

Important updates



Nicole Rhine

There will be a biweekly dues increase for the year 2019 due to the two 2018 cost-of-living adjustments (COLAs) and the upcoming Nov. 24 upgrade/pay schedule consolidation. The dues change will take place in Pay Period 1 of 2019 (Dec. 22, 2018 to Jan. 4, 2019) and will be reflected beginning with the Jan. 11, 2019, paycheck. As a result, the dues increase will show in the branch dues deposits beginning on Jan. 18, 2019.

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 Step D letter carrier in the consolidated career City Carrier grade level

(Table One) per month. Since dues are deducted biweekly, this amount will be \$26.44 for 2019. National retains one-third of this amount, \$8.80, 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 dues that are higher than the minimum dues structure. Also, branches may increase local dues during the year.

Open Season

Open Season for choosing a health benefit plan is Nov. 12 to Dec. 10 and I encourage all members to consider enrolling in the NALC Health Benefit Plan (HBP), our own union-run plan. 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 NALC when enrolled in the NALC HBP.

Under Article 22 of the *NALC Constitution*, an HBP membership (often referred to as an "Associate Membership") applies only to retirees who did not maintain their membership in NALC upon retirement and to all non-postal federal employees. These enrollees of the NALC HBP pay yearly dues of \$36, which are billed directly from Headquarters in the early part of the year.

Branch mergers

Any branch proposing to merge should review Article 2, Section 3 of the *NALC Constitution*, which sets forth the requirements for affecting a merger of branches. Requests for mergers received at Headquarters are often missing two

requirements from both branches wishing to merge: 1) a resolution and 2) a statement of reason(s) for merging. To avoid having a request for a merger returned, please ensure that your branch includes all the necessary documentation. More information can be found on Secretary-Treasurer's page on the NALC website, nalc.org. The Secretary-Treasurer's page is under the "Union Administration" tab.

Buy union

As a vice president of the Union Label and Service Trades Department, AFL-CIO, I would be remiss if I did not urge all NALC members to buy union this holiday season. For more information on how to buy union, check out unionlabel.org.

Branch Officers Training

As previously announced, there will be a Branch Officers Training Jan. 7-10 in Orlando, FL. Registration forms were included in the late October *NALC Bulletin*.

Branch Officers Training consists of three and a half days of educational seminars tailored to assist branch presidents, vice presidents, treasurers, recording secretaries, financial secretaries and trustees in the performance of their duties.

These sessions cover the basics for financial officers: taxes, proper controls, reporting to the Department of Labor, fiduciary duties under the Landrum-Griffin Act, bonding of branch officers and Internal Revenue Service (IRS) reporting requirements.

Additional topics include the *NALC Constitution* and branch bylaws, branch policies, maintaining accurate and complete meeting minutes, member notification requirements, recordkeeping, branch audits, branch elections, branch dues and how to read a dues roster.

As a reminder, branches must use the registration form to register for the class and no travel plans should be made until an acceptance letter is received.

Veterans Day

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.