



Looking to the past and to the future

Our long history is something that every letter carrier can be proud of. There have been many struggles and successes over the years. Below is a list of some of the most important events in our history:

1794—First letter carriers appointed by Congress—they received no salaries but were permitted by Congress to collect a fee of 2 cents for every letter they delivered.

1858—First letter boxes erected on the streets in New York City and Boston.

1863—Free city delivery instituted in large cities.

1888—Law for an eight-hour day for carriers, championed by Congressman “Sunset” Cox, enacted.

1889—NALC officially founded at Schaefer’s Saloon in Milwaukee.

1890—Carriers from large cities and NALC held consolidation meeting in New York City. First NALC Convention held in Boston.

1891—Mutual Benefit Association established at NALC Convention in Detroit.

1893—NALC position on eight-hour law interpretation upheld by two Supreme Court decisions; carriers eventually awarded \$3.5 million in overtime claims.

1902—First gag rule issued.

1905—National Ladies Auxiliary founded at NALC Convention in Portland, OR.

1912—Lloyd-LaFollette Act ended gag rule—postal and federal workers gained right to organize.

1915—25 Fairmont, WV, carriers and clerks submitted mass resignations to protest local postmaster’s policies.

1917—NALC affiliated with American Federation of Labor. Women hired as temporary carriers as men went to war.

1920—Civil Service Retirement Act passed; carriers received sick leave.

1921—Postmaster General Will B. Hays announced “humanization” policy and officially recognized postal organizations.

1930—NALC reaches 58,000-member mark after a half-century.

1935—40-hour workweek established for letter carriers.

1939—Golden Jubilee Convention marks NALC’s first 50 years; gold cards for 50-year members established.

1945—Letter carriers received \$300-a-year wartime bonus.

1950—Twice-a-day delivery ended.

1952—NALC National Headquarters in Washington dedicated.

1953—NALC became MDA’s first national sponsor.

1960—NALC Health Benefit Plan begins operation.

1962—President Kennedy signs Executive Order 10988—NALC won right to represent city delivery carriers in nationwide representation elections.

1964—Nalcrest retirement community for letter carriers dedicated. Significant growth in union membership attributed to the union having its own health plan.

1970—National wildcat strike; Postal Reorganization Act passed and signed into law by President Nixon.

1972—Membership gained power to elect national officers directly.

1974—NALC established the Hero of the Year awards.

1976—NALC won “Kokomo” Arbitration, which dealt with time standards.

1982—Fair Labor Standards Act litigation settled. Joint NALC-USPS Employee Involvement Process established. The “Carrier Alert” program was created.

1984—Arbitration panel determines the terms of a National Agreement for the first time.

1986—President Sombrotto accepted the prestigious “President’s Volunteer Action Award” for the Carrier Alert program from President Reagan.

1989—Union celebrates 100th anniversary in Milwaukee, where it was founded. Union has 316,000 members.

1991—NALC Food Drive begins as a pilot program.

1992—NALC, USPS and other organizations sign Joint Statement on Violence and Behavior in the Workplace.

1993—Hatch Act reform expands political rights for carriers, other postal and federal employees.

1999—Arbitrators elevate all carriers to Grade 6, breaking historic link with postal clerks.

2003—e-Activist Network created to provide instant legislative updates.

2005—NALC creates Leadership Academy. Membership at this time was about 301,000.

2012—Text messages instituted as another means for the president to reach members about important issues. This year marks the 20th anniversary of the Food Drive and the 30th anniversary of Carrier Alert. *Pending postal reform legislation and national arbitration?*

In summary, the NALC has accomplished much over the years. What has been our saving grace is the strength of our membership. Whenever we have needed them, members have risen to the occasion. This is a critical time and we must all stick together and support each other. Be prepared for President Rolando’s call for any one of these issues. ☒