

## EAP is there for you



**Manuel L.  
Peralta Jr.**

**I**n the the spring of last year, our NALC family in Southern California lost one of our brothers. His name was Roger Askew, and he served Van Nuys, CA Branch 2462 for many years, including seven years as its president.

I got to know Roger pretty well during my 20 years working at the national business agent's office, and had the opportunity to present him as a witness in arbitration a number of times. On one occasion, he testified on behalf of a grievant who was facing termination for attendance where chemical dependency was a contributing factor.

The grievant testified that when he reached the point of giving up, he reached out to Roger for assistance

and Roger made the necessary arrangements to get the grievant in contact with the help he needed, even though he stumbled a few times. Why did he reach out for Roger's help?

**“Roger had made it clear that the thing he cared about the most was sobriety. He understood that, without it, all other things in his life would be gone.”**

During our 2018 convention in Detroit, I received an invite to join the delegates from Branch 2462 for a dinner. During that dinner, Steve Seyfried, one of Roger's close friends and a fellow officer, read us the eulogy he had prepared, as this was the first delegates' dinner since we had lost Roger. In part, Steve shared that:



...Roger was many things to many people, adoptee, Eagle Scout, war hero, devoted husband, caring father, recovering alcoholic, letter carrier, union activist, true friend and caring individual, hero to the end...During his early adult years, he struggled with alcohol. After the end of his first marriage, and with a young son to raise, Roger made a truly life-changing decision. He began attending Alcoholics Anonymous...Roger had made it clear that the thing he cared about the most

was sobriety. He understood that without it, all other things in his life, would be gone. It is no easy task, to realize that you have a problem in your life. But to be able to have the strength and fortitude to realize that you do, and to face it head on, and to battle it, shows a true degree of bravery...

Steve's words hit home with many of us as we reflected on Roger's friendship. He never feared that anyone would learn of his battle. Instead, he used his experience to help others who were willing to take a step in the right direction.

We know why the grievant turned to Roger for help. He was the employee with the resources available to help him. Sometimes we need to have a listing of our contractual rights and benefits handy when a member works up the courage to ask for help. Roger knew how to help because he knew how important this help is. Thank you, Roger.

**In our December 2017 issue of *The Postal Record*, the Contract Talk article addresses common questions about the Employee Assistance Program (EAP), and we ask you to review that item from your magazine or, if necessary, to download it from our website. (Go to [nalc.org](http://nalc.org), then navigate to "News and Research," then to "The Postal Record," then "2017 Archive," and then scroll to the December Contract Talk.)**

Most letter carriers care enough about their co-workers to know when something does not appear right. We extend our hearts and help out when we can. NALC encourages you to learn all you can about the available resources and connect yourself, as well as others in need, with the help that awaits your call.

As I close this month's column, I encourage you to review the additional EAP information on page 6.

On April 1, New Directions becomes our new EAP Service provider, so for those of you who are familiar with the EAP services that we have had throughout the years, you will note that additional services are now available. Check it out.

Keep an eye on each other.

**Make the Call!**

USPS Employee Assistance Program  
**1-800-327-4968**  
(1-800-EAP-4-YOU) TTY: 1-877-492-7341  
[www.EAP4YOU.com](http://www.EAP4YOU.com)

