

# Some changes can be averted



**Ernest  
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**I**n last month's article, I wrote about OPM's decision to stop mailing 1099s and to require the forms to be retrieved through its website. We have learned that the policy will change. OPM has announced: "Later this year, OPM will make electronic 1099R forms available to all annuitants through an opt-in process. If annuitants choose not to opt in, they will continue receiving 1099Rs." I thank each of you who responded and, as usual, retired letter carriers have made a difference!

**How do I say goodbye without smiling?**

Bittersweet is the best way to describe my feelings as I ended my tenure as your national director of retired members at the end of March. Looking back on my career, I have been blessed with jobs that I enjoyed. That in itself is amazing. When looking back, most people see jobs they tolerated only because they had to work. While I also had to work, I had jobs that I found rewarding, entertaining and, most of the time, just plain fun.

This last job has been my most enjoyable. While there are many reasons for this enjoyment, including the co-workers that I had the pleasure of associating with, the biggest reason is the respect that I have always had toward retirees. My first introduction to retirees was in 1970 when I became a letter carrier. During my early years, these fellows (only one lady carrier) schooled me and, while not retired at that time, they were close. Over the next few years, they hung up their satchels for the last time.

They educated me on how and why to do my job a certain way. They had pride in their appearance, their work and their relationships with their customers. Mail was an item to protect and was not "just mail," it was "the mail." Every piece had value to someone and, subsequently, value to them. I attempted to carry that pride through my 33-plus years as an active carrier.

From 1978 through 2000, I moonlighted as the branch president. I call it moonlighting because I would carry mail during the day and find time at nights, weekends and non-scheduled days for the branch duties. I was blessed with officers who also took pride in their jobs as union activists. Some were retirees from the earlier days that I alluded to. I truly enjoyed the work and found being able to help those who needed it rewarding.

From there, I was given an opportunity to work in the

national business agent's office in Troy, MI, as a regional administrative assistant. Once again, I worked with and for good people and developed friendships for life. Six years later, in 2006, I was honored and privileged to be elected as national director of retired members. As I prepare to leave, I look back on the past 43 years with a sense of shock at how recent that first day as a carrier seems to have been. They say time flies when you are having fun. That explains my career perfectly.

**I remember a person saying that no one advances or succeeds without the assistance of others. I am living proof of that.**

To the members of Lexington, KY Bluegrass Branch 361, I say thanks for all the support that you have continued to give me through the years.

To my mentors, bosses and friends Ronald Brown, Jim Korolowicz and Patrick Carroll, I say thank you for the opportunities that you have given me.

To President Emeritus William H. Young, I say thanks for

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your belief and support in allowing me to serve the membership in this position.

To President Fredric Rolando, I thank you for allowing me the privilege of serving with you.

To Special Assistant Ernestine Douglas and former Secretary Vickie Bowman, thank you for making the job seem easy.

To my fellow resident national officers, I say thank you for your efforts on behalf of all our members.

To the incoming director of retired members, don't hesitate to call; I have some problems that I want you to fix.

To the members I have enjoyed meeting along the way, thank you for your hospitality.

And to my lovely, deprived wife Linda and golf clubs, let's play a round.

God bless you all, and may God continue to bless the NALC.

**NALC Retirement Department  
Toll-free number: 800-424-5186**

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from 10 a.m. to noon and from 2 to 4 p.m. (Eastern time)

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