

Important updates



Nicole Rhine

There will be a biweekly dues increase for 2016 due to the wage increase this month. The dues change will take place in Pay Period 1 of 2016 (Dec. 26, 2015 to Jan. 8, 2016). This change will be reflected in the dues that will be deducted beginning with the Jan. 15, 2016, paycheck. As a result, the dues increase will be incorporated into the branch reimbursements on Jan. 22, 2016.

The minimum dues structure set forth in Article 7, Section 2 (a) of the *NALC Constitution* is the equivalent of two hours' base pay for an NALC Grade 1, Step D letter carrier per month. Since dues are deducted *bi-weekly*, this amount will be \$24.63

for 2016. National retains one-third of this amount, \$8.20, and remits the other two-thirds to the local branches (with some withheld for state associations and remitted by National Headquarters to the state associations monthly).

Some branches may have set dues higher than the minimum dues structure and may increase local dues during the year, as do some state associations. Any increase in a branch's local dues cannot be processed before Pay Period 4 (Feb. 9, 2016).

Note: Dues corrections or changes to be made in 2015 cannot be processed after Nov. 15.

“I thank all of the branches that sent representatives to the Branch Officers Training.”

Open Season

Open Season for choosing a health plan is Nov. 9 through Dec. 14, and I encourage all NALC members to consider enrolling in the NALC Health Benefit Plan—the NALC's own union-run health benefit plan. NALC health benefit representatives and branch officers are reminded that any USPS employee, regardless of bargaining or non-bargaining status, must be a full dues-paying member of the NALC when enrolled in the NALC Health Benefit Plan.

Under Article 22 of the *NALC Constitution*, a Health Benefit Plan membership (often referred to as an “Associate Membership”) applies only to retirees who did not maintain their membership in the NALC upon retirement and to all non-postal federal employees. These enrollees of the

NALC Health Benefit Plan pay yearly dues of \$36, which are billed in the early part of the year.

Branch Officers Training

The first Branch Officers Training was held in September in Atlanta. The Branch Officers Training was an expansion of the previous secretary-treasurer seminars conducted by the NALC. For more information on what the training includes, please see my September *Postal Record* article.

From the feedback we got from the participants in Atlanta, the new training was a success. I thank all of the branches that sent representatives.

Another Branch Officers Training will be held Jan. 11-14, 2016, in Las Vegas. The information and registration forms for the training were included in the October *NALC Bulletin*.

Veterans Day

This Veterans Day marks the 97th anniversary of the first Armistice Day, when a ceasefire went into effect on the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month during World War I. Although I am not a veteran, I am profoundly honored that so many of our members are and that I get the opportunity to represent our veterans as a national officer. Let's all be sure to thank the men and women who serve in our military for the sacrifices they and their families have made for this great country.

Buy union

As a recently sworn-in vice president of the Union Label and Service Trades Department, AFL-CIO—a distinction that former NALC Secretary-Treasurer Jane E. Broendel also held—I would be remiss if I did not urge all NALC members to buy union.

For Thanksgiving, here is a brief list of what to look for: Butterball or Foster Farms whole turkeys, Ocean Spray cranberries/cranberry sauce, Birds Eye vegetables and Pillsbury rolls, and for dessert, pick pies from Entenmann's or Sara Lee.

And remember to shop in union grocery stores: Albertson's, Cub Foods, Giant, Kroger, Ralphs, Safeway, Schnucks and Shop 'n Save—just to name a few.

The lists above are not all-inclusive. For more information, check out unionlabel.org and labor411.org.