



## What a summer!

**W**ell, summer is finally over and what a summer it was: record-breaking heat and humidity around the country, working in understaffed and mismanaged post offices, dealing with members of Congress and a postal management that at times seems hellbent on destroying this great American institution, writing letters, going on talk shows, contacting newspapers, bloggers and other media sources to get the truth about the condition of the Postal Service out to the public, continuing to negotiate a settlement on the National Agreement while at the same time getting ready for interest arbitration if one can't be reached, while preparing for and conducting a national convention of nearly 7,000 delegates and gearing up for the presidential and congressional elections in November. Whew! No one—and I mean no one—works as hard as letter carriers active in their union. No one.

### National convention wrapup

I want to thank all of those stewards and steward wannabes who attended the five-day steward training class. The response was overwhelming. More than 1,700 delegates attended either the morning or afternoon classes held each day of the convention, including the combined mock arbitration class held on Friday morning. Having never tried such an endeavor before, we weren't sure what kind of turnout to expect or how it would go over, so we "optimistically" planned for about 1,000 a day, but made enough copies of the handouts for 1,500 "just in case" and we still ran several hundred short each day.

But it was a fun five days, not only for me and my co-instructor David Miller, but also for the cast of players in the mock grievance that, during the week, we followed through the grievance procedure to arbitration. What made it fun for us instructors was the response of the delegates. We were truly energized as we watched the seats fill up for each class and by the crowds that stayed behind afterward wanting more. We can't wait for next time.

I want to recognize those NALC members who made up the cast of the mock grievance. They put in many hours preparing for their roles and did a remarkable job. They were: Bill Bothwell of New Hampshire Merged Branch 44, Shawn Boyd of Dallas Branch 132, Jean Faw of Oak Brook, IL Branch 825, Tom Gates of Eugene, OR

Branch 916, Steve Hanna of York, PA Branch 509, Ken Hill of Bloomington, IL Branch 828, Cindy Kirby of Denver Branch 47, Keisha Lewis of Garden Grove, CA Branch 1100, Lyn Liberty of Phoenix Branch 576, Cherie Lumm of Fredericksburg, VA Branch 685, David Mudd of Louisville Branch 14, Lynne Pendleton of Central Florida Branch 1091, Jim Raymond of Anchorage Branch 4319, Dan Szucs of New Jersey Merged Branch 38, Julie Todich of Vernal, UT Branch 3932, and Sue Wellhausen of Eugene, OR Branch 916. I also want to give special thanks to retired Region 7 National Business Agent Barry Weiner, who served as the arbitrator for our mock arbitration hearing. And, of course, a big thanks to my co-instructor, Dave Miller, who helped put the whole program together.

### Leadership Academy

A few weeks after returning from the convention in Minneapolis we were back at the Leadership Academy for the first week of Class 14. As noted in earlier articles, this is the first class not to be held at the National Labor College campus, which is being sold. Instead, we have gone "into the lion's den" and are holding classes at the Postal Service's Bolger Center training facility. While it filled our need to find a facility for the Academy on short notice, it is only temporary. Class 15, which begins in January 2013, will move to our new home at the Maritime Institute near Baltimore-Washington (BWI) Airport.

### Leadership applications

We were pleased to see that a total of 229 applications for the 2013 Leadership Academy classes was received at NALC Headquarters by Aug. 31, the final day of the application period. We now begin the process of selecting the 60 students who will attend one of the two classes to be held next year. Selections should be announced about the time this issue of *The Postal Record* is delivered.

From what I've seen on the applications, President Rolando is going to have a tough task choosing from so many qualified and able candidates. So if you were not selected, it's OK to be disappointed but please, don't be discouraged. As we have said many times, we have many more qualified applicants than we have open positions. Be patient and persistent, and your time will come. ☒