Consensus is the key to positive postal reform

On Jan. 21, NALC President Fredric Rolando was among those called to testify before a Senate committee hearing on the financial state of the U.S. Postal Service.

"We are pleased that the Senate Homeland Security and Government Affairs Committee is taking the opportunity to examine the reality of the Postal Service prior to advancing any postal reform package," Rolando said in a statement before the hearing. "NALC is proud to be a part of this conversation and is encouraged that the committee has called upon us to address legislative and regulatory burdens, such as the pre-funding of future retiree health benefits."

Rolando’s testimony focused on the effect of the congressional mandate on USPS to pre-fund its future retiree health benefits fund.

Rolando called on the committee, which has Postal Service oversight, to address three major impediments:

- the pre-funding mandate, which accounts for 86 percent of USPS $7.2 billion in reported losses;
- the policy that requires all postal retirement funds to be invested in low-yielding Treasury bonds; and
- the scheduled expiration in April of the 3.9 percent minimum rate increase.

"NALC has suggested a variety of legislative measures to address the pre-funding mandate," the president told the committee. "Refers to the Federal Employees Health Benefits Program (FEHBP) to maximize participation in Medicare plans that let eligible postal retirees would all but eliminate the $1 billion unfunded liability for future retiree health, while raising Medicare spending by less than two-tenths of a percent annually."

The committee paid particular attention to investment of the retiree health benefits fund, and Rolando called on senators to "undertake prudent investment change to raise the long-term rate of return on the retiree health fund's assets, to achieve pre-funding goals, to offset the cost of Postal Medicare integration, to relieve upward pressure on postage rates, and to reduce the misguided impulse to cut service."

During the hearing, much attention was focused on a discussion of the consensus of those with particular interest in USPS on the principles of successful postal reform, including:

- stabilizing postal finances by making the exigent increase permanent while freezing capped postage rates until the end of the 2015 fiscal year;
- the scheduled pre-funding mandate by maximizing Medicare participation among postal participants covered by FEHBP; and
- sensibly changing the way USPS invests the retiree health fund.

"All four unions, the Postal Service and a wide range of companies providing financial services, prescription drug plans, newspapers, direct mail products and e-commerce sales have agreed on a set of principles," Rolando said.

"No private company in America would invest its retirement assets in such an unsophisticated way," he said, "especially during a period when Treasuries are yielding 2 to 4 percent returns while health care costs grow 5 to 7 percent annually."

The group also seeks to provide all NALC members who 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.

"By staying informed on issues of importance to letter carrier veterans. These veterans traded their military uniforms for letter carrier uniforms, and they continue to serve their communities and their country."

Consensus is the key to positive postal reform.

Has your branch registered yet for the 2016 food drive?

The 24th annual Letter Carriers’ “Stamp Out Hunger®” Food Drive, held May 14, and a letter from NALC President Fredric Rolando has been sent to every branch president, encouraging them to register for the world’s largest one-day food drive.

"In light of the enormous success of the 2015 food drive, all letter carriers in every participating branch should consider themselves winners," Rolando wrote. "You and your members worked tirelessly with your communities to make a difference for millions in need."

Enclosed with the president’s letter is the important food drive registration form. Branch presidents are asked to complete the registration form immediately, to let NALC Headquarters know how many postcards will be needed for regional deliverers and to identify branch food drive coordinators.

Reminder postcards will be made available to branches, at no cost, as long as they register by March 1.

Branch food drive coordinators and others who work on the drive should help remind their branch presidents to complete the registration form and make sure it gets mailed to: NALC, Food Drive Registration, 100 Indiana Ave. NW, Washington, DC 20003-2144. Note: No faxes or e-mailed registrations will be accepted.

Branch food drive coordinators will receive the coordination manual; a form for ordering posters, lawn signs, banners, hats, pins and T-shirts from the Frank Doolittle Co.; a special food drive DVD; and sample copies of the new Family Circus cartoon drawn for this year’s drive. (The treasure trove of information also is available at nalc.org/food.)

The food drive is the largest one-day drive in the United States. In 2015, active and retired letter carriers, along with their family members and friends—not to mention countless volunteers—collected almost 75 million pounds of non-perishable food. These results brought the grand total to more than 1.4 billion pounds since the drive began in 1992.

Specific questions regarding the food drive should be directed to NALC Director of Community Services Pam Donato at 202-662-2489 or at donato@nalc.org.

NALC Veteran Group: 7,000 members and growing

The National Association of Letter Carriers is made up of approximately 277,000 active and retired members, of which almost a third are veterans of the U.S. Armed Forces.

To date, more than 7,000 NALC members have joined the NALC Veteran Group, which was designed to provide all NALC members who are military veterans access to the information and tools specific to veterans’ rights and benefits within the U.S. Postal Service.

The NALC Veteran Group aims to give its members the means to connect with fellow NALC veterans and to stay informed on issues of importance to letter carrier veterans. These veterans traded their military uniforms for letter carrier uniforms, and they continue to serve their communities and their country.

The group also seeks to provide all NALC members who are also military veterans—active full-time and part-time letter carriers, as well as retired letter carriers—resources, rights information and a sense of camaraderie.

Veterans Group members receive a pin as a symbol of gratitude for their military service and membership in the NALC.

Visit nalc.org/veterans to learn more.

The group is a great Leadership Academy.

Rolando appoints RAAs, HQ staff

NALC President Fredric Rolando has appointed Downers Grove, IL Branch 1870 President Bill Jackson as regional administrative assistant for NALC Region 3, which serves letter carriers in Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota and Wisconsin.

Jackson replaces Ron Miller, who served as Branch 1870 president for 12 years and, at the time of his appointment, was chairman of the Illinois State Association’s executive board. Previously, he has served as Branch 1870’s vice president, treasurer, Formula Group representative and staff. Jackson also has served the members of Region 3 as an arbitration advocate, as Dispute Resolution Team member, as a Carrier Academy Instructor, as a New Delivery Coordinator and on the district advisory committee for the Employee Assistance Program.

Jackson is a graduate of Leadership Academy Class 3.

Both of these appointments were effective Jan. 4.

In addition, President Rolando has appointed former Region 9 RAA Paul Banner to serve as executive assistant to the president at NALC Headquarters in Washington, DC. Banner, a member of Bowser, CA Branch 462, has held various positions in the branch as well as on the Georgia State Association’s executive board. He served as an arbitration advocate, local business agent and Dispute Resolution Team member, and he is a graduate of Leadership Academy Class 3.
Deadline set for national convention in Los Angeles

Delegates are urged to mark their calendars for the 70th biennial national convention in Los Angeles this summer. The NALC Bulletin will carry more details in future issues.

Partnerships are crucial to food drive’s success

The deadline for branches to register for the 7th annual letter carrier “Stamp Out Hunger!” food drive is May 1. As in past years, the National Association of Letter Carriers (NALC) will team up with Feeding America for the annual registration drive taking place now until May 31 to make sure your branch can be successful in the 12th annual South Dakota food drive.

The PMG said that the Postal Service recognizes and appreciates NALC’s contributions to the collective-bargaining process.

The president also made note of ongoing workplace issues that affect lateral entry and retirement, work scheduling, a computer systems outage and the federal workforce’s ability to do its job. In that context, he noted, “We used the collective-bargaining process with you to implement an alternative solution involving reforms to the federal employment system that would benefit both our partnership and its interaction with Medicare.” The president also pointed to the role played by both parties to build support among those mailers—and within Congress—to drastically reduce the effects of the so-called “Postal Service Restructuring and Accountability Act” that was signed into law in October 2012.

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As this meeting approaches, we will look to negotiate a contract that is fair to our employees and, again, that positions the Postal Service for success in the 21st century.”

Describing herself as a “positive believer” in USPS’ future, Brennan said that the agency continues to invest in new technologies and in the health and well-being of its employees. “There’s no question that all postal employees have made sacrifices in the past couple of years,” she said. “Now is the time to build on that foundation and make sure that our employees will have the opportunities to succeed in this and future decades.”

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The postcards on their own won’t reach many of these households, but when they work in concert with those mailed to households by Federal Express or UPS, they can dramatically reduce the amount of food collected.

Another profitable quarter for U.S. Postal Service

On Dec. 9, USPS released its financial report for the first quarter of Fiscal Year 2016, covering October through December of 2015. The report showed a $3.7 billion quarterly operating profit, a fact that Rolando said “presents more good news that again well for the future.”

The continuing financial spewing shows the importance of maintaining and strengthening the unparalleled— and profitable—postal network, which offers Americans the world’s most affordable deliver service,” he said in a statement.

Brennan noted that this impressive performance at the start of FY 2016 builds on back-to-back years of operating profits each exceeding $3 billion. It is the most impressive spouting on a single day in the Postal Service’s 230-year history. “These results aren’t a fluke,” he said. “They stem from hard structural changes, an improving economy has helped stabilize letter mail volume, and other measures like in-store shopping to divert package volume simply cleaned-up-as a one-time per the first quarter of last year.”

The president in the statement that the latest good news was consistent with—and underlines—the emerging consensus on a postal postal market that is limited by key legislation, the Postal Service, postal services, businesses, mailers and industry groups.

“Such reform should include stabilizing rates,” Rolando said, “as well as addressing the pre-funding mandate that is responsible for the net in that has been expected in previous quarters.”

Partnerships between the Postal Service and some of the nation’s largest retailers are an essential service to the 152 million households we serve, Rolando said. “We have a proven track record as powerful partners for this cause.”

The partnership brings more than just letters and packages, as could be expected. “Our members work around the clock, everyday of the year to the food drive’s fold as a national sponsor,” she said. “Our 1.3 million-plus members are honored to be part of the food drive.”

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New ‘Questions and Answers’ on city carrier assistants

On March 15, the national parties updated the “Questions and Answers, 2011 USPS/NALC National Agreement” with a new jointly developed document, numbered M-01830 in the Materials Reference System (MRS). M-01830 may be found on the NALC website in the MRS located under the “Workplace Resource Tab.” As with the three previously developed sets of questions and answers, M-01830 provides the mutual understanding of the national parties on issues related to the 2011 USPS/NALC National Agreement.

This document fully replaces the March 6, 2014, “Questions and Answers, 2011 USPS/NALC National Agreement” (M-01831). It is separated into two sections: the first concerning city carrier assistants (CCA) and the second section addressing contractual provisions.

The document contains several new questions and responses. All of the previous questions and answers from M-01831 are included in M-01830; however, some of the previous question numbers have changed. They are arranged in the order in which related articles of the National Agreement appear. Each addition and change are identified by underlining in M-01830.

NALC Director of City Delivery Brian Renfroe explained the changes in detail in his column in the April issue of The Postal Record. The column is also available at nalc.org.

Public unions score victory with Supreme Court decision

On April 4, the Supreme Court deadlocked 4-4 in a case that had threatened to cripple the ability of public unions to collect fees from workers who chose to not join and did not want to pay for the unions’ collective-bargaining activities.

“Today, working people have persevered in the face of another attack on our rights,” AFL-CIO President Richard Trumka said. “All over the country, working people are showing that we won’t allow wealthy special interests or their politicians to stand in our way to join collectively and make workplaces better all across America.”

A ruling in favor of the plaintiffs would have affected millions of government workers and weakened public-sector unions, which stood to lose fees from those who simply chose not to join while being hit by the unions’ efforts on their behalf.

Because of the deadlock, the lower court’s ruling will stand, but the ruling will apply to this case only and will not set a precedent.

Saturday, May 14

24th annual Food Drive is just around the corner

The Letter Carriers’ Stamp Out Hunger® Food Drive is held each year on the second Saturday in May. This year, that’s Saturday, May 14.

But on Food Drive Day and the days that follow—if past drives serve as any indication—many of us likely will hear from customers who missed the drive, or forget about it.

“So many of us put so much time and effort into the food drive each year that it’s hard to understand how the people we see on our routes at least six days a week could not know about it,” NALC President Fredric Rolando said.

“That’s why making sure we do what we can to spread the word about the food drive is so crucial to ensuring its success,” Rolando said.

Thanks to backing this year from our new national food drive partner, the United Food and Commercial Workers International Union (UFUW), every postal customer this year should receive a postcard in the mail that serves as a reminder. And courtesy of a generous grant again this year by another important national partner, the International Union (UFCW), every postal customer this year should receive a postcard in the mail that serves as a tangible food drive reminder. And courtesy of a generous grant again this year by another important national partner, the UFCW, every postal customer this year should receive a postcard in the mail that serves as a tangible food drive reminder.

If the situation presents itself, Rolando said, carriers should take advantage of that special one-on-one relationship we have with our customers to let them know about the drive.

“If you’re handing a customer a letter or package in person,” he said, “something as simple saying, ‘Don’t forget the food drive on Saturday,’ could go a long way toward gaining the drive a place on that person’s mental calendar.’”

Tags, of course, also contribute mightily to food drive success. Paper or plastic, if a postal customer receives a specially marked food drive bag in the mail, it often can double or even triple that patron’s donation.

But bags can be expensive, and it usually takes the generosity of a local or regional sponsor to help defray the costs. That’s why every postal customer doesn’t get a special food drive bag—at least not yet.

In the meantime, though, letter carriers can still count on traditional, tried-and-true marketing materials to help effectively get the word out about the food drive.

“With the permission of your local managers,” NALC Director of Community Services Pam Donato said, “work with your fellow employees—in the letter carrier craft and as well as the others—to get them to wear food drive gear on the day of the drive as well as in the days leading up to it.”

“Also, ask your postmaster if you can put up a food drive poster,” she said, “and look on your route for businesses that allow notices to be placed in windows or on community boards.”

“Letter carriers are communicators,” President Rolando said. “Our job is to deliver messages—in envelopes or boxes—to every address in this country at least six days a week. I am confident that we will do all we very best to help ensure that every postal carrier is fully aware that our annual food drive will take place once again this year on the second Saturday in May.”

For those customers who still might miss the message and the drive, Donato has some reassuring words. “In most cases, let those folks know that we’ll gladly accept a make-up bag of food set out by the mailbox on the following Monday, or they can take the food directly to their nearest postal office or local branch.”

Last year’s drive gathered 70.6 million pounds of food, bringing the grand total to more than 1.4 billion pounds since the annual food drive began in 1995. Questions? Need help? Contact your branch or regional food drive coordinator; the latest contact lists are posted at nalc.org/food.

Delivering the cure for MDA

The NALC endorsed the Muscular Dystrophy Association as its official charity in 1993, becoming the first official national sponsor of the group founded in 1945.

In the decades since, NALC members have used scores of techniques to raise money for MDA, from bowlathons and fill-the-catch events to raffles, pancake suppers, golf tournaments and bake sales.

Every year, NALC honors those branches that deserve special recognition and thanks for their work in raising money for MDA. The grand total for calendar year 2015 was $1,165,421.

In addition to being cited in the April Postal Record, the branches that won categories for 2015 have an opportunity to attend a special function designated by NALC President Fredric Rolando.

Last year, NALC announced three levels of donating for MDA reporting. For 2015, there were 29 branches at the gold level. The highest level of per capita was recognized as the winner of a new prize (replacing the former Gold Prize: the Golden Weiner). For 2015, that was Montana, CA Br. 480, raising $127,229 per capita.

Here are the Gold Level winners in each branch-size category:

- Category 1 (1,001-3; Long Island Mfg. Br. 601, $71,478
- Category 2 (1,001-4; Portland, OR BR. 18, $32,831
- Category 3 (1,001-4; Arizona Mfg. Br. 1902, $15,157
- Category 4 (1,001-999; Northwest YM NY 337, $38,112
- Category 5 (500-699; Grand Rapids, MI Br. 56, $21,265
- Category 6 (500-999; Ronkonkoma, NY BR. 380, $11,487
- Category 7 (2,001-3,049; Green Bay, WI Br. 619, $53,133
- Category 8 (500-999; Fargo-West Fargo, ND Br. 205, $25,392
- Category 9 (2,001-599; Jefferson City, MO Br. 127, $47,371
- Category 10 (50-49); New City, NY BR. 529, $1,373

The April issue of The Postal Record contained a listing of all branches that NALC is aware of having made a contribution to help and hope to families affected by muscular dystrophy. If you do not see your branch listed, or if the amount listed is inaccurate, please contact Geneva Kubal by e-mail at mdagmail.com or by phone at 202-716-7403.

Information for NALC’s 70th biennial convention in L.A.

Delegate eligibility lists: Delegate eligibility lists for NALC’s 70th biennial national convention in Los Angeles Aug. 19-21 have been mailed to all branches. The lists must be completed and returned to Secretary-Treasurer Nicole Rhine’s office at NALC Headquarters no later than June 15, in order for branch representatives to be registered as delegates to the convention.

Any branch that has not received its delegate eligibility list should have the branch president or secretary contact the Secretary-Treasurer’s office at NALC Headquarters immediately.

Delegate and housing packets are not sent to branches until the properly completed delegate eligibility list is returned to the Secretary-Treasurer’s office.

Hotels: The original block of hotels for the convention is NALC. NALC is aware of the issue and is working to add additional hotels for convention delegates.

If your branch has received your delegate credentials/hotel information but has not made room reservations, you must let the housing firm that you have made hotel reservations with know that you are enrolled with NALC. They will have your name and the number of your room on file and will proceed with the reservation.

The contact information for the housing company is included in the housing instructions, which is sent with the credential packet. Please do not contact the hotels. All room reservations will be made through the NALC’s official housing bureau.

Amendments and resolutions: All proposed amendments to the NALC Constitution to be submitted for consideration at the convention must be received by Rhine’s office by June 15. That date is 30 days in advance of the convention, as prescribed by the Constitution.

Proposed amendments will appear in this July’s Postal Record for the membership to review.

Resolutions to be considered by delegates also must be received by the June 15 deadline in order to be printed in the Resolutions and Amendments Book provided to delegates.

Resolutions received after June 15, still may be considered at the convention.

Branch sales: Branch sales wishing to sell items in the designated branch sales area during the convention must contact Rhine’s office no later than April 8 to secure guidelines and forms. The completed forms must be returned to Headquarters by May 2.

Time limit waiver: NALC and the U.S. Postal Service have agreed to a 30-day moratorium on time limits for the processing of all grievances at the local, regional and national levels due to the 70th biennial NALC Convention.

Under M-0151 (available for review under the Materials Reference System at nalc.org), the moratorium starts on Aug. 7 and concludes on Sept. 6.
Bargaining continues past contract expiration

For the 24th year in a row, letter carriers across the United States carry out the nation’s largest community service and commitment to their postal customers – the annual Stamp Out Hunger food drive. For 12 years, the nation’s largest one-day food collection effort, a bagging effort by America’s city and rural letter carriers, the nation’s most trusted workers. Our bargaining team is acutely aware of this responsibility and is committed to fulfilling it.

As long as we see a path toward success, we will stay the table and work hard as we can to reach a new National Agreement.

Letter carriers deliver food, hope during 24th national Stamp Out Hunger drive

The Postal Service is committed to getting food to those trying to put food on the table. The Stamp Out Hunger food drive is the largest one day food drive in the United States, providing food for 15 million children and families in need. It is the result of a partnership between the National Association of Letter Carriers and Feeding America. The food collected is delivered to local Feeding America member agencies.

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As long as we see a path toward success, we will stay the table and work hard as we can to reach a new National Agreement.
**Bargaining for a new National Agreement continues**

As reported in the last NALC Bulletin, NALC and the U.S. Postal Service announced on May 20 that the bargaining period would be extended beyond the midnight expiration of the 2012-2016 National Agreement. This development came after 90 days of bargaining over the terms of a new agreement, culminating in a week of intense negotiations. Although through discussions we’ve never had a public face on the main table on key economic provisions, and among the numerous committees composed of NALC Executive Council members and management representatives—have been productive and professional,” NALC President Fredric Rolando said. “Although we cannot definitively tell we will be able to reach an agreement according to the laws mediation and interest arbitration procedures, there has been tangible progress and both sides remain committed to attempting to reach a mutually acceptable tentative agreement.”

Key topics discussed during negotiations has included setting wages that reward all letter carriers—career and non-career alike—for our exceptional contributions to USPS’ essential service and for our years of hard work and dedication to the meeting the evolving needs of the nation’s mailers, shoppers and citizens. The inadequacy of city carrier assistant (CCA) wages and the need to improve career conversion rights for CCAs also has been addressed at length, as has repairing and improving the work culture in carrier stations across the country.

“Just as we see a path toward success,” Rolando said, “we will stay at the table and work as hard as we can to reach a new National Agreement.”

**House committee releases postal reform ‘discussion draft’**

On June 15, the leaders of the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee released a discussion draft of a potential postal reform bill. The draft Postal Service Reform Act was issued jointly by Committee Chairman Jason Chaffetz (R-UT) and Ranking Member Elijah Cummings (D-MD).

NALC officers and Headquarters staff members are currently conducting a detailed review of the contents of this draft bill. Although the committee’s goal is to address all of the countless and complex legislative issues that are a part of our ideas for reform—our initial review has revealed a number of shortcomings and omissions in the draft bill, and at least one provision that NALC simply cannot support. That provision is one that would require the Postal Service to convert an undefined number of business and residential delivery points that now receive door delivery service to curb-line or centralized delivery service over the next five years. This cut in service is neither sensible nor necessary.

“We will do all that we can to work with our industry-labor coalition and with the members of the committee and their staffers to reach consensus on legislation that we can all support. Meanwhile, the House committee is consulting stakeholders on the draft measure before it formally introducts and marks up a bill. NALC will be intimately involved in that process.

**80 million pounds!**

**Record total for 24th annual "Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive**

The 24th annual Letter Carriers “Stamp Out Hunger” Food Drive produced record-breaking results.

NALC announced on June 20 that the nation’s largest one-day food drive, held on Saturday, May 14, collected more than 80 million pounds of food, well above the previous record of 77 million pounds. The Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive now has surpassed 1.5 billion pounds since it began in 1993.

“These results are gratifying, because they mean that even more people will be helped,” NALC President Fredric Rolando said. “As letter carriers, we are honored to be able to assist people in need. On a daily basis we see the struggles in the communities we serve, and we believe it’s important to do all we can to help.

“None of this would be possible without the generosity of residents throughout the country,” Rolando added.

He also praised the organizations that help with the effort: U.S. Postal Service, National Rural Letter Carriers’ Association (NRLCA), United Way Worldwide, United Food and Commercial Workers International Union (SPOFO), AFGL, Valpak and Valassis.

Hunger affects about 50 million people around the country, including millions of children, senior citizens and veterans. The Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive held each year on the second Saturday of May in 20,000 cities and towns in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands and Guam.

It provides residents with an easy way to donate food to those in need in the community. Customers simply leave their donation of non-perishable goods next to their mailbox before the delivery of the mail that Saturday. Letter carriers collect the non-perishable food donations on that day as they deliver mail along their postal routes, and distribute them to local food banks, pantries and shelters.

For a spreadsheet containing information on collected food amounts by city or to compile state totals, visit nalc.org.

**Stay safe in summer’s heat**

NALC urges letter carriers to learn about heat safety and pay close attention to the warning signs of overexposure to the sun and heat. Here are key pieces of advice:

- **Hydrate before, during and after work.** Prevention is important, so make sure to maintain good hydration by drinking at least 8 ounces of water every 20 minutes.
- **Utilize shade to stay cool.** When possible, use shaded areas to stay out of direct sunlight.
- **Know the signs of heat stress.** You should understand what heat stress is, and how it can affect your health and safety. Here are some things to look out for:
  - **Weakness or fatigue**
  - **Muscle cramps**
  - **Headache**
  - **Confusion or dizziness**
  - **Muscle cramps**
  - **Nausea**

Finally, it’s important to notify your supervisor or call 911 if you’re experiencing signs of heat-related illnesses. Go to the Safety and Health page at nalc.org for more on how to prepare for extreme heat and sun.

"Letter carriers need to remember to respond appropriately to the weather and immediately notify your supervisor if you feel that you are experiencing heat-stress symptoms or other weather-related issues," NALC President Fredric Rolando said. "Bottom line: Don’t put yourself in danger."
Deadline approaching for FEGLI open season

In September, career letter carriers will have a rare chance to increase their federal group life insurance, without undergoing a major life event, through an open season to continue or increase existing coverage. This open season will run from Sept. 7 to Sept. 30.

To help recognize and support NALC’s fundraising efforts for the Muscle Walk and the NALC’s 70th biennial convention, NALC will participate in the Open Season for September 2013. For more information, please contact the Membership Department.

MDA news

‘Muscle Walk’ President with President Rolando in Texas

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introduces his fellow NALC and a knowledge of the administrative structure (AMSs). The National Association of Letter Carriers (NALC) is a union of over 202,500 active and retired letter carriers who are employed by the United States Postal Service. The NALC was founded in 1917 to represent the interests of letter carriers in the United States. NALC is a member of the National Rural Letter Carriers’ Association, which represents letter carriers in rural areas. The NALC has a number of branches throughout the United States, each of which is governed by a local union or chapter. The NALC also has a national convention, which is held every year to discuss the issues facing letter carriers and to elect national officers for the coming year. NALC is dedicated to improving the lives of America’s letter carriers.
from politics to postal banking, NALC's message out to letter carriers, high interest in banking deserts in this country, unbanked communities, Postal Service to offer banking services, Other Half Banks.

Delegates gave Baradaran a letter of thanks, for its mission. The best organized branch with between 500 and 999 active carriers in South Florida Branch 97, re-elected, with a 3 percent membership rate.

Rolando next asked Board of Tellers officer Brian Hellman and his assistant, BethHughes Reinhard, who introduced the Retirement Commission. "I can tell you, I've had your back with NALC."

To introduce NALC's new mobile app for smartphones, the NALC Messenger App, President Rolando brought the development. "Let's make a new step in the history of NALC."

"Delivering Courage," that highlights the role of letter carriers in delivering the news, was projected on video screens. The delegates thanked Chu with a standing ovation. O'Malley said, "We will need your continued help, as well as the help of those who are able to provide it, to increase our membership," she said. President Rolando then called on Director of National Members Bob Wan-

Delegates elected President Chu to become a member of the NALC's Executive Board, along with spouses. O'Malley said, "I can tell you, I've had your back with NALC."

The meeting was recessed at 1:06 p.m. The bylaws committee completed its work. President Chu addressed the delegates, "We are going in a new direction and we need your help to increase our membership," she said. The delegates thanked Chu with a long standing ovation.

TUESDAY, AUG. 16

We also had NALC Health Benefits Director Bob Funnell, who was a top agent for the AFGE. "We have a top seller in the Postal Service, " Rollando called to order the delegates. "I want you to know how much I appreciate you," he said. The delegates thanked Chu with a standing ovation.

Delegate committees were generally pleased with the results of the latest round of district elections such as savings accounts, as it did under the Jordan plan, which was passed in the 75 cents per member allocated from the Letter Carriers Band Fund, to be shared on their Facebook page by delegates. The recommendations of the committee on the stage: Committee Chairman Anton-ino DeAngelis, and Randall Henning.

"Let's make a new step in the history of NALC," he said. "We need your continued help, as well as the help of those who are active carriers and spouses. O'Malley said, "I can tell you, I've had your back with NALC."

The delegates then reviewed a video, "Delivering Courage," that highlights the role and caring often displayed by letter carri-

"Delivering the day's invocation was Director of City Branch, with fewer than 500 members, they are the future of the letter carrier profession, she said, "We will need your continued help, as well as the help of those who are able to provide it, to increase our membership," she said. President Rolando then called on Director of National Members Bob Wan-
CIO delegates and asking for nominations reviewing the voting process for AFL-CIO voting. The delegates heard from the president of the AFL-CIO and a major theme of the convention was the importance of working together as a union to stand up for workers’ rights. The President welcomed delegates to the AFL-CIO’s 2016 convention and spoke about her vision for the future of the organization. She emphasized the importance of solidarity and unity in order to achieve the union’s goals. The delegates also discussed the value of collective bargaining and the role of unions in advocating for workers’ rights. The convention concluded with a enthusiastic closing ceremony featuring speeches from key leaders and an inspiring call to action for all members to remain active and engaged in the fight for justice.
This is the NALC Convention Chronicle distributed to delegates.
PRESIDENT'S REPORT

NALC President Fredric Rolando called the delegates to order and moved to adjourn the 114th annual meeting of the National Association of Letter Carriers (NALC).

During the opening session, Rolando introduced the top officers of the NALC and introduced special guests: David Kimball, the incoming NALC national comptroller; and Stephanie Bostic, the incoming vice president of the NALC Health Benefit Plan.

Rolando expressed gratitude to the outgoing officers and staff of the NALC for their service and dedication. He also recognized the many challenges faced by letter carriers and the efforts they have made to continue delivering the mail safely during the pandemic.

Rolando highlighted the importance of letter carriers in the distribution chain and emphasized the critical role they play in maintaining the service and providing access to essential goods and services.

He also recognized the efforts of the NALC Health Benefit Plan in providing comprehensive health coverage to letter carriers and their families.

In closing, Rolando emphasized the importance of solidarity and the need for unity in addressing the challenges facing the NALC and the letter carriers it represents.
NALC launches app for smartphones

Member App APK file is available at nalc.org/app for those who know how to manually install the file onto their devices. Berry devices, but some features do function on these and on other devices that can install an Android APK file. The NALC into account, or they give you only one year of NSD dates. This app resolves all of that. Whether you have a rotating sheets and legislative information, so you can know everything there is to know about these bills before speaking participate in the food drive. Whatever your interests, this app is made for you.”

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NALC Heroes for 2016 honored in Washington

NALC President Fredric Rolando said as he welcomed a large audience to the 2016 NALC Heroes of the Year Awards luncheon. “But their commitment to the families and the neighborhood goes way beyond that. Every day, letter carriers help people who need help—and they sometimes save lives in the process, and sometimes at great personal risk. “They don’t do these things because they are supermen or superwomen,” Rolando said. “They do them because they are familiar with the communities that they serve and they know when something’s not as it should be. Because they are often the first ones on the scene. Because they’ve watched the families grow and they’ve watched the children grow up over the years and they care about their well-being and they care about their safety.”

The Heroes event was held on Sept. 21 in the nation’s capital. Attendees included the union’s resident national officers, U.S. Postal Service executives and leaders from other postal unions. The annual ceremony highlighted the special acts of courage and compassion performed by seven NALC letter carriers, as well as an entire NALC branch, to improve lives—or save lives—along their route.

A panel of independent judges reviewed more than 200 stories about heros and humanitarian acts published in The Postal Record between July 2015 and June 2016 and selected this year’s heroes from among those featured.

“I would submit to you that the heroes gathered here today have exhibited the very essence of what leadership is all about,” Rolando said. “They saw an urgent danger or an unmet need—and they stepped up. They evaluated the situation, they devised a plan, and they took action. In so doing, they demonstrated alertness, empathy, bravery and decisiveness. And then, rather than seeking personal credit, they simply moved forward—doing their job with the same quiet professionalism as before.”

The NALC president presented each honoree with an award certificate and a special lapel pin that the carrier can wear to highlight the distinction:

- Mark Pizzo, a member of Rock Hill, SC Branch 1003, who saved a girl by fighting with a pit bull that had her head in its jaws, was honored as NALC’s 2016 National Hero of the Year.
- Brad Gentz, a member of Mason City, IA Branch 471, noticed a boy sitting in a wheelchair on his mail route and transformed the young man’s life by participating with him in marathons around the country. He is the 2016 Humanitarian of the Year.
- Lars Edleblute, a member of York, PA Branch 509, saved a boy who ran from his mother during a heavy downpour and jumped a fence onto a highway. He is the 2016 Eastern Region Hero of the Year.
- Michael Murphy, a member of Hazelwood, MO Branch 5847, tackled a cinderblock-wielding man attacking women in two cars. He is the 2016 Central Region Hero of the Year.
- Brad Gentz, a member of San Diego Branch 70, spotted smoke coming from a home and carried an injured resident to safety. He is the 2016 Western Region Hero of the Year.
- Evangeline Johnson, a member of Detroit Branch 1, helped a woman and her daughter escape from a house engulfed in flames. She is the 2016 Special Carrier Alert Award honoree.
- Patrick Byrne, a member of Lynn, MA Branch 3, helps others break through the stigma of substance abuse by telling the story of losing his own son to an overdose. He was presented with NALC’s 2016 Special Education Award.
- Letter carriers from Syracuse, NY Branch 134 delighted a seriously ill young man by organizing a parade of postal trucks and other community service vehicles to welcome him home after months in the hospital. They received the 2016 Branch Service Award.

You can find links to all of the coverage, as well as hear the heroes themselves telling their stories, on the NALC website at nalc.org/heroes.

NALC Member App a huge hit

Since it was introduced at the national convention this past summer, the NALC Member App for iPhone and Android smartphones has become a hit with members. More than 15,000 letter carriers have installed the app on their phones as of mid-October, and hundreds more are putting it on their phones every day.

Reviews on the Apple App Store and Google Play Store have been overwhelmingly positive, with average ratings of 5 stars and 4.9 stars, respectively.

In many ways, the app expands on the notification system of the e-Activist Network by being broader and sending out personalized notifications about everything the union does. Once you’ve entered your interests, any time a message is sent out about that interest, your phone will alert you that you’ve received the notification.

When you install the app, it’s for you for your home ZIP code, so it can give you the correct legislative information. You then sign up for notifications based on your interests.

From the app’s News tab, you can see all the latest news items from nalc.org. For those interested in the union’s legislative and political agenda, the Government Affairs section has tools for you. The app makes it easy to access Workplace Resources, by clicking on that tab. And there’s also a tab for Member Benefits.

Most rotating calendars don’t take holidays into account, or they give you only one year of NSD dates. This app resolves all of that. Whether you have a rotating or fixed schedule, you can see your non-scheduled days for years in advance. And when your NSD lands on a holiday, the app shifts the holiday designation to the correct day, meaning you’ll know exactly how many days you have unscheduled.

The app is free and available in the Apple App Store for iPhones or Google Play for Android phones. For more about installing and using the app, visit nalc.org/app.

PERF: Helping postal families in need

After killing hundreds in Haiti and elsewhere in the Caribbean, Hurricane Matthew made landfall in South Carolina on Saturday, Oct. 8, dumping torrential rains on the entire Southeast, causing massive flooding and other damage from Florida through North Carolina. More than 200 American have died as a result of the storm—more than half of them in North Carolina, where residents were still reeling from the aftermath as this Bulletin was being prepared.

By Oct. 10, volunteers, U.S. marshals and water-rescue crews had used helicopters, boats and massive trucks to save people stranded throughout the North Carolina. In some locations the flooding had topped the roofs of cars. Many postal facilities were either cut off or flooded and NALC and postal officials were still scrambling to make sure all of the postal workers were safe.

Meanwhile, communities in south Louisiana are still recovering from the catastrophic flooding that devastated the area in August, killing 13 people and causing $8.7 billion in damage, according to the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

By the end of September, the Postal Emergency Relief Fund (PERF) had received claims from more than 180 postal employees in Louisiana, including about 60 coming from NALC members. Claims from postal employees who were in Hurricane Matthew’s path are just now starting to get filled.

PERF helps active and retired postal employees, both management and craft, whose homes, as a result of a major natural disaster, were completely destroyed or left uninhabitable—displacing the postal employees and their families for an extended time. The fund is governed by postal employee and management groups and provides small relief grants to help qualifying victims of such circumstances re-establish residence and to help replenish basic necessities in the aftermath of a devastating loss.

Visit postalrelief.com to learn more, and consider giving to PERF during the Combined Federal Campaign.

Carriers help ‘Deliver the Cure’ for MDA

NALC President Fredric Rolando joined representatives from the 11 highest fundraising NALC branches (announced in the April issue of The Postal Record) in Dallas recently to participate in a Muscle Walk for the Muscular Dystrophy Association, NALC’s only official charity.

Team NALC raised more than $9,000 at this event. Additionally, a few local branches joined and raised an additional $8,000.

Visit facebook.com/DeliverTheCure to see a photo album from this and other events, and consider supporting MDA during this year’s Combined Federal Campaign.

Bargaining for a new National Agreement continues

NALC and the U.S. Postal Service announced on May 20 that the bargaining period would be extended beyond the midnight expiration of the 2011-2016 National Agreement. This development came after 90 days of bargaining over the terms of a new agreement, culminating in a week of intense negotiations.

“We are making real progress and have been continuing productive conversations since we got back from our 70th biennial convention in Los Angeles,” NALC President Fredric Rolando said. “We are committed to remaining at the table as long as we have a realistic chance to reach a deal that is good enough to send to our active members for ratification.”

As bargaining continues during this extended period of negotiations, the terms and conditions of the 2011-2016 contract remain in effect. Any change in the status of contract negotiations will be posted at nalc.org and sent through the NALC Member App for smartphones via push notification.
**NALC Health Benefit Plan: Best prize for letter carriers and their families**

It just keeps getting better by pushing the envelope.

That’s how the NALC Health Benefit Plan works to keep letter carriers and their families healthy—year by year, The Plan seeks to make changes that keep up with the latest medical advances and keep your costs low.

The Plan has been pushing the envelope since it was created, by letter carriers, for letter carriers, in 1991.

Since then, the Plan has never stopped providing the high level of service you expect from a plan that works not for a profit, but for its members.

The Health Plan’s director, Brian Hellman, is a member of New York City Branch of NALC. He’s been a letter carrier since 1986, and he assures that the Health Benefit Plan keeps your health at the top of its list of priorities.

**Open Season for choosing a health plan through the Federal Employee Health Benefits (FEHB) Program is Nov. 14 through Dec. 15.**

**Value Option Plan** are alternatives to the High Option Plan and to CDHP and to other types of employer-sponsored health plans. Chances are there’s a plan that works for you and your family.

**CDHP and Value Option Plan**

The Consumer Driven Health Plan (CDHP) and the Value Option Plans are alternatives to the High Option Plan. Letter carriers who choose the CDHP or the Value Plan are provided a personal care account (PCA).

The PCA allows the member to control medical costs while enjoying the protection of an affordable health plan that will cover major medical costs if they arise. The Health Benefit Plan adds money to each enrollee’s PCA each year to help fund your preventive care when rendered by a PPO provider.

The Value Plan does not have a pre-deductible period. You pay 100 percent when you use a PPO provider. You pay only a $20 co-payment for each primary care or specialist office visit when the service is rendered by a PPO provider.

The calendar-year deductible for the High Option Plan is $150 per person and $600 per family.

Prescription medication is also covered under the High Option Plan at reasonable rates. For generics bought from a network retail pharmacy, you pay $20 per 100 count of the medication, or $30 per 100 count, when ordering by mail. You pay $8 per 15-item order for a 30-day supply. You pay $30 per 30-item order for a 60-day supply.

The Plan pays for most of the costs associated with the prescription drug plans. It pays 100 percent of the cost to the provider. The Plan does not pay for necessary drugs that have a prescription.
Scholarships deadline approaches

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 three national presidents between 1941 and 1976.

Applicants must be high school seniors and must meet all of the following eligibility criteria to be considered:

- 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 application form signed by the NALC member and an officer of the member’s NALC branch. The form must be returned to NALC Headquarters by Dec. 31.

The form, containing more information, was published in recent editions of The Postal Record, and it is also available for download at nalc.org.

‘Advanced Formal A & Beyond’

NALC’s “Advanced Formal A and Beyond” training is for union activists who have some experience at Formal Step A. The focus of this program is to teach participants to look at every Formal Step A case file from an arbitrator advocate’s point of view. This training also sharpens the skills needed for enforcing the National Agreement at Formal Step A and provides an experience of what it’s like to serve as a Step B representative.

There is a lot of emphasis placed on handling situations where management fails to follow the grievance procedure as required by the National Agreement.

Three sessions will be held in 2017: April 2-7, Sept. 17-22 and Oct. 22-27.

To be accepted to attend this training, applicants must have some current experience presenting grievances at the Formal Step A level of the grievance procedure and be able to bring a Windows-based laptop computer (not Apple products) to the training. (Attendees will be using computers a lot during this week of training, and some of the applications are not compatible with Apple products, hence the restriction on Apple computers for this training program.)

Each Advanced Formal A and Beyond training session begins on Sunday afternoon and ends on Friday at noon. This training is conducted at the Maritime Institute just outside of Baltimore. This is a union facility that is located just minutes from the Baltimore-Washington International (BWI) Airport. A free shuttle to and from the airport is available.

Visit the Contract Administration page at nalc.org to learn more and to download the application form. Look for further details in NALC Vice President Lew Drass’ column in the January Postal Record.

Register now for 2017 Food Drive

Early registration for the 2017 Letter Carriers’ “Stamp Out Hunger™” Food Drive has begun. Branch presidents can access the registration form posted to the Members Only portal at nalc.org.

The 25th annual food drive will be held on its traditional second Saturday in May—Saturday, May 13, 2017. Those who register now will secure their orders for Food Drive reminder postcards.

If you haven’t yet created your Members Only portal account, go to nalc.org and click on the box in the upper right-hand corner of the screen labeled “Members Only,” then enter the simple information required to create your account access.

If you have any trouble creating your account, call the NALC Membership Department at 202-662-2826.

Once you’re in the portal, select the “Branch Presidents” button and then select the “2017 Letter Carrier Food Drive” button.

Complete all of the information fields, including how many residential deliveries are in your branch’s delivery area. Note that this becomes your order for postcards.

Also, be sure to confirm whether you have a sponsor for bags and, if so, identify the sponsor(s).

When you are finished, select “Complete registration.”

You must complete all fields for your registration to be confirmed. You will receive a confirmation notification once you are confirmed.

2016 Penalty Overtime Exclusion period

As referenced in Article II, Sections 4 and 5 of the National Agreement between NALC and USPS, the December period during which penalty overtime regulations are not applicable consists of four consecutive service weeks. This year, the December Penalty Overtime Exclusion period begins Pay Period 25-16, Week 2 (Dec. 3) and ends Pay Period 01-17, Week 1 (Dec. 30).

Collective-bargaining update

In the December issue of The Postal Record, NALC President Fredric Rolando provided an update on the collective-bargaining process between the union and the U.S. Postal Service.

“We are continuing to engage the Postal Service in negotiations for a new contract,” he wrote in his President’s Message. “We continue to have productive discussions in many areas of our National Agreement, including increased CCA pay and benefits, step advancements for former transitional employees, and the issue of financially rewarding all letter carriers for their contributions to the operational success of the Postal Service.”

“We are continuing these discussions because the path to a new agreement remains open. As long as that path remains open and we continue to make progress, we will continue to pursue it. However, we are fully prepared to pursue our goals through interest arbitration if progress toward a good contract stalls or if the path to an acceptable agreement closes.”

NALC and the USPS announced on May 20 that the bargaining period would be extended beyond the midnight expiration of the 2011-2016 National Agreement. As bargaining continues during this extended period of negotiations, the terms and conditions of that contract remain in effect. Any change in the status of contract negotiations will be posted at nalc.org and sent via push notification through the NALC Member App for smartphones.

2017 Branch Officers Training—update

The two sessions of NALC’s Branch Officers Training scheduled for 2017 are now full. Branch Officers Training sessions consist of three and a half days of educational seminars tailored to assist branch presidents, vice presidents, treasurers, recording secretaries, financial secretaries and trustees in the performance of their duties.

One session of Branch Officers Training will take place Jan. 10-13 in Phoenix. The other session will take place March 6-9 in St. Louis.

A complete overview of what the training covers was included in Secretary-Treasurer Nicole Rhine’s November Postal Record article.

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