for 18 months—an ordeal for a 4-year-old. His father was serving overseas in World War II, so his mother cared for him alone at their home in Charleston.

"Every morning, she carried me to a bed in the living room next to a window," Smith said. It was summertime, and the window was open because there

was no air conditioning. Other than his mother, Smith's only companion was their letter carrier. "The postman would



Greg Busby

come to the window and talk to me," Smith said. The chats helped the young child, who had been an active youngster, get through each day confined to bed.

"I was too young to remember his name," he said, "but I can still see his face now."

When his father returned home from the war, he took young Ralph to the Cleveland Clinic, hoping to improve his medical care. The doctors at the clinic determined that he did not, in fact, have TB. The symptoms, including a mysterious fever, went away without further treatment, and Smith never learned the cause of his illness.

But the experience of interacting daily with his carrier stuck with the restless child. "I wanted to be active," Smith said, "so I think that's what led to my overachievement."

By "overachievement," Smith means his service as an air surgeon in the West Virginia Air National Guard, where he retired as a brigadier general; his medical degree and years of practice in child and adolescent psychiatry (he is still practicing at age 79); and two master's degrees, one in business administration and the other in communications.

Memories of his father, who died in 1998, the daily visits from his letter carrier, and his father's return from the war and their visit to the clinic, prompted him to write the poem about his lasting connection to the Postal Service.

"When I see a mail person, I get goose bumps," he said. "They're still some of my favorite people in the world." **PR**



Dr. Ralph Smith

Developing the future leaders of NALC



Letter carrier Lakeyia Terry (l) provides on-the-job training to newly hired CCA Robert Hessell in Warren, MI. Mentorship includes not only training about the job of being a letter carrier, but also involves developing leadership qualities.

During negotiations for the 2019-2023 National Agreement, which was ratified on March 8, NALC put forward a bargaining proposal that, if adopted, would have created a new employee mentoring program for city letter carriers. It is NALC's opinion that mentoring new letter carriers plays an important role in their professional development, which in turn benefits not only the new employee, but USPS and our customers as well. It also builds better relationships among co-workers and fosters a better work environment and culture.

A mentoring relationship between an experienced letter carrier and new employee can provide that new carrier with the necessary resource to ask questions, get feedback and begin his or her journey to becoming a professional letter carrier.

USPS did not agree to NALC's proposal as it was presented; however, the parties did reach agreement to pursue the idea under the new City Delivery and Workplace Improvement Task Force. A subcommittee of the task force was formed for the specific purpose of exploring ideas on how to improve city carrier assistant retention rates, as well as the possibility of jointly developing and discussing implementation options for a mentorship program for new employees with the aim of improving their onboarding experience. As a result, NALC and USPS already have agreed to and begun testing these ideas in several locations throughout the country.

As a union, across the board members also should be adopting and implementing the ideas and principles of mentorship for current and future NALC activists and leaders. A mentor generally is an experienced and trusted adviser, focused on the long-term growth of the mentee. Mentors can teach, provide wisdom, advise and support. For local NALC representatives, this can begin by simply teaching new carriers about the union and the various things NALC members do. This can include getting them involved with the annual food drive, telling them about legislative issues, or teaching them how the National Agreement is organized so they can learn more about their rights and how to enforce them. Even simple things, like making sure they understand their right to union representation while being questioned during a disciplinary investigation by management or helping them learn how to consult with the shop steward when there are possible violations to the National Agreement, can be invaluable for new members.

Mentoring also focuses on the growth and development of a person, and a good mentor identifies the specific talent that each person has and helps him or her excel in it. How does this happen? A good first step to identifying talents of potential mentees might be meeting one-on-one for lunch to get to know them a little better. Informal get-togethers as a group with other NALC activists are another good way for experienced branch leaders to learn how potential future leaders might best fit into the organization. The idea is to find out the potential mentee's likes and dislikes. Once a person's qualities and interests are understood, a next step might be to discuss with them their thoughts on the



best ways for them to get involved with the union. It's likely that they have never used their skills and abilities for the betterment of a labor organization such as NALC, so identifying how they fit in and how their skills can best be used is of the utmost importance.

Good mentors are an integral part of leadership development. A good mentor should not only have knowledge, but also should be able to impart that knowledge in an effective manner. Mentors should show enthusiasm and sincerity to help others succeed. Even though experienced NALC activists are knowledgeable in union issues, they should respect their mentees and be patient as they assist them with developing their own skills.

Mentorship gives potential future NALC activists a firsthand experience of what leadership should look like. Mentors display leadership qualities such as effective communication, responsibility and the ability to guide other people. Good mentors design activities for the mentees and provide the tools to perform them. A good mentor can help a person come out of his or her comfort zone by creating different leadership scenarios. Mentors help people gain more confidence and improve their skills.

If you are an experienced NALC activist, you should consider whether you

can be a mentor to any of your current or future brothers and sisters. Take the opportunity to pass on your knowledge and skills—just as, perhaps, another activist at one time did for you.

If, instead, you are a potential mentee, try to take an active role in seeking out a mentor. To get the most from a mentor and become a potential future leader in your branch, you should try to learn from all of your branch activists and glean some of their wisdom. Engage with other carriers, ask questions and listen. Ask a local branch representative how you can get involved and ask if there is someone whom you can work with. For additional assistance on getting involved, reach out to the NALC national business agent who covers the state where you work. The contact information can be found on the NALC website at nalc.org/union-administration/nalc-regions or on page 2 of this magazine.

Leadership is a quality that does not develop overnight. It takes years to hone the knowledge and skills needed to become an effective leader. It requires mentorship, role models, and making mistakes and learning from them. Many organizations invest substantially in developing future leaders, and local NALC branches should be no different. **PR**

The history of the Hatch Act

NALC lost a Supreme Court battle against the law, but ultimately saw it amended

In 1939, a law “to prevent pernicious political activities” was passed with the goal of preventing powerful government officials from having undue political influence on those seeking work, but the law came to infringe on the free speech rights of all federal employees—including letter carriers. For more than 50 years, NALC made it a priority to see the law reformed, allowing carriers to work on political campaigns and lobby their members of Congress. After at least one high-profile setback, NALC succeeded.

The road to the Hatch Act began in 1938, when President Franklin Delano Roosevelt tried unsuccessfully to purge members of his own party. In his New Deal proposals, aimed at helping those affected by the Great Depression, he often was stymied in Congress by a group of moderate Democrats, largely from the South. During that fall’s elections, FDR threw his support behind new Democratic candidates challenging the incumbents.

“FDR felt these senators were too obliged to corporations’ interests in their states, too unwilling to recognize the unemployed’s need or the entire



President Franklin Roosevelt (l) and Works Progress Administration Director Harry Hopkins

country’s need for social welfare legislation,” FDR scholar William Leuchtenburg told *Time* magazine.

The purge failed, and the men whom FDR supported generally lost. But worse, people began to question whether the president’s campaign had gone too far.

Permissible activities under the Hatch Act

NALC encourages all members to be engaged in a wide range of political activities to advance the letter carrier agenda, but it is crucial to remember that all active letter carriers, career and non-career alike, are federal employees, and that political activities are governed by the Hatch Act—including online activities that involve social media and/or email.

Letter carriers should always be off the clock, out of uniform (and government vehicles) and away from the workplace whenever engaging in any partisan political activity, and they should make sure that the activity is in a permissible category.

The following are permissible activities active letter carriers may do (on their

own time, away from work, out of uniform and without using a postal vehicle):

- Be candidates for public office in non-partisan elections (that is, elections in which none of the candidates to be nominated or elected is representing a political party).
- Register and vote.
- Sign and circulate candidate nominating petitions and ballot initiative positions.
- Assist in voter-registration drives.
- Speak and write publicly and otherwise express opinions about candidates, ballot measures and issues.
- Attend political rallies, meetings and other events.
- Attend fundraisers and contribute money to political organizations and campaigns.
- Volunteer for political campaigns and encourage others to volunteer.
- Participate in phone banking and precinct walking for candidates and ballot measures.
- Display bumper stickers, lawn signs and other campaign paraphernalia.
- Raise money for the Letter Carrier Political Fund from other NALC members. (Note: Letter carriers, while detailed to 204b or other higher-level assignments, should not solicit contributions to the Letter Carrier Political Fund from postal employees who may be viewed as their subordinates.)



Sen. Carl Hatch, the author of the Hatch Act

The Supreme Court, which in 1973 heard NALC's case against the Hatch Act



According to Leuchtenburg, newspaper articles claimed that Works Progress Administration (WPA) Director Harry Hopkins—a close ally of FDR—had promised jobs and promotions within the WPA in exchange for votes in the Kentucky election for senator. Hopkins compounded his problems when he said that if he were an Iowa voter, he would support Rep. Otha Wearin—rather than the incumbent, Sen. Guy Gillette—“on the basis of his record.” (Wearin’s record included participating in an annual hog-calling contest on the Capitol building’s steps.)

Sen. Carl “Cowboy Carl” Hatch, a moderate Democrat from New Mexico, had had enough and introduced an amendment to a relief spending bill in 1937. The amendment called for prohibiting officials and employees of federal relief programs from engaging in partisan political activities.

Though the amendment failed, it resurfaced in 1938 after a Senate Committee on Campaign Expenditures found that WPA funds and manpower had been used for political purposes that year in three states. Congress passed the Hatch Act in July 1939, and FDR eventually decided to sign it on the last day he could do so, contending that he had supported it all along.

The 1939 act forbids the intimidation or bribery of voters and restricts political campaign activities

by federal employees. It prohibits the use of any public funds designated for relief or public works for electoral purposes. It forbids officials paid with federal funds from using promises of jobs, promotion, financial assistance, contracts, or any other benefit to coerce campaign contributions or political support. It provides that people below the policy-making level in the executive branch of the federal government must not only refrain from political practices that would be illegal for any citizen, but also must abstain from “any active part” in political campaigns.

Since its passage, federal employees have fought against it, and one fight saw letter carriers take the law all the way to the Supreme Court.

In 1973, six letter carriers wanted to campaign for candidates for public office, and with their union and

- Volunteer, run for and hold an office in a local or state political party or club.

Active letter carriers may not (while on the clock, at the workplace, in a postal uniform or in a postal vehicle) engage in any of the otherwise permissible political activities listed above. For example, while on the clock, at the workplace, in a postal uniform or in a postal vehicle, you may not:

- Send or forward a partisan political email.
- Wear or display any political or campaign material, even as a computer screensaver or desktop wallpaper.
- Circulate partisan political materials to co-workers.

- Sign up electronically to contribute to the Letter Carrier Political Fund or solicit other letter carriers to contribute.

Active letter carriers may not (even on their own time, away from work, out of uniform and without using a postal vehicle):

- Use their official titles or positions when engaging in otherwise permissible activities.
- Raise money for partisan political groups or campaigns (except for the Letter Carrier Political Fund), including phone banking, letter writing, selling tickets, hosting a fundraiser, inviting people to attend a fundraiser, or allowing your name to be used in a fundraising appeal.

- Otherwise solicit, receive or handle contributions for a partisan political group or campaign.
- Run for elective office in partisan (party-label) elections (even if you report “No Party Affiliation”).
- Raise money for the Letter Carrier Political Fund from non-NALC members (except from the member’s immediate family).

The information above is general guidance on common partisan political activity. It is not inclusive of all activity with potential Hatch Act ramifications. For more information, please visit the NALC website or the Unites States Office of Special Counsel website.

If you have questions or concerns, please contact the appropriate national business agent. PR

The history of the Hatch Act

NALC President Vincent R. Sombrotto (l) at an event where he pretended to be arrested for his Hatch Act violation



several local Democratic and Republican political committees, sought an injunction against the enforcement of the Hatch Act on the grounds that the law violated their First Amendment rights to freedom of speech. They also argued that the act was unconstitutionally vague. The case became *United States Civil Service Commission v. National Association of Letter Carriers*, 413 U.S. 548.

The December 1972 edition of *The Postal Record* reported that NALC was represented by attorney Thomas C. Matthews Jr., who argued that it was unconstitutional to take disciplinary action against a federal employee who had done the following: “Made a wager on an election; disparaged the president publicly; engaged in a political discussion; wrote a political letter; allowed his name to be associated with an objectionable political affair.”

The United States District Court for the District of Columbia agreed, finding for the letter carriers. The court held that the term “political activity” was impermissibly vague and overbroad. The federal government appealed the case to the U.S. Supreme Court, where the judges took a different view, deciding against the letter carriers, 6-3.

Associate Justice Byron White wrote the decision for the majority, holding that federal workers’ freedom of speech can be regulated and that the impartiality of government, and also the appearance of impartiality, can justify infringing on these rights. He also said that the rulemaking of the United States Civil Service Commission since the creation of the act had established sufficient rules so that the law was not unconstitutionally vague.

Associate Justice William O. Douglas wrote the dissent, equating freedom of speech to freedom of religion, and concluded that “speech, assembly, and petition are as deeply embedded in the First Amendment as proselytizing a religious cause.” In other words, if the Supreme Court wouldn’t let the federal government infringe on a federal worker’s religious speech, it shouldn’t infringe on his or her political speech.

For the first 54 years of the Hatch Act’s existence, letter carriers found their ability to engage in the legislative process extremely limited. NALC members turned to the Auxiliary—made up of letter carriers’ spouses—as well as to retired members to conduct

much of its lobbying. Because they were not federal workers, the Auxiliary and retirees could help elect letter carrier-friendly members of Congress and communicate to elected representatives NALC’s views on legislation being considered on Capitol Hill.

But by the 1980s, NALC President Vincent Sombrotto recognized that participation in the nation’s political process was essential if the union were to continue to protect the rights, benefits and economic security of letter carriers. In fact, in 1987, the U.S. Merit Systems Protection Board declared that Sombrotto had violated the Hatch Act and suspended him and two other union presidents from federal service for 60 days. What were the union presidents’ violations? Three years earlier, they had announced their unions’ endorsements for presidential candidate Walter Mondale and Senate candidate Mike Lowry.

The symbolic act (Sombrotto was on union leave from his letter carrier job to serve as union president) only emboldened him. “Letter carriers won’t let this political vendetta stop us from making our voices heard in Washington, DC,” Sombrotto said in the March 1987 *Postal Record*.

In 1990, Congress passed a reform amendment, but it was vetoed by President George H.W. Bush. The House overrode the veto, but the Senate fell two votes short. Not until 1993 was NALC able to mount another serious run at Hatch Act reform. In September of that year, both houses of Congress approved legislation granting active carriers the right to work on political campaigns, hold party office, serve as delegates to political conventions and speak out for the candidate of their choosing. A few weeks later, President Bill Clinton signed the bill and NALC could finally declare victory over the Hatch Act.

While not a complete repeal, the amendment meant that letter carriers could campaign for candidates off the clock, could solicit political contributions to the letter carrier political action committee, and could run for political office.

In the November 1993 *Postal Record* article celebrating the bill’s passage, Sombrotto was quoted as follows: “After a half-century of political discrimination, letter carriers are ready to take their place as involved and active citizens.” **PR**

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.

Carrier coordinator retires after one last lead

"I've been the Customer Connect coordinator ever since we started doing it," Hayward, CA Branch 1707 member **Oscar Dominguez** said, before his retirement in May. But the 35-year carrier went out on one final large sales lead.

After learning from the owner of a local paper products supply company that she was paying enormous shipping charges, Dominguez spoke to her about the advantages of shipping with USPS. One of the carrier's biggest selling



Oscar Dominguez holds his award recognizing his work with Customer Connect for the Bay District.

points? "Mention we don't charge for pick-ups," he said.

After returning to the post office, Dominguez passed on the information through a Customer Connect lead card. A sales team was able to follow up with the customer and convince her to make the switch. Dominguez's last sales pitch generated an estimated \$1 million in new annualized revenue for the Postal Service.

"Oscar really enjoys speaking with his customers," said Mary Anderson, the small-business engagement director for USPS Headquarters. "With this one conversation, he saved this customer thousands of dollars a month in surcharges and won new revenue for the Postal Service."

Dominguez says that his years of advising carriers about the Customer Connect program taught him a great deal about how to convince customers to make the switch.

"If you see a business, even a home business, where UPS or FedEx are picking up stuff, get the name of the person in charge of shipping," he said he told newer carriers. "Then get the name to me, and I'll start the ball rolling from there."

The carrier emphasized the importance of Customer Connect for the future of USPS. "The union and the Postal Service are working hand-in-hand on this to generate revenue," he said. "We get no taxpayer money. All of our wages, etc., come from what we can generate."

Dominguez's key tip for carriers who are hesitant to generate leads: "Don't be afraid to ask. If you don't ask, there's no chance [they'll switch]."

An alert California carrier seals the deal for USPS

Pasadena, CA Branch 2200 member **David Savillon** completes more than 400 deliveries on a daily basis. In addition to delivering the mail, however, he also keeps his eyes peeled for potential

new customers for USPS.

One such customer was Carpe Diem Trading, which sells high-quality second-hand clothing.

"I saw that [the business] was shipping a lot," the eight-year carrier said. "But they were using FedEx and UPS."

Savillon approached the owner, Art Simonian, and inquired if he would be interested in speaking with a USPS sales representative. Without hesitation, Simonian said, "Of course," and gave the carrier his business card. Savillon then went back to the post office and told his supervisor about the situation.

When a sales representative met with the owner a short time later, Simonian described the products he was selling and shipping; since his packages were lightweight, the representative explained that USPS First-Class Mail and Priority Mail would both be a better fit for the company, improving packages transit time and lowering costs for the company.

After Simonian shifted his business to the Postal Service, Savillon's lead generated more than \$99,000 of new revenue.

The carrier says that he sticks to the facts in order to persuade new customers to consider switching to USPS. "I tell them, we can offer you a great rate," he explained.

He also believes that a good attitude allows him to pick up leads wherever he can. "You never know what you're going to find," he added. "But if you're positive and open, things are going to follow." **PR**



David Savillon

Reflections on a pandemic that brought out the best in us



**Brian
Renfroe**

A little over a year ago, I wrote a column in this magazine about activism during a pandemic. That article was written in early May 2020. At that time, we were all aware of the present dangers and difficulties that the COVID-19 pandemic caused. Letter carriers were keenly aware as we continued to deliver for our customers. Few, if any, of us could imagine what would take place over the 12 months that followed.

The COVID-19 pandemic became worse. In an election year, it became very political, as most issues do. Regardless of anyone's opinion on the pandemic, political or otherwise, millions experienced sick-

ness and hundreds of thousands of people lost their lives over the rest of 2020 and into 2021. Unfortunately, these included letter carriers and NALC members. We continue to mourn those losses. Each is memorialized on the NALC website in our virtual memorial. I encourage you to take a look at it if you haven't already.

“This pandemic has created scenarios that most of us never thought would be a part of our daily lives. It is a testament to the dedication of letter carriers that we have delivered throughout this pandemic and will continue to do so until it is over.”

The summer of 2020 will hopefully be remembered for the growth of awareness of racial and social injustice in our country. Millions took to the streets to righteously protest these injustices. Unfortunately, some protests were marred by the violence of a small percentage of participants. This violence should be unequivocally condemned, but should never cloud the recognition of the injustices that exist and of the continuing need to address these injustices so as to achieve justice and eliminate racism. The labor movement and NALC members stood up and took action, and we continue to stand with our members to make real progress on these issues that have plagued us for far too long.

While it is still too early to make an historical judgment, the country saw considerable political tumult play out in the 2020 general election and the months that followed. Letter carriers and NALC played a big role in the increased use of vote-by-mail to keep voters safe during a pandemic by giving them access to fair and secure voting through the mail. We did our job and delivered for America during the 2020 election.

The months of lies and false allegations about our election systems, including the Postal Service, culminated in the disgusting events of Jan. 6. Congress was in the process of doing its constitutional duty to certify election results when a mob of people violently broke into the Capitol to disrupt a process that is at the core of our democracy. The images of that day are still surreal and will not be forgotten.

The COVID-19 pandemic is not over. There are still safety and health dangers associated with the pandemic out there, and likely will be for some time. Thankfully, the number of illnesses and deaths from COVID-19 has decreased recently and a return to some level of normalcy is ongoing.

The pandemic challenged many of our union's functions at the branch, state, regional and national level. Events that had become routine for many years, such as our national convention, the Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive, and the thousands of training sessions and branch and regional meetings were canceled, delayed or altered. As I wrote last year, I had no doubt about how NALC members would respond.

History tells us that the men and women of NALC have risen to many challenges throughout our 130-plus years. Through all the events I mentioned here and the daily grind of working through a pandemic, our members found a way. The core mission of representation of our members has continued at the branch, regional and national levels. The legislative and political activism that I wrote about in the June 2020 *Postal Record* has been as strong as ever.

There is no doubt that this pandemic has created scenarios that most of us never thought would be a part of our daily lives. It is a testament to the dedication of letter carriers that we have delivered through the entire pandemic and will continue to do so until it is over. The men and women who serve in any role with our union have demonstrated an ability to adapt and move forward, despite the circumstances and despite the issues of the day. The dedication and determination of these men and women to represent NALC members makes me proud to be a letter carrier and NALC member. I cherish the privilege to work with you all.

2021 *JCAM* changes, Part 1



**Lew
Drass**

The 2021 *Joint Contract Administration Manual (JCAM)* is complete; it has been available online for about a month now. We are in the process of jointly printing hard copies. We hope to have them available in September. I will update you on our progress next month. This is going to be a series of articles highlighting many of the changes that have made to the *JCAM*.

We will start with the city carrier assistant (CCA) Q&A's. We eliminated the CCA Q&A's from the 2021 *JCAM* and replaced them with language that reflects the current intent of the parties. Another reason for doing this was that additional CCA Q&A's have been agreed to since the 2014 *JCAM* was published. This changed the number-

ing of the CCA Q&A's and made the information in the 2014 version inaccurate. We also eliminated the Transitional Employee (TE) Q&A's and did not include some of the CCA Q&A's that applied to TEs in the 2021 *JCAM*.

We are going to list the CCA Q&A's and direct you to the corresponding language contained in the 2021 *JCAM*:

1. **What is the last date that transitional employees may be on the rolls?**
This Q&A is not applicable at this time and is not located in the 2021 *JCAM*.
2. **How will the provisions of Article 7.1.C be monitored for compliance?**
3. **Are transitional employees who were on their five-day break on the effective date of the 2011 National Agreement (Jan. 10, 2013) eligible for the higher Step AA hourly pay rate if hired to a CCA position?**
4. **In determining CCA caps, is the number of CCAs "rounded" for percentage purposes?**
5. **Are CCAs employed under Article 7.1.C.2 limited to sites directly affected by "fundamental changes in the business environment?"**
6. **What are the occupational codes and designation activity codes for CCAs?**
The language for Q&A's 2-6 is located on page 7-3 in the 2021 *JCAM*.
7. **Can city letter carrier transitional employees apply for CCA vacancies in installations other than their employing office?**

8. **Which score is used if a city letter carrier transitional employee with an active test score retakes the exam?**
9. **What is a passing score on the postal exam?**
10. **How long does a previous test score remain active for non-career employees?**

CCA Q&A's 7-10 dealt with different aspects of TEs taking the postal exam/being hired as career employees. We jointly determined that these Q&A's are either not applicable or not necessary to include in the *JCAM* at this time.

11. **Will reinstatement-eligible former career employees and veterans eligible for direct career appointment under VRA or because of their 30 percent or higher disability status be eligible for noncompetitive consideration for CCA employment?**
12. **Does the five-day break between CCA 360-day appointments refer to five calendar or workdays?**
13. **May a CCA employed under Article 7.1.C.1 or Article 7.1.C.2 be appointed to a term of less than 360 days?**

The language for Q&A's 11-13 is located on page 7-4 in the 2021 *JCAM*.

14. **Can a transitional employee turn down an offer to be hired as a CCA in one installation and remain eligible to be hired as a CCA in a different installation?**

This Q&A is not applicable at this time and not located in the 2021 *JCAM*.

15. **May CCAs hold dual appointments?**

The language for Q&A 15 is located on page 7-3 in the 2021 *JCAM*.

16. **Must a CCA go through the normal pre-employment screening process (i.e., drug screen, background check, medical assessment, motor vehicle record check, etc.) when reappointed or hired immediately after a transitional employee appointment?**

The language for Q&A 16 is located on page 7-4 in the 2021 *JCAM*.

17. **May CCAs who have an on-the-job illness or injury be assigned to work in other crafts?**

The language for Q&A 17 is located on page 21-6 in the 2021 *JCAM*.

18. **If a transitional employee is deployed to active military duty during the testing period, will they have the opportunity to be hired as a CCA upon return from active duty?**

(continued on next page)

2021 *JCAM* changes (continued)

19. Does the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act of 1994 (USERRA) apply to CCAs?

The language for Q&A's 18-19 is located on page 7-4 in the 2021 *JCAM*.

20. How are CCAs considered when applying the Letter Carrier Paragraph?

The language for Q&A 20 is located on page 8-15 in the 2021 *JCAM*.

21. Is there a limit on the number of hours CCAs may be scheduled on a workday?

The language for Q&A 21 is located on page 8-19 in the 2021 *JCAM*.

22. Do CCAs receive Night Differential or Sunday Premium?

The language for Q&A 22 is located on pages 8-22 and 8-23 in the 2021 *JCAM*.

23. Do CCAs have a work-hour guarantee?

24. Are there rules covering work-hour guarantees for a CCA who has a gap between two periods of work?

The language for Q&A's 23-24 is located on page 8-25 in the 2021 *JCAM*.

25. Can CCAs be required to remain on "standby" or remain at home for a call-in on days they are not scheduled to work?

The language for Q&A 25 is located on page 8-3 in the 2021 *JCAM*.

26. With regard to scheduling holiday work, are full-time employees who are scheduled after the Tuesday deadline to replace a properly scheduled city carrier assistant employee who calls in sick or is otherwise unable to work eligible for holiday scheduling premium?

The language for Q&A 26 is located on page 11-5 in the 2021 *JCAM*.

27. May CCAs be permanently reassigned from one post of-fice (installation) to another during their appointment?

The language for Q&A 27 is located beginning on page 12-51 in the 2021 *JCAM*.

28. Is there a "lock-in" period that a CCA must meet before being reassigned to another installation?

The language for Q&A 28 is located on page 12-52 in the 2021 *JCAM*.

29. After a CCA becomes a career employee, does he/she serve a lock-in period for transfers as defined by the Memorandum of Understanding, Re: Transfers?

The language for Q&A 29 is located on page 12-51 in the 2021 *JCAM*.

30. May CCAs carry over leave from one appointment to another?

The language for Q&A 30 is located on page 10-7 in the 2021 *JCAM*.

31. Do separated transitional employees receive payment for accrued annual leave?

This Q&A is not applicable at this time and not located in the 2021 *JCAM*.

32. Do CCAs who are converted to career status carry their annual leave balance over when hired?

The language for Q&A 32 is located on page 10-7 in the 2021 *JCAM*.

33. Are CCAs covered by the Memorandum of Understanding, Re: Bereavement Leave?

The language for Q&A 33 is located on page 10-18 in the 2021 *JCAM*.

34. Do leave provisions outlined in Article 10 of the National Agreement apply to CCAs?

The language for Q&A 34 was updated based on the changes to the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) Re: City Carrier Assistant (CCA) Annual Leave in the 2016-2019 and 2019-2023 National Agreements and is located beginning at the bottom of page 10-6 in the 2021 *JCAM*.

35. Does Article 30 of the National Agreement apply to CCAs?

The language for Q&A 35 was updated based on the changes to the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) Re; City Carrier Assistant (CCA) Annual Leave in the 2016-2019 and 2019-2023 National Agreements and is located beginning at the bottom of page 30-2 in the 2021 *JCAM*.

36. Does a CCA who receives a career appointment go through a 90-calendar-day probationary period as a career city letter carrier?

The language for Q&A 36 is located on page 12-3 in the 2021 *JCAM*.

37. Will CCAs have access to the grievance procedure if disciplined or removed?

38. Do the parties apply the deferral rule for CCA removal actions?

The language for Q&A's 37-38 is located in Section 3.E of Appendix B in the National Agreement. This language

also appears on Page 12-3 in the 2021 *JCAM*.

39. Can CCAs be immediately placed in an off-duty status under the circumstances covered by Article 16.7?

The language for Q&A 39 is located in Section 3.E of Appendix B in the National Agreement. This language also appears on page 16-9 in the 2021 *JCAM*.

40. Can a CCA serve as a union steward?

The language for Q&A 40 is located on page 17-2 in the 2021 *JCAM*.

41. Will the union be allowed to address newly hired CCAs as part of the orientation process?

The language for Q&A 41 is located on page 17-8 in the 2021 *JCAM*.

42. Is the union provided an opportunity to discuss health insurance, pursuant to Article 17.6, when a CCA becomes a career employee?

The language for Q&A 42 is located on page 17-9 in the 2021 *JCAM*.

43. Do former transitional employees go through the full orientation process when hired as CCAs?

44. If a current transitional employee is a member of the union and is hired as a CCA, does he or she have to execute a new Form 1187 to remain a member of the union?

CCA Q&A's 43-44 are either not applicable or not necessary to include in the *JCAM* at this time

45. Are CCAs allowed to participate in the Federal Employees Health Benefits Program?

46. To qualify for the Federal Employees Health Benefits Program, must a CCA serve the entire 360-day initial appointment before a second 360-day appointment?

The language for Q&A's 45-46 is located on page 21-3 in the 2021 *JCAM*.

47. Do the provisions of Article 21.5 (Health Benefit Brochures) apply when a CCA becomes a career employee?

The language for Q&A 47 is located on page 21-6 in the 2021 *JCAM*.

48. Are CCAs entitled to higher-level pay under Article 25 of the National Agreement?

49. How does a CCA who is hired as a Grade CC-01 receive proper compensation when assigned to a City Carrier Technician (Grade CC-02) position?

The language for Q&A's 48-49 is located on page 25-3 in the 2021 *JCAM*.

50. When does a CCA become eligible for a uniform allowance?

53. How is a uniform allowance provided to a CCA?

54. How are uniform items purchased?

The language for Q&A's 50 and 53-54 is located on page 26-2 in the 2021 *JCAM*.

51. What defines the anniversary date for the purpose of annual uniform allowance eligibility for a CCA?

52. How is the uniform anniversary date determined for a CCA who is converted to career status?

55. How does a licensed uniform vendor receive payment for uniform items purchased by a CCA?

56. If a CCA does not use the full allowance before his/her appointment ends, does the allowance carry over into the next appointment when the appointment begins before the next uniform anniversary date?

57. Does the annual uniform anniversary date change when a CCA is separated for lack of work and then rehired as a CCA after his/her anniversary date has passed?

58. What happens to the annual uniform allowance for a CCA who has an anniversary date, is separated for lack of work, and then rehired as a CCA before his or her next uniform anniversary date?

The language for Q&A's 51-52 and 55-58 is located on page 26-3 in the 2021 *JCAM*.

59. Will CCAs receive the additional credit authorized under Article 26.2.B with their first uniform allowance following conversion to career status?

The language for Q&A 59 is located on page 26-4 in the 2021 *JCAM*.

60. How is time credited for transitional employee employment when determining relative standing for CCAs?

61. How is placement on the relative standing roster determined when two or more CCAs have the same total time credited for relative standing?

62. How are the provisions of Article 41.2.8.6.[a] referenced in Appendix B. I. GENERAL PRINCIPLES. Section f. of the National Agreement applied when determining a CCA's relative standing?

63. For time spent as a city letter carrier transitional employee, does it matter where an individual was employed when determining relative standing?

(continued on next page)

2021 JCAM changes (continued)

64. Does time credited toward relative standing for time worked as a transitional employee after Sept. 29, 2007, transfer from one installation to another once hired as a CCA?

65. Does relative standing earned as a CCA in one installation move with a CCA who is separated and is later employed in another installation?

66. How is relative standing determined for a CCA who is employed in an installation, permanently moves to a different installation and then is subsequently reemployed in the original installation?

The language for Q&A's 60-66 is located on page 41-17 in the 2021 JCAM.

67. How is a tie addressed when more than one employee is placed in full-time career city letter carrier duty assignments in an installation on the same date through either transfer/reassignment or CCA conversion to full-time?

The language for Q&A 67 is located on page 41-19 in the 2021 JCAM.

68. Will CCAs be allowed to opt on (hold-down) vacant duty assignments?

69. Is there a waiting period for a new CCA (no former experience as a career city letter carrier or city carrier transitional employee) before the employee can opt on a hold-down?

72. What is the pecking order for awarding hold-down assignments?

The language for Q&A's 68-69 and 72 is located on page 41-10 in the 2021 JCAM.

70. Is there a difference in the application of opting (hold-down) rules between part-time flexible city carriers and CCAs?

The language for Q&A 67 is located on pages 41-10 and 41-14 in the 2021 JCAM.

71. Can a CCA be taken off an opt (hold-down) in order to provide a part-time flexible employee assigned to the same work location with 40 hours of straight-time work over the course of a service week (Article 7, Section 1.C)?

The language for Q&A 67 is located on page 41-14 in the 2021 JCAM.

73. Will the five-day break in service between 360-day terms end an opt (hold-down)?

74. Does the five-day break at the end of a 360-day appoint-

ment create another opt (hold-down) opportunity?

The language for Q&A's 73-74 is located on page 41-13 in the 2021 JCAM.

75. Will CCAs be offered part-time regular city carrier vacancies?

The language for Q&A 75 is located on page 7-2 in the 2021 JCAM.

76. When there is an opportunity for conversion to career status in an installation and that installation has both part-time flexible and CCA employees available for conversion, who is converted?

77. When there is a career conversion opportunity for a CCA, how are CCA employees converted?

78. May a CCA decline an opportunity for conversion to full-time regular?

The language for Q&A's 76-78 is located on page 41-18 in the 2021 JCAM.

79. Will CCAs attend the Carrier Academy?

The language for Q&A 79 is located on page 7-4 in the 2021 JCAM.

80. Will transitional employees hired as CCAs attend the Carrier Academy?

It is not necessary for this Q&A to be included at this time and it is not located in the 2021 JCAM.

81. How are breaks provided for CCAs who work less than eight hours on a particular day?

The language for Q&A 81 is located on page 8-3 in the 2021 JCAM.

82. May CCAs enter into City Carrier Transportation (Driveout) Agreements, as defined in Article 41.4 of the National Agreement?

The language for Q&A 82 is located on page 41-38 in the 2021 JCAM.

83. Will CCAs be assigned a Postal Service Employee Identification Number (EIN) and PIN?

The language for Q&A 83 is located on page 7-4 in the 2021 JCAM.

To be continued....

Frequently asked IRS questions



Nicole Rhine

Branch officers often call NALC Headquarters with questions about financial issues. Many questions also surface during officer training. After the question is answered, the branch officer may be directed to the *NALC Branch Officer's Guide to Finance and Administration*, available for purchase from the NALC Supply Department or for free on the NALC website on the Secretary-Treasurer's page. The guide is broken down into the following sections: branch officer duties, NALC dues, reporting to the U.S. Department of Labor, reporting to the Internal Revenue Service (IRS), bonding requirements and branch recordkeeping. If your branch secretary/treasurer does not have this guide, I suggest that the

branch get one for use by all fiduciary officers in the branch.

The following is a sample of common IRS-related questions asked during phone calls or during training seminars, as well as the answers and where the answers can be found in the *NALC Branch Officer's Guide to Finance and Administration*.

If we pay our stewards \$150 per month as a stipend, do we have to file a W-2?

Yes. Stewards are considered employees of the branch (whether they are appointed by the branch president or elected by the branch membership) and, as such, the branch must report stipends as wages and withhold the appropriate taxes. This holds true for all officers of a branch receiving any payments that could be considered wages (see pages 4-4 and 4-5 of the guide).

I heard that if you stay under \$600 per year paid to a branch officer, you don't have to do anything, not even issue a 1099. Is this true?

No. Again, officers are considered employees of the branch and, as such, the branch must deduct payroll taxes; the branch must pay taxes, since the branch is an employer. It does not matter how much money an employee earns; the branch must pay all payroll taxes and issue a W-2. (See page 4-7 of the guide.) A Form 1099-MISC is issued under two circumstances: 1) The branch makes a payment under a non-accountable plan to a member who is not considered an employee under IRS tax rules (see pages 4-15 and 4-16 of the guide); and 2) The branch makes a payment to somebody who is not a member for services rendered to the branch, most commonly a contractor.

The 1099-MISC must be issued only for services rendered and not when payments are made to purchase goods. The 1099-MISC must be issued only when total payments to the

individual are \$600 or more during the tax year (see page 4-18 of the guide). However, this does not exempt the individual from claiming the extra income.

My branch/state association has been receiving notices from our state that we must purchase workers' compensation insurance. Is this true?

In all 50 states, if you pay any wages, you are considered an employer and workers' compensation insurance is mandatory (see page 4-7 of the guide). In some states, the insurance must be secured directly with the state fund. In most states, the premium and benefit structures are set by each state government, but the actual insurance coverage is provided by standard insurance companies via your insurance agent. Volunteers and/or employees who receive very little compensation may be exempt from such coverage in some states. Check your state's website for further information and/or clarification.

Are there any documentation requirements for per diem payments?

Yes. The branch needs to maintain proof of an overnight stay. A hotel receipt, a copy of a round-trip plane ticket, or other similar documentation should be sufficient. The branch need not collect documentation (receipts) of the amount of expenses actually incurred. (See pages 4-13 through 4-17 of the guide for more information on per diem.)

Is an early payment to a hotel or airline considered a travel advance?

No. Making an early payment directly to a hotel or airline—or reimbursing a member for the actual cost of an airline ticket purchased in advance for approved branch travel—is not considered a travel advance.

Is it OK to give branch officers travel advances?

Travel advances are OK as long as the branch keeps certain rules in mind. To be in compliance with the rules outlined by the Labor Management Reporting and Disclosure Act (LMRDA), the sum of all advances to any one individual in a fiscal year should never exceed \$2,000. Also, the officer receiving the advance should document expenditures against the advance and return to the branch any excess funds for which documentation was not submitted.

In addition, IRS rules require an advance for expenses to be made within a reasonable time—generally no more than 30 days before the expenses are expected to be incurred. Under the LMRDA, an advance for expenses is considered a reportable loan unless the advance is provided within 30 days of travel and accounted for within 30 days following the trip (see page 4-21 of the guide). To avoid problems encountered when advances are not properly accounted for, it may be best to forgo advances and instead either reimburse for actual expenses after receipts have been submitted or opt to provide per diem per the IRS guidelines.

Branch election campaigning



Paul Barner

As we look to the fall, many branches will begin the planning phase for conducting branch nominations and elections. I routinely receive calls with questions about election procedures. In this article, I will review some of the common questions and regulations addressing specific campaign provisions.

One frequently asked question concerns whether the NALC logo can be used on campaign material in branch elections. Past presidential rulings have stated:

Consistent with federal law, the NALC Regulations Governing Branch Election Procedures (RGBEP) generally prohibits the use of union funds and resources to support or oppose candidates in Branch elections. (See Sections 9.4 and

9.7 below.) The NALC logo is the intellectual property of the NALC. Therefore, Branches should treat the use of the logo by candidates as a prohibited practice and should try to prevent it. However, the mere fact that a candidate has included the logo on campaign material does not necessarily invalidate a branch election, or require that a rerun election be conducted. The question of whether the use of the logo may have affected the outcome of the election would have to be considered in light of all relevant circumstances in the context of a post-election appeal under Section 21 of the RGBEP.

Let's take a look at the *NALC Regulations Governing Branch Elections*. The handbook is available online at nalc.org and from the NALC Store. This handbook is a great resource for branch officers, particularly the election committee, as it covers all necessary procedures and time frames.

9.0 CAMPAIGN

9.1 The branch must treat all candidates equally; any and all privileges extended to one candidate by the branch must be extended to all candidates.

An example of equal treatment: If a branch permits one candidate to copy a membership list, all other candidates must be allowed to copy it. There are no exceptions to the requirement of equal treatment. The Department of Labor scrutinizes this aspect of elections very closely and will set aside elections based on even minor violations.

9.2 A branch must honor all reasonable requests to distribute campaign literature at a candidate's expense.

This provision is often troublesome for local branches, primarily due to differing interpretations of the term "reasonable." If at all feasible, branches should distribute campaign literature

when asked to do so. For example, a branch should not refuse to distribute literature merely because it has a small staff that cannot handle the extra work. Instead, the branch could hire temporary help to prepare and mail the literature, and charge the cost of the temporary help to the candidates. Treating all candidates the same by refusing to distribute campaign literature does not fulfill the intent of the law. If a candidate cannot afford to distribute literature, the branch does not have to distribute literature free of charge. However, if a branch distributes literature for one candidate without charge, then it must do the same for all of the candidates. To avoid complaints of unequal treatment, branches should advise all candidates in advance of the conditions under which it will distribute literature, and should promptly advise all candidates of any change in those conditions.

9.3 A branch can neither censor campaign literature nor require that branch representatives be permitted to read the literature before it is distributed.

9.4 A branch may not use branch dues, assessments or similar levies or contribute anything of value to promote one candidate over another, or discriminate against any candidate. Branch funds, however, may be used for all notices and for all other expenses necessary for conducting the election.

This provision is commonly violated in branch elections. The bottom line is that branches are absolutely prohibited from criticizing or endorsing any candidate in a union-financed newspaper, publication or letter. On the other hand, publication of information sheets with biographical data is permissible, provided that all candidates are given equal opportunity to submit data and the data for each candidate is given equal space and prominence. Similarly, providing newspaper space for candidates to present their views is permissible if all candidates are given equal opportunity to submit their statements and equal space and prominence in the branch paper. Branches can also sponsor a debate at a branch meeting. However, all candidates must be informed of the time and date of the debate and must be given equal opportunity to express their views at the meeting.

9.5 The United States Postal Service may not contribute money or anything of value to the campaign of any candidate.

9.6 Branch officers and candidates may not campaign on union time.

9.7 Branch officers and candidates may not use branch funds, employees, office space, telephones, facilities, equipment or materials to campaign.

9.8 No campaigning is allowed within a polling place during voting.

I hope this helps clarify some issues that may arise during branch elections. The intent of this article is to educate our members, not to create problems, especially since any objection to an election must be based on the facts and circumstances of that particular election.

New initiatives



Christopher Jackson

As the director of city delivery, I receive many communications from the Postal Service regarding new city delivery test initiatives, potential technology changes, and changes to mail processing and distribution. During June and July, I received notifications of several new city delivery tests, parcel processing facilities and technology enhancements initiated by the Postal Service. I would like to use this month's article to describe these new initiatives.

Digital access—parcel lockers

In a letter dated June 8, USPS announced that it would be partnering with Atmos Digital Incorporated to test secure but unattended mail receptacles for parcel delivery. USPS hopes to use these receptacles to provide an efficient and secure alternate package delivery method for customers. The Atmos systems have a single-unit system and a multi-unit array system that use three locker access modes. Carriers can access lockers via the last four digits of the USPS tracking number, by using a Bluetooth connection pilot supplied device or by accessing the locker via a QR barcode pre-affixed by the shipper. The test began June 28 and is expected to last approximately six months at seven selected addresses in Ogden, UT.

Sunday parcels—loading test

In April, the Postal Service began a pilot test using non-career employees to load Sunday Amazon parcels into delivery vehicles prior to the assigned delivery carrier reporting for work. During the test, city carrier assistants (CCAs) and/or rural carrier associates (RCAs) are assigned to load parcels for four separate routes. The CCA/RCA reports to the office, clocks onto the appropriate street operation and then retrieves parcels for the first route. The carrier loads the parcels into the first vehicle in order of delivery using either the MDD Load Truck feature or Dynamic Delivery sequence numbers. The loading carrier then repeats the same process for the second, third and fourth routes. This test is being conducted at 81 test site locations within the WestPac area.

Package Support Annexes

Another letter, dated June 15, informed me that the Postal Service intends to acquire 46 Package Support Annexes (PSAs) in key locations to assist existing facilities with the processing of parcels. USPS anticipates that these PSAs will be leased for a minimum of two years and will operate on a year-

round basis beginning in August. The Postal Service plans to deploy modified versions of the Small Delivery Unit Sorters (SDUS), known as the Single Induction Package Sorter (SIPS), to 42 PSAs and nine mail-processing facilities throughout the country. The SIPS, in contrast to the SDUS, will be affixed with an optical character recognition (OCR) unit, allowing it to read the text of addresses as opposed to only barcodes. For more information on the SDUS, read my article in the April edition of *The Postal Record*.

MDD/MDD-TR enhancements

In late June, the Postal Service advised me of the release of Mobile Delivery Device (MDD) software update Version 7.35 to enhance device functionality. Release 7.35 provides a new feature that alerts the carrier when the Inspection Service has placed a hold on a suspicious parcel. During the Load Truck process, the carrier will receive an alert prompting them to intercept the package and return it to the supervisor. If the package is not intercepted during the Load Truck process, Package Look Ahead will highlight the package in red and prompt the carrier not to deliver the parcel and return the item to the office.

Version 7.35 also includes multiple features being tested for future use, including Timecard Tracking, DPS Optimization/Edit Book and Customer Connect Lead Card Enhancement. At this time, these features still are being tested in limited areas and have not been deployed nationwide.

Of particular interest to city carriers is the future Timecard Tracking test. In my article in May, I informed you that the Postal Service was looking for a timekeeping alternative to the Electronic Badge Readers (EBRs). The EBRs are more than 25 years old and failing, and some replacement parts are no longer available.

In this test, the MDD application is modified to accept clock ring time entries that can be posted in the Time and Attendance Collection System (TACS) application. Once initiated in the test sites, city carriers will access the timekeeping workflow via the On Street menu or by hot key combination "Red" + "K" on MDDs or "hamburger" menu on the MDD-TRs. Carriers must scan their identification badge prior to recording the time entries. During the test, five types of clock rings are available for carriers to use: "Begin Tour," "Out for Lunch," "Return from Lunch," "Move" and "End Tour." USPS indicates that once the "Depart to Route" scan is performed, the MDD will automatically suppress "Out for Lunch" and "Return from Lunch." USPS states that if the carrier makes a clock ring "Move" entry, the scanner will provide a list of operations and prompt the carrier to choose the proper operation.

NALC will be monitoring this test closely to ensure that usage of the MDD to make time entries is compliant with all contractual and handbook provisions.

As with all technology, updates can occur rapidly; be sure to read my article each month for the most up-to-date information.

‘But I reported it’



**Manuel L.
Peralta Jr.**

In this space and in Contract Talk, we previously have shared the need to report hazards in order to address safety problems. This month, I address what should follow.

If you conduct your vehicle inspection on a daily basis (which you should), you would begin to notice when something is different. You might notice a puddle of fluids under your vehicle. This should alert you to the need to take some form of action, and your first action should be to turn in a vehicle repair tag (PS Form 4565).

The form provides a space to identify the vehicle number, the mileage on the vehicle, the date and time on which you submit the report to your supervisor, and what you believe to be the hazard or defect requiring action. The form also provides a space for your supervisor to sign to acknowledge your report, so that you may keep a copy for your records with your supervisor's signature. If your supervisor refuses to sign and give you your receipt (proof), you should contact your shop steward or your branch officers and ask that a grievance be filed over your supervisor's refusal to sign and provide you with your receipt.

If your supervisor is enlightened, you will receive your receipt of the repair tag with your supervisor's signature. Keep that document for your records. Take a picture of it on your smartphone if necessary, but do not discard your proof. You or the union may need it in the future for further action.

“All management really has to do is follow the rules as they wrote them.”

Separate from the above, you may notice hazards in your office, on your path to your vehicle, or on your route. If you notice defective equipment, you should tag the equipment with the PS Form 4707. Management's responsibility would then be to make certain that the equipment is taken out of service until it is repaired. The *EL-801, Supervisor's Safety Handbook*, states:

[Take tagged equipment] to be repaired or warehoused in

an area designated for defective equipment. Do not remove tags until repairs are completed. Do not allow anyone to place a defective piece of equipment back into service until appropriate repairs are completed.

In November of 2020, my column addressed the safety slogan “Safety Depends on Me.” I believe that safety depends on management. Why? Because I strongly believe that management can pretend and preach all they want about the safe work environment, and they can claim all they want about what they are doing to make your job safer, but until they do make it safer, they are attempting to deflect responsibility away from themselves by claiming that safety depends on you.

Safety depends on craft employees working as safely as they can, reporting hazards, defective equipment and defective vehicles, and then having management respond properly by promptly investigating and abating hazards, arranging for the repair of defective equipment and vehicles, and showing that they believe in the safety program. All management really has to do is follow the rules as they wrote them.

In my March 2017 column, I wrote about “La Palanca” as an example of management's attitude on safety. The union had notified management of a hazard, but management did not take any action until the report of the hazard was documented, therefore on record, and the employer would be responsible in the event that a tragedy happened. You can find a link to that article on the NALC website off of the “Safety and Health” page. In that column, I recommended that you submit a 1767 when you see a hazard.

In closing, you can make a difference by reporting hazards using the appropriate mechanism. If you report a vehicle defect, and your supervisor keeps the vehicle in service by assigning the defective vehicle to an unsuspecting new employee, you should reach out to your shop steward or branch officers to initiate a grievance. If you know that a defective vehicle or piece of equipment was reported but not taken out of service, you also should submit a 1767 and bring your concern to the union immediately.

We frequently discover that an employee, acting in good faith, reports a hazard expecting the issue to be corrected. If the issue is not addressed, the employee becomes disappointed in the system and does not reach out to anyone else to seek further help. This happens more often when the office does not have a highly visible union and management safety commitment.

Get involved and keep an eye on each other.

Annuity options after separation



Dan Toth

In general, being removed or fired from the Postal Service does not negatively affect a Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS) or Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS) retirement, except that one stops accruing additional credit upon separation. There sometimes is a misconception that if you are fired, you lose your right to an annuity. Although it is technically possible to lose one's entitlement to an annuity, these situations are extremely rare. There are certain crimes, mainly revolving around espionage and treason, that if convicted, would result in the loss or forfeiture of retirement benefits.

The first and generally most obvious choice for separated employees is an immediate unreduced annuity. FERS eligibility for an immediate and unreduced annuity is minimum retirement age (MRA) with 30 years of service, age 60 with 20 years of service, or age 62 with five years of service.

Those who do not have the minimum years of service but have achieved their MRA and have at least 10 years of service may be eligible for an immediate but reduced annuity (MRA+10). Under an MRA+10 retirement, they face a permanent reduction of their benefit by 5 percent for each year under age 62. In this situation, they can reduce or eliminate the age reduction by choosing a later annuity start date. When postponing the annuity date, your life insurance cannot continue if you are not receiving an annuity. When the annuity begins, if you meet the usual requirements for continuing coverage into retirement at separation, the life insurance coverage you had when you separated will resume. Health insurance is similar, except that it is possible to temporarily continue your health benefits coverage for 18 months, though you must pay the entire premium. When your annuity payments begin, if you had Federal Employees Health Benefits (FEHB) coverage for the five years of service immediately before you separated, you will again have the opportunity to enroll in a health benefits plan under the regular FEHB program, and the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) will pay the government share of the premium.

If you retire on an immediate annuity that is not reduced for age, you may be eligible for the annuity supplement, in addition to your regular monthly FERS benefit.

Employees separated before their MRA may have to defer their retirement. In a deferred retirement, the separated employee can apply to start an annuity when he or she achieves the same eligibility situations for an immediate annuity, listed above. If you receive a deferred annuity, you will not be eligible to continue health benefits or life insurance coverage. For example, let's look at a FERS employee with 11 years of service that separates at age 54, three years shy of his or her MRA at 57, and who is not eligible for disability retirement. The employee can either start his or her annuity at age 57 (MRA+10) and face the 5 percent reduction per year for each year under age 62, or start an unreduced annuity at age 62. If this employee has 20 years of service, he or she could start an unreduced annuity at age 60 instead of 62. If this employee has 30 years of service, eligibility for an unreduced annuity would commence at age 57 (their MRA in this example).

Generally, FERS disability retirement can be applied for if OPM receives the application within one year of the date of separation. FERS employees must have completed 18 months of creditable service to be eligible. CSRS employees must have completed at least five years of creditable service.

If you receive a deferred benefit, a disability benefit or an immediate MRA+10 benefit, you will not be eligible for the annuity supplement.

FERS employees with less than five years of service are not eligible for a voluntary retirement, such as an unreduced immediate annuity, or a deferred retirement. Separated FERS employees can apply for a refund of their FERS contributions. Those who withdraw their FERS contributions forfeit their right to an annuity, so anybody with more than five years should be extremely careful before requesting a refund. If reemployed in the federal government, they may elect to redeposit those funds to get back their credit.

Any CSRS employees who are not yet eligible for an immediate retirement and would like to explore their options can visit the retirement page at nalc.org or contact the Retirement Department at 800-424-5186 Monday, Wednesday and Thursday from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. and 2 p.m. to 4 p.m., or by calling 202-393-4695 Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. (Eastern time).

Finally, I would like to remind everybody that an application must be submitted to start an annuity. There are no automatic payments for those who neglect their obligation to apply. OPM recommends submitting an application two months prior to your commencement date.

Information security



**James W.
“Jim” Yates**

The security of our membership’s personal information is a very high priority for all of us at the Mutual Benefit Association (MBA). We all have become aware of major corporations, banks, and even state and federal government systems that have been attacked by hackers. As a result of these attacks, the sensitive personal information of millions of Americans has been compromised.

Cybersecurity is among the most significant challenges for all business organizations, including the MBA. As such, we have had an information security program in place for several years, based on a model law drafted by the National Association of Insurance Commissioners as well

as our own operations.

Within MBA’s information security program, we monitor and manage material risks, perform vendor and third-party oversight, have third-party intrusion tests performed, and report on any security incidents and breaches. A portion of the monitoring of our intrusion prevention capabilities is automated and reported by our software and hardware systems. We continually strive to maximize the capabilities of our systems to stay ahead of attempts to compromise our data and to protect our membership.

In addition to protecting our members’ information on our computer systems from cyberattacks, we also take numerous steps to ensure that their information is secure, no matter the format.

When a member calls the MBA or the MBA calls a member regarding a policy, the member will be asked several questions to determine if he or she is the policy owner. He or she will be asked to verify his or her Social Security number, date of birth and address. The MBA will speak only to the policy owner regarding the details of a policy, unless we have received permission from the owner of the policy to speak to someone other than the owner.

Whenever a conversation regarding a policy takes place, whether initiated by the MBA or the member, notes are taken. These notes are then added to the policy file in our database for future reference. We also maintain hard copies of our members’ policy files. All hard copies of policy files and members’ information are housed in a secured area.

Additionally, all policy documents are electronically imaged and stored in our database; thus, they are always available should the hard copies be destroyed in the event of a disaster. Furthermore, the database is encrypted and

backed up off-site. The database and its backup can be accessed only by the MBA from our office or, if necessary, our disaster recovery location.

Any time there is a request to withdraw funds from or cancel an annuity policy, the policy owner’s signature is verified. This is taken a step further when a life insurance policy is canceled. In this case, the policy owner’s signature must either be notarized or verified by a branch officer.

The MBA requires written and signed requests to add, or make changes to, a policy’s beneficiary or to change the members’ address of record. Any addition or changes to a beneficiary are processed immediately upon receipt at the MBA to ensure that any benefit claims are paid to the proper individual, per the policy owner’s request.

The MBA has policies in place to ensure that any communication via email that includes a member’s private information is sent in an encrypted format. Additional policies are in place governing cell phone usage in the work area that contains our members’ sensitive information.

Our members’ money is as important to us as their private information. Statements are mailed to the policy owners to confirm cash values, dividend amounts and loan values. Policy owners should contact the MBA immediately if they notice any discrepancies.

It is our goal to process all premium payments received in our office on the day received. Any payment that is not processed on the day received is secured in our safe until the next business day. Once these checks and money orders are processed, they are secured for an additional 90 days. After 90 days, the checks and money orders are shredded. This process is followed to comply with banking regulations.

In addition to shredding any checks and money orders received at our office, MBA also shreds any discarded documents that contain our members’ information. These documents are kept under lock and key until shredding is completed by a shredding and records management company contracted by the MBA.

Members who receive monthly annuity payments are required to provide “proof of life” annually by having their signatures notarized on our proof-of-life letters. This ensures that our members are the individuals receiving the payments.

For information regarding any of the MBA products, 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: Through Aug. 13, 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.

Member rights and responsibilities



**Stephanie
Stewart**

In this month's article, I wanted to take a moment and thank you for being a member of the NALC Health Benefit Plan. In a world with many options, you have chosen our plan, and I don't take that lightly.

I also want to remind you of your member rights and responsibilities. As director of your health plan, I feel that it is imperative that you understand what you can expect from us, and in return how you can stay proactive in your health.

Member rights

1. You have the right to receive up-to-date information about your health plan and available benefits, as well as your rights and responsibilities and those of the health care professionals, hospitals and other providers that participate in the Plan's Preferred Provider Organization network.
2. You have the right to receive a copy of the notice of the NALC Health Benefit Plan's privacy practices that outlines your rights and informs you how to designate a personal representative, which allows the Plan to discuss your protected health information.
3. You have the right to privacy and confidentiality of your protected health information in accordance with applicable laws.
4. You have the right to be treated with courtesy, dignity and respect.
5. You have the right to access quality care, regardless of race, color, national origin, sex, age or disability.
6. You have the right to participate fully with your network providers in decision-making.
7. You have the right to receive an explanation of benefits describing the benefits we pay, as well as to be informed of the reason for any adverse determination on a claim for benefits, including the specific utilization review criteria, guidelines or benefit provisions used in the determination.
8. You have the right to appeal our decision in accordance with the Disputed Claims Process in Sections 3, 7 and 8 of the Plan brochure.
9. You have the right to request further information concerning anything you do not understand.
10. You have the right to know that utilization management decisions are based only on the appropriateness of care and your current coverage. The NALC Health Benefit Plan does not reward network providers or others for denying coverage.
11. You have the right to make suggestions and recommendations regarding the NALC Health Benefit Plan's "Member

Rights and Responsibilities" statement.

12. You have the right to receive a prompt reply when you ask us questions or request information.
13. You have the right to know that neither you nor your health care provider can be punished for disputing a claim.
14. You have the right to refuse to participate in research.
15. You have the right to receive complete information about your diagnosis, evaluation, treatment and prognosis from your health care professional.
16. You have the right to participate with your health care professional in health care decisions.
17. You have the right to be heard. Our complaint handling process is designed to hear and act on your complaint, concern, suggestion or grievance and provide a courteous, prompt response.

Member responsibilities

1. Read the information the Plan provides you and ask us questions when you need to know more.
2. Make sure you understand your benefits under the NALC Health Benefit Plan, including your costs for services as outlined in Section 4 of our brochure.
3. Accept personal responsibility for any charges not covered by this Plan, if applicable.
4. Provide information the Plan needs to process your claims (to the extent possible), including other health insurance coverage your family may have.
5. Keep your provider informed about your medical history and your current health status, including the medications you take, so that they can effectively treat you and manage your care.
6. Inform your provider about any living will, medical power of attorney or other directive that could affect your care.
7. Participate with your provider to understand your health condition and develop mutually agreed-upon treatment goals to the degree possible.
8. Follow your provider's instructions and treatment plan; ask questions if you don't understand them.
9. Treat your health care provider, the medical staff and others respectfully and honestly.
10. Voice your complaints, concerns, suggestions or grievances to our Customer Service Department and/or your health care provider.
11. Make sure you obtain authorization required under the Plan for certain services.

For questions about how to exercise these rights, or to learn more about these responsibilities or our Plan generally, you can call our Customer Service Department at 888-636-6252. You also can write to us at: NALC HBP, 20547 Waverly Court, Ashburn, VA 20149.

Contract Administration Unit

Brian Renfro, 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

Paid leave

The National Agreement negotiated between NALC and the Postal Service contains many rights and benefits related to leave from the workplace. Most city carriers are familiar with the rules and contractual provisions related to annual, sick and bereavement leave. However, these are not the only negotiated provisions related to paid leave available to city carriers. This month's article will describe some other lesser-known types of leave provided by the National Agreement, including court leave, military leave and Wounded Warriors leave.

Court leave

Court leave is provided for career employees who are summoned to serve as a juror or witness in certain judicial proceedings. The definition and eligibility rules governing court leave are found in the *Employee and Labor Relations Manual (ELM)*, Section 516.2, which reads:

516.2 Court Leave

516.21 Definition

Court leave is the authorized absence from work status (without loss of or reduction in pay, leave to which otherwise entitled, credit for time or service, or performance rating) of an employee who is summoned in connection with a judicial proceeding, by a court or authority responsible for the conduct of that proceeding, to serve as a juror, as a witness in a nonofficial capacity on behalf of a state or local government, or as a witness in a nonofficial capacity on behalf of a private party in a judicial proceeding to which the Postal Service is a party or the real party in interest. The court or judicial proceeding may be located in the District of Columbia, a state, territory, or possession of the United States, including the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, or the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands.

516.22 Eligibility

Court leave is granted to full-time and part-time regular employees. Certain part-time flexible employees are granted court leave as provided and governed by applicable collective bargaining agreements. Other employees are ineligible for court leave and must use either annual leave or LWOP to cover the period of absence from postal duties for court service but may retain any fees or compensation received incident to such court service. Court leave is granted only to eligible employees who would be in work status or on annual leave except for jury duty or service as a witness in a nonofficial capacity on behalf of a state or local government, or service as a witness in a nonofficial capacity on behalf of a private party in

a judicial proceeding to which the Postal Service is a party or the real party in interest. An employee on LWOP, when called for such court service, although otherwise eligible for court leave, is not granted court leave but may retain any fees or compensation received incident to court service.

Full- and part-time regular letter carriers who are summoned to court service while on annual leave will have the leave changed to court leave in accordance with *ELM*, Section 516.31.

Part-time flexible (PTF) letter carriers are entitled to court leave in accordance with the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) Re: PTF Court Leave, which is found on pages 187 and 188 of the 2019-2023 National Agreement. To qualify for court leave, a PTF must first complete their probationary period. CCAs converted to career status who have completed one 360-day term as a CCA do not have to serve a probationary period. In addition, court leave is available only if the PTF would otherwise have been in a work status or on approved annual leave. The amount of court leave for PTFs shall not exceed eight hours in a service day or 40 hours in a service week.

If a letter carrier on approved court leave is paid a stipend by the court for the performance of jury duty, the employee is entitled to keep the allowance as long as it does not exceed \$25 per day. Employees must remit to their supervisor the amount received in excess of \$25 per day. Employees who are eligible to receive such fees are not authorized to waive the fee.

CCAs are not eligible for court leave; therefore, they must use either annual leave or leave without pay if summoned for jury duty. Since these employees are not compensated by the Postal Service for the court duty, they are entitled to keep any allowance paid by the court for their service.

Military leave

Career letter carriers may receive military leave to serve their country in the armed forces. Military leave is paid leave in which letter carriers can still earn a paycheck from the Postal Service while they are fulfilling certain obligations to the military. Paid military leave is authorized absence from postal duties for hours the employee would have worked during his or her regular schedule, without loss of pay, time or performance rating, granted to eligible employees.

The rules and regulations governing military leave are found in *ELM*, Section 517, which states in part:

517 Paid Military Leave

517.1 General

517.11 Postal Service Support

The Postal Service supports employee service in the Reserve or National Guard, and no action is permitted to discourage either voluntary or involuntary participation. The Postal Service allows employees to be absent:

- a. To participate in drills or meetings scheduled by the National Guard or Reserve Units of the armed forces.
- b. To attend usual summer training periods.
- c. To perform any other active duty ordered by the National Guard and Reserve Units of the armed forces.

However, eligible employees are entitled to paid military leave only for such duty as and to the extent provided below.

517.12 Definition

Paid military leave is authorized absence from postal duties for hours the employee would have worked during his or her regular schedule, without loss of pay, time, or performance rating, granted to eligible employees who are members of the National Guard or reserve components of the armed forces.

Note: Non-workdays are not charged against the paid military leave allowed.

517.41 General Allowance

Eligible full-time and part-time employees receive credit for paid military leave as follows:

- a. Full-time employees other than D.C. National Guard — 15 calendar days (120 hours) each fiscal year.
- b. Part-time employees other than D.C. National Guard — 1 hour of military leave for each 26 hours in pay status (including military LWOP) in the preceding fiscal year provided:
 - (1) Employee was in pay status a minimum of 1,040 hours in the preceding fiscal year.

Note: A part-time employee's time on military LWOP in one fiscal year counts toward meeting the 1,040 hours' requirement for the next fiscal year.

- (2) Employee's pay for military leave does not exceed 80 hours.

As stated above, full-time employees are granted 15 days of military leave per fiscal year, while part-time employees receive one hour of military leave for each 26 hours in pay status. Part-time employees must have a minimum of 1,040 hours in the preceding fiscal year,

and paid military leave cannot exceed 80 hours annually.

Letter carriers should note that the allowance for military leave, unlike other leave categories in the Postal Service, is based on the fiscal year and not the leave year. USPS fiscal years begin on Oct. 1 and end on Sept. 30 each year. Keep this distinction in mind when considering your military leave allowances.

Employees may use military leave intermittently and may carry over unused military leave from one fiscal year to the next. The amount of military leave employees may carry over may not exceed 15 days.

To receive paid military leave, the leave must be substantiated by a copy of the employee's military orders or other documentation endorsed by the appropriate military authority. Paid military leave is provided for specific types of duty and certain military activities are not eligible. For the specific list of duties covered and more information related to military leave, read the *NALC Veterans Guide*, which can be found on the NALC website at nalc.org/veterans-guide.

Wounded Warriors leave

Management is required to approve leave requests by disabled veterans to undergo medical examination or treatment related to their service-connected disabilities. Unfortunately, letter carriers may not accrue enough paid leave, especially when they are first hired, to cover these absences. Prior to 2016, this meant that many veterans with service-connected disabilities had to take unpaid leave to attend medical appointments.

With the passage of the Wounded Warriors Federal Leave Act of 2015, certain veterans who chose to commence or resume a civilian career with the Postal Service following their military service became eligible to have credited and use up to 104 hours of Wounded Warriors leave to undergo medical treatment for a service-connected disability rated at 30 percent or more.

Each January, all employees who are disabled veterans with a 30 percent or more combined disability rating receive 104 hours of Wounded Warriors leave to use during that leave year. Upon being hired, employees who meet the eligibility requirements will be credited with 104 hours of Wounded Warriors leave. This leave may be used for the remainder of that leave year. At the end of each leave year, any unused Wounded Warriors leave is not rolled over to the next year, nor will it be paid out if the employee leaves

(continued on next page)

Paid leave (continued)

the Postal Service. As long as the employee still has a combined disability rating of 30 percent or more, he or she will receive 104 hours of Wounded Warrior leave at the start of each new leave year.

Prior to requesting to use Wounded Warriors leave, the employee must notify the Postal Service of his or her eligibility. Employees must provide documentation to the HR Shared Service Center from the Department of Veterans Affairs certifying that the employee has the requisite level of service-connected disability. An employee's supervisor is responsible for approving or disapproving requests for Wounded Warriors leave by signing PS Form 3971, Request for or Notification of Absence, and returning a copy to the employee. In addition, to verify that Wounded Warriors leave requested by an employee is appropriately used for the treatment of a service-connected disability, the requesting employee must provide proof from the health care provider that the employee used the leave to receive treatment for a covered disability. USPS has created a form to be used for this verification: a PS

Form 5980, Treatment Verification for Wounded Warriors Leave, which must be submitted within 15 days of the medical treatment.

This category of leave is a very important benefit to letter carriers who also are veterans with a disability rated at 30 percent or greater. Copies of the Postal Service Management Instruction EL-510-2019-2 (M-01901 in NALC's Materials Reference System) setting forth the policy guidelines and standard procedures for administering Wounded Warriors leave and PS Form 5980 are available on the "Contract Administration" and "City Delivery" pages of the NALC website. For more detailed information on Wounded Warriors leave and paid military leave, read the *NALC Veterans Guide* previously referred to in this article. The *NALC Veterans Guide* is available in electronic format on the NALC website at nalc.org/veterans.

For questions related to these or any other types of leave, city carriers should contact their local shop steward or branch officer.

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, in accordance with Article 2, Section 5 (a) of the *NALC Constitution*.



Additionally, the national secretary-treasurer's office handles branch re-

quests 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:

70-year pins

Ronald W. Carnaghi	Joliet, IL	Br. 305
Douglas L. Lee	Hobbs, NM	Br. 3727
Anthony J. Irene	Flushing, NY	Br. 294

65-year pins

Ralph H. Friedhofer	Naples, FL	Br. 4716
Franklin E. Crummie	Atlanta, GA	Br. 73
Paul J. Feldkamp	Louisville, KY	Br. 14
Louis Durant Jr.	Worcester, MA	Br. 12

Gerard L. Pothier	Worcester, MA	Br. 12
Dorwin Grainger	Mid-Michigan	Br. 256
Gerard L. Sirois Jr.	Mid-Michigan	Br. 256
Frank Tasson Jr.	Mid-Michigan	Br. 256
Earl W. Jones	Western Wayne Co., MI	Br. 2184
Edward R. Kirby	Western Wayne Co., MI	Br. 2184
Larry R. Schimmel	Western Wayne Co., MI	Br. 2184
Gordon M. Balfe	Minneapolis, MN	Br. 9
Richard L. Benshoof	Minneapolis, MN	Br. 9
Nick C. Boosalis	Minneapolis, MN	Br. 9
Curtis F. Britz	Minneapolis, MN	Br. 9
Ralph J. Buystedt	Minneapolis, MN	Br. 9

Robert I. Gossler	Minneapolis, MN	Br. 9
Arthur A. Heikkila	Minneapolis, MN	Br. 9
Kenneth W. Johnson	Minneapolis, MN	Br. 9
Joseph F. Stanek	Minneapolis, MN	Br. 9
Martin Tich	Minneapolis, MN	Br. 9
Vernon C. Wehage	Minneapolis, MN	Br. 9
Eugene W. Stretz	Long Island Mgd., NY	Br. 6000
Michael I. Jadick	Scranton, PA	Br. 17
Lowell W. Rohrbach	Salt Lake City, UT	Br. 111
Philip W. Lottes	Madison, WI	Br. 507
Roy H. Hendrickson	Wenatchee, WA	Br. 1350

60-year pins

Jimmie E. Kirby	Joliet, IL	Br. 305
Joseph P. Pluth	Joliet, IL	Br. 305
William L. Kaelin	Louisville, KY	Br. 14
Fred L. Satori	Louisville, KY	Br. 14
Louis Durant Jr.	Worcester, MA	Br. 12
Gerald P. O'Brien	Worcester, MA	Br. 12
Gerard L. Pothier	Worcester, MA	Br. 12
Walter R. Taylor	Worcester, MA	Br. 12
Ronald L. Thibeaut	Mid-Michigan	Br. 256
Cary A. Black	Western Wayne Co., MI	Br. 2184
Richard R. Salewski	Western Wayne Co., MI	Br. 2184
John G. Bailey	Minneapolis, MN	Br. 9
Larry L. Blessi	Minneapolis, MN	Br. 9
Harry A. Bloom	Minneapolis, MN	Br. 9
Jerome D. Bona	Minneapolis, MN	Br. 9
Roger W. Coryell	Minneapolis, MN	Br. 9
Lawrence S. Dahlberg	Minneapolis, MN	Br. 9
Herbert L. Halverson	Minneapolis, MN	Br. 9
Anthony J. Kruse	Minneapolis, MN	Br. 9
Arthur H. Kujawa	Minneapolis, MN	Br. 9
Roger E. Lindahl	Minneapolis, MN	Br. 9
Robert J. Logelin	Minneapolis, MN	Br. 9
Jerome M. Madsen	Minneapolis, MN	Br. 9
Robert W. Masuda	Minneapolis, MN	Br. 9
Joseph F. Pasiowitz	Minneapolis, MN	Br. 9
Wain D. Pearce	Minneapolis, MN	Br. 9
Francis M. Rice	Minneapolis, MN	Br. 9
David B. Thompson	Minneapolis, MN	Br. 9
Glen J. Trudell	Minneapolis, MN	Br. 9
Myron R. Girton	Hobbs, NM	Br. 3727
Charles E. Chatfield	Hudson Valley Mgd., NY	Br. 137
Tully W. McElrath	Hudson Valley Mgd., NY	Br. 137
Norman C. Trogdon	Asheboro, NC	Br. 2560
John A. Kyle	Amarillo, TX	Br. 1037
Carroll W. Lewis	Amarillo, TX	Br. 1037
Gary K. Phillips	Amarillo, TX	Br. 1037
Lee A. Baker	Dallas, TX	Br. 132
Narvel E. Scherzinger	Salt Lake City, UT	Br. 111
John J. DiCristina	Madison, WI	Br. 507
Marion E. Gerstenkorn	Madison, WI	Br. 507

55-year pins

Richard W. Beuth	Lakeland, FL	Br. 1779
Casmier T. Adamowski Jr.	Joliet, IL	Br. 305
Jeffrey J. Baranski	Joliet, IL	Br. 305
Emil W. Bernard	Joliet, IL	Br. 305
John J. Wielgosz	Joliet, IL	Br. 305
James H. Doyle	Rockford, IL	Br. 245
Steven D. Schroeder	Rockford, IL	Br. 245
Paul V. Brinley	Louisville, KY	Br. 14
Lawrence B. Carruthers	Louisville, KY	Br. 14
James R. Cecil	Louisville, KY	Br. 14
Dennis L. Cornell	Louisville, KY	Br. 14
Jerry L. Emmons	Louisville, KY	Br. 14
Joseph A. Halbleib II	Louisville, KY	Br. 14
William C. Harrison	Louisville, KY	Br. 14
Linda L. Ireland	Louisville, KY	Br. 14
William A. Jones	Louisville, KY	Br. 14
Clifton D. Stout	Louisville, KY	Br. 14
Herman J. Strohbeck Jr.	Louisville, KY	Br. 14
Bobby D. Tinsley	Louisville, KY	Br. 14
Edward E. Unsel'd Jr.	Louisville, KY	Br. 14
David E. Ducharme	Worcester, MA	Br. 12
Maurice F. Myra	Worcester, MA	Br. 12
Gerald P. O'Brien	Worcester, MA	Br. 12
Gerard L. Pothier	Worcester, MA	Br. 12
William F. Ryan	Worcester, MA	Br. 12
Walter R. Taylor	Worcester, MA	Br. 12
Phyllis A. Boyd	Mid-Michigan	Br. 256
Betty M. Grandstaff	Mid-Michigan	Br. 256
Shirley C. Jennings	Mid-Michigan	Br. 256
Peggy J. Bauman	Western Wayne Co., MI	Br. 2184
Dusty Dalton	Western Wayne Co., MI	Br. 2184
Andrew V. Kozel Jr.	Western Wayne Co., MI	Br. 2184
Beverly E. Liverance	Western Wayne Co., MI	Br. 2184
John B. McKay	Western Wayne Co., MI	Br. 2184
Dennis E. Bahn	Minneapolis, MN	Br. 9
Ronald R. Barker	Minneapolis, MN	Br. 9
Daryl E. Blatzheim	Minneapolis, MN	Br. 9

Gerald W. Broman	Minneapolis, MN	Br. 9
James A. Cassell	Minneapolis, MN	Br. 9
Richard G. Hansen	Minneapolis, MN	Br. 9
Richard W. Hobot	Minneapolis, MN	Br. 9
Edward H. Issenhuth Jr.	Minneapolis, MN	Br. 9
Marvin M. Mattila	Minneapolis, MN	Br. 9
Donald W. McVeigh	Minneapolis, MN	Br. 9
Robert A. Moening	Minneapolis, MN	Br. 9
Alf V. Mork	Minneapolis, MN	Br. 9
Maurice L. Savoye	Minneapolis, MN	Br. 9
George M. Skrbich	Minneapolis, MN	Br. 9
David T. Swatosh	Minneapolis, MN	Br. 9
Dwane L. Thompson	Minneapolis, MN	Br. 9
Herman M. Weidner	Minneapolis, MN	Br. 9
Donald P. Wieber	Minneapolis, MN	Br. 9
William F. Winefeldt	Minneapolis, MN	Br. 9
Robert E. Yost	Minneapolis, MN	Br. 9
Vernon J. Zierman	Minneapolis, MN	Br. 9
Herman R. Collins	St. Joseph, MO	Br. 195
Bennie W. Hamilton	St. Joseph, MO	Br. 195
Robert L. Avery	Missoula, MT	Br. 701
Ronald Berge	Toms River, NJ	Br. 2128
Richard F. Farley	Toms River, NJ	Br. 2128
Stanley V. Markevich	Toms River, NJ	Br. 2128
Charles E. Chatfield	Hudson Valley Mgd., NY	Br. 137
Anthony F. Jerolino	Hudson Valley Mgd., NY	Br. 137
Edward J. Makowski	Hudson Valley Mgd., NY	Br. 137
Michael A. Cerino	Allentown, PA	Br. 274
Carl E. Dutt	Allentown, PA	Br. 274
Charles J. Burdis	Amarillo, TX	Br. 1037
Rafael Tinajero	Amarillo, TX	Br. 1037
Kenneth M. Densmore	Garland, TX	Br. 4065
John H. Gaukel	Madison, WI	Br. 507
Myron L. Peterson	Madison, WI	Br. 507
Randy L. Pieper	Madison, WI	Br. 507

50-year pins and gold cards

Vernon E. Jones	Bakersfield, CA	Br. 782
Frank A. Thomy	Bakersfield, CA	Br. 782
Miguel Munoz	Tri-Valley, CA	Br. 2902
Guy H. Daniels Jr.	Naples, FL	Br. 4716
Arnold H. Ludwig	Naples, FL	Br. 4716
Alfred J. Miciceli	Naples, FL	Br. 4716
Frankie J. Stephenson	Naples, FL	Br. 4716
Bobby L. Turner	Atlanta, GA	Br. 73
Paul J. Depodesta	Joliet, IL	Br. 305
Michael D. Kollberg	Rockford, IL	Br. 245
Katherine E. Jacobs	S. Suburban Mgd., IL	Br. 4016
Lawrence Armstrong	Louisville, KY	Br. 14
David A. Bensing	Louisville, KY	Br. 14
Thomas P. Bowling	Louisville, KY	Br. 14
Deborah E. Harper	Louisville, KY	Br. 14
Felix M. Healey Jr.	Louisville, KY	Br. 14
Prentice L. Raisor	Louisville, KY	Br. 14
William J. Thombsberry	Louisville, KY	Br. 14
David L. Volpert	Louisville, KY	Br. 14
Steven R. Wilkins	Louisville, KY	Br. 14
Lloyd T. Bowen	Mid-Michigan	Br. 256
Sylvia S. Head	Mid-Michigan	Br. 256
Sharon L. Irwin	Mid-Michigan	Br. 256
Norman W. Jayne Jr.	Mid-Michigan	Br. 256
Dale W. Mockbee	Mid-Michigan	Br. 256
Ella B. Teamer	Mid-Michigan	Br. 256
Terri L. Wheeler	Mid-Michigan	Br. 256
Michael W. Crane	Western Wayne Co., MI	Br. 2184
Rosella M. Garchow	Western Wayne Co., MI	Br. 2184
Joseph B. Golonka	Western Wayne Co., MI	Br. 2184
Virginia I. Macko	Western Wayne Co., MI	Br. 2184
Diane R. Miller	Western Wayne Co., MI	Br. 2184
Mary A. Musich	Western Wayne Co., MI	Br. 2184
Joan F. Rensel	Western Wayne Co., MI	Br. 2184
Richard D. Tosh Jr.	Western Wayne Co., MI	Br. 2184
Ronald K. Anderson	Minneapolis, MN	Br. 9
Burton P. Baker	Minneapolis, MN	Br. 9
Michael M. Bangsund	Minneapolis, MN	Br. 9
Norman J. Cavalier	Minneapolis, MN	Br. 9
John S. Cooper	Minneapolis, MN	Br. 9
James S. Dewar	Minneapolis, MN	Br. 9
Rodney H. Dirx	Minneapolis, MN	Br. 9

John A. Dornfeld	Minneapolis, MN	Br. 9
Thomas F. Dvorak	Minneapolis, MN	Br. 9
Morris R. Gross	Minneapolis, MN	Br. 9
John M. Hahn	Minneapolis, MN	Br. 9
Garrett W. Hardenburgh	Minneapolis, MN	Br. 9
Thomas Holten	Minneapolis, MN	Br. 9
Marvin J. Kaderlik	Minneapolis, MN	Br. 9
James E. Kloster	Minneapolis, MN	Br. 9
Glenn R. Lindfors	Minneapolis, MN	Br. 9
Lloyd R. Matt	Minneapolis, MN	Br. 9
David R. Millette	Minneapolis, MN	Br. 9
Michael J. Mroska	Minneapolis, MN	Br. 9
David L. Pierson	Minneapolis, MN	Br. 9
Loretta E. Quick	Minneapolis, MN	Br. 9
David M. Shingler	Minneapolis, MN	Br. 9
Joseph Stecker Jr.	Minneapolis, MN	Br. 9
Robert L. Avery	Missoula, MT	Br. 701
Richard F. Milano	New Jersey Mgd.	Br. 38
George Wildes	New Jersey Mgd.	Br. 38
Barry Jefferson	Flushing, NY	Br. 294
Alan Stopler	Flushing, NY	Br. 294
Robert H. Blauvelt	Hudson Valley Mgd., NY	Br. 137
William Carelock	Hudson Valley Mgd., NY	Br. 137
Charles E. Chatfield	Hudson Valley Mgd., NY	Br. 137
Neal J. Cunningham	Hudson Valley Mgd., NY	Br. 137
Anthony F. Jerolino	Hudson Valley Mgd., NY	Br. 137
Carl K. Jones	Hudson Valley Mgd., NY	Br. 137
Edward J. Makowski	Hudson Valley Mgd., NY	Br. 137
Tully W. McElrath	Hudson Valley Mgd., NY	Br. 137
David B. McMorris	Hudson Valley Mgd., NY	Br. 137
Karl Wolter	Hudson Valley Mgd., NY	Br. 137
Joseph P. Bisceglie	Jamaica, NY	Br. 562
Michael H. Artus	Long Island Mgd., NY	Br. 6000
Kevin F. Curry	Long Island Mgd., NY	Br. 6000
William Hill	Long Island Mgd., NY	Br. 6000
Erich H. Hoffmann	Long Island Mgd., NY	Br. 6000
Lee M. Kinsey	Long Island Mgd., NY	Br. 6000
Eusebio R. Soto	Long Island Mgd., NY	Br. 6000
Gerald T. Henry	Yonkers, NY	Br. 387
Stephen H. Brower	Asheboro, NC	Br. 2560
John W. Cagle Jr.	Asheboro, NC	Br. 2560
Robert B. Merrill	Asheboro, NC	Br. 2560
Larry C. Trogdon	Asheboro, NC	Br. 2560
T. H. Archer	Scranton, PA	Br. 17
Stephen H. Bayles Sr.	Scranton, PA	Br. 17
Ronald T. Davis	Scranton, PA	Br. 17
Richard J. Evans Jr.	Scranton, PA	Br. 17
M. Grayson	Scranton, PA	Br. 17
Ronald A. Gregory	Scranton, PA	Br. 17
Eugene J. Herman	Scranton, PA	Br. 17
Robert C. Hughes	Scranton, PA	Br. 17
William M. Krotzer Jr.	Scranton, PA	Br. 17
Thomas Mammolito	Scranton, PA	Br. 17
Knewell A. Miller	Scranton, PA	Br. 17
Robert Mrykalo	Scranton, PA	Br. 17
Joseph T. Ryan	Scranton, PA	Br. 17
James C. Shaffer	Scranton, PA	Br. 17
Michael J. Shaute	Scranton, PA	Br. 17
James M. Smugerski	Scranton, PA	Br. 17
Robert M. Surkey	Scranton, PA	Br. 17
William C. Zeman	Scranton, PA	Br. 17
William F. Mitchell	Charleston, SC	Br. 3902
Jack W. Bickle	Garland, TX	Br. 4065
Kenneth M. Densmore	Garland, TX	Br. 4065
Arthur F. Bland Jr.	Wenatchee, WA	Br. 1350
Thomas M. Crowell	Wenatchee, WA	Br. 1350
Joel J. Hume	Wenatchee, WA	Br. 1350
Louis A. Lowell	Wenatchee, WA	Br. 1350
Carl A. Prehm Jr.	Wenatchee, WA	Br. 1350
Walter J. Draper	Madison, WI	Br. 507
Peter J. Esch	Madison, WI	Br. 507
Harlan J. Fox	Madison, WI	Br. 507
Roger F. Gilles	Madison, WI	Br. 507
Michael L. Kasmarek	Madison, WI	Br. 507
Dennis F. Muskat	Madison, WI	Br. 507
Henry Anderson	Racine, WI	Br. 436
Eugene Haluska	Racine, WI	Br. 436
Dave Willing	Racine, WI	Br. 436

How does fundraising help the MDA?



Christina Vela Davidson



I hope this message finds you, your family and your friends safe and able to enjoy each other's company.

Food for thought: If every member (of NALC's 290,000-strong membership) gave at least \$5 to the Muscular Dystrophy Association (MDA), then, sisters and brothers, we could raise more than \$1.4 million.

How awesome would that be?

On another note, MDA is making a considerable effort to reach out to as many branches as possible.

Brothers and sisters, please contact MDA if you need help, and it will try to support you in any way it can. Please be sure to take a few minutes to connect with MDA and let it know what you need. The more branches that connect with MDA, the better we can all do our part to #DeliverTheCure in 2021!

Virtual campaigns

Even though we are all slowly starting to come together to host MDA in-person events, I don't want you to forget about NALC virtual campaigns. Below are the 2021 virtual campaigns that your branch can donate to or get involved with to raise money for MDA. When contributing to the below campaigns, always input your branch number to receive the recognition.

Branch online virtual fundraising registration— Please sign up online at mda.donordrive.com/event/nalc2021.



MDA Virtual Muscle Walk, Aug. 7— Please sign up online at mda.donordrive.com/team/TEAMNALCVIRTUALWALK. Join our team or donate to support the MDA and its mission of transforming the lives of people living with neuromuscular diseases.

Tough Mudder 5K, Oct. 17— Please sign up online at mda.donordrive.com/participant/TEAMNALCToughMudder. Team NALC will participate in the Washington, DC, Tough Mudder 5K in Budds Creek Motocross Park, located at 27963 Budds Creek Road, Mechanicsville, MD.

NALC/MDA gift bags (\$100 each)— You can purchase these bags (see below) online at mda.donordrive.com/participant/nalcmdagiftbags.



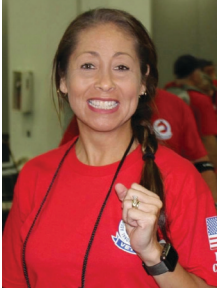
NALC/MDA poker chips (\$2 each)— You can purchase these chips (see below) online at mda.donordrive.com/participant/NALC-MDAPokerChips.



Brothers and sisters, thank you for working with all who have worked tirelessly throughout this pandemic to continue advancing the exceptional progress in achieving MDA's mission.

"We make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give."—Winston Churchill.

Join the NALC Veterans Group



Assistant to the President for Community Services
Christina Vela Davidson

Veterans of the U.S. Armed Forces comprise almost a quarter of the membership of the National Association of Letter Carriers—active NALC members as well as retired members. As of right now, we have more than 15,000 members in the Veterans Group; however, there are thousands of members who are veterans and have not signed up.

These veterans traded their military uniforms for letter carrier uniforms, and they continue to serve their communities and this great nation. The

creation of the NALC Veterans Group is intended to be something tangible and useful.

The NALC Veterans Group is 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. It also is intended to give veterans a sense of family and more brotherhood/sisterhood. It seeks to provide all NALC members who also are military veterans—active full-time and part-time letter carriers, as well as retired letter carriers—resources, rights, information and a sense of camaraderie.

I am asking all branch presidents to get with your members and help them sign up for the group if they are veterans. Just a reminder: The names of all members who are signed up with the Veterans Group will appear in the November *Postal Record*, the commemorative veterans issue. If you have questions, please feel free to email me at cdavidson@nalc.org or call me at 202-662-2489.

NALC has made it easier for all veterans to sign up for the group. You can fill out the form on the website and mail it in, or you can fill out the form shown below and mail it in.

You also can go to nalc.org/join-veterans and it will generate an email (see the image below). You then will need to enter the information requested—name, address, branch number, military branch and any affiliated veterans groups. Once the fields are completed, press “send,” and the email will be sent to me. I will then enter you in our NALC Veterans Group

and you will receive an *NALC Veteran Guide* and pin.

Just a reminder, Veterans Group memorabilia is available to purchase if you are a member of the Veterans Group. These items would make a great gift from a branch to its veterans; call the Supply Department at 202-662-2873 to

MEMBER BENEFITS
Join the NALC Veterans Group



To join the NALC Veterans group, click [here](#) to send an email. Please provide:

- Name
- Address
- Branch number
- Military branch and
- Any affiliated veterans groups

order. All proceeds go toward future Veterans Group projects.

Always remember, brothers and sisters: “Our debt to the heroic men and valiant women in the service of our country can never be repaid. They have earned our undying gratitude.” — Harry S Truman

Serving you is my job, and serving our communities is all of our jobs. As I always say, “Help those in need, because you never know when it might be you in need.”

<p>Join the NALC Veterans Group</p> <p>The NALC Veterans Group is designed to provide NALC members—both active and retired letter carriers—who are also military veterans the ability to connect with fellow NALC veterans and stay informed on issues of importance to letter carrier veterans. It is free to join.</p> <p>Members receive a pin as a symbol of gratitude for your military service and membership in NALC.</p> <p>If you are interested in joining the group, complete the sign-up card at right and mail it to the address included. A fillable version is also available at nalc.org/veterans.</p>	<div style="text-align: right; color: white; background-color: red; padding: 5px; font-weight: bold;">Free to join</div> <div style="text-align: center;">  <p>You continue to serve your country— THANK YOU!</p> <p>NALC Veterans Group</p> <p>Complete this form and mail it to: NALC Veterans Group, c/o NALC, 100 Indiana Ave., N.W., Washington, DC 20001-2144</p> </div> <p>NAME: _____</p> <p>ADDRESS: _____</p> <p>CITY, STATE, ZIP: _____</p> <p>NALC BRANCH NUMBER: _____ BRANCH OF SERVICE: _____</p> <p>I BELONG TO THE FOLLOWING VETERAN GROUP(S):</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> AMERICAN LEGION <input type="checkbox"/> DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS <input type="checkbox"/> VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> OTHER: _____</p>
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Explaining letter carrier duties



Assistant to the President
for Workers' Compensation
Kevin Card

Over the past couple of years, the Office of Workers' Compensation Programs (OWCP) leadership has been slowly refocusing the agency toward a customer service model. While this is welcome news for injured workers, some OWCP employees have struggled to adapt, resulting in a higher-than-normal turnover in personnel, particularly at the claims-examiner level.

Due to the high turnover, OWCP is in the process of hiring 200 new claims examiners. A claims examiner's job requires extensive knowledge of the Federal Employees' Compensation Act, as well as OWCP regulations and procedures. It is not a job one can learn overnight.

Claims examiners also have to learn the occupations of the injured workers filing claims. As letter carrier injuries represent a large percentage of OWCP claims, the new claims examiners need to learn the work duties unique to the letter carrier craft.

Claims examiners get information on letter carrier work duties from two sources: the injured worker and the Postal Service. Often, in the rush to file a claim for a traumatic injury, injured workers hurriedly write brief statements explaining how an injury happened.

Now that we can file claims electronically via the ECOMP web portal, injured workers have ample room to write detailed descriptions of injuries and work duties. Writing a concise description of the events surrounding an injury is essential to getting a claim accepted. When writing an explanation of a traumatic injury, you should think like a newspaper reporter and describe the who, what, when, where and how of the incident.

Detailed work descriptions are particularly important in occupational disease claims. The "Injured on the Job" page at on the NALC website (nalc.org/workplace-issues/injured-on-the-job) has directions on how to write a job description for filing a CA-2 for an occupational disease claim.

OWCP claims examiners will also contact the Postal Service requesting a letter carrier position description. The Postal Service standard position description for a letter carrier reads like a legal description of our duties and responsibilities and fails to accurately describe the physical nature of letter carrier work.

Absent a detailed job description from the injured worker, OWCP can refer only to the Postal Service standard position description. When claims are denied, it is often due to insufficient knowledge of letter carrier work duties. Injured workers can do themselves a big favor by taking the time to describe every facet of the physical nature of their work duties.

Job offers: suitable versus appropriate

Another reason we need to accurately describe our letter carrier duties is so that OWCP claims examiners can determine whether Postal Service job offers accurately fit our medical limitations.

The Postal Service's requirement to make every effort in finding work for injured letter carriers often results in job offers that exceed the employee's medical restrictions.

For example, NALC has seen many cases where the restrictions impose zero twisting, bending or stooping, and the job offer includes casing and carrying mail with only some auxiliary parcel help. It's impossible to case and carry a route without twisting, bending or stooping.

In this example, it would be correct for the employee to refuse the job offer, as it exceeds the carrier's medical limitations. When a job offer is refused, OWCP will decide whether or not the job offer was suitable given the employee's medical restrictions.

"Suitability" is a term of art within OWCP that specifically refers to the determination made by OWCP that the job offer complies with the employee's work restrictions.

OWCP generally takes the Postal Service's word at face value that the described duties in the job offer fall within the accepted restrictions. The injured worker bears the burden of proving that the job offer was inappropriate.

While we cannot grieve the suitability determination made by OWCP, we certainly can investigate and grieve whether the job offer made by the Postal Service is appropriate.

Postal Handbook EL-505, Section 7-4 directs managers to "consult with the occupational health nurse, contract physician or the treating physician" (in writing) to ensure that the limited-duty assignment is consistent with the injured worker's medical restrictions. Federal law requires that the Postal Service be a neutral party in developing the facts in every case. A grievance investigation needs to investigate the chain of events that led to the formation of the inappropriate job offer.

In cases where the job offer exceeds the employee's medical restrictions, we should argue the fact that the Postal Service is misrepresenting the actual job duties, making the job offer inappropriate.

A remedy in such cases might include a retraction of the job offer and a letter from the Postal Service to OWCP explaining that the offered duties, in fact, fall outside the injured worker's restrictions.

Educating OWCP claims examiners on your work duties is an essential piece in the claims process. Take your time and be clear with your explanation. It may be the most important piece of writing you ever do.

NALC Financial Statement

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF LETTER CARRIERS OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA UNCONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF CASH RECEIPTS AND CASH DISBURSEMENTS BY FUND FOR THE SIX MONTHS ENDING MARCH 31, 2021

	General Fund	Building Fund	Convention Fund	Legislative and Political Action Fund	Public Relations Fund	Political Education Fund	Doherty Scholarship Fund	Subtotal Unrestricted Fund	Donelson Scholarship Restricted Fund	Total All Funds
Cash Receipts										
Per capita tax	22,012,276	98,009	93,108	49,005	19,603	294,027	63,266	22,566,028	9,364	22,566,028
Investment income	8,418,516	580,194						9,061,976		9,071,340
Postal Record advertising income	380							380		380
Inventory sales	68,051							68,051		68,051
Contributions	80						110,415	110,495		110,495
Service Allowance transfer	2,500,000							2,500,000		2,500,000
Other income	550,208							550,208		550,208
Total Cash Receipts	33,549,511	678,203	93,108	49,005	19,603	294,027	173,681	34,857,138	9,364	34,866,502
Cash Disbursements										
Salaries and other compensation	10,093,870					3,830		10,097,700		10,097,700
Benefits and employment taxes	5,051,190					363		5,051,553		5,051,553
Office and administrative expenses	1,335,766	21,897	30				20,000	1,357,693		1,357,693
Contributions, awards & scholarships	629,712							649,712	1,000	650,712
Affiliation & fees	1,100,063							1,100,063		1,100,063
Professional expenses	2,676,367		34,240					2,710,607		2,710,607
Travel	374,668							374,668		374,668
Communications & publications	2,944,438		6,775					2,951,213		2,951,213
Office occupancy	1,007,092							1,007,092		1,007,092
Capital assets purchased	298,059		41,045					298,059		298,059
Total Cash Disbursements	25,511,224	21,897	41,045	-	-	4,193	20,000	25,598,359	1,000	25,599,359
Excess (Deficiency) of Cash Receipts over Cash Disbursements	8,038,287	656,306	52,063	49,005	19,603	289,834	153,681	9,258,780	8,364	9,267,143

Nicole Rhine
Secretary-Treasurer

NALCREST

NALCREST FOUNDATION, INC. FINANCIAL REPORT FOR THE SIX MONTHS ENDING JUNE 30, 2021

Revenue	June 30, 2021	
Rental revenue	\$	1,302,524
Revenue - laundromat		5,177
Revenue - USPS		19,750
Other Income		15,720
Interest Income		346
Total Revenue	\$	1,343,517
Operating Expenses		
General & administrative	\$	11,695
Payroll		175,126
Payroll Taxes		12,126
Payroll Fees		1,212
Professional Fees		209
Taxes, licenses & fees		575
Loan payments to NALC		13,957
Bank and credit card fees		25,518
Utilities - water		144,603
Utilities - electricity		36,321
Utilities - cable		62,138
Utilities - gas & oil		11,168
Utilities - telephone (office & mobile)		1,469
Trash Removal		21,340
Pest Control		2,014
Landscaping and Grounds Keeping		49,615
Insurance - Health		88,739
Insurance - worker's compensation		7,354
Insurance - Commercial Property		106,255
Repairs & Maintenance		2,482
Supplies expense		88,718
Capital Improvements		111,812
Legal & other professional fees		8,290
Real estate taxes		115,543
Other taxes - tourist development taxes		3,213
Vehicle expenses		4,598
Marketing & other advertising		500
Total Expenses	\$	1,106,590
Net Profit (Loss)	\$	236,927

State Summaries

California

California will hold a recall election on Sept. 14, which could lead to Democratic Gov. Gavin Newsom being thrown out of office. Some of you might think, “Well, what does that have to do with letter carriers?” Well, everything, actually!

You see, if there is a majority vote against him and a Republican is elected in his place, guess what? Should something happen to Dianne Feinstein (who just turned 88) before her term ends, a new Republican governor has the authority to appoint her replacement, who would make Mitch McConnell Senate majority leader again. The same Mitch who prevented H.R. 2382 (which would have repealed the pre-funding mandate) from coming to a vote last year, or any kind of postal reform from seeing the light of day.

If you vote in California, please take the time to fill out your ballot and send it in at least two weeks before the election date. And if you have a few hours to spare, please take the time to contact your fellow Californian voters and encourage them to not only vote to keep Gov. Newsom in office, but to get their family and friends to do likewise.

Don't take this election for granted. It wasn't too long ago that California held another recall election and replaced a Democratic governor with an actor by the name of Arnold Schwarzenegger.

And this is an off-year election in which anything can happen. Some people don't vote unless it's a presidential election or a preferred candidate is on the ballot. If you're one of those people, now's a good time to break that habit.

And if you live in another state and have the chance to phone bank into California, please help. This election is a good example of how what happens in California affects the whole country.

Eric Ellis

Colorado

It has been a busy summer for the COSALC. After hosting our 2021 COSALC state convention in Pueblo in April, the newly elected leadership team of the COSALC has been reaching out to branches throughout Colorado to educate them on the Postal Reform Act of 2021. Our LCCLs have been busy reaching out to branches and members, requesting that they contact their congressional representatives to support this important legislation.

This is a great opportunity for us to educate on the importance of postal reform and hopefully get this legislation passed this term. Knowledge is power! It takes all of us to work together to get the job done on every level. The NALC has made the portal for contacting our representatives an easy process to understand and navigate.

COSALC President Danielle Fake-Moorman has appointed COSALC Vice President Doug Jaynes as the chairman of the legislative committee for the COSALC. Doug has been a strong leader in legislative issues for many years, and will continue to lead the way and educate the LCCLs toward continued success.

We are already in preparations for the 2022

Stewards College in January that will be held in Westminster. While working together with the NALC Region 4 NBA's office on this training, we are also building the foundation for the 2022 COSALC state convention that will be held in Colorado Springs in April 2022. More information and details can be located at cosalc.org and will be updated when it becomes available.

In solidarity—

Richard Byrne

Florida

The COVID-19 pandemic, which was declared in March 2020, created many logistical problems at all levels for conducting union business. All meetings of our executive board have been conducted by teleconference. District and most branch meetings, have been conducted via Zoom, webinar, etc. Others, while continuing to hold regular meetings did so within the CDC guidelines, requiring masks and physical separation. As of July 2021, most branches have begun holding in-person meetings again. However, many of the larger branches indicate plans to continue using Zoom as an adjunct for members who live too far from their union halls to normally attend meetings.

Now that the pandemic seems to be winding down, we all seem eager to resume face-to-face meetings. The FSALC will conduct its 76th biennial convention Aug. 12-14 in Orlando at the Hilton Orlando, Buena Vista Palace—Disney Springs. Lynne Pendleton, our NBA, has scheduled a full slate of training classes, including legislative, stewards, retirement, route inspections, OWCP, branch audits/communication and CCAs/newly converted city carriers. For most of the delegates who attend, it will be the first opportunity since March 2020 to see and greet old friends and new faces, to gather, discuss and work on issues concerning our state association and for in-person training for officers and stewards.

With the pandemic waning, Floridians are now entering the hurricane season. From now through November, we will be daily watching the weather reports and checking the latest status of developing tropical depressions. We've just had Tropical Storm Elsa slide up our Western coast with thankfully only minimal damage.

The fall Committee of Presidents meeting (for branch and state presidents) will be hosted by West Coast Florida Branch 1477 Oct. 24-25 at the Hilton St. Petersburg Bayfront, located at 333 1st St. SE, St. Petersburg. You may contact the hotel at 727-894-5000.

O.D. Elliott

Kentucky

Our Kentucky State Association of Letter Carriers election process is underway with the guidance of State Secretary Steve Terry. As you are reading this print article in early August, the nominations have just closed on July 30. See the June *Postal Record* under Election Notices for details.

We have more information on our replacement KYSALC state convention Feb. 26-27, 2022. Site is Holiday Inn Cincinnati Airport. The host

branch is Northern Kentucky Branch 374, with Mike Smith as president. Details about it are in the July *Postal Record* under State Summaries.

Registration will be \$50 for delegates and guests. State Secretary Steve Terry will provide ample notice and will work with Branch 374. Room rates are \$109, which includes a buffet breakfast on Sunday morning, Feb. 27. We will have a vigorous political and legislative agenda, plus a valuable update from a national officer. NBA Troy Clark and staff will provide training.

While 2021 is a tame and low-volume political year in Kentucky, NALC legislation still needs your help. Our NALC legislation, H.R. 3076 and S. 1720, the Postal Service Reform Act of 2021, must be requested for support from our federal legislators. President Rolando has already described in detail its importance to our jobs and benefits, and vitality to USPS. Just go to nalc.org or call Anna Mudd, our LPO, at 270-317-2960 or email her at amudd@nalc.org for help contacting your U.S. representative and two U.S. senators. In KY-6, Andy Barr is our U.S. rep; his phone number is 859-219-1366.

Bob McNulty

Texas

I hope this message finds you in good health as we make our rounds in this Texas heat. I want to thank all of the board members for their work during this pandemic. Congratulations go out to all board members re-elected and newly elected by acclamation, and good luck to all candidates remaining.

House Committee on Oversight and Reform (COR) Chairperson Carolyn Maloney introduced H.R. 3076, the Postal Reform Act, on May 13. There are currently 39 co-sponsors; unfortunately, no representatives from Texas have signed on to support it—yet.

Our LCCLs are on the case, and it is through their concerted efforts that we continue to have dialogue with our representatives. LCCLs are not the only ones who can call, email or send letter—you can, too.

I have contacted Texas Rep. Filemon Vela (D-34) to support this bill. All we need to do is follow through with all of our representatives and senators' offices. The Senate introduced S. 1720, the Postal Service Reform Act of 2021, companion bill to H.R. 3076.

H.R. 4268, the Federal Retirement Fairness Act, was introduced on June 30 by Reps. Derek Kilmer (D-WA) and Tom Cole (R-OK). This bill would amend Title 5, United States Code, to provide that civilian service is a temporary position after Dec. 31, 1988, may be creditable service under the FERS. Previous RCAs, Casuals, TEs and CCAs would benefit from this bill. It started off bipartisan and has been referred to the House COR.

Additionally, working with the Rio Grande Central Labor Council, we are pushing the passing of the PRO Act. We are sending postcards to your representatives and senators. If your branch needs some, please contact me or Vice President Everett Wyllie. This is a positive push for workers' rights across this great country. There is dignity in labor.

Carlos Rodriguez Jr.



From the Trustees

In these articles, we often extoll the many amenities that come with living at Nalcrest. This is truly a wonderful place to spend your time, be it as full-time residents or the renting of a short-term vacation apartment.

But...there is more. Peace and tranquility.

Nalcrest abounds with flora and fauna. A stroll or bike ride around the community brings the pleasure of a variety of trees, flowers and many other plants.

That same journey through Nalcrest could also have resulted in an encounter with new families of wild turkeys, sandhill cranes and ospreys. In fact, there is quite a variety of bird life to view and enjoy.

Wait, there is more. With a little effort and a fishing rod, bass and catfish await the lucky angler casting from the shores of our two lagoons.

More peace and tranquility can be found as

you relax in a lounge chair on the shore of Lake Walk-in-the-Water.

These are just a few other reasons to choose Nalcrest for your retirement home. As with hundreds of other letter carriers, you will be glad you did.

Speaking of choosing, the waiting list continues to hover at the 200-applicant level, so if you are contemplating coming to paradise, contact the Nalcrest office now to get the process started.

Be well; get vaccinated.

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

Retiree Reports

Hartford, Connecticut

Quite a range of temperatures in Connecticut recently—40 degrees and damp the whole Memorial Day weekend here (*brr*), then 98 degrees with 99 percent humidity the following week. Friends in Arizona tell me of 107-degree temps there. Plus, there was an earthquake recently in California and a hurricane in Florida and the East Coast of the U.S. These are a lot of different conditions for our letter carriers to deliver mail in.

Our union, Branch 86, around Labor Day will have an evening at a Hartford Yard Goats baseball Eastern League game.

It is disturbing to hear that the administration is using the U.S. Mail to spy on average American citizens, as well as tracking journalists' email. This is *not* what our Founding Fathers envisioned when they promoted the Bill of Rights.

It is a fine sight to see new postal vans out

on the road for mail deliveries. They apparently have air conditioning in them—a must in the summer weather.

I am being deluged by emails claiming that I won a prize though USPS, UPS, Walmart, etc. None of them are legitimate. All ask you for credit card information, etc., unsolicited. Obviously you should never give that out to anyone unless you go to their website on your own. Friends of mine and my college alumni association tell me of phony emails they've received, purportedly from me, asking for gift cards to be sent to a phony address and email locations.

Have other retirees had problems accessing the OPM website for information? I have had to use the regular U.S. Mail to get items done through them.

Have a great summer, everyone.

Ed Mulrenan, Branch 86

Paterson, New Jersey

Welcome to the summer months here in New Jersey. If you are a heat worshiper, this is the time of year of which you like best. If you do not like heat, humidity, sweating, etc., this may be the time to utilize your annual leave to relieve you from these heat conditions.

Most people know and realize it is no picnic when walking outside with a satchel on your back during a heat wave (three or more days in a row of 90-plus degrees) with the sun staring at you all day long, but these are the careers we have chosen, for better or worse.

We advise all of our letter carriers to stay as hydrated as possible and emphasize concentrating on the protection of your safety and health.

Joseph Murone, Branch 120

Election Notices

Alexandria, Virginia

Nominations for delegates to the 2022 national convention will be held on Nov. 2. Elections, if needed, will be held on Dec. 7. The president, vice president, secretary-treasurer and recording secretary are all automatic delegates by virtue of their office. The nominations will be held at the Huntington Creek Club party room at 2059 Huntington Ave., Alexandria.

Timothy Palmer, Sec.-Treas., Br. 567

Anchorage, Alaska

This is official notice to all members of Branch 4319 that nominations for the following officers and national convention delegates will be held at the regular branch general membership meeting on Oct. 7: president, vice president, financial secretary/treasurer, recording secretary, health benefits representative, three trustees and sergeant-at-arms. The president, vice president, financial secretary/treasurer, recording secretary and health benefits representative shall become automatic delegates to the 2022 NALC national convention by virtue of their election to their office. The president, vice president, financial secretary/treasurer and recording secretary shall become automatic delegates to the regional assemblies held during their term of office. Nominees for delegates to the national convention must have attended a minimum of two-thirds of the regular branch general membership meetings since the previous national convention to be eligible for reimbursed expenses, except for the delegates who work in offices outside the municipality of Anchorage.

All nominations must be accepted orally or in writing at the nominating meeting, or they must be received in writing no later than seven calendar days after the close of nominations. Failure to accept nominations as stated will result in automatic decline of the nomination.

The election of officers shall be done by referendum mail ballot. The ballots must be received by the election committee's post office box by Nov. 29. There shall be no write-in votes cast for candidates not officially on the ballot. The results of the election shall be reported by the election committee at the Dec. 2 meeting of the branch. The newly elected officers shall hold office for a period of two years, beginning Jan. 1, 2022.

Alison Harpe, Rec. Sec., Br. 4319

Baton Rouge, Louisiana

This is official notice to all members of Branch 129 that nominations for 14 delegates and alternate delegates will take place at the union meeting held on Sept. 22 at 7:30 p.m. at the George B. Cooper Building, 1953 Beaumont Drive, Baton Rouge. In accordance with Article 5 of the *NALC Constitution* and Branch 129 bylaws, the election date will be Oct. 29.

Trelle Thomas, Rec. Sec., Br. 129

Bergen Co. Mgd., New Jersey

This is official notice to all Branch 425 members of nominations and elec-

tions. Nominations of candidates for all officers and trustees, along with the members of each station to nominate the primary shop steward(s) shall be made at the regular meeting on Oct. 12.

A member must be in good standing to accept nomination to office. The president will appoint alternate shop stewards. The term of office for all elected officers, trustees and shop stewards of this branch shall be for three years, 2022 through 2024.

The president shall appoint an election committee, consisting of a chairman and two tellers, to conduct the election. They are to keep a record of the members voting, count ballots and announce the results of the election at the Dec. 14 meeting.

Elections will be by secret mail-in ballot. Ballots will be mailed to all members in good standing within three weeks of nominations. Ballots must be returned by mail to the address designated by the election committee, and postmarked no later than Dec. 1. No walk-in ballots will be accepted under any circumstances.

John Dudek, Sec.-Treas., Br. 425

Boulder, Colorado

This is official notice to all members of Branch 642 that nominations for branch officers, stewards and delegates to the 2022 national and state conventions will be accepted at the Oct. 14 meeting, beginning at 6 p.m. This meeting will be conducted via Zoom. Members who want to be nominated to either branch officer, steward and/or delegate positions must be present at the October meeting (via Zoom), or signify in writing, signed and dated to the secretary of Branch 642, by 6 p.m. the day of the branch meeting.

Dave Negrotti, Pres., Br. 642

Bridgeport, Connecticut

This is official notice to all Branch 32 members in good standing that nominations for all officers will be accepted at the Oct. 20 meeting at Boothe Memorial Park, North Main Street, Stratford, at 7 p.m. Elections will be held on Nov. 17 during the regular branch meeting. Installation of new officers will take place on Dec. 15.

Lynda Mariotti, Sec., Br. 32

Brookfield, Wisconsin

This is a notice to all members of Branch 4811 that nominations will be accepted at the Aug. 10 meeting, which will be conducted at Bullwinkles Sports Bar, 20290 W. Bluemound Road, for the next two-year term for the following offices: president, vice president and two stewards.

Any member in good standing is eligible for nomination. Those wishing to be nominated must accept such nominations during the August meeting or must submit their willingness to be nominated in writing to the branch secretary prior to August meeting.

If an election is warranted, it will be held during our Sept. 14 meeting. Voting will be by secret ballot. The results will be announced at the September meeting.

Craig Topel, V.P., Br. 4811

Bux-Mont, Pennsylvania

In accordance with Article 5 of the *NALC Constitution* and the bylaws of Branch 920, this is an official notice to all members of Branch 920 of nominations for delegates to the NALC 2022 state and national conventions. Nominations will take place at the regular October meeting at the Croydon Annex, 1000 State Road, Croydon, at 7 p.m. Elections, if necessary, will take place at the regular November meeting at St. Gabe's Lodge, 525 Jefferson St., Stowe, at 7 p.m.

Sean Geackel, Pres., Br. 920

Canton, Ohio

In accordance with Article 5 of the *NALC Constitution*, this is official notice to all members of Branch 238 that nominations for officers will be held at the regularly scheduled meeting on Oct. 12. The election will take place at the Nov. 9 meeting. Nominations and the election will be held at the William O. McDonald Jr. Hall, 1718 Navarre Road SW, Canton, with the meetings starting at 7:30 p.m.

The following offices are open for nomination/election to a one-year term: president, vice president, secretary/recording secretary, treasurer/financial secretary, three-year trustee (one three-year term), building manager, director of retirees, health benefits representative, and delegates to national convention and/or seminars. Nominees must have attended six of the last 12 regularly scheduled meetings to be eligible as paid delegates to the convention. Nominees must accept in person if nominated, or submit acceptance in writing to the branch secretary by Oct. 8.

The election will be by secret ballot on Nov. 9. Election ads will be accepted for publication in *The Branch Reporter* at a cost of \$10 per ad and must be in the hands of the editor of *The Branch Reporter* no later than 10 days after a regular scheduled meeting. Absentee ballots may be requested from the election committee at William O. McDonald Jr. Hall, 1718 Navarre Road SW, Canton, OH 44706-1667, in writing if for emergency reasons only (i.e., hospitalization, annual leave outside of the immediate area, imminent death of an immediate family member). Absentee ballots must be in the hands of the secretary prior to the commencement of the election night meeting in order to be turned over to the election committee.

Bonnie Contrucci, Rec. Sec., Br. 238

Carmel, Indiana

This is official notice to all members of Merged Branch 888 that nominations will be held at the regular membership meeting on Oct. 7 at the Carmel American Legion, located at 852 West Main St., Carmel, in accordance with Article 5 of the *NALC Constitution* and the branch bylaws, for the following branch offices: president, vice president, secretary/sergeant-at-arms, treasurer, health benefits representative and three trustees. The terms of office will be three years, beginning on Jan. 1, 2022. Candidates may accept nomination to only one office.

The president and vice president, by virtue of their office, are delegates to all state and national conventions dur-

ing 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 of all members. Ballots must be returned to the election committee prior to the regular branch meeting at 7 p.m. on Nov. 4. The election will be at the regular branch meeting at 7 p.m. on Nov. 4.

Michael Wonderlick, Sec., Br. 888

Cedar Falls, Iowa

This is official notice to all members of Branch 719 that nominations for branch officers will be held at the Nov. 10 monthly meeting. Nominations will take place for president, vice president, treasurer, steward and secretary for two-year terms of office.

Elections, if necessary, will take place at the Dec. 8 meeting.

Bill Hansen, Sec., Br. 719

Centennial, Colorado

In accordance with Article 5 of the *NALC Constitution* and Article 4 of the branch bylaws, this is official notice to all members of Branch 5996 that nominations for the following offices and positions will be held at the regular Oct. 7 branch meeting at the Centennial branch office, located at 1010 S. Joliet St., Suite 204, Aurora, at 7:30 p.m.

Nominations will be for the following offices: president (two-year term), vice president (two-year term), financial/recording secretary (two-year term), treasurer (two-year term), sergeant-at-arms (two-year term), director of retirees (two-year term), health benefits representative (two-year term), one trustee (three-year term), shop stewards—all stations (one-year term), delegates to the national convention, delegates to the NALC Colorado state convention, three delegates to the Colorado AFL-CIO convention and two delegates for the Denver Area Labor Federation.

Election will be by secret mail ballot and results will be announced at the Dec. 2 regular branch meeting.

Candidates must accept nomination at the time made or must signify in writing to the branch financial/recording secretary prior to the meeting their willingness to serve in the desired position.

All regular members shall be eligible to hold any office or position in the branch, except that a member who, voluntarily or otherwise, holds, accepts or applies for a supervisory position in the Postal Career Service for any period of time, whether one day or fraction thereof, either detailed, acting, probationary or permanently, shall immediately vacate any office held, and shall be ineligible to run for any office or other position for a period of two years after termination of such supervisory status. Upon nomination, candidates must verify that they have not served in a supervisory capacity for the 24 months prior to the nomination.

In accordance with Article 4, Section 2 of the branch bylaws, the branch president and vice president shall be delegates to the national and state conventions by virtue of their office, provided they were elected pursuant to the NALC election regulations.

Tamara Twinn, Fin./Rec. Sec., Br. 5996

Central California Coast

In accordance with Article 5 of the NALC Constitution and the bylaws of Branch 52, this is the official notice of nominations and election of officers and delegates of Branch 52.

Nominations for the election of officers of Branch 52 will be the first order of business at the regular branch meeting on Thursday, Oct. 14, at 7 p.m. at the Best Western Big America Conference Room, 1725 N. Broadway, Santa Maria. Candidates must accept nominations at the time made or, if absent, in writing by the end of the meeting. Candidates may accept nominations for only one office.

Nominations will be held for the following branch offices: president, executive vice president, vice president/health benefits representative, recording secretary, treasurer/financial secretary, legislative liaison/MBA representative, sergeant-at-arms, three trustees, and delegates and alternates to the national and state conventions. The terms of office will be two years, beginning Jan. 1, 2022.

The candidates elected president, executive vice president, vice president/health benefits representative, recording secretary, treasurer/financial secretary and legislative liaison/MBA representative in the forthcoming election, by virtue of their office, will automatically be delegates to the national and state conventions that will take place during their terms of office.

The election will be conducted by secret ballot at the regular branch meeting on Wednesday, Nov. 10, beginning at 5:30 p.m. at the Best Western Big America, 1725 N. Broadway, Santa Maria. Any member who for any reason will be unable to vote on Nov. 10 may obtain an absentee ballot by writing (no sooner than Oct. 14) to the election committee of Branch 52: P.O. Box 5056, San Luis Obispo, CA, 93403-5056.

Requests for absentee ballots must be received by the election committee no later than close of business on Thursday, Oct. 30. Write-in votes will not be permitted.

Kristina Pickering, Rec. Sec., Br. 52

Charlotte, North Carolina

This is official notice to all members of Branch 545 that nominations for the following meetings and convention will open at the regular August meeting of Branch 545: spring 2022 training seminar, 2022 NALC national convention and fall 2022 training seminar. Nominations will close at the regular September meeting of Branch 545 upon motion and second.

If a delegate election is necessary, it will be held at the regular October meeting. The meetings will take place on the third Tuesday of the month (Aug. 17, Sept. 21 and Oct. 19, respec-

tively) at the Ramses Temple, located at 4919 Beatties Ford Road, Charlotte.

Sylnia Stevens, Pres., Br. 545

Cleveland, Ohio

This is the official notice to all Branch 40 members that nominations for delegates to the 73rd National Convention, held Aug. 8-12 in Chicago, will be held at the branch meeting at 7:30 p.m. on Friday, Nov. 12. These delegates will also be qualified for the state convention, to be held in Ohio in the summer of 2023.

An election, if necessary, will be held at the regular branch meeting at 7:30 p.m. on Dec. 10. These meetings begin at 7:30 p.m. and will be held at the Pipefitters Hall, located at 6305 Halle Drive, Valley View.

Nestor J. Chaves, Rec. Sec., Br. 40

Crystal City, Missouri

This is official notice of nominations and elections of officers for Branch 4050. Nominations will be held at the regular branch meeting on Oct. 14 at 7 p.m. at Pogolino's, located at 530 N. 2nd St., Desoto. Nominations will be held for the following offices: president, vice president, secretary, treasurer, three stewards, financial secretary, sergeant-at-arms, health benefits representative and three trustees.

The election will be held at the regular branch meeting on Dec. 9 at 7 p.m. at Pogolino's, located at 530 N. 2nd St., Desoto.

Ronald Spoth, Pres., Br. 4050

Decatur, Illinois

This is official notice to the members of Branch 317 that nominations will be taken for elected officers and state and national convention delegates at the regular branch meeting on Oct. 5. Members wishing to be nominated must be in attendance or must notify the branch secretary in writing by 7 p.m. on Oct. 4, indicating a desire to accept a particular nomination in accordance with Article 5, Section 4.

Mark Cobb, Sec., Br. 317

Downers Grove, Illinois

Nominations for the election of officers of Branch 1870 will be held at the regular branch meeting on Sept. 9 at 7 p.m. at the Knights of Columbus Hall, located at 25 N. Cass, Westmont. Candidates must accept nominations at the time made or, if absent, in writing. Candidates may accept nomination for only one office.

Nominations will be held for the following branch offices: president, vice president, secretary, treasurer, sergeant-at-arms, health benefits representative and three trustees.

The term of office will be two years, beginning Jan. 1, 2022. In addition, nominations will be held for the delegates for the 2022 state convention in Bloomingdale as well as the 2022 national convention in Chicago.

Elections will be conducted through mail-in ballots, and all ballots will be counted during the meeting on Nov. 10 at 7 p.m. Meetings are held at the Knights of Columbus Hall, located at 25 N. Cass, Westmont. Any member in good standing is eligible for nomination.

Jeanie Williams, Sec., Br. 1870

Duluth, Minnesota

This is official notice to all members of Branch 114 that nominations for state and national convention delegates will be accepted at the Sept. 16 and Oct. 21 meetings of Branch 114 Merged. 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 Oct. 21 meeting. Elections will be held by secret ballot at the Nov. 18 union meeting. As per the bylaws of Branch 114, the number of delegates and the amount to compensate them will be decided before nominations begin.

In addition, every qualified member of Branch 114 may run for unpaid delegate to state and national conventions, except a member who, voluntarily or otherwise, holds, accepts or applies for a supervisory position in the Postal Service for any period of time, whether one day or fraction thereof, either detailed, acting, probationary or permanently, 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.

Upon nomination, the candidate must certify that he/she has not served in a supervisory capacity for the 24 months prior to the nomination. The president and vice president of this branch at the time of the convention, by virtue of their office, are automatically considered delegates. Only those qualified members (including the president and vice president) having attended eight union meetings of the last 11 prior to nominations may run for paid (receiving union funds for their expenses) delegate positions for state and national conventions.

This is also official notice to all members of Branch 114 that nominations for the offices of president, vice president, recording secretary, treasurer, three trustees, financial secretary, MBA/health benefits representative and sergeant-at-arms will be accepted at the Sept. 16 and Oct. 21 meetings of Branch 114 Merged.

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 Oct. 21 meeting. Elections will be held by secret ballot at the Nov. 18 union meeting. A member who, voluntarily or otherwise, holds, accepts or applies for a supervisory position in the Postal Service for any period of time, whether one day or fraction thereof, either detailed, acting, probationary or permanently, shall be ineligible to run for any office.

Dave Mayou, Rec. Sec., Br. 114

Durham, North Carolina

This is to serve as official notice to all members of Branch 382 that nominations for a two-year term for the offices of president, executive vice president, vice president, treasurer, secretary, sergeant-at-arms, health benefits representative, one trustee, and national and state convention delegates shall take place at the regular branch meetings on Sept. 28 and Oct. 26 at 7 p.m., either by Zoom or at 4122 Bennett Memorial Road, Suite 300A, Durham.

All nominees can accept nomination for one office and must be present at the time of nomination at the Sep-

tember and October meetings, or have written consent on file at the time of nomination.

The election will be held at the regular branch meeting on Nov. 23 from 6 to 8 p.m. at 4122 Bennett Memorial Road, Suite 300A, Durham. Absentee ballots can be requested after Oct. 26; the last day to request an absentee ballot is Nov. 9. Send written request to: NALC Br. 382 Election Committee, P.O. Box 12659, Durham, NC 27709.

Hope P. Mundine, Sec., Br. 382

East St. Louis, Illinois

Due notice is hereby given to all members of Branch 319 of nominations and elections for all elected officers and shop stewards for the 2022-2024 term. Nominations will take place at the regular meeting of the branch scheduled for Tuesday, Oct. 12, at 7 p.m. at Sauguet Village Hall, 2897 Falling Spring Road, Sauguet, and Tuesday, Nov. 9, at 7 p.m. The election will take place at the regular branch meeting on Dec. 14.

Officers to be nominated are: president, vice president, sergeant-at-arms, health insurance representative, secretary, shop steward, treasurer and trustees.

Amy Lee-Cole, Pres., Br. 319

El Paso, Texas

This is official notice to all Branch 505 members that the nominations for branch delegates to the national convention in 2022 and president, vice president, recording secretary, treasurer, secretary treasurer, assistant secretary treasurer, health benefits representative, sergeant-at-arms, newsletter editor, assistant editor, director of retirees/OWCP, mutual benefits representative and one trustee will be accepted from the floor at our regular branch meeting on Wednesday, Oct. 6, at 7 p.m. Nominees not present must submit their acceptance for nomination in writing to the branch recording secretary prior to the start of nominations.

Elections shall be by secret ballot via mail from Nov. 1 through Nov. 21. The term for the trustee shall be for three consecutive years from Jan. 1, 2022, through Dec. 31, 2024.

Arturo Gallardo, Rec. Sec., Br. 505

Elmira, New York

This is the official notice to all members of Branch 21 that nominations for the office of president, vice president, recording/financial secretary-treasurer, health benefits representative, MBA representative/sergeant-at-arms, director of retirees and board of trustees (total of three) will take place at the regular branch meeting held at the American Legion Post 443 in Elmira on Oct. 6 at 6:30 p.m. All offices are for a three-year term.

The election, if necessary, will be by secret mail ballot, the results of which will be tallied and announced at the November meeting. All members in good standing are eligible to run for office. Any nominee not present must indicate their acceptance in writing at the time of nomination. An installation ceremony will take place in January.

William Burley, Sec.-Treas., Br. 21

Election Notices

Fairfield, Connecticut

This is official notice to all members of Branch 2313 that nominations will be taken at our regular meeting on Oct. 20 at Saint Thomas Church/School located at 1719 Post Road, Fairfield (entrance on Ruane Street). The length of term for each office shall be two years. The following offices will be available for nominations: president, vice president, recording secretary, secretary treasurer, financial secretary, sergeant-at-arms, NALC health care representative, mutual benefits representative, three trustees, and convention delegates and alternate delegates. Elected officers will automatically be considered national and state convention delegates. The total number of delegates allowed for our branch will be determined during the convention preparation period by our national office. Any member can self-nominate. Members can be nominated for multiple offices; however, they can accept only one office before adjournment of the October meeting.

The nomination results will be disclosed at the branch's November monthly meeting. Elections shall be by secret ballot. When there are two or more candidates for any office, the election shall be by ballot and the plurality of all votes cast for such office shall be necessary to elect. There shall be no write-in votes for candidates on the ballot. Any such write-ins shall not be counted but will not invalidate the rest of the ballot.

Non-active members of our branch shall automatically receive a ballot in the mail if a runoff is required. In addition, absentee ballots will be available upon request between Nov. 1 and Nov. 16 for active members. They are to be returned to the recording secretary no later than Nov. 16 and will be held in a secure location until the day of the election. An election committee shall be established at the September monthly meeting. Any qualified regular member wishing to be on the election committee can submit his or her name to the executive board by the September meeting; however, all nominees are not allowed to be on the election committee.

If you have any questions regarding this information, please contact the branch president or recording secretary.

Michael Capodici, Sec., Br. 2313

Flushing, New York

This is official notice to all members of Branch 294 that nominations for president, vice president, secretary, financial secretary, treasurer, assistant secretary treasurer, director of city delivery/compensation, director of retirees/health benefits representative, editor, sergeant-at-arms and three trustees will be held at the branch meeting on Oct. 13 at 6 p.m. at the Knights of Columbus Hall, located at 3579 160th St., Flushing. All terms are for three years. The balloting will be done by mail and the ballots will be counted after the November branch meeting.

Nominations for delegates to the national convention, to be held in Chicago Aug. 8-12, 2022, will also be held at the October meeting.

Keith Bates, Sec., Br. 294

Fort Collins, Colorado

Nominations for elected officers and delegates will be held at the regular branch meeting on Tuesday, Oct. 19. The meeting begins at 6:30 p.m. Location is the Fort Collins Senior Center, 1200 Raintree Drive (Foxtail 1 Room). Any member in good standing may run for any office. If a member wishes to be a candidate but cannot attend the meeting, they must signify their willingness to run in writing.

The elective offices to be filled are delegates to the state convention and national convention: Elective seven delegates to the state convention, one-year terms of office, Jan. 1, 2022, through Dec. 31, 2022, and seven elective delegates to the national convention, one-year terms of office, Jan. 1, 2022, through Dec. 31, 2022. Please note that according to the bylaws of the branch, the president is a delegate to convention by virtue of the office.

Elections will be conducted by secret ballot at the regular branch meeting on Tuesday, Nov. 9. The meeting begins at 6:30 p.m. The meeting place will be at the Fort Collins Senior Center, 1200 Raintree Drive (Foxtail 1 Room).

Any member who, for any reason, will be unable to vote in person on Nov. 9 may obtain an absentee ballot by writing to: Election Committee, Branch 849, P.O. Box 270848, Fort Collins, CO 80527-0848. Requests for absentee ballots must be received by the election committee no later than Oct. 30. All absentee ballots must be mailed to the election committee at: P.O. Box 270848, Fort Collins, CO 80527-0848. Each member's ballot is to be mailed in separately or it will be invalid. All ballots must be received at P.O. Box 270848 by 4 p.m. on Nov. 9 in order to be counted.

Danielle Fake-Moorman, Pres., Br. 849

Fort Wayne, Indiana

This is the official notice to members of Branch 116 that nominations will be held at the regular branch meeting on Oct. 14 for the following two-year positions: president, vice president, recording/financial secretary, treasurer, three trustees, health benefits representative, *The Summit City Mailbag* editor, mutual benefits representative, sergeant-at-arms, data entry person, director of retirees, and stewards for each of the Fort Wayne units, as well as Angola, Auburn, Bluffton, Decatur, Garrett, Huntington, New Haven and Warsaw. Also, nominations will be held for delegates to the 2022 Indiana state and national conventions.

Candidates must be present at the Oct. 14 meeting or have submitted prior to the nomination a letter to the recording/financial secretary stating acceptance of the nomination. Candidates must signify that they have not served in a supervisory position for 24 months prior to nomination. Voting will be by mail-in ballot. The ballots will be counted by the nomination/election committee in December.

Elizabeth Wappes, Rec. Sec., Br. 116

Gainesville, Georgia

This is official notice to all members of Branch 1441 that nominations

for president, vice president/sergeant-at-arms, recording secretary/financial secretary/treasurer/health benefits representative and a board of trustees comprised of three members will be held during the regular branch meeting on Oct. 7 at 5:30 p.m. Nomination shall be made from the floor and all candidates must be present at the time of their nomination or else signify their willingness, in writing, to accept if elected. Notices stating willingness to accept must be in the hands of the secretary-treasurer at the time of nominations. The president, vice president and secretary-treasurer of this branch shall, by virtue of their office, be regular delegates to all national and state conventions. The president, or vice president if the president is unable to attend, shall be chairman of each delegation.

If after nominations an election is in order, it shall be consummated and concluded during the regular branch meeting on Nov. 4 at 5:30 p.m., in accordance with the provisions of Article 5 of the *NALC Constitution*. The election is to be conducted by secret ballot.

Rex Newell, Pres., Br. 1441

Grand Rapids, Michigan

This is official notice to the members of Branch 56 that nominations for all branch officers, the 2022 national convention delegates and the 2023 state convention delegates will take place at our regular November meeting.

Following close of nomination, ballots will be mailed out to all members. The deadline for receipt of ballots is by close of business on Dec. 1, prior to the Dec. 2 meeting.

Malinda Dekker, Rec. Sec., Br. 56

Granite City, Illinois

This is official notice to all members of Merged Branch 1132: Nominations for all branch officers, delegates, and alternates to the 2022 national and Illinois state convention will be accepted from the floor at the regular branch meeting on Oct. 21 at 6 p.m. at the Venice Social Club, located at 4168 IL-162, Granite City. Nominations may also be made in writing and must be received by Secretary Victoria Speece at P.O. Box 1635, Granite City, IL 62040 no later than 6 p.m. on Oct. 20. Candidates must accept nomination at the nomination meeting or, if not in attendance, submit a written acceptance to: Secretary Victoria Speece, P.O. Box 1635, Granite City, IL 62040 by Oct. 31.

All elected branch officers' terms of office will be for two years, and delegates to the 2022 Illinois state and national convention must be members in good standing. Convention delegates must have attended six regular meetings in the 12 months prior to the month of the convention to qualify as paid delegates.

The election will be conducted by secret ballot at the regular branch meeting on Nov. 18 at 6 p.m. at the Venice Social Club, located at 4168 IL-162, Granite City. Write-in votes are not permitted and will not be counted. Any member who, for any reason, is unable to vote on Nov. 18 may obtain an

absentee ballot by writing to: Election Committee Branch 1132, P.O. Box 1635, Granite City, IL 62040. Requests for absentee ballot must be received by the election committee 15 days before the election, or Nov. 3. Completed absentee ballots must be received by noon on Nov. 18.

Victoria Speece, Sec., Br. 1132

Great Valley Mgd., Pennsylvania

This is official notice, in accordance with Branch 4317 bylaws, that nominations for all branch officers and stewards will take place at the October general membership meeting. Branch 4317 is currently planning for that meeting to take place in person on Oct. 6 at the regular meeting location, the Downingtown VFW. Should circumstances prevent an in-person meeting in October, the membership will be notified as soon as possible and an online meeting will be held; nominations will take place at that online meeting.

Tom Wallace, Pres., Br. 4317

Greenville, South Carolina

This is official notice to all active and retired members of Branch 439 that nominations for delegates to the state and national conventions will be conducted at the October branch meeting. The meeting will be on Oct. 7 at the union hall, located at 4003 Old Buncombe Road, Greenville. The election will be held at the same location on Nov. 4. Candidates for convention delegate must either be present at the meeting when nominated, or signify in writing prior to the meeting their willingness to serve if elected. If unavoidably detained, candidate must notify election committee by telephone and follow up with written acceptance. The ballot will show that the president, vice president, secretary, treasurer and director of retirees are automatic delegates to national and state conventions.

Michelle Splawn, Sec., Br. 439

Hobbs, New Mexico

This is official notice to all members of Branch 3727 that nominations for all branch officers, convention delegates and alternate delegates to the national and New Mexico state convention will take place at the regular branch meeting in October, with election of officers to be held at the regular meeting in December. Installation of new officers will be held in the January branch meeting.

Laura Lopez, Sec.-Treas., Br. 3727

Hopkins, Minnesota

This is official notice to all members of Branch 2942 that nominations for one trustee position will be accepted at the regular branch meeting on Oct. 6 at the Hopkins American Legion, located at 10 12th St. S., Hopkins. The term of office is three years. Letters of intent to serve as delegate to the 2022 Minnesota state convention and national convention must be turned in to the branch secretary prior to the 7 p.m. start of the October meeting.

People may also be nominated orally at the October meeting. Names of all nominees will be read at the Nov.

3 meeting, with mail-in election to follow.

Nominations will also be accepted for the following positions at the Oct. 6 meeting: president, vice president, recording secretary, financial secretary/treasurer, health benefits rep, sergeant-at-arms, trustee, AFL-CIO delegate, stewards and newsletter editor.

Leanna Steinbrunn, Sec., Br. 2942

Hot Springs Natl. Park, Arkansas

This is official notice to all Merged Branch 543 members for nominations for branch president, executive vice president, vice president, recording secretary, financial secretary/treasurer, sergeant-at-arms, Trustees 1 and 3, and delegates to the 2022-2024 national convention. 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 the nomination before the October meeting. The term of office will be until December 2024.

Johnny Johnston, Rec. Sec., Br. 543

Houston, Texas

This is the official notice from Branch 283 about nominations for the four full-time officers, executive board members, delegates and alternate delegates to the 72nd biennial national convention, to be held Aug. 8-12, 2022, in Chicago, IL.

In accordance with Article 5 of the NALC Constitution, this is the official notice to all members of Branch 283 of nominations of delegates and alternate delegates to serve one year as delegates during the year of 2022. Nominations will be accepted during the regular union meeting on Tuesday, Sept. 7, at 7 p.m. at the union hall, located at 2414 Broadway. Any member in good standing and current in payment of his or her dues may run for delegate. Upon nomination, candidates must certify that they have not served or applied for a supervisory capacity in the 24 months prior to nomination. The final day for Election Chairman Anthony Domingo to receive signed nominee acceptance slips will be Friday, Sept. 10, by 12 p.m. at the union hall.

The election will be conducted by secret ballot. Ballots will be mailed on Monday, Oct. 18, and must be returned by 8 a.m. on Monday, Nov. 15. Write-in votes are not permitted. Voting instructions will be enclosed with the ballots. Ballots must be mailed to the hall. All members are requested to keep their mailing addresses current. If you have recently moved, please notify the union hall of your new address by calling 713-641-2366.

All nominees must check for their name on the list posted at their station or in the *Houston Letter Carrier's* September issue. You must report any errors or the omission of your name to the union hall no later than 12 p.m. on Sept. 27. The mailing list will be available for nominee inspection on Sept. 30.

Perla Garza, Rec./Fin. Sec., Br. 283

Hudson Valley Mgd., New York

Please be advised that nominations for the election of officers of Branch 137 will be held at the regular membership meeting on Oct. 20. The meeting will be held at 7 p.m. at the American Legion, located at 221 Saddle River Road, Monsey. All regular members have a right to nominate a can-

didate for any office; for those nominees unable to attend the meeting, written acceptance is permissible.

Nominations will be held for the following positions: president, executive vice president/ MBA, first vice president, second vice president, secretary/treasurer/health benefits representative, assistant secretary/treasurer, director of education, director of retirees, sergeant-at-arms and all three trustee positions. All elected offices are for three-year terms and all the officer positions above (except the sergeant-at-arms and the trustees) are delegates to the local, state and national conventions.

The positions of president, executive vice president/ MBA, first vice president, second vice president, secretary/treasurer/health benefits representative will be voted on by secret mail ballot, and the assistant secretary/treasurer, director of education, director of retirees, sergeant-at-arms and three trustee positions will be voted on by secret ballot at our election meeting on Dec. 8 at 7 p.m. at My Place (by the airport), located at 911 Little Britain Road, New Windsor. Write-in votes are not permitted; retired members who wish to vote and are unable to attend this meeting can contact the election committee at P.O. Box 10666, Newburgh, NY 12552 by Nov. 10 and arrangements will be made for an absentee ballot.

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

Hutchinson, Kansas

This is to serve as notice for all members of Branch 485 that nominations will take place at our regular branch meeting on Thursday, Oct. 14. Nominations will be accepted for president, vice president, secretary, treasurer, steward, sergeant-at-arms, trustee, and for delegates to the 2022 Kansas state training, the 2022 national convention and the 2022 Region 5 rap session. Branch meetings are held in the basement of the Hutchinson post office, 128 E. 1st Ave., Hutchinson, and begin promptly at 7 p.m.

Tyler Bengston, Sec., Br. 485

Killeen, Texas

In accordance with Articles 4 and 5 of local bylaws of Branch 4217, this is the official notice to all members that nominations for all the offices will take place at Yank Sing, 1705 E. Central Texas Expressway, on Sept. 21 at 6:30 p.m.

Ruben Caro Jr., Pres., Br. 4217

Lancaster, Pennsylvania

This is official notice to the membership of Branch 273 that, in accordance with Article 5 of the NALC Constitution and Article 4, Section 2 and Article 5 of the Branch 273 bylaws, nominations for trustee shall be conducted at the monthly branch meeting on Oct. 20, commencing at 7 p.m.

The one trustee position (Michelle Alston's position) is a three-year term, commencing on Jan. 1, 2022, after the installation ceremony held at the regular December branch meeting.

Due to the COVID-19 crisis, self-nominations can be made in writing and mailed to: NALC Branch 273, P.O. Box 7397, Lancaster, PA 17604 and received by 5 p.m. on Oct. 20, or self-nominees can signify in writing to the recording secretary their willingness to serve as an officer

of the branch if elected.

If an election is necessary, it shall be conducted by secret mail ballot. The election committee shall mail a ballot to each member's last known address at least 20 days prior to the Nov. 17 regular branch meeting. The president, immediately following the close of nominations, shall appoint the election committee. The deadline for returning marked ballots shall be 5 p.m. on Nov. 17.

All election results will be announced after the official opening of the Nov. 17 monthly meeting.

Christian Oatman, Rec. Sec., Br. 273

Levittown, Pennsylvania

This is the official notice to all members of Branch 4973 for nominations for the offices of president, vice president, secretary, treasurer, sergeant-at-arms and three trustees. Nominations will be accepted on the third Tuesday meeting in September and October. All elected officers will serve as delegates to the state and national conventions. Following final nominations, ballots will be handed and/or mailed to all members. Ballots will be counted at the November union meeting. All ballots must be postmarked by Nov. 16 and received prior to the union meeting. The results will be announced at the meeting.

John Morlando, Sec., Br. 4973

Lorain, Ohio

This is official notice to all active and retired member of Branch 583 that nominations for the offices of president, vice president, recording secretary, treasurer and trustee will be accepted at the October meeting, held on Oct. 6 at the American Slovak Club, 2915 Broadway Ave., Lorain, at 7 p.m. Any member seeking office and unable to attend on the night of the nominations must indicate by written notice to the recording secretary of their intent.

Elections will be held at the regular meeting held on Nov. 3 at the same location, by secret ballot.

Anthony Ross, Pres., Br. 583

Morrisville, Pennsylvania

Please note: This notice was previously published in the June issue of The Postal Record under Bristol, Pennsylvania. We apologize for the error.

This is official notice to all members of Branch 2572 that nominations are scheduled for the following offices: president, vice president, treasurer, recording secretary, sergeant-at-arms, two stewards and five trustees.

Nominations will be accepted at both September and October meetings, and by mail to P.O. Box 711, Morrisville, PA 19067. Nominations will be closed at the conclusion of the branch meeting on Oct. 5. Elections will be held and decided at the meeting on Nov. 2.

All offices are for a term of one year, from January 2022 through December 2022.

William Rittler, Rec. Sec., Br. 2572

Minnesota

This is an official notice to all members of the Minnesota State Association of Letter Carriers.

Nominations and elections for the office of president, vice president, treasurer,

secretary, editor, executive board and director of retirees will be held at the state convention Oct. 4-5 at Cragun's Resort and Convention Center in Brainerd. The term of office will be for two years.

Two additional Minnesota AFL-CIO delegates and two Minnesota AFL-CIO State Retirees Council delegates will be elected for a term of two years.

Members who have held, accepted or applied for supervisory positions are ineligible to run for and hold office for a period of two years after termination of such status. All candidates must verify upon acceptance that they have not served, accepted or applied for supervisory position within the last 24 months.

Balloting will take place during the Oct. 4 session of the convention. Newly elected officers will be sworn in during the Oct. 5 session of the convention.

Christa Abraham, Sec., MSALC

Napa, California

This is official notice to all members of Branch 627 that nominations of all branch officers will be held at the regular meeting on Oct. 21 at the Branch 627 office, located at Room 112, 1832 Soscol Ave., Napa. Offices for election are president, vice president, recording and financial secretary, treasurer, sergeant-at-arms, three trustees, health benefits and MBA representative. There will also be nominations for the 2022 national convention delegates and alternate delegates. The term of office shall be two years. By virtue of the office, the president shall be first delegate to any convention.

The election will be held at the Napa Post Office by secret ballot. Absentee ballots will be mailed to all retirees and those who request one. All ballots must be received by Election Day. Election Day shall be the date of the November meeting, Nov. 18. Results will be announced at the November meeting. Nominations shall be valid only upon written acceptance by the nominee within five days of the nomination.

David James, Pres., Br. 627

New Jersey

This is official notification to all members of the New Jersey State Association of Letter Carriers that elections for president, first vice president, second vice president, secretary, treasurer, director of education, director of retirees, sergeant-at-arms and all 10 executive board positions will be held at the biennial convention Sept. 26-28 at the Caesars Hotel and Casino in Atlantic City.

All elected positions will be nominated and voted on during this convention. Those elected will serve a two-year term.

Joe Rutkoski, Sec., NJSALC

New York

This is official notice to all members of NYSALC that nomination and election will be held at the NYS biennial convention Oct. 5-7 for the following positions: president, vice president, secretary, treasurer, delegate-at-large, alternate delegate-at-large, director of legislation, director of education, director of retirees and the seven executive board district positions (Tinnelly, Central, Southern Tier, Niagara Frontier, Hudson Valley, Long Island and Caribbean).

Election Notices

All elected positions will be nominated and voted on during this convention. Elected officers will serve a two-year term.

Jay Jackson, Sec., NYSALC

Norfolk, Virginia

This is official notice to inform members of Branch 456 that nominations of all officers and delegates to the 2022 national convention will be held at the October meeting. The elections will be by secret ballot in November. Rules set forth in our bylaws, Article 5, Section 6, apply: Those members nominated from the floor who are not present to accept the nomination must furnish a written acceptance letter to the recording secretary within 10 days. Noncompliance will be noted as a denial. Those nominated but not present must be informed of the nomination by the person who nominated him/her.

Branch meetings are held at the Iron Worker Local Union No. 79, 5307 East Virginia Beach Blvd., on the third Thursday of each month at 7:30 p.m.

Annezett Edwards, Rec. Sec., Br. 456

Northern Virginia

In accordance with Article 5 of the NALC Constitution, this is the official notice to all members of Branch 3520. Nomination of delegates to the 2022 national convention in Chicago will be held at the regular branch meeting on Thursday, Oct. 14, at 7:30 p.m. Elections, if necessary, will be held at the regular meeting of Branch 3520 on Thursday, Jan. 13, 2022. The Branch 3520 regular meeting is held at the Motel 6, Governor Room, 6652 Arlington Blvd., Falls Church.

Deborah Quinn, Sec., Br. 3520

Oak Park, Illinois

This is the official notice to all Branch 608 members that nominations for president, vice president, secretary-treasurer, health benefits representative, sergeant-at-arms, three trustees, and delegates to the state and national conventions in 2022 will be accepted from the floor at the regular branch meeting on Tuesday, Oct. 26, at Commodore Barry American Legion Hall, 6919 West Roosevelt Road, Berwyn, at 5:30 p.m. All terms are for three years.

By virtue of their office, the president and secretary-treasurer are delegates to national and state conventions. The balloting will be done by mail, and the secret ballots will be opened and counted at the regular branch meeting on Tuesday, Nov. 23, at the same location.

Any nominee not present must notify the secretary-treasurer in writing prior to the October meeting, giving assent for nomination.

Charles Kindahl, Sec.-Treas., Br. 608

Panama City, Florida

This is official notice to all Branch 3367 members that the nominations for the election of officers will be held on Oct. 21 at the regular branch meeting at the Golden Corral, located at 105 E. 23rd St., Panama City, at 7 p.m. All members in good standing who have not served in a higher-level management position for any period of two years prior to the nomination date of Oct. 17 are eligible. Candidates must accept nominations at the time made or, if absent, in writing. Candidates may accept

a nomination for only one office.

Nominations will be held for the following branch offices: president, vice president/sergeant-at-arms, recording secretary/HBR-MBA representative, treasurer/financial secretary, three trustees and stewards for all offices. The term of office will be for two years, beginning Jan. 1, 2022.

The candidates elected president and vice president in the forthcoming election shall be delegates to the national and state conventions that will take place during their terms in office. Nominations for up to four more delegates will be accepted. The number of delegates to be sent to the national convention will be determined by available funds and a vote by the members present at the nominating meeting.

The election will be conducted by secret mail ballot. Ballots will be mailed to the home address of eligible members on Nov. 1. Ballots must be mailed back to: Election Committee, P.O. Box 15151, Panama City, FL 32406. Ballots must be received by 5 p.m. on Dec. 10. The election committee will tally the votes at the December meeting. Write-in votes are not permitted.

Barbara Sizemore, Pres., Br. 3367

Puyallup, Washington

This is the official notification to all members of Branch 1484 that nominations for all elected positions will be held at the regular branch meeting on Oct. 14 at Cheers Bar and Grill, located at 4110 South Meridian, Puyallup.

The elected positions are as follows: president, vice president, secretary-treasurer, two shop stewards, sergeant-at-arms, director of retirees and three trustees.

All officers shall be elected for a term of two years, or until their successors are duly elected and installed.

The election will be conducted by a secret ballot at the regular branch meeting to be held on Nov. 11 at Cheers Bar and Grill, located at 4110 South Meridian, Puyallup. Any member who, for any reason, will be unable to attend the Nov. 11 regular branch meeting shall mail their official ballot to the secretary/treasurer of the branch, to be received no later than Nov. 10. Write-in votes are not permitted.

Brian Dunigan, Pres., Br. 1484

Roanoke, Virginia

In accordance with Article 3 of the bylaws of Branch 524, this is an official notice to all members of Branch 524. The monthly Branch 524 business meeting of Tuesday, Oct. 12, is now scheduled for Tuesday, Oct. 19. The time of the meeting remains at 7 p.m. The Branch 524 business meetings are held at the union hall, located at 1015 Georgia Ave. NE, Roanoke.

Jack M. Green, Sec., Br. 524

Salem, Virginia

Branch 1605 will have an election for the following positions: president, vice president, recording secretary, treasurer, health benefits representative, steward and board of trustees. Nominations will be held at the next available meeting after this announcement.

Emily Winters, Acting Pres., Br. 1605

Santa Clara, California

This is official notice that nominations for all officers of Branch 1427 will be held at our Oct. 6 general membership meeting. The general membership meeting will be held at the branch office located at 3350 Scott Blvd., Building 57, Santa Clara. Officers of the branch are president, executive vice president, senior vice president, vice president, secretary, treasurer, assistant secretary/treasurer, insurance/MDA officer, sergeant-at-arms, board of trustees chairperson and three trustees. Candidates must accept the nomination at the time made or, if absent, in writing.

The election, if necessary, will be conducted by secret ballot. Ballots and instructions will be mailed to the home address of eligible members.

Election results will be announced at the general membership meeting on Dec. 1 at the branch office, located at 3350 Scott Blvd., Building 57, Santa Clara.

This is official notice that Branch 1427 will hold nominations for delegates to the 2022 national convention at the Oct. 6 general membership meeting at the union office, located at 3350 Scott Blvd., Building 57, Santa Clara. The national convention will be held in Chicago Aug. 8-12, 2022. Candidates must accept the nomination at the time made or, if absent, in writing.

If necessary, a secret ballot election will be mailed to eligible members in October. The results will be announced at the Dec. 1 general membership meeting at the union office, located at 3350 Scott Blvd., Building 57, Santa Clara.

Jacqueline Rodriguez, Sec., Br. 1427

Sedalia, Missouri

This serves as official notice to all members of Branch 139 that nominations for the office of president, vice president, recording secretary, treasurer, health benefits representative, sergeant-at-arms and three trustees will take place at the regular branch meeting scheduled for 7 p.m. on Tuesday, Oct. 12, at the VFW meeting hall, 121 South Ohio, Sedalia. All officers nominated and elected will serve a two-year term.

If an election is warranted, such election will take place by secret ballot at our regularly scheduled union meeting on Nov. 9. The results will be announced at the November meeting.

Scott Hunter, Pres., Br. 139

South Dakota

This is an official notice to all members of the South Dakota State Association of Letter Carriers. Nominations will be held at the convention on Sept. 17 in virtual format on Webex for the following positions: president, vice president, secretary/treasurer, editor, historian, director of retirees, director of education and three trustees.

Members who have held, accepted or applied for a supervisory position are ineligible to run for or hold office for a period of two years after termination of such status. All candidates must verify upon nomination that they have not served, accepted or applied for a supervisory position within the last 24 months.

Balloting will be conducted by mail-in ballots of those delegates who were in attendance at the convention for any contested position.

Ben Lembcke, Sec.-Treas., SDSALC

South Jersey, New Jersey

This is official notice to all members of Branch 908 that nominations for the election of branch officers, shop stewards and convention delegates for the 2022-2023 term shall take place at the regular monthly meeting of the branch on Wednesday, Oct. 20. Elections shall be by secret mail ballot of the eligible branch membership and held as soon as possible after nominations at the October regular monthly meeting.

Nominations shall be made from the meeting room floor or in writing to the branch recording secretary, mailed or presented to him/her prior to or at the October regular branch meeting. Each eligible member of the branch nominated for office shall accept or reject nomination in writing prior to the adjournment of the October regular monthly branch meeting. Failure to accept nomination for branch office prior to adjournment of the October regular branch meeting will invalidate the nomination. Shop stewards shall be nominated by an eligible branch member from the office at which the nominee is employed to represent the branch membership.

Installation of branch officers, shop stewards and convention delegates shall take place at the regular monthly meeting of the branch in January. Offices up for election include that of the branch president, vice president, recording secretary, treasurer, financial secretary, assistant recording secretary, trustees' chairman, four trustees, health benefits representative, housing chairperson, sergeant-at-arms, letter carrier political fund officer, 19 shop stewards and approximately 36 convention delegates.

The number of convention delegates to be compensated for their attendance at a state or national convention, provided they meet the eligibility requirements for such compensation, shall not exceed 2.5 percent of the total branch membership, which is approximately 18.

Norman Spence, Sec., Br. 908

South Macomb, Michigan

This is an official notice to the membership of Branch 4374 that nominations for election of delegates to the 2022 national convention, in Chicago, IL, will take place at the general membership meeting held Tuesday, Sept. 7, at 7:30 p.m. If needed, elections will be held by mail, per the NALC Regulations Governing Branch Election Procedures, Section 14.0, Conducting Mail Balloting. The election must conclude at the regular general membership meeting held on Tuesday, Nov. 2. If an election is held, write-in votes will not be accepted, nor permitted, and will be void. The meeting(s) will take place at the branch union hall, located at 8124 E. 10 Mile Road, Center Line.

Members need not be present to be nominated, but must submit to the branch a signed nomination acceptance form by 5 p.m. on Thursday, Sept. 9. The number of delegates will be as set forth in Article 4 of the NALC

Constitution. Upon nomination, the candidate must certify that he/she has not served in a supervisory capacity for 24 months prior to the nomination and must be a member in good standing.

To be eligible as a paid delegate, a member must have attended at least nine of the last 12 membership meetings; executive board members must have also attended nine of the last 12 meetings prior to the 2022 national convention in Chicago, IL. Due to the current COVID-19 pandemic, meeting attendance qualifies as in person, virtual or via conference. To be eligible as a paid delegate, the delegate must attend all sessions of the convention, in their entirety, unless otherwise directed or excused by the president.

Beki Serwach, V.P., Br. 4374

S. Suburban Mgd., Illinois

This will serve as official notice to all Branch 4016 members that nominations for the election of officers and stewards for three years, beginning Jan. 1, 2022, as well as delegates to the 2022 state and national conventions, will be held at the regular branch meeting on Oct. 12 at 7:30 p.m. at the American Legion Post 615, located at 17423 South 67th Court, Tinley Park. Candidates must accept nomination at the time made or, if absent, in writing to the branch recording secretary by the time of nomination. Also, nominees must not have applied for or served in a supervisory position for two years prior to nomination.

Nominations will be held for president, vice president, financial secretary/treasurer, recording secretary, MBA representative and health benefit representative, and who, by virtue of their office, shall be automatic delegates to the state and national conventions. The office of sergeant-at-arms and five trustees will also be nominated. The nomination and election of stewards will be made by members of their respective offices.

The election of officers and stewards will be by secret mail ballot. If necessary, the election of delegates to the state and national conventions will be by secret ballot at the regular branch meeting on Nov. 9 at the above-named location.

Daniel Smith, Pres., Br. 4016

St. Cloud, Minnesota

This is official notice to all members of Branch 388 that nominations for all officers and stewards of the branch will take place at the regular scheduled meetings held in September and October. Elections will be held at the regular meeting on Nov. 10. The meetings are held at the Sauk Rapids VFW, located at 901 Benton Drive N., Sauk Rapids.

Lawrence Kroska, Rec. Sec., Br. 388

Starkville, Mississippi

This is official notice of nomination and election of officers of Branch 2291. Nominations for the election of officers of Branch 2291 will be in writing and must be received by the secretary no later than Oct. 2. Nominations will be accepted for the following branch offices: president, vice president and secretary-treasurer. The term of office will be one year, starting Jan. 1, 2022.

The election will be by secret ballot at the regular branch meeting on Nov. 2 at 4:30 p.m. at Lost Pizza, 325 Hwy. 12, Starkville. Requests for absentee ballots must be made to any of the current branch officers no later than Oct. 21.

Nick Gerteis, Pres., Br. 2291

Utica, New York

This is an official notice to all members of Branch 375 that all nominations for the election of officers will take place at the regular meeting on Oct. 14. The following offices will be open for a two-year term: president, vice president, treasurer, secretary, sergeant-at-arms/financial secretary, health benefit coordinator and five trustees.

Elections will be held at the regular meeting on Nov. 11. If you wish to be nominated, you must be in attendance at the October meeting or have a letter of intent on file prior to the meeting. Absentee ballots may be requested through the elections committee at: P.O. Box 4566, Utica, NY 13504. If there are questions, you can leave a message at 315-793-8937. Absentee ballots must be received before the start of the Nov. 11 meeting.

All members are requested to keep their mailing information up to date. If you have moved, please inform the branch of your new address.

Roderick Kallen, Sec., Br. 375

Valparaiso, Indiana

This is official notice to all members of Branch 753 that nominations for all offices of Branch 753 and delegates to the national and state association conventions to be held in 2022. Nominations will be taken at the regular meeting on Oct. 19. The election will be held at the regular meeting on Nov. 16, with the results announced that night. Offices include president, vice president, steward, treasurer, secretary, sergeant-at-arms, health benefits representative and three trustees. Absentee ballots may be obtained from a member of the election committee and must be returned by 4 p.m. on Oct. 19.

Donald Gulbransen, Sec., Br. 753

Vancouver, Washington

In accordance with Article 5 of the branch bylaws, this is the official notice to all members of Branch 1104 that nominations and elections for delegates to the 2022 Washington state convention and NALC national convention will take place from the floor at our regular monthly branch meeting on Oct. 14 at Pied Piper Pizza, located at 12300 NE Fourth Plain Blvd. E, Vancouver, starting at 7 p.m. The candidates for convention delegate positions shall be required to be present at the meeting when nominated, or signify in writing, no later than 7 p.m. at the Oct. 14 branch meeting, the delegate position to which he/she would accept nomination and his/her willingness to serve if elected.

All regular branch members in good standing shall be eligible to hold any delegate position in the branch. If there is to be a runoff election, an election committee of three will be formed by the branch president and ballots will be mailed to the member's last known address on record. The election committee will be responsible for arranging all election procedures and counting ballots. All members are entitled to one vote for both national and state convention delegate, if necessary. Article 5 of the branch bylaws will govern the elections. All ballots must be returned by Nov. 11 by 7 p.m. to be valid and counted; there will be no write-in candidates. The results of the balloting will be announced at the Nov. 11 branch meeting.

Jon Weinberg, Sec., Br. 1104

Western Massachusetts

This is official notice that the triennial elections for all officers and stewards will take place by secret mail ballot, with the ballots due by noon on Dec. 14.

Nominations for all officers and stewards will take place at the regularly scheduled union meeting on Oct. 12.

Nominations for the following positions will be accepted: president, vice president, Upper Valley vice president, secretary, treasurer, health benefits representative, sergeant-at-arms and three trustees.

Lesley Vila, Sec., Br. 46

Wichita, Kansas

This is official notice to the members of Branch 201 that nominations of the 2022 national convention delegates as well as all executive board positions and steward positions will take place at the regular meeting on Oct. 18 at 7 p.m.

Nominations for qualified delegates, officers and stewards in accordance with Article 5, Sections 2 and 7 of the branch bylaws, may also be made in writing to the recording secretary. At the time of nomination, the member nominated must be present or have written consent accepting the nomination on file with the recording secretary.

The president and vice president, by virtue of their elected office, shall be delegates to the national convention.

Election of national convention delegates will be held at the regular branch meeting on Nov. 15 at 7 p.m. Election of executive board members and stewards shall be by mail ballots, if so warranted, which shall be received no later than 10 a.m. on the day of the November branch meeting.

Carol B. Woods, Rec. Sec., Br. 201

Yonkers, New York

To all Branch 387 members: Nominations for union officers will take place at the Oct. 13 general meeting commencing at 6:30 p.m. sharp.

Anthony Giobbe, Sec., Br. 387

In Memoriam

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

Sandra N. Miller	Br. 1630	Dothan, AL	Eugene C. Brown	Br. 352	Central Iowa Mgd.	William M. Brown	Br. 182	Dayton, OH
Henry D. Hansen	Br. 231	Central California	William C. Owens	Br. 443	Hagerstown, MD	Wallace E. Minton	Br. 182	Dayton, OH
Paul W. Stindt	Br. 231	Central California	Frederick E. Reel	Br. 443	Hagerstown, MD	Raymond R. Vannorsdall	Br. 182	Dayton, OH
Billy R. Lennon	Br. 1100	Garden Grove, CA	Jack L. Stroupe	Br. 443	Hagerstown, MD	Fred W. Hibbler	Br. 458	Oklahoma City, OK
Lilia Maldonado	Br. 1100	Garden Grove, CA	John J. Kearns Jr.	Br. 25	MA Northeast Mgd.	Frank E. Gugliuzza	Br. 389	Easton, PA
Robert L. Tegel	Br. 1100	Garden Grove, CA	Melvin L. Prather Jr.	Br. 5530	St. Ignace, MI	Roland B. Sasseville	Br. 55	Pawtucket, RI
Nelson F. Rarang	Br. 1427	Santa Clara, CA	William S. Debes	Br. 908	South Jersey, NJ	Donald D. Malcomb	Br. 491	Sioux Falls, SD
Robert C. Hildebrandt	Br. 1071	South Florida	Victor A. Vitello	Br. 3	Buffalo-Western NY	John E. Satter	Br. 491	Sioux Falls, SD
Warner L. Ward	Br. 321	Pensacola, FL	Nicholas M. Zaccaria	Br. 6000	Long Island Mgd., NY	Gregory O. Pearse	Br. 419	Knoxville, TN
Jeffery D. Garnto	Br. 1068	Dublin, GA	Herman J. Dimeo	Br. 358	Northeastern NY	Ricky L. Bambico	Br. 132	Dallas, TX
La A. yBouchee	Br. 11	Chicago, IL	Edmund J. Kearney III	Br. 358	Northeastern NY	Clifford W. Verill Jr.	Br. 572	Janesville, WI
Terayut Konkrasang	Br. 11	Chicago, IL	David L. Jacobs	Br. 693	Westchester Mgd., NY			
Carrie A. Andrzejewski	Br. 4099	Mount Prospect, IL	Garland M. Andrews	Br. 630	Greensboro, NC			

Branch Items

Albany, New York

Congratulations to Alonda Morman and Leo Daigneault Jr. on being converted to full-time regular in Albany City. Good luck as you begin your careers.

Our branch offers our thoughts and prayers to the family of our departed brother, Peter Ensel, who recently passed away. Peter was a 63-year member of our branch. He served his country as a member of the Navy during World War II. Rest in peace, brother.

Jay Jackson, Branch 29

Anchorage, Alaska

Mark your calendars for the retiree banquet to be held on Sept. 25. Our special guest will be NALC President Fred Rolando. Having President Rolando isn't something you can always have at your events, so you won't want to miss it. Tickets are available from any branch officer or at the union hall. President Rolando was our guest at our annual branch picnic in 2010. That was my first large event as branch president, and I felt honored to have our national president as our guest.

And now, as I host my last event as branch president, I'm honored once again to have President Rolando as our guest. This is my last term, as I will retire as branch president the last day of this year. I've been able to accomplish many of the goals I set when I came into office. One of my main goals was to acquire our own union building. And it has been four years that we've owned our union hall. While it may have been contentious to some at first, I believe the majority of the members have been extremely satisfied with the building and see the benefits. The branch is in good hands as I count down the days to retirement. We have an extremely talented group of officers and stewards. They are highly trained and can match anything management throws at them. We've been recognized many times for the great work our stewards do in representing the membership.

Another goal was that, upon my departure, the branch would have the tools in place to continue providing the membership with the services and representation they have become accustomed to. I've been fortunate to be surrounded by dedicated union brothers and sisters. And that's a goal we should all strive to achieve.

Jim Raymond, Branch 4319

Boston, Massachusetts

As of July 7, the Boston District has had more than 1,625 positive cases of the coronavirus since the first case in early spring 2020. There have been entire weeks without a reported case, but there are still flare-ups with multiple cases in the same office in the same week. Management has not lifted its mask mandate, but it has canceled the monthly COVID-19 Zoom meetings that share information with the local unions.

Management has completed route inspections in Brookline, with data, staffing, more than 30 percent vacant deliveries on routes due to students not back in school and closed businesses, CCAs with no proficiency, or a dry run on

the routes they were assigned to carry were just some of the issues that were not in compliance to conduct a proper route inspection. This is what management now considers a "fair evaluation" of a carrier's route. I did ask the postmaster to wait till the fall, after the COVID-19 MOUs had expired, and that request was denied. Now it will have to wait for an arbitrator to sort out.

Congratulations go out to the 20 CCAs who were converted to career employees on July 3. Additional congratulations go out to recent branch retirees Roger Bresnahan, Mark Adreane, Peter Wienko, Greg Hill, James Porter, Daniel Norton, James Tennihan, Patrick Sheehan,



Above: Buffalo-Western New York Br. 3 honored John Zuffoletto with a 50-year gold card. Below: the branch honored William Liddell, former president of Ham-burg, NY Br. 1822, with a 70-year plaque.



Edward Chinetti, Paul Levasseur, Catherine Murray, Michael Flaherty, Doug Edgerly, Robert Sateriale and John Anastas.

Condolences to the families of active carrier Marc Tuxbury of Fort Point and retired carriers Heyward Myers of Roxbury and Gregory Ashe of Backbay. Rest in peace, our brothers.

Jerry McCarthy, Branch 34

Camden, New Jersey Merged

It finally happened. Our branch held its first in-person general meeting since we entered into the shutdown due to the pandemic. I am very proud of all the letter carriers throughout the U.S., but especially the members of Branch 540. We all entered into this new reality full of unknowns, but we didn't let that stop us. We kept moving forward and lived up to our unofficial motto of, well, you know.

I know I've written quite frequently about the performance of our nation's letter carriers throughout all of this, but it's because I feel so strongly about it. Not only did we continue to deliver the nation's mail, but we also (as a union and union members) continued to lead by example and show everyone else what a professional and dedicated workforce is all about. Our branches continued to represent the members, and our national officers did the same and even successfully negotiated a new National Agreement with our employer.

It took our branch two missed meetings to get our bearings and get with the times. We began holding Zoom meetings, like many other branches, and continued on with the business of representing the members. I was pleased and surprised to see the members pick up, log on and tune in. I'm also proud of our retirees, who took whatever steps necessary to partake in their branch's meetings. On a side note, I grew quite fond of the "mute all" button.

Now things are opening up and we were able to safely meet in person. There is nothing like it. Zoom did the job and allowed us to do the business of the branch, but it's just not the same.

Chuck Goushian, Branch 540

Carmel, Indiana

I would like to challenge every Hoosier letter carrier to help increase our number of contributors to the Letter Carrier Political Fund (LCPF). Our state of Indiana is in second place in our K-I-M Region 6 at 11.18 percent, with Michigan beating us at 11.57 percent and Kentucky at 8.97 percent, according to the February 2021 *Postal Record*. We cannot use union dues for our political agenda. There are people out there and in Congress who would like nothing more than to slash our wages and roll back our benefits. They would like to eliminate collective bargaining and throw our contract out the window.

We have done very well since 2017, with an increase of almost 4 percent, but we can do better! We can be No. 1 in Region 6. We should be proud that we increased our LCPF numbers from 7.38 percent in 2017 up to 11.18 percent in 2020. I think we can do better, and our goal should be to try to catch up with our brothers and sisters up north. The state association is at your service if you want us to come to your branch meetings and help you try to sign up members for LCPF.

Our friends and neighbors might have a hard time understanding how we are receiving four wage increases with seven additional possible COLAs and a new top Step P with our new contract when the USPS is reporting losses in the billions. It is quite simple: You want higher pay? Join a union. You want better job protections? Join a union. You want above-average benefits with affordable health care? Join a union.

The time is now with our back pay and COLA coming up to step up and contribute to the political fund or to increase the amount you give to help protect our jobs.

Knowledge is power!

Ronnie Roush, Branch 888

Charlotte, North Carolina

We at Branch 545 hope that our members have had a wonderful summer. Every one of us knows how hot the summer weather can be and the toll it takes on all of our bodies, but the weather should be breaking soon. Please continue to hydrate throughout the day, take frequent water breaks, use sunscreen and wear light clothing to stay as cool as possible. With the summer coming to an end, and schools starting back, we want all of our carriers to be on high alert for kids coming to and from school.

Also, the branch would like to make sure that all of our members are aware of what is going on politically with the Postal Service. In the Senate, there is S. 1720, the Postal Service Reform Act of 2021, and in the House, there is H.R. 3076. Both of these bills have bipartisan support, with the main issue being the repeal of the Postal Service pre-funding mandate, which has hampered the finances of the Postal Service since it was enacted in 2006. S. 1720 also includes language that would mandate and protect six-day delivery of mail and packages, instead of having to renew it annually. We ask that all of our members of NALC and anyone they know to please contact your senators and House members and push for them to make these bills into law.

The union leaders would like to let all of our members know that we are continuing with our in-person local union meetings. We are holding our meetings the third Tuesday of every month for anyone who is interested in attending, and we are continuing to work within the parameters established by our local government leaders in regard to COVID-19. We look forward to seeing all of our members who are able to make it out.

Justin Fraley, Branch 545

Cleveland, Ohio

“Thank you.” Two little words that mean a lot and are not said often enough. Letter carriers in Northern Ohio are working a tremendous amount of hours. The overtime list for carriers last quarter shows an average of more than 200 hours. Mandatory overtime is an everyday situation. Thank you to every carrier who continues their commitment to a job well done!

Did I mention it is getting hot? Not just global warming and the daily temperature—temperatures, too, could be getting hotter.

The Postal Service, once again, is trying crisis management. The goal was to hire 300 new city carrier assistants by June, and we still have not reached that number. Plus, with a record number of retirements and low retention rate for city carrier assistants, this will be a continuing problem.

The new CCA pilot program needs to be used across the country. Currently, CCAs (at least from Branch 40) are being sent to other stations within their probationary period and being worked 50-plus hours a week. Management needs to understand that letter carriers have lives outside the Postal Service. “Thank you” needs to become a part of management’s everyday vocabulary.

With that being said, the Ohio State Association biennial convention was held in Cleveland

July 21-24. I would like to thank all of the active and retired letter carriers who volunteered to make this event a success. Thank you to all of the branches who took sponsorship in the event program. From sponsorships to bag stuffing, registering delegates, purchasing the all-important “beverages” for the hospitality room to staffing the event—thank you all!

Erick Poston, Branch 40

East Lansing, Michigan

I want to commend those brothers and sisters from the Northwest states who suffered and persisted, doing excellent work delivering mail in the recent heat wave afflicting that part of the country. I have a conservative friend who vacationed in Oregon to “get away from the heat of North Carolina” and found himself “feeling right at home” in triple-digit heat. After the many heat-related deaths in Oregon and Washington, I asked him what he thought we should do about it. “They should all get air conditioning” was his response. “You don’t think it’s finally time to do something about global climate change?” I asked. “No,” he replied, “that heat-dome thing was a thousand-year event, it’ll never happen again.” Tell that to my uncle who recently and reluctantly moved from Wyoming because in the past five years, the forest fires in his area never stopped burning.

It’s clear that climate change is upon us, and much quicker than we thought. The time is now to adapt. That’s why the new vehicles the P.O. is getting to replace the LLVs should be all EVs, and yes, they should all have air conditioning. A good first step toward adaptation is to get rid of the deadwood, the major stumbling block we still must deal with, and that’s DeJoy. Why he’s still around dragging us down, I don’t understand. His departure is inevitable and we should be preparing for life without DeJoy. And after he’s gone, we’ll still need to weed out his cronies, his enablers. Change is coming but maddeningly slow; I hope it’s soon enough to save us.

Finally, if you’re still not vaccinated, you’re likely a Trump follower. Somehow, the situation had evolved where COVID-19 almost exclusively strikes unvaccinated, mostly Republican voters whose only cure is to admit they were wrong.

Mark Woodbury, Branch 2555

Emerald Coast, Florida

I am not going to talk about what carriers are not doing, nor am I going to talk about what management should or should not be doing. I have been thinking about what we as union officers and stewards should be doing. When we were sworn in, we promised to protect and uphold the Constitution, protect the resources we were placed in charge of and marshal the National Agreement, which included protecting the carrier’s rights. Sometimes this can be a difficult thing to do. We attempt to share information with the carriers so that they are aware of issues that concern them. A favorite one is explaining the holiday schedule repeatedly, but this is our job, and we should not mind keeping the carriers informed.

When management is violating the contract and forcing carriers to constantly be carrying off their assignment, we are *supposed* to file for them, whether they want us to or not. We are obligated to protect the carriers and the contract. At *no* time should we ignore a violation, whether the carrier wants you to file or not, nor should we refuse to file for the carrier or ask them to not file a grievance, because even if we ask them not to do this, it is their grievance at the informal level.

If we start making deals with management, we are making a deal with the devil. This job can be frustrating at times when we try hard to work for the carriers and they sometimes have their self-serving motives in mind. I just ask that the next time a carrier comes to you because they feel that they have been violated, listen, investigate and file if there is a violation.

Percy Smith Jr., Branch 4559

Evansville, Indiana

When last we wrote a missive for the *Postal Record* Branch Items, we spoke of the need for more OJT time for new CCA hires, and how we were going to attempt to negotiate more training time into our LMOU.

Well, we tried. As I said then, it may not be one of the 22 items, but we’re going to try. Evansville sent up four impasse items to the NBA’s office, but more CCA training was not one of them. Wasn’t because we didn’t put a very reasonable proposal on the table for our postmaster to consider—we did. But CCA training simply wasn’t one of the 22 items listed in Article 30 that we are allowed to impasse. A pity.

I will say, however, to the postmaster’s credit, that at least three of our CCAs have been sent for additional training with a different trainer, because they were struggling—one single day. But I must question how many more of our CCAs would be better letter carriers if they were given more time with an on-the-job trainer when they were first hired.

This Branch Item may seem more like I am acquiescing to management, but good deeds should be rewarded. I was out on a very hot, humid day recently, delivering cold water and Gatorade to carriers from the River City station—didn’t have any ice-cold watermelon; be a couple more weeks yet for Posey County melons—when a carrier I pulled up on declined my offer of bottled water. Said his supervisors had just stopped by and provided him with cold water.

I won’t mention any names. I don’t want the two supervisors to get a big head. But that’s the way management is supposed to operate. That’s my idea of proper street supervision.

Al Griffin, Branch 377

Fresno, California

I do not understand our PMG’s rationale. He claims slowing down mail delivery service will make it better. Can you imagine our fire department slowing down its response time to improve safety? Maybe not the best example.

I looked up some numbers provided by the Postal Service. From 2015 to April 1, 2021, the USPS has 4,078 more employees, 6.4 million

Branch Items

more delivery points, delivers 2.8 billion more parcels annually, has 4,802 more delivery routes, and has 16,608 more vehicles. These are the numbers. It must be a matter of physics that goes over my head. I do not get it. Retail office visits did drop by 151.4 million during the same time period. That's it! The puzzle is solved. Well, maybe not. It's a classic case of postal management and craft not thinking the same.

One thing that does remain the same is our goal of providing the best possible mail delivery service to our patrons. That is our bread and butter to survival of our jobs and mail delivery. Let's not forget how it also provides a decent retirement for our retirees. Despite crazy thinking by our PMG, providing timely, efficient mail delivery should not include slowing it down. We will all be better off for it, and our patrons and businesses will continue to support us. Continue to provide great service, and be proud of it.

Jesse Dominguez, Branch 231

Greensboro, North Carolina

Recent COVID-19 news items should draw our attention. First, North Carolina Gov. Roy Cooper, who has done a relatively good job handling the state's pandemic, announced his worry that a new spike in serious COVID-19 cases may be coming. My immediate thought: Current active letter carriers and other postal workers in North Carolina and across the U.S., as essential workers, possibly will have to experience again the hazardous conditions and protocols prevailing during the earlier upsurges of the coronavirus.

Days later, a Pfizer corporate medical official announced that a third Pfizer "booster" shot could now be anticipated. Pfizer Corporation is one of the biggest and most profitable pharmaceutical companies in the world and could reap fantastic private profit from extra booster shots. In response, the CDC and FDA pushed back on Pfizer Corp. Dr. Anthony Fauci, Biden's chief medical adviser, echoed the CDC/FDA position. While not ruling out the possibility, Fauci said it's too soon for the government to recommend another shot.

The new stronger Delta variant is clearly raising concerns about COVID-19 disease everywhere. New coronavirus variants are generated by continued massive spread of the disease among the unvaccinated and the under-vaccinated, including in the U.S., where vaccine is plentiful! However, Pfizer's "premature announcement" will discourage thousands of skeptical U.S. citizens from getting the current double shot, thereby increasing the selfish, individualistic conduct that denies our collective social responsibility for dealing with the coronavirus and may even make an additional shot necessary.

Effective safety representation by the national leadership of NALC, APWU and other postal unions in timely negotiations with postal management saved countless lives of our members and community members throughout the pandemic. As union brothers and sisters, we know that "in our unity lies our strength." We know "we are our sisters' and brothers' keepers!"

Richard A. Koritz, Branch 630

Hagerstown, Maryland

With a bevy of conversions to regular on the horizon, now would be a good time to advise the newly converted of their rights as regulars. The most evident right will be your ability to choose whether you want to work as an Overtime Desired, Work Assignment or No Overtime (eight-hour) carrier. Each of the lists have their own unique features regarding how long you can expect to work on an average day. Another new right you will gain is two regularly scheduled days off, which is still my favorite feature after years of being a part-timer. There are many other benefits to having made regular after years of being part time that you will find beneficial to a suddenly much-improved work-life balance.

The most important postal issue in national news is postal reform. As of this writing, the postal reform bills have 43 co-sponsors in the House and 20 co-sponsors in the Senate. However, there are no representatives from our local tri-state area who are co-sponsoring these bills. It is urgent that we all write our local representatives and urge them to act on the bills. This may be the closest we come to achieving postal reform and to fail now when we are so close would be devastating for our future.

However, in the Senate, we do have one area co-sponsor in Joe Manchin (D-WV), so we should all be urging the other five senators to co-sign as soon as possible so that we can hopefully move this bill forward. This bill has broad bipartisan support, ranging from as far right as Josh Hawley (R-MO) to as far left as Bernie Sanders (I-VT). This issue is not political, but for our future, it is critical that it pass this political test.

In solidarity—

Jeremy Kessel, Branch 443

Kansas City, Missouri

I recently added Prevagen to my daily medicine regime, with the belief I will soon be able to remember more today than yesterday. I mean, I am well aware that the USPS is not what it was 20 years ago. Shucks, I have been convalescing for a week, and it is quite possible that there may be a new batch of CCAs on board when I return.

If perception is an individual's reality, then I seriously question what is real. Is it real that the work ethic of this generation of letter carrier fits this generation, rather than what my generation (50-plus) is accustomed to? For that matter, how do our customers interpret the service they receive today, compared to the past. "Where's my package?" versus "Whatever." While there is no doubt plenty has changed in our society, NALC has successfully kept pace. The advent of the CCA, insight for the Leadership Academy, the strategic utilization of retirees in the legislative battle. Institution of safety protocols and guidelines for conducting our mission as its membership performed in imminent danger (COVID-19), and another CBA. The Postal Strike in the '70s made today's gains possible. I recognized and could relate to the sacrifice, courage and unity required to accomplish what they did. Right about now, it would be safe to say, though many have signed up to be NALC members, few have

become active in their degree of participation, to not only maintain our gains, but to create a better path for those who follow. If the internally initiated turmoil we created with the attendance crisis isn't resolved soon, how prepared are we, as a unified entity, for the external battles looming over the horizon? Today is the tomorrow you thought about yesterday—better get active now.

Calvin Davis, Branch 30

Knoxville, Tennessee

Hello, brothers and sisters. Carriers have accidents. No way around it, but simply having an accident is not grounds for discipline (per national-level decision M-00744). However, if you have an accident, you are required to report it, and in Tennessee, you are required to report an accident if property damage exceeds \$400. If you have one and do not report it, well, that is another story. Particularly if you were caught on camera. Cameras do not lie. If you value your job, fess up and let management know what the circumstances were that led to the accident. It is extremely difficult to win this scenario at all levels of dispute resolution.

Now that we are well into the "dog days of summer," carriers are reminded to protect themselves from heat stress. So, one factor in heat illness is liquid intake, meaning lack of water intake. OSHA recommends at least one pint of water per hour during the day, and if you are working the next day, drink a pint (large glass) the night before. One is considered hydrated when their urine has a clear appearance.

Symptoms of heat exhaustion include headache, dizziness or fainting, weakness and wet skin, irritability or confusion, thirst, nausea or vomiting. Risk factors for heat illness: driving a postal vehicle, high temperature and humidity, direct sun exposure and no breeze or wind. City carriers can replenish their water containers at designated locations on the route as necessary. These locations will be authorized by management based on input from the city carrier regularly assigned to the route (M-01860). The bottom line is common sense and good judgment. Stay safe out there!

Tony Rodriguez, Branch 419

Louisville, Kentucky

Well, we're opened back up, but your mask should still be on (that's if you're not vaccinated), although the Post Office has put out that we are still required to wear masks, per policy. And as most carriers push the issue on this, the number of COVID-19 cases is on the rise again here in Kentucky.

If you haven't seen it on Facebook, carriers are anticipating when we'll receive the contractual back pay dating back to 2019! The guess is on, and the prediction is the Aug. 20 PP17 check. There isn't any official word, but you know carriers want the scoop.

We're still feeling the pain of not being able to hire enough CCAs, and the retention rate is still low. The Post Office idea of hiring more candidates is you, the carrier, carrying postcards door to door to draw them in. Since this is the

best idea they could come up with, we'll most likely be shorthanded for the rest of the year.

Looking forward to much-needed fundraising for MDA and socializing with our members. Our cornhole tournament will be pushed indoors due to the weather, and most carriers can't attend because they are forced to work Sundays. Even though we're struggling in attendance, our community activities coordinator, Missy Harris, is doing a wonderful job of finding alternative ways to fundraise.

Stay optimistic and stay safe. Remember, knowledge is power!

Adriane Shanklin, Branch 14

Minneapolis, Minnesota

For months, COVID-19 has caused forced isolation for many. Much of our interaction during this time has been through social media. When we have gone into public, we did so wearing masks and at a distance of 6 feet. Our personal interactions quickly became impersonal.

During the pandemic, the common phenomena of mean and rude conduct on social media easily moved into public behavior. Physical distancing and masks became an excuse for social detachment from social graces for many. With the lifting of COVID-19 restrictions, we now have a choice to make. Will we allow uncivil conduct to become the norm, or will we return to Minnesota nice?

There is a concept called the six degrees of separation. The theory is, that all people are, on average, six social connections or less from each other. Wouldn't it be wonderful if we could all move from the 6 feet of distance as strangers, into an acknowledgement our six-degree connection? After all, it is much more difficult to be rude and disrespectful to someone who isn't a stranger.

The habits formed in the last year could, for some people, be hard to break. As letter carriers, we have the ability to effect change. We are in the public every day. We can be a catalyst in the return to normal discourse, congeniality and good manners. Working together for a goal and worthy cause is what we do as a union. It's time to take that cause beyond the confines of ourselves to make a positive change in our communities. All it takes is patience, a smile, word of encouragement or act of kindness. We can do this. We are Branch 9 strong.

In solidarity—

JoAnn Gilbaugh, Branch 9

Monterey, California

Will the fourth time be a charm? We got decisions in our favor for our three non-compliance grievances, and management *again* failed to comply. Using data from a period when the routes weren't even in the same configuration, they only decided three of the routes were out of adjustment—*not!*

Failing to talk to the carriers and failing to pay the required penalty. You just can't make this stuff up. I hope our next grievance will bring a stronger penalty and someone with some sense will explain to management that you don't get

to choose when you do or don't comply. Many thanks to James Henry for all of his hard work.

Wishing Dan Killough the happiest of retirements. Dan is a retired Navy veteran and awesome letter carrier. He will now have all sorts of time to enjoy his grandson, who he adores.



Milwaukee, WI Br. 2 President Ron Kania (r) presented retired member Sebastian Hirsch with a 70-year plaque and pin.

Great working with you, Dan—the best is yet to come!

Wishing our second in seniority, Robert Flores, a speedy recovery. Make sure that your wishes are known and those who can make decisions are identified. If not, it can be a tremendous challenge. I'm still confused why no one called to do a welfare check on him, but thanks to Michelle English, who brought it to my attention, we got him help. We just don't know how long Robert laid on the floor, but certainly longer than he should have. I do know, Robert is a fighter, overcoming challenges no one should have to face. We all love you, buddy!

With summer here, make sure you carry enough water and stay hydrated. Lots of folks are having heat-related issues.

Attend your union meetings and learn your rights. The best offense is a great defense.

United we bargain; divided we beg.

Patty Cramer, Branch 1310

New Orleans, Louisiana

Greetings, brothers and sisters.

We have concluded our one-day state convention held in the capital city. It was very successful and exhilarating!

Kudos to the treasurer and the director of retirees on being re-elected to their positions. The LSALC board is intact and strong. We have strong leadership and experience in the state association. So, for the next two years, I can truly say it is in good hands. We're moving on up!

In the midst of this pandemic, people are moving about as if we were back to normal. What is normalcy? Dr. Fauci stated even vaccinated persons should wear masks indoors due to variants of COVID-19. We are flying, motor-ing, just traveling about free as a bird. What are the consequences? We will find out. There are only two choices—vaccinate, or not vaccinate. The choice is yours, America! Hope everyone is safe, healthy, and enjoying life to the fullest. Keep up the good deeds, continue to fight the

fine fight. CCAs who have been converted to PTF status, congratulations on the road to regular career carrier! Familiarize yourself with the *M-39* and *M-41* manuals. Continue to grow in your job. Continue to attend branch meetings. Give to LCPF.

We are now in the midst of hurricane season. Be vigilant and take heed of warnings, escape with your very life. The weather is very hot and humid, so do hydrate, hydrate. If you feel overheated, please get out of the sun and drink plenty of liquids.

As always, yours in unionism—

Marshall Wayne Smith, Branch 124

Norristown, Pennsylvania

Got a lot feedback from my last scribe article I wrote,

“That was awesome,” these words I quote,

So I thought, “Hey I’ll do the same,”

So get your mind ready for the “Joel train”!

The window is back; 6:30 be done,

There’s plenty of overtime for everyone.

Contract says yeses must work 12,

Before the noes are put through hell,

Early starting would fix this problem,

Working less noes, now that’d be awesome.

It’s the reason that we got off the list,

Stop running our lives; time to cease and desist,

We love our jobs and our customers too,

We love our family way more than you.

Service to us is what matters,

So yesterday that window got shattered,

It’s just a tool to make carriers go faster,

I have to say it’s a recipe for disaster.

Skipping breaks and cutting corners,

An easy way to make our routes shorter,

It doesn’t help you if you’re running your route,

They’ll just give you more without a doubt.

I’m not saying this to start any wars,

But the route we lose could be yours,

We are professionals, alas, it’s true,

Have each other’s backs is what we do.

Like a family, we have different opinions,

Don’t let management start a division,

We are strong when we stay united,

Strong as one—easier to fight ’em,

Help each other make it through the day,

Maybe soon we’ll get more CCAs.

Let’s teach them to do the job right,

A great letter carrier isn’t born overnight,

We can tell them it’s a great career,

Easy to say when retirement is near.

Memories are the pains we feel,

Some scars are hard to conceal,

So let’s do what we gotta do,

You look out for me, I’ll look out for you.

God bless the red, white and blue,

And with that, I bid you adieu!

Joel Stimmler, Branch 542

South Jersey, New Jersey

Has anyone noticed how many of our seasoned carriers are now running for the door to get out? It doesn’t surprise me in the least that our older members have had enough. Between the COVID-19 atmosphere and the forced overtime, who in their right mind would want to continue this job? This job was really a

Branch Items

great job prior to this pandemic, but now has become an albatross around everyone's neck. The Postal Service can't keep its new CCAs for any extended time because of continued abuse. USPS keeps asking us what we need to do to keep them, but it continues to do its own thing and ignore our suggestions. Yeah, it was nice to see the new raises in the contract, but the Postal Service isn't concerned because the top-salaried employees are leaving. It knows for a fact there won't be that many new employees who will ever attain the top salary, because they would have to stay for 12 and a half years to reach that number.

I don't know how many brothers and sisters have told me that they would love to stay for a couple of more years, but the atmosphere has forced their hand. I truly believe management has taken the approach of our new PMG to do what it takes to reduce costs, regardless of its impact on the Service. I can still remember the days when we would be so mad at ourselves for miscasing one letter for our routes. The days of caring about the mail are totally gone. It is a sad state of affairs we are a part of today, but I'm still hopeful things will get better.

Gary DiGiacomo, Branch 908

Petersburg, Virginia

Ask one of the many customers on Mr. Perkinson's City Route 312 to tell you about their mailman, and you are surely in for a funny anecdote or heartfelt story. In fact, George Perkinson has been the mailman for the last 14 years on City Route 312 in Petersburg. Prior to his current route, he delivered mail for close to 20 years on the other side of the city, making his total service in the organization 34 years.



George Perkinson

Aside from being a "million-mile safety driver" under the United States Postal Service's standards, Mr. "Perk," as many in the community know him, really "perks" up his customers and co-workers daily with his laugh, comforting advice and ever-present smile. At the end of June, he will have a new reason to smile: He's looking forward to "no more clock rings."

Mr. Perkinson has seen the city and the USPS change around him throughout the last 34 years, but he has always remained a constant. He fondly remembers decades ago, when his wife brought his son, Michael, to see him on his mail route and he would carry him on his shoulders up to a house before giving Michael mail to place in a lucky customer's mailbox.

It is not often you find a mailman who consistently works 12-hour shifts as well as his scheduled off days after 34 years in the service in order to ensure that all mail gets delivered every day. This mission is important to Mr. Perk, and he takes it very seriously.

At the end of June, Mr. Perkinson had a new mission: spending time with his family in the Outer Banks of North Carolina. We all wish him the best in what is sure to be a long and relaxing retirement!

Cara Neri, Branch 326

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

It has been a hellish 17 months for all of us. Words cannot do justice to what we have been through. Many of us have contracted COVID-19 or been exposed to this terrible disease, or have lost family, friends and co-workers. To all of you, I want to express my deepest sympathy as well as my warmest admiration to all of the letter carriers who continue to serve the many neighborhoods that embrace Philadelphia.

In 2020, the Philadelphia Council AFL-CIO celebrated virtually its 33rd annual Labor Day parade. Branch 157 submitted a short film, as many other unions had, to show solidarity, despite the ill-fated pandemic that prevented us from marching in person down Columbus Boulevard.

I am pleased to announce that the 34th annual AFL-CIO Labor Day parade will return to Columbus Boulevard. Yes, once again we will be able to gather with family, friends and laborers from the more than 100 local labor unions representing close to 200,000 working men and women in the public sector, private industry, and the building and construction trades.

On Sept. 6, at 8:30 a.m., it is my sincere hope you will join your union brothers and sisters in attending this family celebration. Food, refreshments, children's activities, make and take crafts, and live music will be provided. Branch 157 will cover the fees for our members in attendance.

As they say, "Timing is everything!" We have been separated and isolated from each other for what seems like forever. I cannot think of a better occasion to see each other again as we celebrate and honor the social and economic achievements of the American worker.

God bless you all, and I look forward to seeing you at the Labor Day parade.

Stay safe, stay hydrated and get vaccinated!

Joe Rodgers, Branch 157

Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

Two hundred and two. The number standing between you and happiness; between you and stability. Double Disney's Dalmatians? No. Scientific notation? Not a chance. With the lead time for print magazines, I hope this article is less relevant by the time you read it.

Another month, more inaction in Congress regarding postal reform. The current proposed legislation would repeal the Postal Accountability and Enhancement Act of 2006. Make no mistake—the pre-funding mandate was a false bill of goods and veiled attempt at privatization. It is my belief that legislators at the time believed that no organization could survive—let alone thrive—under those conditions and would leave the USPS wounded and vulnerable.

Why no activity on the new bill? Because of 202. Section 202, that is. The phrase "integrated delivery network of mail and parcels" has hair standing on the necks of multiple interests. These groups, including UPS, are mobilizing to have this particular phrasing struck from the bill completely. Why? Because they believe that USPS could use first-class mail to subsidize lower parcel rates, causing it to lose market share.

Other entities are moving because they believe they'll be the ones stuck with the parcel profitability gap. We cannot sit idly by.

By now, I'm certain you've seen the alerts from the NALC Member App to contact your congresspeople. This is the precise reason that you should have received a letter from the branch on the topic. Become a nuisance. If you're a retiree, make a few phone calls to your reps and pay it backward to those working currently. The Angel Number 202 symbolically means, "that to get absolute harmony in life is demanding; thus, it requires your dedication and hard work." Ironically, 202 is the area code for Washington, DC, and *that* is the place that your hard work will lead to harmony for the foreseeable future.

John Conger II, Branch 84

Portland, Oregon

Branch 82's vice president and dear friend, Jim Baxter, died suddenly on Thursday, June 10. Jim was a constant part of Branch 82 for more than 20 years. He held multiple positions, including shop steward, trustee, executive board member, chief steward and lastly as vice president.



Jim Baxter

There will never be another Jim Baxter. He was one of a kind. Even in the toughest of times, he was optimistic and kept a good attitude. It was infectious. Jim liked to work hard, and he did so, but he liked to have fun while doing it. He didn't care about being flashy or making a big scene about it. He never bragged or boasted; he just cared about doing things the right way.

Baxter never got frustrated with the neediest of members, and every grievance he looked at, regardless how ridiculous it was, he thought he could get something out of it. "I think that has a little shine to it..." Jim was always results-driven, and he never gave up on a member. He would do anything I asked of him. He would show up early and work late. He was experienced, thoughtful and a joy to be around.

Jim Baxter spent a career in service to Branch 82, and there are generations of letter carriers who owe him thanks. He saved countless jobs, vigorously upheld the contract, and got letter carriers thousands and thousands of dollars in violations. He imparted his wisdom, wit and friendship to everyone around him. We are all fortunate to have had him in our lives. For me, Jim was one of my closest advisors and dearest friends.

Thank you, Jim Baxter, for everything that you have given me and given to this union. I will never forget you.

David Norton, Branch 82

Providence, Rhode Island

"Insanity is doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results."—Albert Einstein

A few months ago, our station underwent a managerial change, and it's been quite the adventure since then, to say the least. A move



Above: Racine, WI Br. 436 President Paul Hummer (r) presented Henry Anderson with a 50-year gold card. Below: Br. 436 Recording Secretary Jim Buhler (r) presented Eugene Haluska with a gold card.



I'm sure upper management was hoping for the better, has only seemed to have made things worse. Seemingly every day we are given pieces or told to pivot and just in time for the summer weather! And we've heard all the lies you could think of in response to our explanations of how we won't be able to accomplish our routes and be able to pivot. I was even told at one point that waiting around for parcels to finish being pitched in the morning actually helped me (and yes, I'm serious).

My co-workers and I can't remember a stretch quite like these last few months. We were hoping for a return to normalcy as we exit the pandemic, but unfortunately, we've been having similar results. To sum it all up, insanity seems like an appropriate word to describe the workplace more often than I would like to. Hopefully, we turn a corner and I can bring some more positive news next time out—until then, be safe, everyone.

Also, our monthly in-person union meetings will resume as of Wednesday, Sept. 8, due to Labor Day, at the APWU hall. Look forward to seeing you all again.

Anthony Turcotte, Branch 15

Racine, Wisconsin

It is an honor for Branch 436 to recognize and congratulate retirees Dave Willing, Eugene "Spider" Haluska and Henry Anderson with the presentation of their 50-year life membership gold cards. Their lifelong contributions and continued support of Branch 436 were, and continue to be, instrumental in the shaping of this branch.

An interesting footnote: Our three honored gold card members have been retired collectively longer than the latter 10 carriers on our seniority list combined have in years of service with the Post Office. All three rightfully take

their spot in the Honor Roll section of *The Postal Record*.

We also congratulate our newest retiree to the last punch bunch. Congratulations, Tim Albrecht! Tim retired after 41½ years with the Postal Service. Thanks Tim; time served!

Chris Paige, Branch 436

Rockville, Maryland

On July 7, we had our first in-person union meeting in 16 months! Actually, it was a hybrid meeting with some members participating via Zoom. All said, the meeting went rather well. We are getting back to normal one baby step at a time. Thank goodness!

On June 11, we had an Intervention meeting at the Frederick Post Office. The behavior of one of the supervisors there was totally unacceptable. His actions toward hardworking letter carriers were reprehensible and, in fact, dangerous!

I want to thank our NBA, Vada Preston, and his regional grievance assistant, Alton Branson, for their unwavering support during this Intervention meeting with Frederick management. It was agreed that the supervisor causing most of the problems would be moved out of supervising city letter carriers except on Sundays. The rest of the meeting went fantastic as well.

I want to thank Terrence Lee Super, 4th vice president of Greater East Bay, CA Branch 1111, for his fine article in their June newsletter. He wrote about mandatory overtime and mentioned a prior arbitration win where the non-ODLs were paid an *additional 500 percent* for Article 8, Section 5G violations! This is the largest amount I have ever seen for the non-ODLs. Even the ODLs won an escalating remedy. The language in this arbitration is as good as it gets. I highly recommend that stewards read it. Search "C-30973" for one of the best arbs ever!

I want to thank our vice president, Chuck Clark, and steward Steve Klein for winning thousands of dollars for our members concerning violations of M-01915. Management is not to send our members to other post offices, to the extent possible. Management is regularly violat-

ing this. And, we are escalating the remedy in order to attain contract compliance!

Kenneth Lerch, Branch 3825

St. Louis, Missouri

Secretary of Retirees Nicki Prado and I had the pleasure to take a road trip to present one of our senior union brothers with his 70-year plaque as a member of Branch 343.

Jim Kluepers enlisted in the Navy near the end of World War II and was assigned to the military police at Pearl Harbor. Discharged from the Navy in 1947, Jim began his 43-year career with the Postal Service.

Jim recalled, "I was hired on as a temporary indefinite substitute, no guaranteed hours, days or assignments. I worked an entire month and only made \$42. I had serious doubts if this was the career for me. From 1950 to 1952, Whittier legislation prevented anyone from making regular.

"You had to remember the union didn't have a lot of clout in those days. Everything, wages and benefits, had to be granted through legislation and the only muscle we had was writing and appealing our case to Congress."

Jim served this union as a shop steward and a station collector, and maintained the hospital fund. Following retirement, he served as the treasurer of retirees and he, along with his wife Anna, who served as the president of Auxiliary #11, were fixtures at the annual OI' Timers' Day and St. Louis Labor Day parades.

Jim is a district service officer for the American Legion District 8 VFW and founding member of the Cedar Hill VFW. That involvement included taking veterans to doctor's appointments and visiting wounded service men and women at the veterans' hospitals.

Jim's message to the current generation of letter carriers: "Fight for what is right and never forget that every benefit you enjoy today was not given to you by a grateful Postal Service. It was fought for and won by your union."

Tom Schulte, Branch 343

COLA: Cost-of-living adjustment

- ▶ Following the release of the June consumer price index (CPI), the fourth cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) under the 2019-2023 National Agreement is projected to be **\$1,726 annually**. This COLA is based on the change in the CPI from the base index month to July 2021, with the previous three COLAs subtracted. The previous three COLAs will be paid retroactively to their contractual effective dates.
- ▶ The 2022 projected COLAs for the Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS) and the Federal Employees Retirement

System (FERS), which are based on the CPI's increase between the third quarter of 2020 and third quarter of 2021, is **5.1 percent** and will be finalized with the publication of the September 2021 CPI in October 2021.

- ▶ The 2022 projected COLA under the Federal Employees' Compensation Act (FECA) is **4.9 percent** following the release of the June CPI. This COLA is based on the change in the CPI between December 2020 and December 2021.

Visit nalc.org for the latest updates.

Branch Items

Saint Paul, Minnesota

July 2 was a pretty exciting day for many people. It was the Friday before the first holiday weekend without masks for 18 months, the



St. Louis, MO Br. 343 honored Jim Klumbers with a 70-year plaque. Pictured (l to r): Branch Secretary of Retirees Nicki L. Prado, Klumbers and his wife, Anna.

weather in Minnesota was sunny and hot, and it was the first time carriers could try out this new AL in lieu of holiday pay for working on their scheduled holiday. For me, it held its own special significance—July 2 was the first time my TSP balance ended at more than \$100,000.

That may be small potatoes to some of you old timers, but for me, with an Enter on Duty Date of March 6, 2015, it means that I, and my family, have been able to sock away and grow \$100k in a little more than six years of being a regular. I'm not near ready to retire yet, but I know I'm well on my way because I am thinking about it, and preparing for it now.

The scary thing is that \$100k might have been not that much less than the total I would retire with if I had left my TSP and deductions at the default level (3 percent to the G Fund) that it was set at when I became regular. Walking away after 20 or 30 years of missing matching contributions and making less than inflation in interest is a mistake that I fear far too many of us make. Please don't let it be you.

Were the markets irrationally positive during the pandemic? Maybe. Has that resulted in some non-repeatable returns? Sure. But, even without that, there is no substitute for saving early and paying some attention to where your money is and how/if it is working for you. Don't put retirement planning off. It's not worth it.

Colin Walker, Branch 28

San Antonio, Texas

A disturbing trend I've seen recently in grievances locally is evidence of deals made between carriers and management that are in conflict with the National Agreement. Of course, when a steward challenges the resulting violations in the grievance procedure, the first words in management's contentions discuss how the steward is acting in bad faith because if no one in the office is complaining about it, there's no reason for the union to be involved.

It's a divisive tactic and it works only when carriers and/or stewards allow management to control the narrative.

There's nothing wrong with getting along with your manager. It's actually preferable, as long as you don't lose sight of the contractual protections that NALC has negotiated to keep local managers from being able to manipulate you.

Please be sure to look out for your safety. It's sometimes easy to take precautions for granted, but that's when you become vulnerable. Don't fall into that trap: too many people will miss you.

Jim Ruetze, Branch 41

Seattle, Washington

Whenever Jo Ann Pyle came striding into our station as Branch 79 president, the managerial personnel would immediately stiffen, as if they had suddenly grown a backbone. Then they'd follow around behind her, fawning away over her shoulder about how busy we were that day, as if on other days we had extreme lulls in activity. Then she would natter back about the National Labor Relations Board and union rights and, reluctantly, they'd socially distance themselves—trailing in her wake, pleading and pestering about the need for brevity. I'm sure there's some sort of requirement; I mean they had to be alerted to her coming, forewarned in the way a weather forecaster might predict the arrival of a typhoon. It seemed surprising that they should be so set back on their heels by her presence. What had they forgotten to batten down? But it was just a wellness visit, simply a checkup.

That was back in the 1980s. I was relatively new as a steward, and she was new, too, as a branch president. Given past practice, one can only assume that management thought to administer a heavy dose of harassment and intimidation, which of course they applied liberally to anyone "new," with the expectation that this panacea, this Balm of Gilead would chase her back out the door. It didn't. Sometimes management is just extra stupid. A person doesn't just topple off the turnip truck and land at the helm of a union branch. This woman had been baptized under fire. Harassment to her was just more fuel. I admire that. I lit my flame there that day. "That Jo Ann Pyle," I thought, "she's one tough cookie." My other thought was, "The Girl Scouts should name a brand after her. It could be a million-dollar seller."

Don Nokes, Branch 79

Silver Spring, Maryland

I would like to direct your attention to an important article from Bloomberg that should be "required reading" for all workers. You can find it online at [bloombergquint.com/business/fired-by-bot-amazon-turns-to-machine-managers-and-workers-are-losing-out](https://www.bloombergquint.com/business/fired-by-bot-amazon-turns-to-machine-managers-and-workers-are-losing-out).

It is important to know that corporations, including USPS, are copying the artificial intelligence (AI) management style that seems to be the shining standard of success, at least for Amazon executives. Therefore, it is also vital to understand that the only resistance against the trend to rebrand all employees as "gig economy" contract workers with no rights is to be found in the political process known as "agi-

tation." Agitation includes lobbying, petitioning and protesting. Please be sure you are doing at least the minimum by contributing automatically to the Letter Carrier Political Fund.

The referenced article details the horrors of AI management. The worker's boss and their boss (at least) are also managed by AI and have no decision-making leeway. There is no excuse for underperformance, including situations beyond the worker's control, such as delays in loading or traffic, inaccessibility, illness, vehicle repair issues and other emergencies. The worker is not exactly fired, just deactivated via email and no longer have access to the delivery app. If they want to appeal deactivation, it will cost \$200. The algorithms may have rated them "excellent" two days prior, but their personal vehicle broke down and someone else had to take the load, so they abandoned their assignment and are permanently deactivated today. Benefits like leave or pension? Get real!

After appropriate head-shaking, please notice how USPS is headed in this direction. I have a recurring nightmare that my scanner told me I was terminated or printed out a disciplinary letter.

Please don't sleep through this transition and wake up when it's too late to fight. Let's do battle for our collective bargaining and human being rights together!

Lee Taylor, Branch 2611

Southeast Pennsylvania Merged

The Carrier Academy does a great job of preparing the newly hired CCAs. There are lots of good OJIs out there as well. But the overriding factor has shown that once they get on their own, they are doing whatever they want. I always say experience is the best teacher. Sometimes we must ask what these people are thinking when they apply for the job. Everyone knows the "rain, sleet, and snow" mantra. But you would be surprised at what our new employees complain about. The sad part is that, in my office, the last three have just quit after their first day on their own.

I subscribe to the thought that we letter carriers cannot lower our standards to accept anybody. We are proud people and although we have problems with management, we take pride in our company. And we are the company! If you retired carriers saw what was going on now, you would come back to carrying (well, let's not take it that far). This COVID-19 continues to challenge us. But some people will use any excuse *not* to come to work. We have to be honest and show our tough love.

Remember that all the experienced carriers would say, "Doing that takes time." Everyone was so hyped about the elimination of MSP points. But you know that is just time. And I just don't think our family was thinking clearly when making those comments. You know that our job is about time. They will come after every minute we have. I will scan 50 MSP points instead of walking up to a house on the top of a hill.

So please be careful the rest of this summer. They are watching, and until we fully figure out this COVID-19 thing, we will continue to adjust.

Eric Jackson, Branch 725

Springfield, Ohio

I read that we deliver an average of 41 pounds of junk mail a year to every household. Multiply 41 by the number of houses on your route, add in First-Class Mail and parcels and it adds up to a lot of tonnage. Makes my back ache thinking about it.

Then I started thinking about all the dead weight I carry. To me, dead weight is the overbearing, oppressive burden I feel in my brain about why I dislike my job so much when I used to enjoy carrying mail. Dead weight is the stuff that makes me regret my career choice to be a letter carrier. I can't see it or smell it, but it's always there weighing me down.

Some of my dead weight is the postmaster. Nice guy with no leadership or management skills. Likes to pick a carrier at random and then harass them for a day or two over the most trivial things. Spends most of his time looking at his phone.

Some dead weight comes from the attendance control officer, a titular title since she does little to control attendance. Likes to take care of her friends. If you're a friend of hers, she never disciplines you. If you're not a friend, then you're fair game.

Everyone has their own idea of what dead weight is. I'm sure other people's ideas differ from mine.

Thanks for letting me vent my frustrations. I feel better, like a heavy weight has been lifted from my shoulders. At least until I go to work tomorrow.

Branch meetings are the second Thursday of each month at 6:30 p.m. Show up. Listen. Ask questions. Knowledge is power.

Brian Gourilis, Branch 45

Tacoma, Washington

When the story is told of the 2021 Washington state convention in Lynnwood, many things will be mentioned: the spectacular food at the Auxiliary luncheon, the limited hospitality rooms and the triggering phrase "secretary-treasurer."

But if you ask about the highlight of the convention, the universal one-word answer will be "Danielle," although the most important participant at the event was not even there...in body, anyway.

In a life cut short by muscular dystrophy, Danielle Harada died on July 14, 2020. According to the August 2020 *Washington State Letter Carrier*, Danielle was the Washington state MDA Ambassador, an honorary NALC family member since 2002 and an incredibly gifted artist whose works of art were auctioned or raffled to raise money for MDA for nearly 20 years. After the state convention raised money for her trip, Ms. Harada spoke to 8,000 letter carriers at the 2018 national convention in Detroit of the importance of supporting MDA. She later said it was one of the highlights of her life.

On the last night of the 2021 convention, Danielle's parents, Michael and Linda, began the evening's activities by donating a print of one of Danielle's most popular works to each Washington branch. Following that, three of Danielle's art works were auctioned, with fierce

bidding coming in from all branches present. The final auction item was a portrait of Danielle herself, using the medium of coffee on canvas. After bidding reached \$10,000, the "winning" branch donated the portrait to Danielle's parents (see page 11). It was an incredibly moving moment when her parents realized they would have a permanent reminder of their daughter from a group she had given so much energy to over the years. The total raised for MDA by the auction that night was \$16,500, a lasting legacy of an unforgettable young woman.

Tim Ihssen, Branch 130

Toledo, Ohio

The revolving door in the postmaster's office has welcomed a new postmaster, Richard Clark. Our previous occupant has moved to the POOM position, covering most of our associate offices.

Staffing is still abysmal. The Postal Service opened a second training academy at the Bowling Green Post Office. Now it just needs to find people to train.

We are making some progress with our backlog of grievances. With the ever-changing management personnel, it's difficult to have a cohesive process. There are a lot of starts and stops, which wastes time and money.

The weather tried to ruin our annual Charles Cohen Golf Scramble for MDA. Luckily the day was dry for the 52 golfers. We raised more than \$700 for MDA.

We sent 24 delegates to the Ohio state convention in Cleveland. This year's convention was somewhat different due to the partial restrictions that were still in effect in Ohio under the health department protocols.

At our July branch meeting, we approved funds for our Labor Day picnic. With last year's being canceled, I'm sure many members are looking forward to this year's gathering.

Toledo currently has the LPGA in town for the Marathon Classic. In August, Jeep Fest comes to the city. In September, the city will be hosting the Solheim Cup at Inverness Club. It's turning out to be a busy summer.

Ray Bricker, Branch 100

Tri-Valley, California

Kudos to branch retirees Angela (Angel) Hale from Chatsworth and Onofre Varela from Northridge.

Prior to their recent retirements, both Angel and Onofre were longtime stewards in their respective offices. When they retired, both their offices were left without the benefit of a steward in the workplace. Our branch has several offices without an on-site steward, which requires the branch to provide an alternative, usually a branch officer. Angel's and Onofre's retirements left the branch with two more offices to cover, expanding our workload beyond maximum capacity.

When I asked them if they would be willing to step up and help the branch, they both heeded the call and have come out of retirement to rep-

resent their offices at the Informal A level of the grievance procedure. Most stewards who retire simply want to ride off into the sunset and say goodbye to all. Angel has also been coming in to the branch office voluntarily, on her own time, and helping with filing. Did you read that, new-school money grubbers? On her own time!

Onofre lives far away from the Northridge office, and it is a long commute for him. It is no secret that Onofre has suffered from recent issues with his eyes, but that was no deterrent to his willingness to help the branch and the carriers in the Northridge office. I also want to thank Onofre's wife, Angelita, for chauffeuring Onofre to the Northridge office when he is unable to drive.

Selfless members like Angel and Onofre make me proud to be the president of Branch 2902 and serve as a reminder to us all that old-



Corporate Hills Station carriers celebrated 60 years of federal service by Wichita, KS Br. 201 member and active carrier Alan Cunningham.

school solidarity lives! If you work in Chatsworth or Northridge, be sure to give a hearty "thank you" to Angel and Onofre for caring about you.

Ray Hill, Branch 2902

Wichita, Kansas

I was 8 years old when Alan Cunningham started with the Post Office Department. On June 11, at Corporate Hills Station, the Postal Service celebrated 60 years of federal service from Alan Cunningham. Four of those were with the military. He's still going strong.

Alan started with the Post Office Department in 1965. Gas was 30 cents a gallon. Stamps were 5 cents. Priority and Express Mail were not in existence yet. The ZIP code was still new. In 1971, Alan witnessed the change from the Post Office Department to the USPS. TV consisted of mostly three channels. Phones were all land lines. You get the idea. A lot has changed since Alan started working with the USPS.

The Post Office has changed a lot since then, too. Automation has changed how we deliver the mail. Back in the day, mail volume could be 20 to 30 pieces a day per route, or more. You had to case it all by hand, and flats and letters were not cased together.

Vehicles have changed, too. There was the Mailster and the Jeep when he started. It moved to the LLVs in the late 1980s. Alan will likely be around for the conversion from the LLV to the NGDV, whenever that may be.

District Manager Pam Dunaway, Postmaster Ryon Knopik and the entire Corporate Hills staff celebrated Alan's achievement. And Alan has no plans to retire anytime soon. He loves his job and is still in good health.

Congratulations to Alan.

Pat Hill, Branch 201

Auxiliary Update



Cynthia Martinez
Vice President

National Auxiliary Board

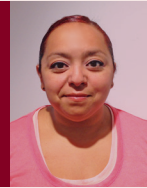
News and updates from the officers



Cythensis Lang
President



Crystal Bragg
Secretary



Linda Davis
Asst. Secretary



Pam Fore
Treasurer

From the Vice President

Hello? Is anyone out there? As we all begin to emerge from seclusion and try to resume our regular lives, it will be great to see everyone again. When the national convention to be held in Honolulu, HI, in 2020 was canceled, the news was devastating, as we had all been looking so forward to meeting up at such a beautiful location. But even as we are adapting to our “new normal,” we can set our sights on the upcoming 2022 NALCA national convention in Chicago, IL.

And, while things have been pretty quiet lately, I wanted to highlight some of the fun, positive events before COVID-19 descended upon us all. My husband, Steven, and I had the privilege of attending the Texas state convention for NALCA and Auxiliary. Members from all over the state attended, everyone was so friendly, and we all had lunch together at a restaurant near the hotel. The auxiliary memorial service was done in conjunction with the letter carriers’ service. It was done beautifully, with a special letter given to the family of each departed carrier and auxiliary member. One evening, we went into downtown Denton for a concert in the park and enjoyed a treat at an old-fashioned ice cream parlor with our friends, the Beckers. I also got to see my pen pal and good friend, Andi Cooley.

At the beginning of 2020, we attended retirement luncheons in my home state of Arizona at Phoenix Branch 576 and Arizona Merged Branch

1902. NALC Director of Retired Members Dan Toth was the featured speaker at both events; he shared new relevant information with retirees on the Postal Service. He also reminded everyone how important it is to support the Postal Service with our letters, cards and parcels.

Our Auxiliary 377 treasurer, Jana Maron, and I went to a labor rally at the state capitol. We heard speeches from union leaders and attended workshops supporting bills that were union friendly. Our highlight was meeting Caesar Chavez’s granddaughter, Julie Chavez Rodriguez, who is active in the AFL-CIO. She has been working to support labor all her life and was so inspiring.

The Arizona State Association of Letter Carriers Auxiliary lost our state treasurer, Byron Orrs, this spring. He was one of our early retired letter carriers who joined the NALC Auxiliary. He and his wife, Evelyn, were very active in Auxiliary 377 and also went to all of the state and national conventions. He will be terribly missed. (He was my mother’s favorite letter carrier ever.)

Our son, Michael Martinez, was with an Air Force crew that received medals for the missions they flew in the Far East. He has been an Auxiliary member for a few years, growing up around the union hall, going to pickets and serving food at union functions.

Incidentally, we have three National Auxiliary Board members with birthdays in August: Crys-



Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, NALCA Vice President Cynthia Martinez attended the 2019 Texas State Auxiliary convention (top) and retirement luncheons at branches in Arizona (above).

tal, our secretary, was born on the 12th; Pam, our treasurer, was born on the 26th; and Cythensis, our president, was born on the 31st. If you have a chance to wish them a happy birthday, they would be so pleased.

I am looking forward to seeing everyone again soon. Stay well and happy.

In solidarity—

Cynthia A. Martinez

NALCA Second Quarter Financial Report

The following report shows financial transactions from April 1 through June 30, 2021.

Balance 4/1/21	\$7,683.13
Deposits	2,020.00
Total	\$9,708.13
Expenditures	
Bank charge for deposit slip order	57.30
Total disbursements	\$57.30
Balance 6/30/21	\$9,645.83

Submitted by Pamela Fore, Treasurer

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Mutual Exchanges

CA: Fresno (3/07) to Dallas/Fort Worth area, TX. Regular carriers only. Large office with five zones; area includes five bidding offices. Lots of OT available. Central California, great weather. Just a few hours to beaches, Yosemite Park and Disneyland. Norman, 559-906-5222 or alinorman@sbcglobal.net.

CA: Stockton (5/04) to Sparks, Reno, Carson City, NV or surrounding area. Stockton is located in the San Joaquin Valley. It is centrally located: 2.5 hours to Tahoe, 1.25 hours to San Francisco and 1.5 hours to Napa Valley. Lots of OT available. Monica, 209-327-8375 (text) or monig8375@gmail.com.

CO: Denver (5/05) to Orlando, FL or surrounding areas. More than 20 bidding stations available in the metro and surrounding areas. Small to large offic-

es to choose from. More than 300 days of sunshine, with all four seasons present. Regulars only. Friendly people and a strong union. A growing and thriving city. Plenty of OT available. Looking to swap due to family reasons. Trinh, 303-594-3814.

FL: Bradenton (8/00) to Anderson, SC. Great weather. Close to beaches. Jerry, 941-932-6157 or jerrymoden@yahoo.com.

GA: Savannah (9/15) to Atlanta, GA. Seeking mutual swap with city letter carrier. Five bidding offices. Lots of overtime. Curtis, 708-822-5494.

IL: Chicago (9/93) to Fort Lauderdale, FL or surrounding areas. Regular carriers only. Large office with lots of overtime, if wanted. North Side of Chicago. 15 minutes from downtown. Great

routes. Tanny, 773-742-1197 (text or call) or reena2@hotmail.com.

IL: Mundelein (3/20) to Olympia, WA or surrounding areas. Two bidding stations. Mix of park-and-loop and mounted routes to choose from. Great co-workers and small-town community feel; strong local union. Close to Chicago or Milwaukee. Moving to be closer to family. Garrett, garrett.ledesma91@gmail.com.

NV: Las Vegas (5/18) to NC or SC. Regular carriers only. No state tax. Large bidding area. John, 970-405-9193 or jdp91665@skybeam.com.

NJ: Fairview (12/19) to Lawrenceville or anywhere in Gwinnett County, GA. Two bidding offices, 15 minutes from NYC. Brian, 646-577-0180 (text) or brianduran11@gmail.com.

NY: Manhattan (3/20) to Plano, Dallas, TX. Great station and OT available. Great routes with mix of business and residential. For family reasons. Masaaki, 646-318-4721 (call or text).

TN: Kingsport (12/19) to Suncoast District, FL. Large office with plenty of OT. Good work environment with great union/management rapport. Robert, 423-617-4327 or rjgerner4@gmail.com.

UT: Ogden (3/20) to Valley, AL or surrounding area. Three bidding offices with OT available. Close to amenities, skiing and the great outdoors. Need to move closer to family. Willing to commute to Montgomery (possibly Atlanta). Adam, 801-941-0271 or jc.white70@gmail.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., August's deadline is for the September 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.

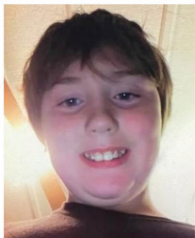


MISSING

HELP BRING ME HOME

NCMEC: 1421892

Xavior Harrelson



Missing Since: May 27, 2021
Missing From: Montezuma, IA
DOB: May 30, 2010
Age Now: 11
Sex: Male
Race: White
Hair Color: Brown
Eye Color: Blue
Height: 4'9"
Weight: 100 lbs

Xavior was last seen on May 27, 2021.

DON'T HESITATE!

ANYONE HAVING INFORMATION SHOULD CONTACT

CALL 911 OR

1-800-843-5678 (1-800-THE-LOST®)
Poweshiek County Sheriff's Office (Iowa) 1-641-623-2107 or 1-641-623-0002

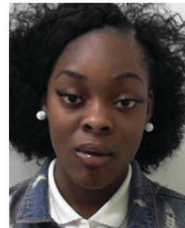


MISSING

HELP BRING ME HOME

NCMEC: 1425676

Shamia Little



Missing Since: Jul 6, 2021
Missing From: Shreveport, LA
DOB: Oct 9, 2003
Age Now: 17
Sex: Female
Race: Black
Hair Color: Black
Eye Color: Brown
Height: 5'10"
Weight: 130 lbs

Shamia was last seen on July 7, 2021. She was last seen wearing a blue Nike soccer shirt and black fitness shorts with white trim.

DON'T HESITATE!

ANYONE HAVING INFORMATION SHOULD CONTACT

CALL 911 OR

1-800-843-5678 (1-800-THE-LOST®)
Shreveport Police Department (Louisiana) 1-318-673-7300



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
- Interactive Non-Scheduled Days calendar
- Legislative tools, including bill tracker, individualized congressional representatives and PAC information
- Instantaneous NALC news with personalized push notifications and social media access
- Much more

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