



## It's time!

**I**t's time for all letter carriers to unite if we are going to save the Postal Service. Over the last year, every *Postal Record*, e-Activist message, NALC web page and *NALC Bulletin* has carried information to us on how we, the members of the National Association of Letter Carriers, can help protect the future of this great country by keeping the good old Postal Service alive. I realize it's never easy when we are fighting management on every level, but we must overcome the hurdle.

After all, it is not about taking care of local management; it's about making sure the American public has a service that allows them to communicate at a personal level while the letter carrier is out there on the street six days a week keeping an eye on the community. We can take pride in knowing that every American has the

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utmost respect for letter carriers around the nation. That respect was not just given to us! Our union brothers and sisters since 1889 set the standard we follow today. You don't get to be the most trusted government employee in the federal sector by just punching a clock or walking down the street.

If we let management chip away at our workdays and cut service today just to save a dollar, what will they want to do next to save a second dollar? The NALC will continue to find ways to solve problems on the workroom floor, but let's first make sure we still have a workroom floor to go to! You can do your part by attending your next branch meeting and NALC regional training seminar, and following key issues as they move through Congress by visiting the NALC website.

**Around-the-clock meetings over the last several months** between the management at Postal Service headquarters

and NALC officers, led by our national president, produced an improved process to adjust letter carrier routes in this time of uncertain mail volume. The ink is just drying on the new memo, setting the stage for a joint process to adjust routes. The process is called the Joint Alternate Route Adjustment Process (JARAP). We will use the process to adjust routes to as close to eight hours per day as possible. The agreement is also going to require management, together with local union representatives, to go back and fix the so called “unfinished MIARAP adjustments” first. I understand that no one likes their route to be missed, but this is the only way to get routes to eight hours without ending up with a mess that would take years to make right.

For my friend who doesn't like old war stories, this is for you! A little history is like medicine—you hope it will make you feel better and, at the same time, you promise yourself never to party that hard again. Well, under the old process, it was all one-sided. You cased and carried and local managers counted the mail, did most of the paperwork and crunched the numbers. By the time management redlined most of

your office and street time on paper, your route often showed as one or two hours shorter than it really was. The war would start as branches filed thousands of grievances into a system known as the grievance procedure.

After 10 years of management messing up the adjustments, the letter carriers union had more than 60,000 cases pending arbitration and, in some instances, the letter carrier's route had been counted and adjusted three times before his first grievance made it to arbitration. By the way, he was able to retire before the second case came up.

So, where was the justice? You guessed it—there was none. That is why letter carriers several national conventions ago said to the national officers, “Find a way to fix our routes that will require management to use our local union leaders in a joint process.” Well, we did that, and with your help, we will get it right! Save the Postal Service—attend your next branch meeting. ☒