

# A Constitution wrap-up and a fond farewell



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**T**he last several months, my articles have covered sections of the *National Constitution*, particularly as it relates to NALC Headquarters and its roles and responsibilities. This month let us take a look at the second part of the *Constitution*, the *Constitution for the Government of Subordinate and Federal Branches*, that involves the branches' roles and responsibilities.

## Article 1: Name and Object

**Article 1 deals with a branch's** identification by name and/or number. Branches often are named after their charter city (example: Branch 1100, Garden Grove, CA); a past member and/or officer (Nathaniel Green Branch 630); or other identifi-

ers (Branch 1477, West Coast Florida Letter Carriers). Regardless of whether a name has been chosen, the branch will have a number assigned to it at the time of organization. Each branch was assigned a number in order of application for its charter. The lower the number, the older the branch. Detroit, MI, was granted the first charter, so it is known as Branch 1.

You might be wondering: "Why Detroit? I thought the union was formed in Milwaukee." When the union was founded in 1889 in Milwaukee, WI, W.H. Wood, a letter carrier from Detroit, was elected our first president. Hence, he was tasked with dispensing the charters to each branch that joined NALC. This allowed him to hand out the first number, and he gave it to his branch. Milwaukee was given No. 2; Buffalo, NY, No. 3, etc.

The first 15 branches were the founders of this great union. While our numbers were low originally, today we represent all city delivery cities. The following words from the *Constitution* best describe what our union stands for:

The objects of this Branch are to unite all employees who are eligible for membership under Article 2, Section 2, of the National Constitution into one harmonious body for their mutual benefit, and to assist the National Association of Letter Carriers in its efforts to improve the condition of its entire membership.

## Article 2: Membership

### Section 1 states:

Application for membership must be made in writing, signed by the applicant, stating age, social security number, place of residence, and such other information as may be determined by the Branch. A Form 1187 (Dues Check-off) must be signed by all applicants seeking a membership in the Branch and the NALC.

Section 3(a) provides that:

[A]ny regular branch member in good standing in his/her Branch, moving his/her employment to another city, or retiree in good standing in his/her Branch moving to another city, may transfer membership to the Branch located in such city.

## Article 3: Meetings

**The bylaws of each branch should address the following in** regard to branch meetings:

The regular meetings of the Branch shall be held not less than once a month, at such time and place as may be designated in the Branch bylaws. Each Branch, with prior approval of its membership, shall have the option of only meeting ten (10) times per year.

Section 2 provides that:

Special meetings shall be called by the President upon the written request of \_\_\_ members (number to be determined by the Branch) in good standing or by vote of the Branch and notification of such meetings, stating the object of the call, shall be given the members by the Recording Secretary as directed by the Branch or as required by the by-laws.

## New salary schedule

**Effective after Nov. 24, letter carriers will be covered by** a new salary schedule, negotiated by NALC and the Postal Service, which led to the following amendment change during the 71st Biennial National Convention in Detroit, MI:

Article 7, Section 2(a). There shall be a minimum dues structure which shall consist of the following: Each member shall pay monthly dues equal to two hours base pay for an NALC Grade 1, Step D letter carrier employed by the United States Postal Service. After November 24, 2018, each member shall pay monthly dues equal to two hours base pay for an NALC Step D letter carrier in the consolidated career City Carrier grade level (Table One) implemented on that date. One third of such dues shall be allocated to the national union and shall be designated the national per capita tax. The remaining two thirds of such dues shall be allocated to the member's branch and shall be designated minimum branch dues.

Branches should review their bylaws to ensure that the language is not out of date. Branches who have used the following language (or something similar) will not need to change: "The dues for active members of the branch shall be the same as set by Article 7, Section 2(a) of the NALC National Constitution."

## Holiday wishes

**I wish everyone a very merry Christmas, happy Hanukkah,** happy Kwanzaa and any other holiday you observe. May you and your families celebrate with much joy and happiness. To all my sisters and brothers delivering the mail during the holidays, be safe and thank you for all you do! As this is my last article as assistant secretary-treasurer, I want to say thank you to the members for all the support and friendship you have shown me over the years. In unity, NALC remains strong!